

# Legal Stream Overview

## NSW Government Graduate Program

2025

[www.psc.nsw.gov.au/graduateprogramresources](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/graduateprogramresources)

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**One choice,  
endless opportunities**



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The Legal stream is designed to attract and retain entry-level legal professionals to NSW Government. Graduates gain knowledge, skills and experience in such areas as litigation, providing legal advice and developing policy. This exposure has been designed to provide a career pathway for legal graduates as they work to being admitted as a solicitor in NSW.

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## Snapshot

### Employment



- 18-months temporary employment with the home agency
- Legal Officer at Grade 1, Year 3
- Ongoing role upon successful completion of the program

### Development



- Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice
- Working in Government workshop
- Performance and development plans
- 3 x 6-month placements

### Support



- Welcome event and program induction
- Agency Coordinators
- Structured mentoring
- Executive Sponsor
- Placement Managers
- Networking events
- Virtual Graduate Hub
- LinkedIn Graduate Program alumni group

## Employment

Legal Stream graduates are employed and paid by their home agency for the 18-month program in a temporary Legal Officer role at Grade 1, Year 3. The secondment mechanism is used when graduates rotate to a host agency for external placements.

Graduates must be offered an ongoing role at the Grade 1, Year 5 in the home agency on successful completion of the program and once they have been admitted as a solicitor in NSW. See the [Legal stream Success Criteria](#).

Please visit the [NSW Government Graduate Program Resources](#) site for the current Legal Stream Graduate Role Description.

## Cost to participating agencies

The home agency will fund the graduate's salary (plus on-costs) at the Legal Officer role at Grade 1, Year 3, contribute towards the cost of the formal education component and pay the cost of the mentoring component.

Commitment	Per Graduate, 2025 Program
Annual Salary, Legal Officer Grade 1, Year 3	Approx. \$79,032
Education	The Law Society of NSW \$7,150 UTS \$65 (Working in Government workshop)
Mentoring Program	\$1,409

\*Legal Stream graduates are required to contribute an additional amount of up to \$4,000 towards their GDLP.

Agencies will be invoiced directly by the provider for the education and mentoring components. Agencies will be able to seek a refund from the graduate for the GDLP if they leave the program early as per the terms and conditions agreed to in the graduate's Letter of Offer.



## Development

### Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice

The Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice (GDLP) is delivered over approximately 8 months through the College of Law, commencing in the second rotation with five face-to-face days of workshops. Blended learning includes online components and workshops.

The Practical Legal Training program (PLT) is undertaken in three components: coursework, work experience and continuing professional education. Please note that the **work experience component and supervision must be provided by an Australian legal practitioner who is currently practising**.

Successful completion of the PLT leads to the award of the GDLP and prepares graduates for admission to practice as a solicitor in NSW.

During the first rotation, legal graduates will also attend a workshop through the Law Society of NSW, which will cover:

- How do I practice law in NSW?
- Professional responsibility
- Writing to make an impact
- Legal ethics for graduates
- Risk management
- Wellbeing and resilience
- Career mapping in government and networking

Graduate attendance and participation in all formal learning is mandatory.

### Working in Government workshop

To build foundational knowledge of government and understand how government works, graduates will attend a one-day whole of cohort workshop as part of the development program with the University of Technology. This face-to-face workshop will cover:

- Understanding NSW public sector context
- Promote the values and ethics of the NSW public service
- Teamwork and collaboration skills
- Ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practice

Graduates attend the workshop during work time and attendance and participation in all formal learning is mandatory.

### Study Day

Graduates are entitled to one study day per month once they commence the GDLP to complete assessments during working hours. The timing of these is to be coordinated with the manager. Managers should check in with the graduate on a regular basis regarding progress toward their formal learning and how they can assist the graduate with their studies. The PSC will keep in contact with managers regarding the graduate's progress.

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## Placements

As part of the program's Exposure component, graduates complete 3x 6-month placements.

In this stream graduates rotate in their second rotation to ensure broad legal experience. Working in different agencies helps to broaden a graduate's understanding of how NSW Government works in a variety of different contexts, an important component of their career development and progression.

## Performance and Development Plans (PDP)

Graduates complete one PDP with each 6-month placement in consultation with their manager. A dedicated online platform has been developed to facilitate a consistent and accessible process across the sector. For more information, please see the Program Guide and other resources available on the [NSW Government Graduate Program Resources](#) site.

## Success criteria

Component	Criteria	As assessed by
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completes all components of the GDLP</li> <li>• Eligible to be admitted as a solicitor in NSW</li> <li>• Working in Government workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College of Law:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ formal assessments as part of the Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Supervising Solicitor:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Practical Legal Training sign-off</li> </ul> </li> <li>• University of Technology Sydney</li> </ul>
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets all 16 capabilities as defined in the stream specific role description</li> <li>• Overall, performance is at the 'Achieving' level or higher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home agency:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Performance and development plan reviews</li> <li>◦ Overall progress and performance of the graduate</li> <li>◦ Exceptions will be managed by the home agency</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Contact

Your Agency Coordinator is the first point of contact for queries related to the NSW Government Graduate Program. Contact information is available on the [NSW Government Graduate Program Resources](#) site.