

THE LEGAL PROFESSION'S EXPERIENCE OF PRACTICAL LEGAL TRAINING

Research Report

Prepared for

THE NSW LEGAL PROFESSION ADMISSION BOARD

09 April 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Urbis acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands we operate on.

We recognise that First Nations sovereignty was never ceded and respect First Nations peoples' continuing connection to these lands, waterways and ecosystems for over 60,000 years.

We pay our respects to First Nations Elders, past and present.



The river is the symbol of the Dreaming and the journey of life. The circles and lines represent people meeting and connections across time and space. When we are working in different places, we can still be connected and work towards the same goal.

Title: Sacred River Dreaming
Artist: Hayley Pigram
Darug Nation
Sydney, NSW

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THIS RESEARCH

Urbis was engaged by the NSW Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) to undertake research into the experience of Practical Legal Training (PLT) in NSW.

An invitation from Chief Justice Bell was issued to all members of the Law Society of NSW to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire contained two sub surveys, one for PLT graduates (Graduate Survey) who had completed in the last 10 years and another for supervisors (Supervisor Survey) of PLT graduates in the last 10 years.

The PLT graduate survey focused on:

- Teaching quality and methods
- Feedback on compulsory and elective subjects
- Assessment and feedback
- Work experience.

The supervisor survey focused on:

- Satisfaction with legal skills of entry-level lawyers
- Need to supplement PLT
- Regularity of entry-level lawyers demonstrating various legal skills.

After data cleaning, a total of 2,559 responses were received to the Graduate Survey which represents around 14% of all NSW solicitors with up to 10 years of experience. The Supervisor Survey was completed by 2,064 respondents, representing around 5% of all solicitors in NSW.



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

GRADUATES

Quantitative findings

Graduate feedback across many survey questions was mixed, suggesting **variation in the experience of PLT**.

The highest levels of agreement were reported for **usefulness of work experience and PLT resources**, manageability of course workload and quality and teaching methods of initial live workshops.

The highest levels of disagreement reported related to **PLT being reasonably priced, intellectually challenging**, the usefulness of compulsory subjects and the overall quality and methods of teaching across the course.

Key **differences across PLT experience included the size of firm in which graduates were working and the time since completing PLT**. Respondents in large firms with over 100 solicitors generally reported a more negative experience of PLT compared to their colleagues in smaller firms. Respondents who have completed their PLT in the past two years reported more negative experience compared to those who had completed the course 8-10 years ago.

Qualitative findings

PLT was reported to be **a box-ticking exercise, lacking relevance to legal practice**. Respondents provided feedback that PLT provided minimal value and was often seen as a required but unnecessary hurdle to being able to practice law. Material taught was sometimes noted to be out of date and did not reflect a current understanding of legal process.

Around two-thirds of all respondents had completed PLT either entirely online or through hybrid teaching models. **Face-to-face learning was preferred to online delivery methods** with online delivery methods being reported to lack depth and not support critical thinking or active engagement with learning material.

A lack of academic rigour was reported. Several respondents noted the course was seen as hard to fail with many assessments relying on rote learning or repeated from previous years, making sharing of answers common amongst certain groups. Some inconsistency in oral examinations or contradictory advice from lecturers was also reported.

PLT costs can be prohibitive and isn't always seen as providing value. This was the most common feedback provided by respondents with the lack of learning outcomes being reported as not worth the high cost of PLT course fees (around \$10,000). Some respondents reported having to delay their entry into the profession due to PLT being unaffordable, or the enticement of paid PLT influencing their choice of their practice sector. Furthermore, it was noted the considerable cost was likely to disproportionately impact graduates with less financial resources or mature students who may have considerable financial obligations, reducing both the attractiveness and equity of the profession.

Work undertaken during study was reported to be most useful.

Around three-quarters of all respondents reported the work experience component of their PLT as being useful for building legal skills. This was commonly reported to be the most useful element of the course with some respondents reporting that coursework added negligible learnings. Some respondents who had prior legal (particularly paralegal) work experience questioned the value of the PLT work experience component, as they felt it provided similar learnings to what they had already received from work they did while at university. Other respondents also reported inappropriate administrative tasks and lack of supervision being provided during work experience, or graduates being attracted to unpaid placements on the understanding of resulting paid work that never occurred.

The unpaid nature of some placements was sometimes reported to lead to financial strain and limit diversity.

Around one in five respondents reported that their PLT was funded through their employer. However, the survey did not collect information on if respondents were paid during the work placements required as part of PLT. Some respondents reported an additional financial burden of having to undertake additional study and unpaid work experience.

Disparities in employer-funded PLT was reported to steer new lawyers towards private practice,

deepening existing workforce imbalances across practice areas. Respondents working in government and community legal were significantly less likely to report that their PLT course was funded by their employer. This was reported by some respondents as influencing their choice of practice area.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS SUPERVISORS

Quantitative findings

Dissatisfaction with the skill level of entry-level practitioners was prevalent with 42% of supervisor respondents reporting they were dissatisfied with the practical legal skills demonstrated by entry-level lawyers.

Four in five respondents reported **needing to often or always supplement PLT to support staff to perform entry-level tasks**. There was some discussion regarding the varying expectations of legal graduates and the importance of supporting entry-level practitioners with supervision in their first years of practice.

There was **variation in the competence reported by entry-level practitioners across various legal tasks**. Legal research skills, ethical decision-making and written communication were the skills most commonly reported as being demonstrated. On the other hand, competence in drafting advices and dispute resolution skills were the least commonly identified.

Supervisors **from firms with large numbers of PLT graduates generally reported a more positive experience of entry-level practitioners**. Respondents from firms who had supported more than 50 graduates over the past five years were more likely to report their graduates were able to manage their coursework and employed work, were more satisfied with their legal skills and in particular, written communication, legal competency, time management and ethical decision-making. This suggests there may be some differences in the quality of graduates recruited by larger firms where PLT course fees are often employer funded and where there are also greater resources to support the training of early-career professionals.

Qualitative findings

Supervisor respondents reported **PLT graduates were not always adequately prepared for the realities of work**. Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of practical skills demonstrated by graduates with some respondents questioning if a lack of depth within PLT coursework was providing insufficient depth of knowledge regarding legal practice. Conversely, some respondents queried the role of PLT, suggesting work experience is a more appropriate platform to support practical legal training.

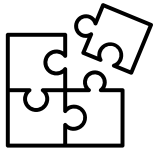
Certain skills were commonly reported as not being sufficiently taught through PLT. These include drafting and writing, interpersonal communication, research and analytical skills, ethics and professional conduct, and time management.

Many supervisors reported that the **practical legal skills were better learnt on the job**. With 80% of supervisor respondents reporting the need to supplement PLT, there was a common perspective that no classroom learning could replace the experience gained by undertaking actual legal work under the close supervision of an experienced practitioner. Some respondents did, however, express concerns regarding the capacity of smaller firms to provide the necessary supervision, with a higher opportunity cost compared to larger firms with more resources available to support early-career practitioners.

IMPLICATIONS



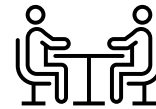
There is evidence that the current PLT system is not meeting the requirements of both graduates and the profession.



The entry-level skills expected of early-career practitioners need to be better defined.



Cost and value for money need to be a consideration in any future changes to early-career lawyer training.



Work experience or placement seem to be the key facilitator to developing entry-level skills.



There is significant variation across the profession around capability and capacity to support early-career practitioners.



Any online learning should be supported by lecturer contact and critical thinking elements.

A number of implications for any potential future data collection or research in this area have also been provided.

METHODOLOGY

Research overview

Urbis was engaged by the NSW Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) to undertake research into the experience of Practical Legal Training (PLT) in NSW.

The LPAB developed a questionnaire which was refined in collaboration with Urbis. The questionnaire contained two sub-surveys, one for PLT graduates (Graduate Survey) who had completed the course in the last 10 years and another for supervisors of PLT graduates (Supervisor Survey) in the last 10 years. The survey contained a combination of closed and open-ended questions, and the full questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

The PLT graduate survey included questions on:

- Demographics
- Teaching quality and methods
- Feedback on compulsory and elective subjects
- Assessment and feedback
- Work experience.

The supervisor survey included questions on:

- Demographics
- Satisfaction with legal skills of entry-level lawyers
- Need to supplement PLT
- Regularity of entry-level lawyers demonstrating various legal skills.

The survey was programmed by Urbis and hosted on the online survey software, QuestionPro.

The initial email invitation from Chief Justice Bell including a link to the survey was circulated by the NSW Law Society to its 32,364 members on Tuesday 11 February followed by two reminders in subsequent Monday Briefs. The survey was open from 11 February 2024 to 28 February 2024.

Data accuracy

To address any concerns around the veracity of the data being received, Urbis conducted analysis including:

- Checking duplicate IP addresses for evidence of duplicate responses
- Checking the length of time taken to complete the survey to identify those completing it in a particularly short timeframe
- Checking for open-ended responses generated by AI.

Analysis of the IP addresses of respondents found no evidence of individuals completing multiple responses with the same answers and similarly, analysis of the time taken did not identify any individuals who were completing the survey in a significantly shorter period than their peers (which could be an indicator of an individual not completing the survey appropriately).

The survey also included two screening questions to ensure that individuals completing the survey were eligible to do so (by either completing PLT in the past decade or supervising a legal graduate over the same period). Just under 300 respondents were screened out across these two questions and therefore would not have been provided any further questions.

Data cleaning

A total of 5,292 responses were received. Data cleaning was undertaken on this data and removed:

- 1,061 responses who did not complete any of the experiential questions
- 108 responses who were 'unsure' when they completed their PLT
- Four responses who selected they had completed their PLT in the last 10 years but in comments indicated otherwise.

Following data cleaning, a total of 4,119 responses were analysed across both surveys. This included n=2,559 responses to the Graduate Survey and n=2,063 responses to the Supervisor Survey. There were n=553 respondents that completed both surveys. As not all respondents completed every question of the survey, the base size (the total number of respondents who answered the question) has been reported.

Data analyses

Quantitative survey results were analysed in the statistical software SPSS. Cross-tabulation and chi-square tests, at the 95% significance level, were used to identify statistically significant differences between groups of respondents. Qualitative responses were analysed in Microsoft Excel using a thematic coding framework.

What is significance testing?

Significance testing is a statistical method used to determine if the observed differences between groups are likely to be genuine or if they could have occurred by chance. It involves calculating a p-value, which indicates the probability that the observed results could have happened under the null hypothesis (i.e. no real difference exists). A p-value less than the chosen significance level (within this report $p < 0.05$, corresponding to a 95% confidence level) suggests that the observed differences are statistically significant, meaning they are unlikely to have occurred by random chance alone. Larger sample sizes generally increase the likelihood of detecting significant differences, as they provide more reliable estimates and reduce the impact of random variation.

How is it used throughout this report?

In the body of this report significance testing is reported only as general trends without the mention of specific significant differences between groups and their values.

Significant differences between different groups are reported in Appendix A and B. A number of significant differences were identified throughout the data, however analysis was undertaken to identify recurring difference among groups and differences between groups with sample sizes greater than n=25. These have been included in reporting, one-off differences between groups have not necessarily reported.

Limitations

The following limitations should be taken into account when reading this report:

- The findings in this report are based on responses to the surveys and therefore represent the profile and views of survey respondents only.
- For the Graduate Survey, a sample of n=2,559 and a population of 19,006 graduates with 10 years and under of experience¹ will result in a degree of sampling error (i.e. confidence interval) at the 95% level of statistical confidence of +/- 1.85 percentage points. That is, there is a 95% probability (abstracting from non-sampling error) that the percentage results will be within +/-1.85 percentage points of the results that would have been obtained if the entire population had responded. A margin of error of +/- 1.85 percentage points is generally considered to be quite acceptable for survey research, indicating a high level of reliability in the results.
- For the Supervisor Survey, we do not know the population number of supervisors and therefore could not calculate the sampling error but we expect it to be similar to that of the Graduate Survey.
- Higher degrees of sampling error apply to questions answered by fewer respondents.
- Non-sampling errors, such as response bias or inaccuracies in self-reporting, may also affect the results.

This report

The report has been separated into the sections, the first reports on the Graduate Survey results, the second on the Supervisor Survey results and finally the implications of this research are discussed. Within each of these sections we initially report on the quantitative findings from the closed questions within the survey then on the open-ended qualitative comments.

¹ From the Law Society of New South Wales database as of 31 October 2024.

GRADUATE EXPERIENCE



RESPONDENT PROFILE

This is the profile of the respondents that completed the **graduate survey**.

Compared to all solicitors in NSW, corporate/in-house legal was **underrepresented** (11% compared to 21% in the population), while Sydney CBD respondents were **overrepresented** (63% compared to 49% in the population).

Total number of respondents

2,559

responses to the graduate survey

approximately

14%

of solicitors in NSW with up to 10 Years of experience

Sector



64%
Private Practice



16%
Government



11%
Corporate/
in-house legal



3%
Community
legal



3%
Bar



3%
Other

PLT Provider

83%

The College of Law

5%

ANU

5%

UNSW

2%

UTS

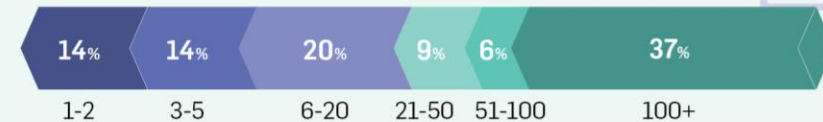
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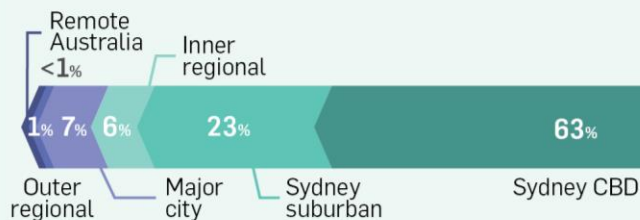
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Other

Firm solicitors numbers



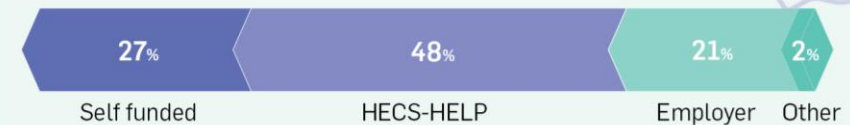
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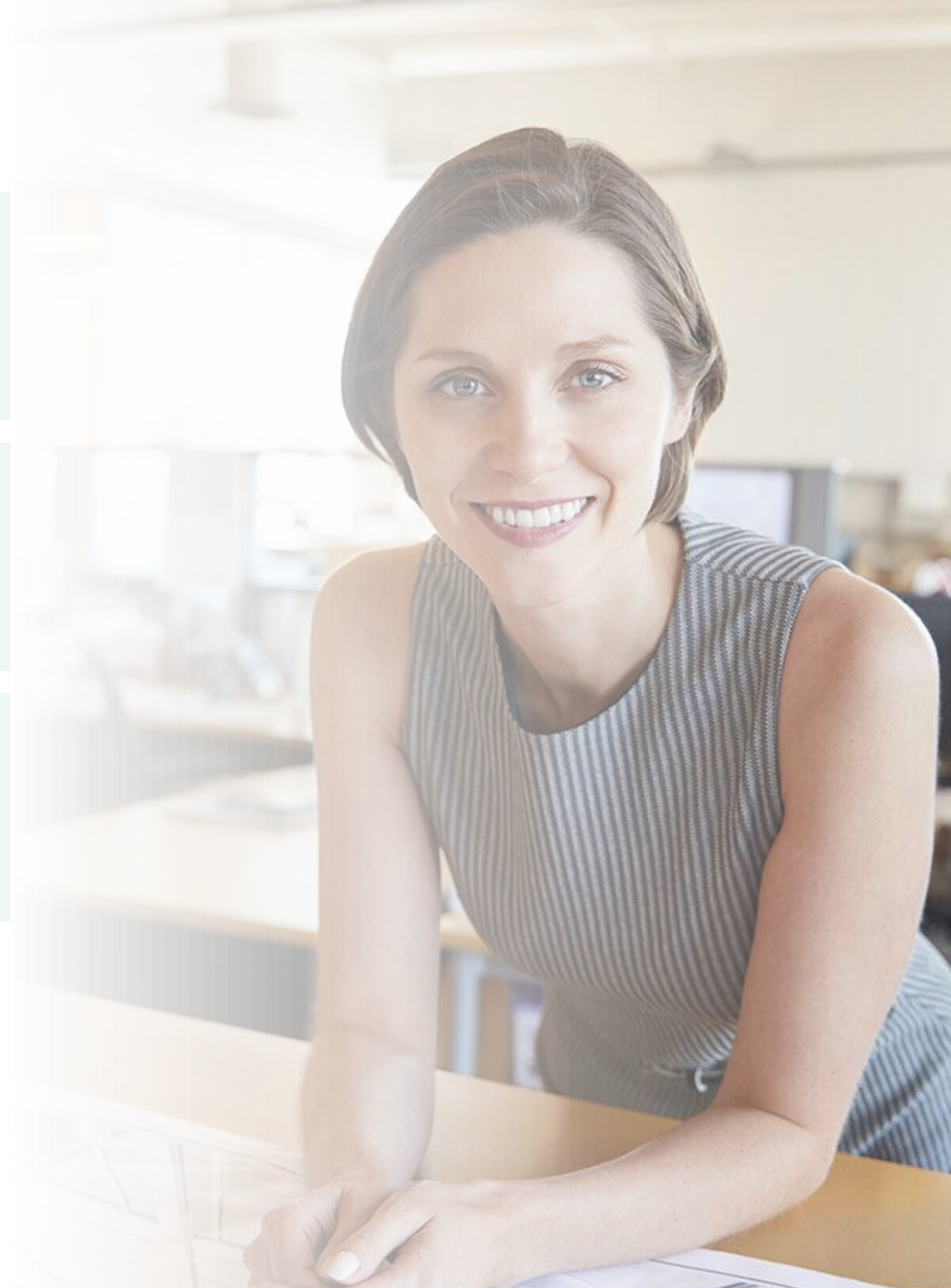
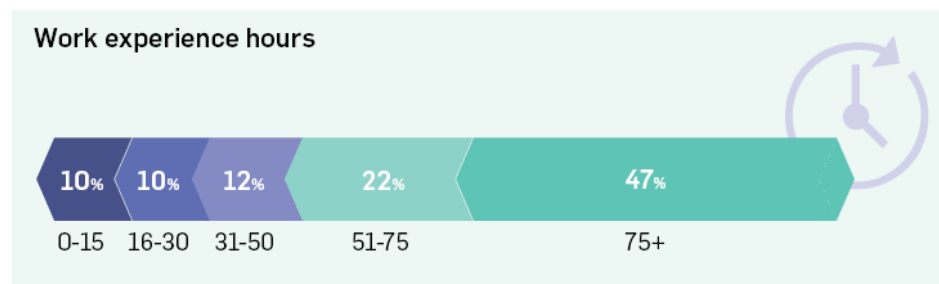
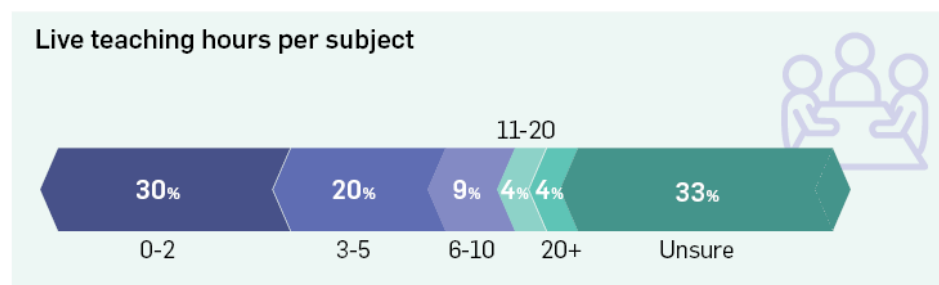
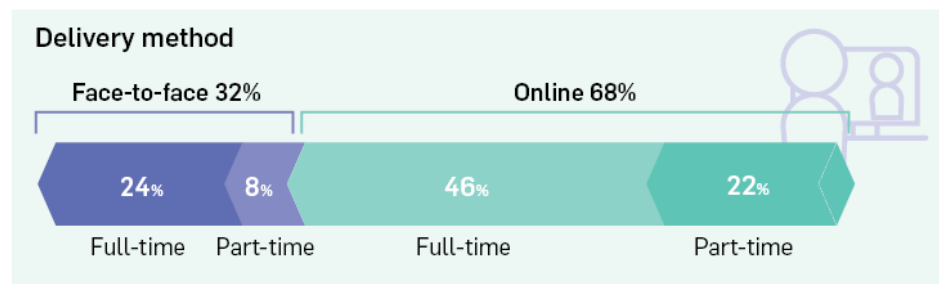


Time since PLT Completion



Funding source





QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

The findings below reflect the analysis of responses to the 23 closed questions from the graduate survey. The questions asked respondents to rate various statements across a five-point agreement scale, with an additional option for unsure or not applicable. For easier reading, responses have been grouped into net disagreement (strongly disagree and disagree) and net agreement (strongly agree and agree).

Analysis of the open-ended comments in the graduate survey are discussed in the next section.

Graduate feedback across most survey questions was mixed

Graduates reported mixed views about their experience with PLT, with similar proportions agreeing and disagreeing for a considerable number of survey questions. For example, a third of students (34%) disagreed that their elective subjects provided them with useful skills, while 41% agreed. Similarly, 36% disagreed that they were satisfied that the assignments were practical and relevant, while 43% agreed.

Elective subjects provided useful skills and knowledge (n=2,490)



Assignments were practical and career-relevant (n=2,419)



■ Net disagree ■ Neutral ■ Net agree ■ Unsure

These findings suggest a mix of PLT experiences among all responses. We will explore the breakdown of different cohort experiences later in this section, where there are statistically significant differences.

Higher levels of agreement were reported for usefulness of work experience and PLT resources, manageability of course workload, and quality and teaching methods of initial live workshops

There were several areas where respondents expressed higher overall agreement. These areas were:

- usefulness of work experience in developing legal skills (74% net agreement)
- manageability of course workload (71% net agreement)
- usefulness of course resources (66% net agreement)
- grading standards and policies were clearly communicated (53% net agreement)
- satisfaction with the quality of teaching during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT course (54% net agreement)
- satisfaction with the methods of teaching adopted during live workshops (52% net agreement).

Work experience built practical and useful legal skills (n=2,362)



PLT course workload was manageable (n=2,362)



Resources (practice papers, notes, etc.) were useful (n=2,340)



Grading standards were clearly communicated (n=2,419)



Quality of teaching in initial workshops was satisfactory (n=2,595)



Methods of teaching in initial workshops were satisfactory (n=2,594)



■ Net disagree ■ Neutral ■ Net agree ■ Unsure

There were very few significant differences in the responses provided across different groups compared to other questions, suggesting these areas (work experience, resources provided and the initial workshops) were consistently experienced by respondents as the more beneficial elements of PLT.

Highest levels of disagreement reported were related to PLT being reasonably priced, intellectually challenging, the usefulness of compulsory subjects and the overall quality and methods of teaching across the course

The highest level of disagreement was, by a considerable margin, related to the price for the course relative to the content, delivery methods and outcomes achieved. Almost three-quarters of all respondents disagreed (72% net disagreement) the course was reasonably priced.

Other areas where there were the highest levels of disagreement were:

- the PLT course being intellectually challenging (47% net disagreement)
- usefulness of skills and knowledge from compulsory subjects (39% net disagreement)
- satisfaction with the overall methods of teaching in the course (38% net disagreement)
- satisfaction with the overall quality of teaching in the course (36% net disagreement).

The high levels of disagreement across these areas suggest they are the areas where respondents were least satisfied with their experience of PLT.

The course was reasonably priced for students (n=2,340)



PLT was intellectually challenging (n=2,362)



Compulsory subjects provided useful skills and knowledge (n=2,490)



Methods of teaching were satisfactory (n=2,595)



Quality of teaching was satisfactory (n=2,595)



■ Net disagree ■ Neutral ■ Net agree ■ Unsure

There were, however, some significant differences among the responses provided by different groups. For example, while a majority of all respondent groups disagreed regarding the course being reasonably priced, respondents working in large firms (100+ solicitors) were significantly more likely to disagree (81% net disagreement) compared to their counterparts working in small firms with 1-2 solicitors (56% net disagreement). Significant differences were also present based on time since PLT completion, provider, funding source, delivery method and location. The full list of significant differences is provided in Appendix A.

This suggests there was some variation in the experience of the course based on the profile of graduates. This is discussed further in the following section.

Key differences across respondents include the size of firm in which they work and the time since completing PLT

Urbis conducted significance testing among graduate cohorts to identify differences in question responses that weren't due to chance alone (this concept is explained in detail in the methodology section). This identified a number of key drivers that influenced experience of PLT. There were consistent differences across questions focusing on different elements of PLT, allowing us to identify groups that reported more positive or negative experiences of the course. Full reporting of significant differences can be found in Appendix A.

The table below outlines the cohorts that generally tended to have significantly more negative or more positive experiences of their PLT.

Table 1: Graduate experience by cohorts

Graduates that reported a more <u>negative experience</u> with PLT tended to:	Graduates who reported a more <u>positive experience</u> tended to:
Be working at firms with 100+ solicitors	Be working at firms with 1-2 solicitors
Have completed PLT within the last two years	Have completed PLT 8+ years ago
Have completed PLT at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) or College of Law	Have completed PLT through University of Newcastle, University of Technology Sydney (UTS) or another provider
Have had their PLT paid for by their employer	Have paid for their PLT themselves
Have completed PLT online	Have completed PLT face-to-face
Have completed their PLT part-time	Have completed their PLT full-time
Be working in Sydney	Be working outside of Sydney

Analysis confirmed that the above cohort differences are intercorrelated. For instance, those working at larger firms were more likely to have their PLT paid for by their employer, be working in Sydney, and have completed their PLT part-time. Additionally, those who completed their PLT eight or more years ago were more likely to have completed their PLT face-to-face, with a provider other than the College of Law and have paid for their PLT themselves.

While analysis on which difference is most likely to influence experience was not possible, triangulation of this data with the open-ended responses provided suggests there are two key factors which may explain difference in graduate experience:

Firm size: those in large firms of 100+ solicitors reported a more negative experience than those in small firms of 1-2 solicitors. Respondents working in large **firms** were significantly more likely to be working in Sydney and have their PLT paid for by the employer and have completed their PLT at UNSW. On the other hand, those working in small firms were more likely to be working outside of Sydney, have paid for their PLT themselves and have completed their PLT at UTS or another provider not listed.

Years since completion: respondents who completed their PLT in the last two years reported a more negative experience than those who had completed the course in the last 8-10 years. Those graduating in the past two years were significantly more likely to be working in smaller firms, have completed their PLT at UNSW, had their PLT paid for by their employer and have completed the course online or in a hybrid model. On the other hand, those who completed the course 8-10 years ago were significantly more likely have paid for the course themselves, have completed the course face-to-face and at UTS, University of Newcastle or another provider not listed.

There are also a number of questions where those who completed the course 4 to 5 years ago report a more negative experience than those who completed the course 8-10 years ago. This may be due to this cohort being the first group to undertake their PLT fully online due to COVID-19 related lockdowns not allowing face-to-face teaching. This cohort is likely to have had their university teaching primarily or entirely face-to-face and therefore have experienced a considerable change in having to complete their PLT online.

There could also be some positivity bias reflected in the more positive experience of those completing the course 8-10 years ago. This theory suggests that the more time that has passed since an event, the more likely people are to consider it positively.

The key factor in years since completion is likely to be the format of course delivery. Over half of all respondents who completed the course six or more years ago (53%) reported undertaking the course entirely face-to-face compared to only 14% of respondents who had completed the course in the past five years. This is also discussed further in the qualitative findings section.

Differences between providers

Analysis was also undertaken to identify significant differences in the experience reported by respondents completing the course through different providers. Caution should be taken when interpreting these results due to the small sample size for several of the providers (UNSW n=55, University of Newcastle n=55).

Graduates from UNSW and College of Law generally reported a more negative experience of PLT. College of Law graduates made up over four in five respondents and were more likely to work in larger firms and significantly more likely to have graduated in the past two years and be working in Sydney. Similarly, UNSW graduates were more likely to be working at larger firms and have completed their PLT more recently and have their PLT paid for by their employer.

Qualitative comments suggested that graduates in larger firms often received substantial internal support, which made the PLT training seem less relevant to their practice. This is discussed in more detail in the next section.

On the other hand, graduates reporting a more positive experience were more likely to have attended University of Newcastle, UTS or another provider. Graduates of University of Newcastle were more likely to work in firms with 51-100 solicitors, live in an inner regional or other major city, have completed their PLT 8-10 years ago, have funded their PLT through HECS and be working in a Community Legal Centre. The PLT scheme within University of Newcastle is included as part of a student's Bachelors of Laws studies as a required Diploma of Legal Practice. Students complete around one-third of their required work experience hours within the University's Legal Centre.

UTS graduates are more likely to be working in practices in suburban Sydney, and have completed their PLT 8-10 years ago. Graduates from other providers were more likely to be working in Community Legal Centres, with between 3-5 solicitors, in inner regional areas of the state and have completed their PLT 8-10 years ago.

Differences between funding source

Around half of all respondents (48%) reported their PLT studies were funded through HELP-HECS, with 27% funding their studies themselves and 21% having it paid by their employer. There were consistent differences in the experience of those that paid for the course themselves and those whose employer funded their studies. Self-funded respondents were generally more positive about their experience including having the highest level of agreement regarding the course being reasonably priced (19% net agreement). On the other hand, employer-funded respondents were generally more negative about their experience.

Further research would be required to fully explain this difference, however it may be due to self-funded respondents having more positive views due to their large financial investment. This is often known as a cognitive bias called the 'sunk cost fallacy' when individuals who have already invested a significant amount want to avoid the feeling of having wasted money or effort and continue to invest resources or have unrealistic optimism.

Employer-funded respondents on the other hand are more likely to be working in larger firms which, as previously mentioned in this section, often provide substantial internal support which may reduce the relevance of PLT.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

These findings reflect the analysis of the substantial number of open-ended question responses provided by survey respondents. Each response was read and common themes identified. These themes are reported below.

PLT is seen as a box-ticking exercise, lacking deep relevance to legal practice

Some respondents perceived PLT as being of limited relevance to their current or future work as a lawyer, with the course structure and content overly focused on niche areas they were unlikely to engage with. For example, students looking to build a career in family law are required to learn conveyancing and the use of PEXA software, which are concepts they are unlikely to use in their career as family lawyer. These respondents reported PLT was most suited to generalist lawyers working in small suburban sole practitioner or boutique legal firms with subject matters such as registering documents on the Personal Property Securities Register or trust accounting.

In particular, PLT graduates who worked in (or would go on to work in) government, community legal centres, or as corporate/in-house lawyers reported both PLT having little relevance to their intended field, and frustration in being required to complete compulsory subjects far outside their interests or career path (such as civil law or property law). Several respondents reported that they did not receive training in essential skills as part of PLT, with examples including in international law for corporate/in-house lawyers and working with vulnerable populations for government or community law practitioners.

“The core and elective subjects were not particularly helpful for my career. Everything is aimed largely at work of private firms and not the work done by the community legal sector or government sector. There was also not enough practice time to feel confident at certain tasks - doing one fake court appearance or one piece of legal drafting (which was only marked pass/fail) was not sufficient to take the skills into the workplace.” - Survey respondent

Some respondents additionally perceived PLT content as relatively surface-level or repetitious of what had already been learned at university. The wide range of subjects taught was seen by some as providing a good overview of the profession but lacking in the depth necessary to prepare them for legal work.

Some respondents with prior experience in other jurisdictions or as a paralegal identified examples where course content or teaching staff advice was out-of-date or contradictory to their current experience of the law, particularly when course materials were reused without updates or review by currently practicing staff.

“The program lacks clear objectives it intends to achieve. The materials were mostly outdated and unconnected with the real practice. The scope of teaching was too broad and general, and it is difficult to grasp what each subject is intended to achieve. The syllabus needs to be seriously and carefully reviewed. It'd be better to prioritise a few skills for students to focus on rather than being overly ambitious by including every spectrum of the practice in each subject.” – Survey respondent

“Teachers typically did not have subject matter expertise. For example, the session regarding engaging with Aboriginal clients was taught by someone who had never worked with Aboriginal clients and relied on outdated materials from 1970s that assumed most Aboriginal clients had difficulties with English ... Assessments were recycled each year - my 2020 course used hypothetical exam questions from 2016. Marking guides were clearly not updated to reflect changes to the law.” – Survey respondent

Respondents regularly referred to PLT as a 'box-ticking exercise'; an artificially imposed hurdle to admission rather than a genuine opportunity to develop practical legal skills. Respondents reported having learnt little from their coursework, citing course and subject design as inconducive to skill development and retaining knowledge, or having already learnt the content in university or via work experience completed during their university studies. It was also noted that across all legal sectors there were limited opportunities to conduct real-world legal tasks during PLT.

"I completed my PLT through my workplace with very limited teaching time and largely online, independent study. The expectation (either through the [provider] or through my workplace) was clearly just to learn enough to pass exams and obtain the qualification required for admission. There was no genuine opportunity to build legal skills and the short time period for each course was not conducive to retention of information or deep learning of any topic. I did not feel as though any of the skills taught in PLT were more useful than any topics or skills taught at law school or on the job training." – Survey respondent

The move to most of the course being delivered online has led to a lack of in-depth learning

During the COVID-19 pandemic, PLT providers were able to continue teaching the course through online delivery methods such as pre-recorded lectures and video calls. These delivery methods continued to be used following the pandemic, and while initial face-to-face teaching returned, the course was reported by respondents as having become increasingly weighted towards online delivery. While some found online delivery to be convenient, it was more commonly heard that the lack of in-person delivery or contact with teaching staff resulted in poor learning outcomes and a perceived lack of value for money.

"The part-time, hybrid program allowed good flexibility to complete my PLT while working full time. The intensive few days ... followed by online sessions thereafter was a good balance for people working full time while undertaking [PLT]." – Survey respondent

"[PLT] felt like a conveyor belt where assessments were recycled for years ... There was almost no face-to-face teaching, all of it was done online through reading the provided course materials." – Survey respondent

Some respondents reported a significant difference in quality between the in-person and online components of the course. Compared to in-person engagement with teaching staff, the online and self-directed component of PLT was seen by some as essentially unsupported, with very limited guidance or feedback on submitted assessments. There was seen to be a lack of interactive learning opportunities and ability to critically analyse or discuss the topics at hand. A small number of respondents identified the in-person advocacy

workshops as particularly valuable due to the benefits of face-to-face engagement with peers and instructors, however this was often associated with a disappointment that these opportunities were limited in number.

Difficulty in completing assessments were reported by some respondents as primarily due to the number required to be completed within a short timeframe as opposed to complexity or depth of thinking required. There were few opportunities for developing critical thinking or skills in applying the law to complex cases, and instead assessments relied on rote memorisation of high-level content.

"The first week of the PLT was so inspirational and rewarding. It was awesome getting to speak with experienced professionals and undertaking interactive workshops. The mock trials were especially interesting. I left that week inspired to start my career. The next three months of the PLT online were a complete waste of \$10k. There was little to no teaching, and very little personalised feedback was provided for any assignments. I found myself just going through the motions, and by the end I could show up to an oral assessment completely unprepared and pass, which leaves me questioning the efficacy of the program." – Survey respondent

A lack of academic rigour was reported with the course being seen as hard to fail

Some respondents reported PLT assessment as lacking expected rigour. Assessments, particularly oral assessments, were seen by some as "impossible to fail", with examples given including students being able to continually resubmit the same assignment with minor edits until they passed, or assessors providing students with answers to assessment questions unprompted. Respondents stated that feedback was minimal for some subjects, and in several cases was given to the cohort rather than tailored for individual students.

"At one point in an oral assessment I got an answer wrong and then the teacher said "I think you meant to say... [insert correct answer]" and then marked it correct." – Survey respondent

"The PLT workload is unbelievably simple. You cannot fail assessments. In one course I was busy in my role at the time and simply did not submit an assessment for 8 months. When I finally did submit the assessment, not even an eyebrow was raised. Other students would occasionally submit blank or poorly done assessments intentionally, as the "feedback" provided often gave them the answers they would need to successfully pass the assessment when resubmitting." – Survey respondent

A small number of respondents reported cases of academic misconduct where answers and assessment papers completed by current or former students were reused and submitted verbatim with no consequence. This was often due to examination questions being the same or very similar year on year,

"...Assessments were clearly recycled year to year with often only superficial changes between cohorts, meaning that cheating was rife. Feedback on assessments was minimal and the standard to pass was remarkably low." – Survey respondent

"The coursework was functionally a copy-paste exercise, either copying directly from the textbook without understanding what I was copying and why or doing the same from someone else's work from years prior. The coursework was not regularly updated and did not meaningfully change. The assessments, in my view, were little more than a notetaking and reading task." – Survey respondent

"I also noticed that students who were completing the course as part of a firm often had the answers or were using previous course papers provided by people they knew - again, this undermined the effectiveness of the course in ensuring consistent outcomes and contributed to inequality." – Survey respondent

Some respondents felt that the difficulty and content of oral assessments was inconsistent across examiners, and in some cases, students reported being assessed on content not taught but reflecting the interests of the examiner. Several cited this lack of a consistent assessment standard as being unfair or stressful, creating difficulties in effectively studying for assessments and resulting in unclear or inconsistent feedback from assessors.

"In one of my oral exams the examiner tested me on material that wasn't covered in our course (power of attorney). I was very confused and mentioned this to her at the end, which confused her also. I don't think she was given the correct information." – Survey respondent

"I found the grading overall was inconsistent and, at times, unfair because the questions I was asked were not covered in any of the course material. I also found examinations were very inconsistent in terms of structure and grading. I had an examiner that was rude and patronising for no reason. I also had an exam that went an hour over the allotted time period." – Survey respondent

PLT costs can be prohibitive and aren't seen as providing value

When asked to provide further comments on their experience of completing PLT, over one quarter of all survey respondents provided open-ended comments indicating PLT had somewhat excessive time or financial costs relative to the course's value. Some respondents reported that PLT costs (including when covered through HECS-HELP assistance) caused significant and lasting financial strain or was simply unaffordable. In several cases, students reported being ineligible for HECS-HELP assistance for PLT due to having exceeded the maximum debt allowance in their undergraduate studies. In other instances, respondents delayed their PLT due to financial reasons.

While the large cost was regularly mentioned across respondents, certain groups such as mature age students or those with existing financial obligations reported more substantial, ongoing and potentially career-defining limitations. This suggests that the cost of the PLT course is likely to have implications on the equity of access to entry into the profession.

"\$10,000 straight out of uni was difficult. I had to delay my commencement of PLT until 3 years after. Now I'm behind my peers, and [it's] difficult to get a job due to questions around my [post-qualified experience]." – Survey respondent

"I was unable to self-fund my PLT and had all but given up on furthering my legal career. I am a single mum who had already spent any available funds on the Diploma at Law through LEC. A further \$10,000.00 plus \$1,500.00 in admission fees was entirely unreachable. I may have been able to pay for a unit at a time but this was not available as an option. I am not eligible for HECS or any fee support. A family friend who wanted to see me succeed eventually loaned me the funds to undertake PLT. If not for her I would not have been able to achieve admission. I am still paying back the loan." – Survey respondent

In some cases, respondents questioned whether the cost of PLT was justified by the expenses involved, especially in light of the reports of recycled content and minimal teaching hours. This sentiment may also be exacerbated by rising PLT fees. For example, College of Law fees increased by 25% from 2015 to 2024. Some respondents provided feedback that PLT was a 'money-making' scheme and were concerned that PLT providers were utilising oligopoly conditions and the mandatory nature of PLT for admission to artificially increase costs, knowing that law students, having already invested in the significant sunk cost of a law degree, would be willing to pay a large sum.

"The cost of the training is frankly outrageous and unjustifiable especially after already accumulating more than \$50k in HECS debt for most students. It cannot be the case that the cost of providing online classes to a PLT student be anywhere near \$10,000 and that means that the service providers are making very comfortable profit margins through this mechanism. That is ethically really questionable as the PLT industry works as an oligopoly and law students are captive with no choice but to pay this cost to become lawyer." – Survey respondent

"I am still paying it back and I have a low-income job. I had no debt prior to studying and in a regional area the work is scarce. In hindsight it has financially crippled my family as they take all my tax return to pay for the education and a large chunk of my wages every week. We wanted to buy a house and it is not possible as they consider your education payment as a debt and as part of the outgoings weekly and the bank will no longer loan us the money." – Survey respondent

In addition to the direct financial costs of PLT, the work experience requirement and courseload was reported by some as creating long periods with minimal income, necessitating support from family members, Centrelink payments, or working multiple jobs. This is discussed in more detail in the next section.

"Undertaking the PLT was an incredibly stressful period of my life that adversely impacted my mental health considerably. I had finished my JD (after 7 years of study at university). I was interested in working at a community legal centre, so was undertaking unpaid work at my local community legal centre 3-4 days a week as the practical component of the course. In addition to that, I was completing each of the [PLT] courses, applying and interviewing for jobs...and also trying to earn a living wage to pay my rent. My PLT placement and courses/assignments meant I was working 9-5 Monday to Friday. I then worked hospitality at night from 6pm-11pm Monday to Saturday so that I could pay my bills. I recall this period as being filled with extreme anxiety, far surpassing any stress I encountered at university or in my legal career in litigation since. Coming away with \$10K+ addition to my HECS for a course that had no relevance to my career was really the icing on the cake." – Survey respondent

FEEDBACK ON WORK EXPERIENCE

Work undertaken during study, such as paralegal work was reported to be more useful

As reported in the survey findings, 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the work experience component of PLT was useful for building practical knowledge and skills. The reported experiences of graduates did, however, vary.

Work experience was seen by many as crucial for developing the skills necessary for working in the legal profession, facilitated through practical experience of completing legal tasks in a real-world environment. While a handful credited PLT for encouraging or enabling them to undertake practical work experience, others reported that they were already employed in the legal sector or would have been looking for work experience regardless of PLT.

Graduates who had experience working in the legal sector prior to their PLT typically reported gaining very little from the course or work experience requirements. These students had often developed the intended skills of PLT.

A small number of respondents reported dissatisfaction with their work experience, with issues including being assigned menial tasks with no associated learning. Some reported that PLT assessment requirements were burdensome or a distraction from their regular work, for instance mandatory work experience journal assessments, a maximum of eligible hours 'counted' per week or needing supervisor sign-off on hours worked.

"I undertook PLT while also working full time in law. All of the skills I developed during this time were skills I ordinarily would have acquired and were not enhanced or furthered by the PLT program. Instead, the PLT program added additional administration and 'reflection' on an already difficult workload. I was fortunate to be in paid employment at this time, however the work experience component was a primary reason why I delayed PLT for two years as I could not afford to have 1-2 months unpaid to complete this component. I also had to move from where I was living to Sydney to be able to find a firm which had capacity to sponsor the work experience component." – Survey respondent

"The work experience part is the most useful component of the PLT. I'm not sure why there needs to be a separate PLT course. I think this should either be incorporated into a normal law degree or just be focused more around supporting work experience opportunities." – Survey respondent

The unpaid nature of some placements can lead to financial strain and may impact equity within the profession

Some graduates and employers, were concerned that PLT's high costs and requirement for potentially unpaid work experience was privileging some students over others and limiting the diversity of the profession. Examples included students being able to afford PLT through financial assistance from family members, leveraging family connections to secure a paid internship or living rent-free with parents while undergoing unpaid work experience and study.

"What I find most concerning is the requirement to do 75 days of practical work experience, without the requirement that this work experience be PAID. I was lucky enough to be in a paid paralegal job at this time, so all of my 75 days were paid. But many of my friends had to do unpaid work experience to meet this requirement, often at several different places over a long period of time. Can you imagine not being paid for 2.5 months, i.e. nearly a quarter of a year? Does that make sense to you? How does the legal profession expect young law students to support themselves without an income? What if they were living out of home - how would they meet their living expenses? Is it any wonder that there is so little diversity in our profession when it assumes you'll be able to support yourself without pay, and does not interrogate this?" -Survey respondent

Students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds, such as First Nations students, students from low-income families, those from non-English speaking backgrounds, or those with family or caring responsibilities, were perceived as being less able to afford PLT, potentially limiting their representation within the legal profession as a whole.

"The cost of PLT is prohibitive for many students, especially those from a low socio-economic background. As a lawyer who comes from a low socio-economic background, the only way that I could afford PLT is because my wonderful university offered it as part of the Law Degree (Western Sydney University). If it were not for this, and being able to pay by HECS, I would not be in the position that I am. Please consider alternative avenues to enable those who come from poorer backgrounds to have the same opportunities as others. We need the diversity in our profession." – Employer survey respondent

Employer-funded PLT could steer new lawyers towards private practice, deepening existing workforce imbalances across practice areas

There were significant differences in the sector of survey respondents reporting their employer funded their PLT studies. Respondents were significantly more likely to be working in private practice (26%), corporate or in-house legal (27%) or as a barrister (27%) than those in government (7%) and the community legal sector (6%). Respondents who worked in larger firms with 100+ solicitors were also significantly more likely to have had employer-funded PLT (40%) compared to all other respondents (ranging between 8% and 15%).

This supports respondent feedback regarding differences between practice areas in whether firms were willing or able to pay PLT costs. These accounts typically contrasted large private practice firms with community legal and government legal employment. Large private practice firms were seen as able to provide structured training or study leave to large cohorts of early-career lawyers and pay their PLT costs in return for a minimum duration of employment post-PLT. Community legal and government were generally reported as unable to pay for an employee's PLT fees and were less likely to be able to offer paid placements for PLT students.

Comments from some graduates at large firms reflected that their completion of PLT was substantially supported by their firm's internal training programs supplementing the course, as well as by receiving assistance from other current or recent PLT students at their firm in sharing notes or answers.

These disparities were cited by several respondents as explicitly influencing their choice of practice area towards private practice and away from employment in community legal or government roles, potentially exacerbating issues faced by these sectors in recruiting staff.

"The prospect of having to pay back PLT fees if I left my law firm early influenced my career decisions, including evaluating the costs and benefits of applying for a judicial associateship/tipstaff position..." – Survey respondent

"The program took 6 months and more than \$10,000 and provided me with no more than a piece of paper attesting to my completion of the course. It delayed my start in practicing law in a manner that meant I had to move multiple times to maintain jobs that I could balance with the program study and placement requirements. There is no clear reason in my mind why the purpose of PLT could not be fulfilled by the existing regulation of university degrees. I work in a non-profit legal organisation in a remote rural area, it was on me to cover the cost of my PLT. This is in stark contrast to my friends who work in corporate firms in the city who had the costs covered by their firms. The cost of PLT is yet another barrier to people practicing in community law." – Survey respondent

Work experience placements could be open for exploitation of students

In a small number of cases, PLT students reported feeling taken advantage of by their work experience employer, with little recourse available due to the scarcity of alternative opportunities or oversight by providers. These experiences ranged from some respondents being assigned menial administrative tasks with little educational value to several cases where PLT students were given false assurances of employment post-admission, only to be used as free administrative labour, until their placement ended, and they were replaced by another PLT student.

"The work experience component was the least enjoyable. Initially, I volunteered in a boutique criminal law firm in Sydney CBD and the firm took advantage of my willingness to volunteer. They did not provide meaningful or intellectual tasks, rather they assigned me administration tasks only. It became apparent during my PLT they frequently hire PLT students on a volunteer basis with the promise of potential paid employment in the future, however they do not intend to offer paid employment at the end of the PLT period. Speaking to other graduates through my time as a lawyer, this seems to be a common occurrence... I believe there should be an avenue for graduates to complain if law firms are seeking to take advantage of PLT hours and not provide meaningful opportunities for graduates to learn and develop. Unfortunately, the reality is that paid opportunities are not always available for all law students, so this seems to be a common occurrence." – Survey respondent

"In order to obtain the necessary work experience within the relevant time-frame, I had to take leave from my paid job in accounting to do unpaid work for a commercial legal firm who was sending out my advices to clients virtually unedited, while paying me nothing for three months (two days a week). The firm was staffed almost entirely by similarly exploited PLT students. Some safeguards should be put in place to prevent this kind of exploitation." – Survey respondent

Variation in supervision while on placement impacted the usefulness of work experience

The experience of supervision provided during placement varied. Respondents with supportive and responsive supervisors reported this creating an environment conducive to learning and skills development. This support was invaluable with respondents reporting being allocated meaningful 'stretch' tasks but being supported to succeed in these. This accelerated their learning and helped them to bridge the gap between their university studies and the expectations of working within the profession.

"I loved the work experience component of my PLT course, but this was in spite of (and not because of or in addition to) the coursework load. The paperwork requirements connected to the work experience felt contrived; the most value I found was in informal and formal supervision meetings with the team I completed work experience with. It was nearly impossible to stay on top of full-time work expectations and deadlines while also managing PLT coursework and assessments. This is to say nothing of the others part of life, which very much fell to the wayside because there was no space for them: family, friends, health and wellbeing. Even so, I had it better than many of my coworkers, who were working up to 14 or 16 hours per day, and who had no support from their supervisors to do their PLT coursework or prepare for their assessments." – Survey respondent

There was also consistent feedback regarding the lack of utility of reflection tasks required as part of work experience, such as the work experience journal. These were reported as a box-ticking exercise with little or no critical thinking or reflection required.

"The journal was quite useless though - there is no point in me "reflecting" on what I did. It is just paperwork for paperwork's sake, in my view." – Survey respondent

On the other hand, respondents who had negative supervision experiences reported this having significant impact on the usefulness of the work experience component. They often reported feeling powerless to provide feedback or unsupported by their PLT provider or the wider profession, with no recourse available to require their placement employer to provide the expected supervision.

"The declaration portion of my work experience form, from memory, still had to be signed off by the person supervising my work experience so I don't believe there was any ability to really provide feedback to the person supervising my practice or lodge a complaint to [provider]/Law Society etc without it being career suicide. My experience was that one of the lawyers supervising my legal practice was terrible to work for and I was doing full-time unpaid legal work (hence exploitative practices ensued for someone like myself who is a first generation lawyer with no connections in the legal industry, desperate for work experience, despite being privileged enough to accept working a full-time unpaid role). There is a power imbalance in the legal profession and when it comes to a law graduate organising their own work experience it allows for firms to get away with bad behaviour and exploitative practices and no quality control on what law grads learn from law firms and also no accountability in place for those firms and practitioners supervising the work experience." – Survey respondent

SUPERVISOR EXPERIENCE



RESPONDENT PROFILE

This is the profile of the respondents that completed the **supervisor survey**.

Compared to all solicitors in NSW corporate/in-house legal was **underrepresented** (11% compared to 21% in the population).

Total number of respondents

2,064
respondents

534
also completed the
graduate survey

10%
of solicitors in NSW
approx.

Sector



73%
Private
Practice



11%
Government



11%
Corporate/
in-house legal



3%
Community

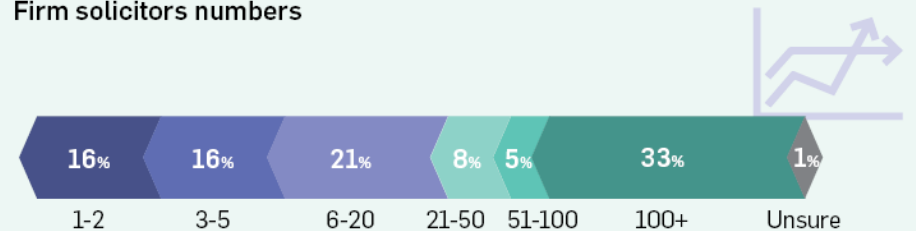


1%
Bar

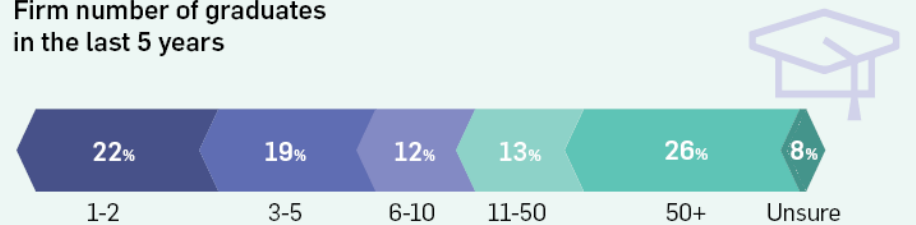


3%
Other

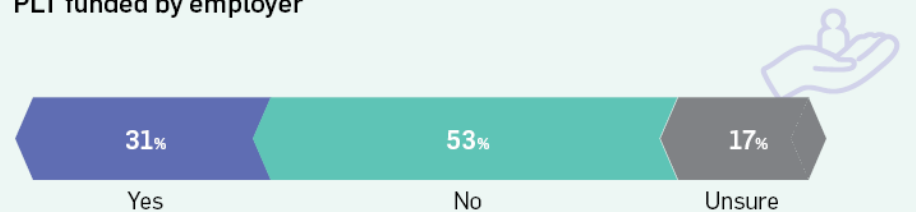
Firm solicitors numbers



Firm number of graduates in the last 5 years



PLT funded by employer



Note: percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Dissatisfaction with the skill level of entry-level practitioners was prevalent

Over two in five supervisors (42%) reported that they were dissatisfied with the skills demonstrated by entry-level lawyers, and only a third (31%) were satisfied with entry-level lawyers' skills.

Satisfied with legal skills of entry-level lawyers (n=2,063)



■ Net disagree ■ Neutral ■ Net agree ■ Unsure

There were some differences in the satisfaction of supervisors based on their sector and exposure to law graduates. Those in the community legal sector were significantly more satisfied (47%) compared to their colleagues in private practice (29%). Those with over 50 graduates over the past five years also have higher levels of satisfaction (34%), particularly when compared with those who had employed 6-10 graduates (19%).

Four in five respondents reported needing to often or always supplement PLT to support staff to perform entry-level tasks

Almost half of supervisors (46%) reported always having to supplement PLT for graduates to perform entry-level legal tasks with a further 34% reporting having to do this often.

Need to supplement to perform entry-level tasks (n=1,988)



■ Never/rarely ■ Sometimes ■ Often/always ■ Unsure / not applicable

This suggests a notable gap in the preparedness of new lawyers entering the workforce after PLT. It goes to further support the perspectives identified within the graduate responses regarding the importance of work experience and supervision in developing legal skills.

Supervisors within corporate or in-house legal were significantly less likely to report having to often or always supplement PLT (72%) compared to those in private practice (82%). Those working in small firms with 1-2 solicitors were also significantly less likely to report this (74%) compared to those in large firms with 100+ solicitors (83%). While these differences are significant, the high proportion still suggests supplementing PLT is a common occurrence across all areas of the profession.

There was variation in the competence demonstrated by entry-level practitioners across various legal tasks

The survey asked supervisors to identify how often entry-level lawyers demonstrate competence across several skill areas.

There was substantial variation in the responses provided across different areas. Supervisors were more likely to report that entry-level lawyers displayed competence to an acceptable standard often or always for legal research (62%), ethical decision making (51%) and written communication (45%).

Demonstrate competence in legal research (n=1,915)



Demonstrate competence in ethical decision-making (n=1,915)

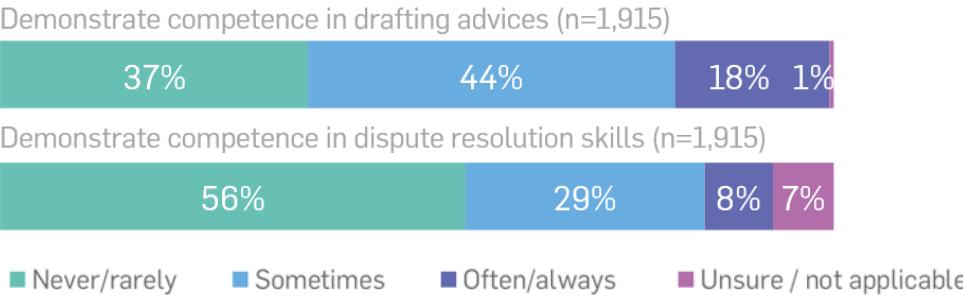


Demonstrate competence in written communication (n=1,915)

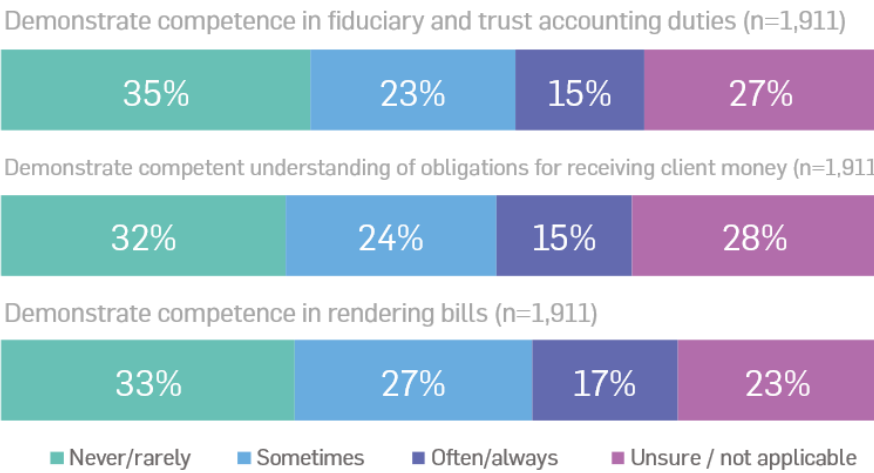


■ Never/rarely ■ Sometimes ■ Often/always ■ Unsure / not applicable

Supervisors were less likely to report that entry-level lawyers displayed competence often or always for drafting advices (18%) and dispute resolution skills (8%).



There were several areas where a higher proportion of supervisors reported that they were unsure, or that it was not applicable for their graduates to demonstrate competence – including fiduciary and trust accounting (27% unsure or not applicable), receiving client money (28% unsure or not applicable) and rendering bills (23% unsure or not applicable).



These results suggest there is a variation in the skills required of entry-level practitioners and that the generalist approach taken within PLT may not be facilitating the skills to support these varied expectations. This echoes similar feedback provided by graduates regarding the applicability of several areas taught within PLT.

The gap in more specialised and practical skills like dispute resolution and drafting advices is notable but may also reflect the potential for these tasks to range significantly in complexity (for example dispute resolution could have been interpreted by some respondents as being able to manage differences of opinion with colleagues, while others may have understood this to mean ability to manage client mediation). Further research, including understanding the differences in expected skills of entry-level lawyers across the sector and different firm sizes would be required to provide a more accurate reflection of the skills that need to be developed in this cohort.

Overall, supervisors from larger firms with more solicitors and graduates generally reported graduates displaying competencies more often. This is discussed on the following page.

Supervisors from firms with more graduates generally reported a more positive experience with PLT graduates

Urbis conducted significance testing among supervisor cohorts to identify differences in question responses that weren't due to chance alone (this concept is explained in detail in the methodology section). We conducted significance testing against the supervisors' firm size, sector, the number of graduates their firm had in the last five years and whether their firm funded PLT.

Full reporting of significance differences can be found in Appendix B and we have summarised high level findings below.

We found that those in firms with more graduates in the last five years (50+ graduates) tended to have a more positive experience with PLT graduates including:

- their graduates could better manage their coursework and employed work (66% net agreement compared to 46% of supervisors with 1-2 graduates)
- they were more satisfied with the legal skills of entry-level lawyers (34% net agreement compared with 19% of supervisors with 6-10 graduates)
- graduates displayed written communication (50% often/always compared with 35% of supervisors with 6-10 graduates), legal competency (35% often/always compared with 24% of supervisors with 6-10 graduates), time management (37% often/always compared with 25% of supervisors with 6-10 graduates) and ethical decision-making skills (57% often/always compared to 46% of supervisors with 1-2 graduates) to an acceptable standard more often.

On the other hand, supervisors in smaller firms reported that they were more aware of what student skills to develop as part of PLT (58% net agreement compared to 42% of supervisors with 50+ graduates).

This suggests that smaller firms may provide more focused, hands-on supervision, while larger firms might offer a more structured graduate program that requires less supervisor involvement in PLT.

These differences could also reflect the variation in quality of graduates. Incorporating these results with feedback provided by respondents to the graduate survey, there was a perspective that graduate positions in large firms, particularly those which provide paid PLT, are very competitive and may therefore attract a higher quality of graduates. Conversely, smaller firms which take on smaller number of graduates and therefore may not have structured graduate programs in place, or do not offer paid PLT, may not be as sought after by graduates.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

PLT graduates were not always adequately prepared for the realities of work

Some supervisors expressed concerns about a perceived lack of practical skills of PLT graduates that they employed. It was suggested that PLT did not adequately prepare graduates for the realities of practice, with deficiencies noted by some employers in communication skills, applying knowledge with critical thinking and in competently performing the typical duties of an entry-level lawyer.

"I feel like the recent PLT courses have sort of deteriorated in terms of quality. The recent junior solicitor that the firm supervised was not up to the standards in private practice compared to the junior solicitors before the pandemic." – Survey respondent

Some employers noted that the short-term format of PLT seemed insufficient to deliver the necessary depth of knowledge or practical experience to confidently work in law. Several questioned whether PLT should be expected to fully prepare graduates for entering the profession, raising concerns such as the content taught in university or the significant diversity of work and working styles across law firms and practice areas.

A small number of supervisors reported the quality of entry-level lawyers had declined over time to an unacceptable level, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these concerns covered not only the appropriateness of PLT in preparing graduates but also the quality of teaching at universities.

"Graduates are unable to construct a sentence, have no idea what a title deed is, how to put together a brief, answer the phone, address an envelope, construct a cogent argument or conduct legal research. They have no concept of researching the law before engaging on a legal task, seeking supervision or the importance of only putting truthful information in a statutory declaration. How is it possible that anyone can obtain PRACTICAL legal training online... The thought that anyone after 15 weeks of your ONLINE course can obtain a practising certificate is frightening, one would have thought Lawcover would have had something to say about insuring such ill equipped 'practitioners'." – Survey respondent

"The calibre of law graduates in general has declined considerably in the last 10 to 15 years. Graduates leave university and PLT with little to no understanding of the practical application of their legal knowledge, which in itself is shabby and of poor quality. Writing and comprehension skills are lacking, and an ability to assimilate and apply whatever knowledge they have is almost absent. As an employer I find myself undertaking the role of a teacher rather than a guide or mentor and I find myself asking what it is that these graduates have actually learned in their past 5 years of study. I think it is an outrage that the PLT providers are charging top dollar and delivering a service that is substandard in almost every facet." – Survey respondent

Certain skills were commonly reported as not being sufficiently taught

Employers of PLT graduates were given the opportunity to comment on the need for additional training of entry-level lawyers. Skills listed by employers as underdeveloped or lacking in PLT graduates are represented in the graphic on the following page. As noted in the previous section, there was considerable diversity in the skills identified by respondents. Several noted the emphasis on certain skills that were of less importance in their context led to knowledge gaps in other areas.

"The PLT course, whilst [it] has an important function in bridging the academic transition to the practical aspects of the legal profession, seems to be misstepped in providing real skills for legal practice due to the breadth of course work. A real focus on ethics, responsibility and duties to the court/justice etc. need to be instilled in PLT. I do think the advocacy component appears to be done well in PLT as well as basic drafting/pleadings etc. But what is the point of accounting, costs and those administrative parts of the PLT that really come with practice management and seem premature for early-career law graduates? A review as to what real practical skills we want graduates to have would be useful but that should be done within a strong foundation of ethical obligations." – Survey respondent



Drafting and writing skills

- Drafting documents, letters, affidavits, pleadings, legal advice and similar tasks.
- Writing skills, including plain English drafting, legal writing, and constructing chronologies.
- Attention to detail in drafting and writing.



Communication skills

- Verbal and written communication with clients, colleagues, and in court.
- Professional-level correspondence, including emails and letters.
- Phone etiquette and choice of communication mediums.
- Client engagement and management skills, including client interviewing.



Research and analytical skills

- Legal research, including the use of legal resources and referencing.
- Critical and analytical thinking, problem-solving, and statutory interpretation.



Courtroom and procedural skills

- Courtroom etiquette, appearances, and understanding court processes.
- Preparation of court documents, briefs, and adherence to procedural rules.



Time and file management

- Time management, prioritisation, and workload management.
- File management, including document management and creating file notes.



Interpersonal and emotional skills

- Interpersonal skills, including dealing with clients and colleagues.
- Emotional intelligence, resilience, and trauma-informed practice.
- Managing their mental health in a high-pressure profession.



Technology and software skills

- Proficiency in legal software, enterprise software, and digital technology.
- Use of court portals and other legal technology tools.



Ethics and professional conduct

- Understanding of ethical obligations, solicitor conduct rules, and professional duties.
- Communication and conduct towards other practitioners and the court.



Administrative and office skills

- Basic office skills, including typing, filing, and general administration.
- Practical common sense and business/administration tasks.



Specialised legal skills

- Advocacy, including oral and written advocacy.
- Contract drafting, commercial acumen, and understanding of legal principles.

Many supervisors reported that the practical legal skills were better learnt on the job

Supervisors repeatedly reported that practical legal skills were better taught through work experience. Several of these practitioners justified this belief by referring to a perception of little difference in an employee's skills pre- and post-PLT, but significantly greater competence being displayed by employees who had undergone work experience prior to their current employment, regardless of if they had completed PLT or not.

"The skills they have, they mostly developed prior to the PLT and they either already have these or they don't. The PLT makes no great difference." – Survey respondent

"I have supervised many law students and recent graduates. The quality of their work varies enormously from person to person. Based on what I know of the ones who do well, they are strong students academically and have been in the workforce before. I do not believe the various PLT courses make any difference to the quality of work. Many I've supervised started placements in their final university year before doing their PLT course. The improvements in their work clearly was a result of taking on feedback during their placement. No major improvement was seen when students were going through/having completed their PLT. I think most of the meaningful training and learning was in the workplace not the PLT course." – Survey respondent

An additional sentiment was seen in some responses where employers viewed PLT as unnecessary or a box-ticking exercise, especially so for larger firms with their own training programs for early-career lawyers. Over a quarter of supervisors who provided open-ended comments indicated a significant need for additional employer support or training beyond what is provided by PLT. Within these responses, it was often noted that the necessary skills or knowledge could only be learnt on the job or were specific to their workplace. Views differed from the framing of PLT as "unnecessary" through to agreeing additional training was necessary but that it was unreasonable to expect PLT to provide this.

"There is a steep learning curve for any graduate coming out of academic study and into legal practice. I am frequently impressed by the standards of these graduates... However I do not consider the PLT to be a useful exercise for these graduates. They learn the practical skills they require through professional mentoring and integration into the team of practitioners working around them. If anything, the PLT takes them away from that integration. It should be removed." – Survey respondent

"I see the PLT program as an introduction to private practice for graduates. However, in my experience, graduates will require at least two years of intensive guidance and supervision as admitted solicitors. Part of this has to do with a translation of knowledge into practice, but a lot of it [has] to do with developing the confidence of graduate lawyers to foster their growth." – Survey respondent

While many responses indicated learning was more effective in workplaces, some respondents noted this may not be practical for every firm. In particular, smaller firms were noted as being less able to provide PLT graduates thorough supervision or additional training, or to provide study leave or reimbursement of PLT fees. This was reflected in comments by some employers from smaller firms (fewer than 6 solicitors), who reported being at a disadvantage in their ability to pay for PLT or conduct supervision and supplementary training for early-career lawyers.

"PLT is a barrier to entry into the workplace. We, as a small firm, cannot fund PLT course for our graduate solicitors. Much of the coursework is unnecessary and does not provide better practitioners, who develop skills 'on the job'. Steps to reduce the cost and make the course shorter and less onerous would be welcome." – Survey respondent (3-5 solicitors employed)

"At any one time, I have 5-6 staff in total, and I cannot leave supervision to anyone else. It's an unfair burden on small firms, especially knowing that once they're out of the dangerous stage, the majority will want to work in a larger firm. I do it hoping that young lawyers avoid the unethical treatment and training I received." – Survey respondent (3-5 solicitors employed)

Some PLT content was seen by some supervisor respondents as largely irrelevant to the tasks of an early-career lawyer. Trust accounting was singled out repeatedly as a task that would not typically be assigned to junior staff, and as an area in which PLT graduates were lacking in the necessary competency. Several employers from large law firms noted that trust accounting is handled by specific finance teams within their business or by partners and senior supervisory staff overseeing accountants.

"There is a strong argument for entirely excluding the trust accounting element of the PLT curriculum. While the fundamental principles (no comingling of client and office funds, for example) are critical, in the vast majority of law firms, accounting is performed by dedicated finance stuff. It is almost never the case that a practising lawyer needs to create and maintain double entry bookkeeping records; and rarely is it the case that practising lawyers are required to supervise accountants or finance stuff." – Survey respondent



IMPLICATIONS



This section presents suggested implications for the training and support provided to entry-level practitioners from the findings of the survey. It should be noted that the viability or appropriateness of these implications have not been fully tested but instead provide a starting point for consideration.

There is evidence that the current PLT system is not meeting the requirements of both graduates and the profession

Both PLT graduates and supervisors reported concerns that the current PLT does not prepare entry-level lawyers adequately for the workforce. This suggests that there is a gap between the training provided and the practical skills required in the legal workforce. This misalignment may lead to new lawyers feeling unprepared or lacking confidence as they enter the profession and employers having to invest significant time in supporting the development of practical legal skills, raising questions regarding the purpose and utility of PLT.

This research has identified dissatisfaction with the current system, but additional research and consultation across the profession and training organisations is required to identify the scope and nature of any potential redesign or restructuring of training for early-career professionals.

The entry-level skills expected of early-career practitioners need to be better defined

Consistent feedback was received regarding the breadth of skills covered by PLT leading to a lack of applicability to different sectors or types of work.

There is an opportunity for the profession to revisit the expected 'core competencies' for all practitioners, and equally, what more specific skills may be required within certain areas of the profession.

Greater understanding regarding the areas of consistency and variation could help provide more definition and utility to training of entry-level lawyers. This could also assist employers in providing supervision and having more clearly defined expectations of their role in the development of graduates.

Cost and value for money need to be a consideration in any future options

Graduates expressed strong concerns about the financial burdens of PLT, sometimes resulting in significant financial strain, delays in being able to practice, or influence over their choice of practice sector. This was of particular concern for marginalised groups which typically had fewer supports or financial capacity.

Furthermore, both graduate and supervisor respondents questioned the value provided by PLT especially in light of the large costs involved and significant input and supervision required by employers. Described regularly as a box-ticking exercise, respondents often reported seeing little or no outcomes from the coursework undertaken, leading to frustration of this being the only option available to enter the profession.

Any changes to the training of entry-level lawyers should be required to demonstrate value and support equity of opportunities and diversity across the sector.

Work experience or placement seem to be the key facilitator to developing entry-level skills

Both PLT graduates and supervisors highlighted the pre-eminence of work experience in developing legal skills in graduate practitioners. Hands-on experience was recognised as being the key factor in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application.

While some respondents identified useful learning through PLT coursework, the learning opportunities provided through work experience were consistently reported as being more efficient and effective in supporting the development of entry-level lawyers.

This suggests an opportunity for the profession to investigate further the role of work experience and what supports are required across different areas of the sector, to maximise the utility and effectiveness of placements.

There is significant variation across the profession around capability and capacity to support early-career practitioners

Supervisors reported that smaller firms are often less able to provide PLT graduates thorough supervision, additional training, study leave or the reimbursement of PLT fees, while larger firms have resourcing to pay for PLT and provide structured training, support and study leave.

This did not, however, equate to a more positive experience for graduates working in larger firms. There were consistent differences in the ratings provided by PLT graduates in firms with over 100 solicitors, with this cohort reporting a more negative experience than their peers in smaller firms. Analysis of the commentary provided identified this was often due to PLT being seen as unnecessary due to the structured support that was provided by larger firms.

This variation could impact the development and career progression of graduate practitioners, potentially creating an uneven playing field within the profession. There are, therefore, opportunities to consult more widely with the sector (and training organisations) to understand the likely impacts of any modifications of the training for early-career lawyers.

Any online learning should be supported by lecturer contact and critical thinking elements

Graduates highlighted that face-to-face teaching was more engaging and preferable and that online learning opportunities were not maximised. However, the option of live online learning with interaction was valued, particularly by graduates who find attending in-person sessions challenging.

There are opportunities for the online delivery of training to be improved to include interactive content and support critical thinking.

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Implications for future data collection

Urbis suggests the following be considered for any future research regarding early-career lawyer training:

- Including an overall satisfaction rating for graduates would be beneficial to capture their general sentiment. It would also serve as a straightforward metric to track, and measure differences in satisfaction over time.
- Future data collection with graduates (or potentially supervisors) should gather information on the financial arrangements of their work experience to understand the proportion of PLT students undertaking paid or unpaid placements. This could help provide further evidence around the financial implications of PLT study.
- Asking supervisors, through an additional survey or qualitative interviews/focus groups, about the specific skills they believe are requisite for entry-level lawyers. This information could help to tailor training programs to better prepare new lawyers for the demands of their roles.
- Investigating the capacity of different types of firms (considering size and sector) to offer work experience would be beneficial. This could be undertaken through a survey of firm decision-makers supplemented with qualitative interviews to get both breadth and depth of insight. This could help to identify the differences in support that can be provided across the sector and inform the potential development of targeted resources or assistance to ensure all entry-level lawyers are provided appropriate supervision.
- Some graduate responses compared the usefulness of PLT work experience and legal (particularly paralegal) work experience they had undertaken while completing their university degree. Undertaking further research into this as a potential additional avenue for work experience could be useful to help inform any future changes to PLT.
- Further data collection is recommended to understand the extent to which providers conduct PLT online, the way course delivery changed during COVID-19, and providers' delivery plans post-2025, when the LPAB's permission to teach online ceases.
- Analysis of how PLT provider content has evolved over the past 10 years and how providers plan to update their content moving forward. This could help inform any future changes to PLT and to ensure the curriculum remains relevant and effective.

DISCLAIMER

This report is dated 9 April 2025 and incorporates information and events up to that date only and excludes any information arising, or event occurring, after that date which may affect the validity of Urbis Ltd (**Urbis**) opinion in this proposal. Urbis prepared this report on the instructions, and for the benefit only, of the NSW Legal Profession Admission Board (**Instructing Party**) for the purpose of research reporting (**Purpose**) and not for any other purpose or use. To the extent permitted by applicable law, Urbis expressly disclaims all liability, whether direct or indirect, to the Instructing Party which relies or purports to rely on this proposal for any purpose other than the Purpose, and to any other person which relies or purports to rely on this proposal for any purpose whatsoever (including the Purpose).

In preparing this proposal, Urbis was required to make judgements which may be affected by unforeseen future events, the likelihood and effects of which are not capable of precise assessment.

All surveys, forecasts, projections and recommendations contained in or associated with this proposal are made in good faith and on the basis of information supplied to Urbis at the date of this proposal, and upon which Urbis relied. Achievement of the projections and budgets set out in this proposal will depend, among other things, on the actions of others over which Urbis has no control.

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This proposal has been prepared with due care and diligence by Urbis and the statements and opinions given by Urbis in this proposal are given in good faith and in the reasonable belief that they are correct and not misleading, subject to the limitations above.

APPENDIX A

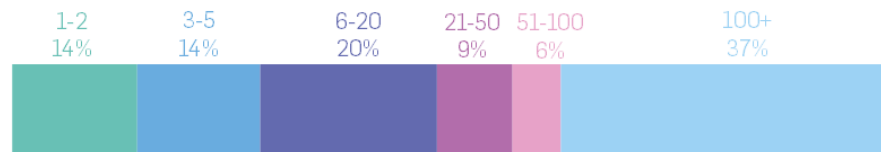
GRADUATE SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic questions

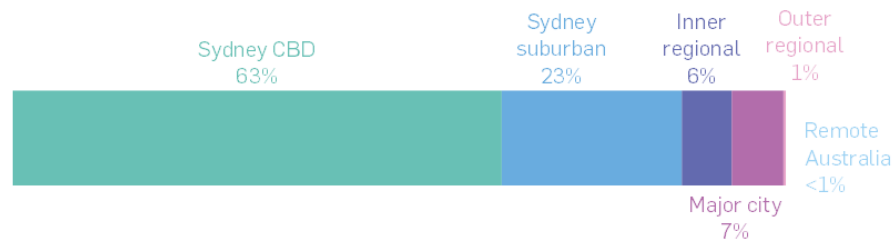
Q1. What sector of the legal profession do you currently work in? (n=2,599)



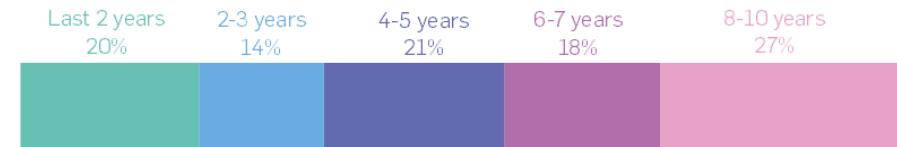
Q2. How many solicitors work at your current law firm, company or department? (n=2,599)



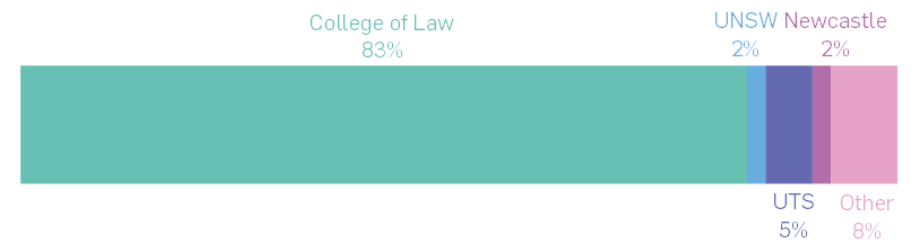
Q3. What is the postcode where your main employment/practice is located? (n=2,599)



Q4. How long ago did you complete your PLT course? (n=2,599)



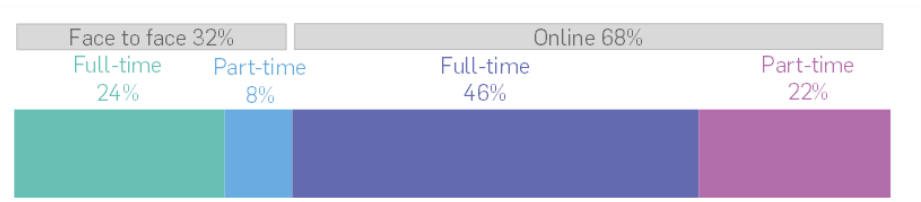
Q5. With which provider did you complete your PLT? (n=2,599)



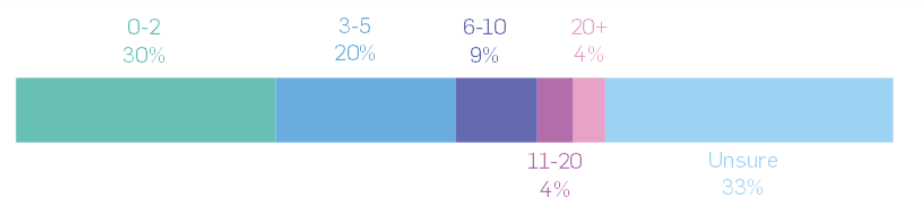
Q6. The cost of my PLT course was paid for: (n=2,598)



Q7. The teaching of my PLT course was conducted: (n=2,598)



Q8. On average, how many live hours of teaching (either online or in-person) did you receive per subject? (n=2,598)



Experiential questions

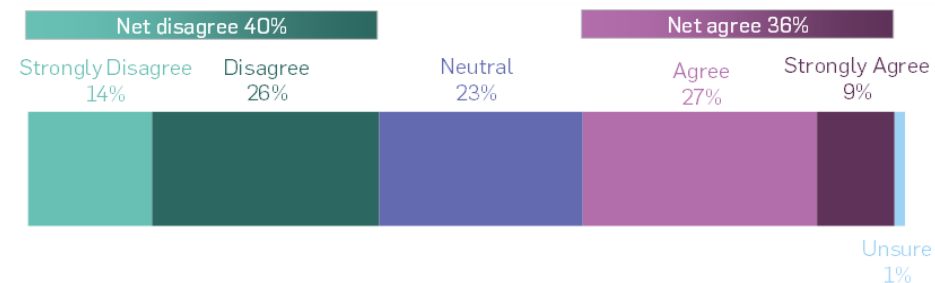
The following sets of questions detail the question data as a chart, followed by significant differences for the question net agreement and net disagreement.

A number of significant differences were identified throughout the data, however analysis was undertaken to identify recurring difference among groups and differences between groups with sample sizes greater than n=25. These have been included in reporting, one-off differences between groups have not necessarily reported.

The symbols in the below table refer to the significance difference area tested and are used throughout this section.

	Sector
	Number of solicitors in firm
	Years since admission
	PLT Provider
	PLT funding source
	Delivery mode (online/hybrid or face-to-face)
	Full time or part time PLT study
	Firm Location

Q9. I was satisfied with the amount of live (in-person or online) hours in the teaching of my PLT course for the purpose of preparing me to commence legal practice. (n=2,595)



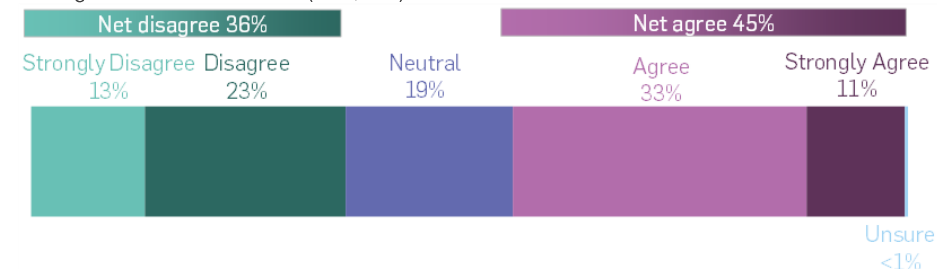
Net **agreement** significant differences

Private practice 36% vs Gov 27%	1-2 50% vs 100+ 27%
8-10 years 52% vs <2 years 27%	University of Newcastle 76% vs CoL 32%
Self 39% vs Employer 32%	F2F 52% vs Online 28%
Full-time 37% vs Part-time 32%	Rest of NSW 40% vs Sydney 35%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Gov 48% vs Private practice 40%	1-2 26% vs 100+ 47%
8-10 years 25% vs <2 years 51%	'No significant difference
No significant difference	F2F 24% vs Online 47%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 33% vs Sydney 41%

Q10. I was satisfied with the quality of the teaching provided by the instructors throughout the PLT course. (n=2,595)



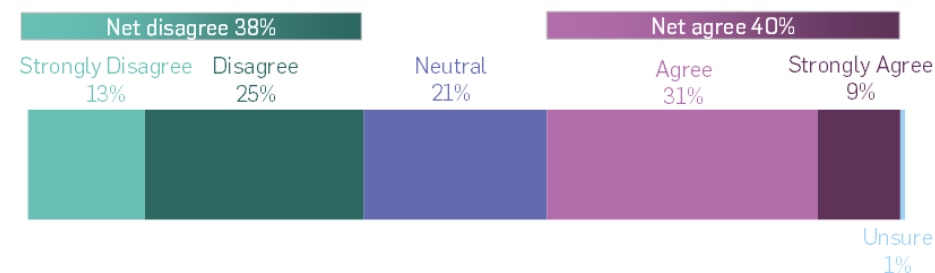
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant differences	1-2 57% vs 100+ 35%
8-10 years 56% vs <2 years 39%	University of Newcastle 83% vs CoL 41%
Self 49% vs Employer 35%	F2F 55% vs Online 40%
Full-time 47% vs Part-time 40%	Rest of NSW 58% vs Sydney 43%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 24% vs 100+ 45%
8-10 years 25% vs <2 years 42%	No significant difference
Self 31% vs Employer 44%	F2F 27% vs Online 40%
Full-time 34% vs Part-time 40%	Rest of NSW 23% vs Sydney 38%

Q11. I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted by the instructors throughout the PLT course. (n=2,595)



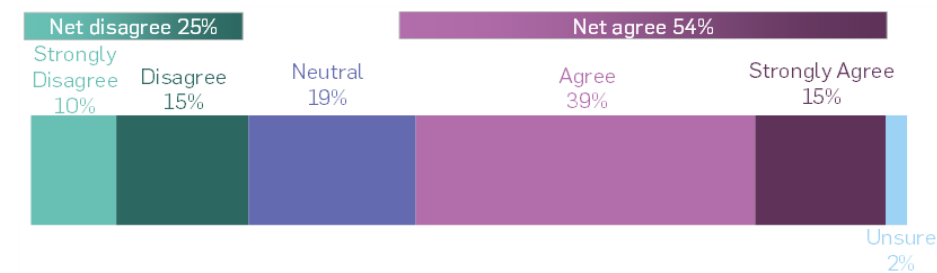
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corporate 49% vs Gov 32%	1-2 52% vs 100+ 30%
8-10 years 53% vs <2 years 33%	University of Newcastle 81% vs CoL 36%
Self 46% vs Employer 31%	F2F 52% vs Online 35%
Full-time 42% vs Part-time 36%	Rest of NSW 51% vs Sydney 39%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Gov 48% vs Corporate 28%	1-2 25% vs 100+ 49%
8-10 years 26% vs <2 years 46%	UNSW 55% vs UTS 18%
Self 32% vs Employer 48%	F2F 29% vs Online 43%
Full-time 36% vs Part-time 44%	Rest of NSW 27% vs Sydney 40%

Q12. I was satisfied with the quality of teaching during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program. (n=2,595)



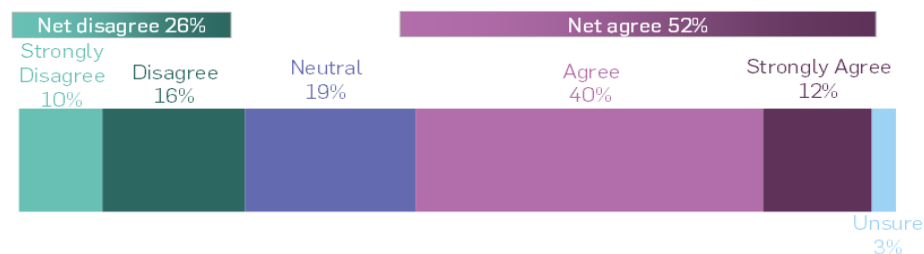
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corporate 59% vs Bar 38%	1-2 60% vs 100+ 47%
No significant difference	University of Newcastle 81% vs CoL 52%
No significant difference	F2F 58% vs Online 51%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 64% vs Sydney 52%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 38% vs Corporate 18%	1-2 17% vs 100+ 30%
8-10 years 17% vs <2 years 29%	No significant difference
No significant difference	F2F 21% vs Online 26%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 16% vs Sydney 26%

Q13. I was satisfied with the methods of teaching during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program. (n=2,594)



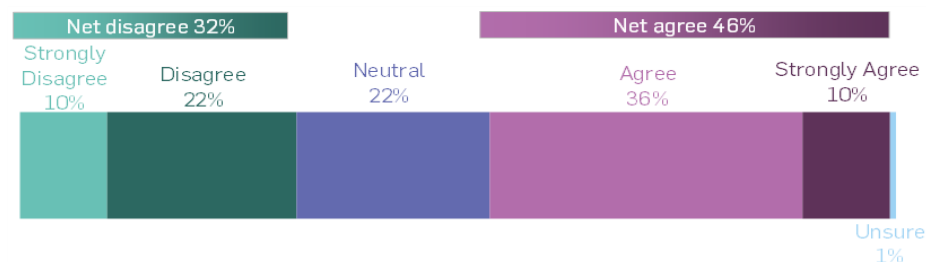
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corporate 59% vs Gov 45%	1-2 60% vs 100+ 45%
No significant difference	University of Newcastle 76% vs CoL 50%
No significant difference	F2F 55% vs Online 50%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 60% vs Sydney 51%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 41% vs Corporate 20%	1-2 19% vs 100+ 32%
8-10 years 18% vs <2 years 28%	No significant difference
Self 23% vs Employer 30%	F2F 22% vs Online 28%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 18% vs Sydney 27%

Q14. The skills I was expected to develop in each of the courses were clear to me. (n=2,594)



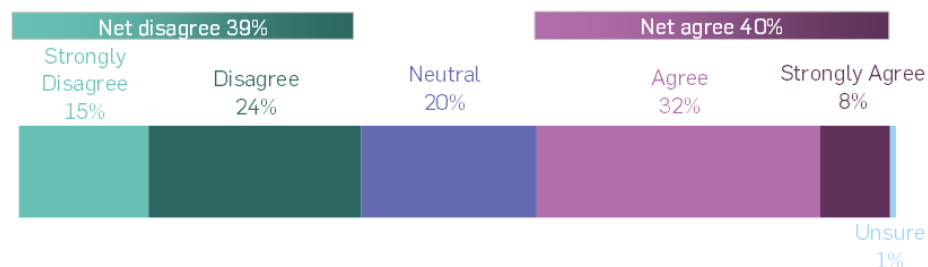
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corporate 53% vs Community 33%	1-2 57% vs 100+ 39%
8-10 years 55% vs <2 years 43%	UTS 61% vs CoL 43%
Self 50% vs Employer 40%	F2F 51% vs Online 43%
No significant difference	No significant difference

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Gov 38% vs Corporate 25%	1-2 22% vs 100+ 39%
8-10 years 25% vs <2 years 32%	CoL 33% vs UTS 20%
Self 27% vs Employer 37%	F2F 28% vs Online 33%
Full-time 30% vs Part-time 34%	Rest of NSW 26% vs Sydney 32%

Q15. The compulsory subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice. (n=2,490)



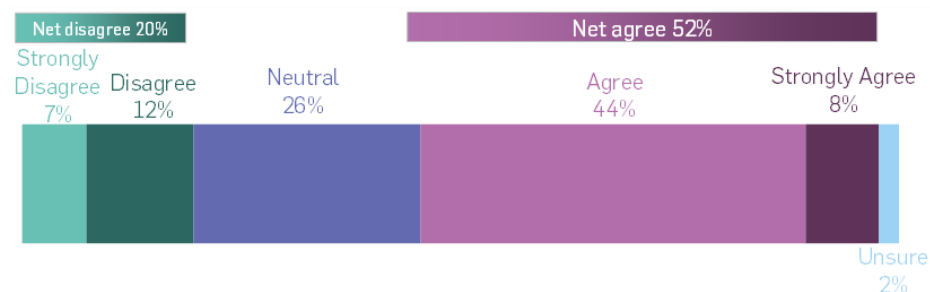
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corp 47% vs Gov 31%	1-2 53% vs 100+ 29%
No significant difference	Other providers 59% vs CoL 39%
Self 46% vs Employer 30%	F2F 43% vs Online 39%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 50% vs Sydney 39%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 57% vs Corp 31%	1-2 27% vs 100+ 51%
No significant difference	UNSW 60% vs UTS 34%
Self 32% vs Employer 49%	F2F 36% vs Online 40%
Full-time 38% vs Part-time 42%	Rest of NSW 33% vs Sydney 40%

Q16. The contents of the compulsory subjects were logically structured and well organised. (n=2,490)



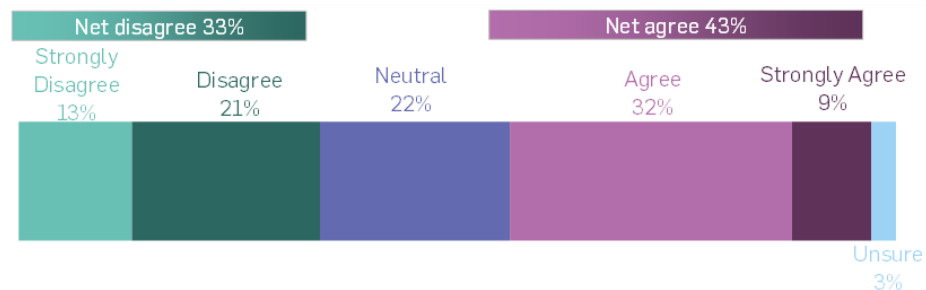
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 62% vs 100+ 43%
No significant difference	No significant difference
Self 56% vs Employer 43%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 61% vs Sydney 51%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 13% vs 100+ 26%
8-10 years 13% vs <2 years 25%	No significant difference
No significant difference	F2F 17% vs Online 21%
No significant difference	No significant difference

Q17. My elective subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice. (n=2,490)



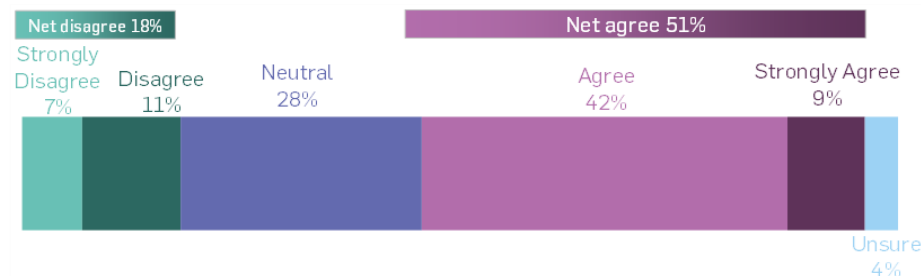
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 53% vs 100+ 31%
No significant difference	No significant difference
Self 46% vs Employer 27%	No significant difference
Full-time 42% vs Part-time 38%	Rest of NSW 58% vs Sydney 39%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 54% vs Corp 28%	100+ 44% vs 1-2 25%
No significant difference	UNSW 54 vs UTS 27%
Self 31% vs Employer 46%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 23% vs Sydney 36%

Q18. The contents of my elective subjects were logically structured and well organised. (n=2,490)



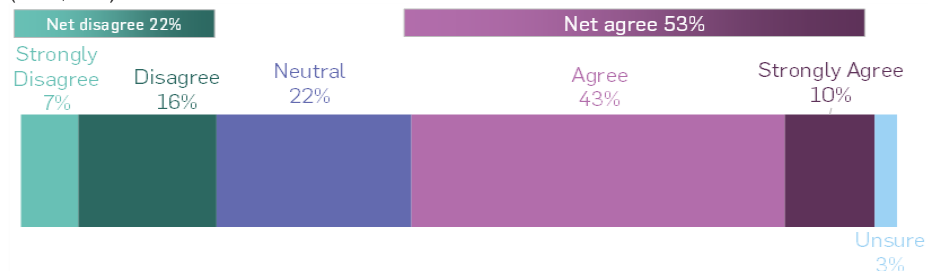
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 60% vs 100+ 43%
No significant difference	No significant difference
Self 54% vs Employer 40%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 63% vs Sydney 49%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 14% vs 100+ 23%
8-10 years 12% vs <2 years 24%	No significant difference
No significant difference	F2F 15% vs Online 19%
Full-time 17% vs Part-time 20%	Rest of NSW 13% vs Sydney 19%

Q19. Grading standards and policies were clearly communicated to me.
(n=2,419)



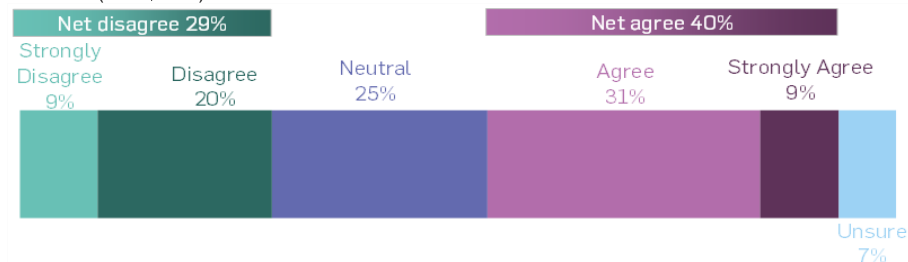
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 60% vs 100+ 48%
No significant difference	University of Newcastle 69% vs CoL 51%
Self 56% vs Employer 47%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 61% vs Sydney 52%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 15% vs 100+ 27%
No significant difference	No significant difference
Self 19% vs Employer 28%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 17% vs Sydney 23%

Q20. I received adequate opportunity to provide meaningful feedback about the course. (n=2,419)



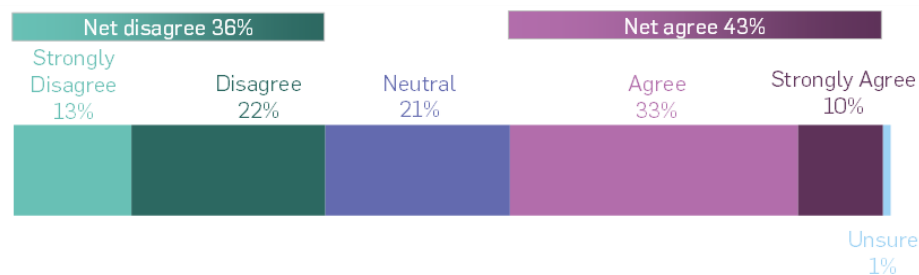
Net **agreement** significant differences

Other provider 55\$ vs Govt 34%	1-2 48% vs 100+ 34%
No significant difference	University of Newcastle 65% vs CoL 38%
Self 44% vs Employer 36%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 47% vs Sydney 39%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 22% vs 100+ 35%
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	F2F 26% vs Online 30%
No significant difference	No significant difference

Q21. The assignments provided were practical and relevant to my career. (n=2,419)



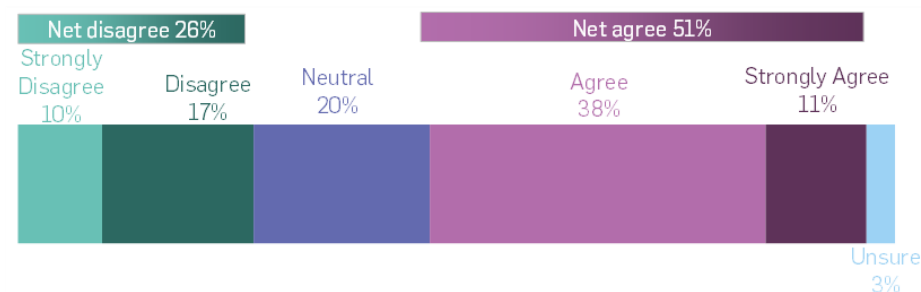
Net **agreement** significant differences

Private practice 45% vs Gov 35%	1-2 55% vs 100+ 30%
No significant difference	UTS 59% vs CoL 41%
Self 48% vs Employer 30%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 58% vs Sydney 40%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 57% vs Private practice 33%	1-2 25% vs 100+ 48%
No significant difference	UNSW 50% vs UTS 24%
Self 31% vs Employer 47%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 24% vs Sydney 37%

Q22. The oral exams tested my knowledge of the course effectively and comprehensively. (n=2,419)



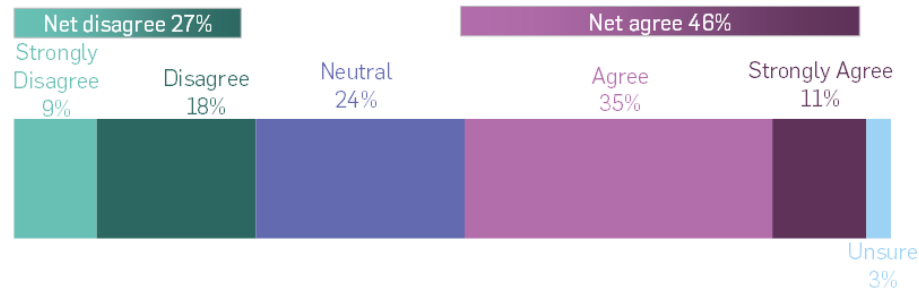
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corp 56% vs Gov 41%	1-2 59% vs 100+ 40%
No significant difference	No significant difference
Self 53% vs Employer 41%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 60% vs Sydney 48%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 43% vs Corporate 20%	1-2 18% vs 100+ 36%
8-10 years 20% vs <2 years 29%	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 18% vs Sydney 28%

Q23. I was provided with helpful feedback on the assignments and oral exams. (n=2,419)



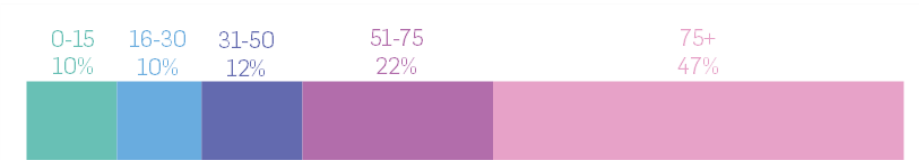
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corp 51% vs Gov 36%	1-2 50% vs 100+ 38%
No significant difference	University of Newcastle 67% vs UNSW 48%
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 56% vs Sydney 44%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

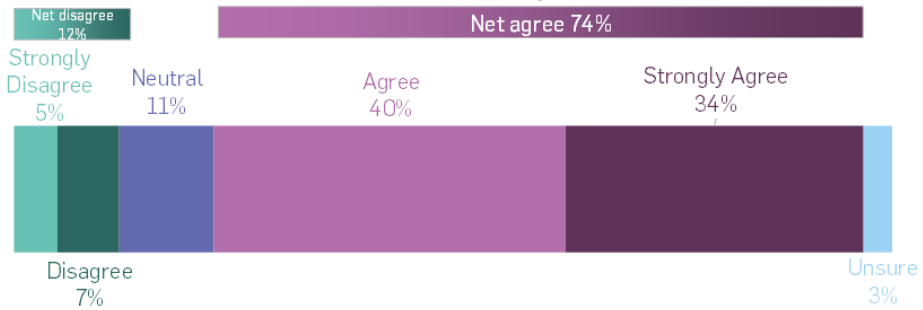
No significant differences	1-2 21% vs 100+ 35%
No significant difference	No significant difference
Self 23% vs Employer 36%	F2F 25% vs Online 29%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 18% vs Sydney 29%

Q24. What was the extent (in days, full-time equivalent) of work experience as part of your PLT course? (n=2,397)



No significance testing undertaken.

Q25. The work experience component assisted me in building practical legal skills which were useful when I commenced legal practice. (n=2,362)



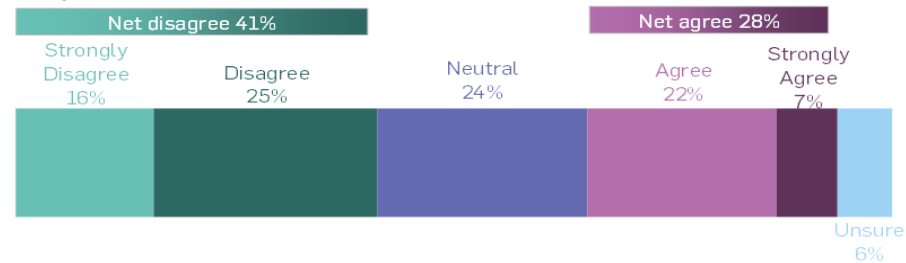
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	No Significant Different
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
Full-time 13% vs Part-time 9%	No significant difference

Q26. The Work Experience Journal / Declaration allowed me to apply, test and reflect on what was learnt within my period of work experience and to reflect on the nature of legal practice more broadly. (n=1,957, shown only to College of Law graduates)



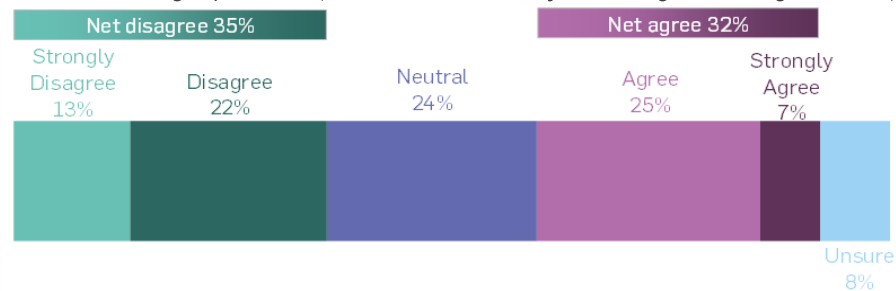
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 33% vs 100+ 23%
No significant difference	N/A
Self 32% vs Employer 23%	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 35% vs Sydney 27%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 29% vs 100+ 49%
8-10 years 32% vs <2 years 47%	N/A
Self 33% vs Employer 50%	No significant difference
Full-time 40% vs Part-time 45%	Rest of NSW 31% vs Sydney 43%

Q27. The Continuing Professional Education program modules helped me acquire business and technological tools and practical skills to assist me when I commenced legal practice. (n=1,957, shown only to College of Law graduates)



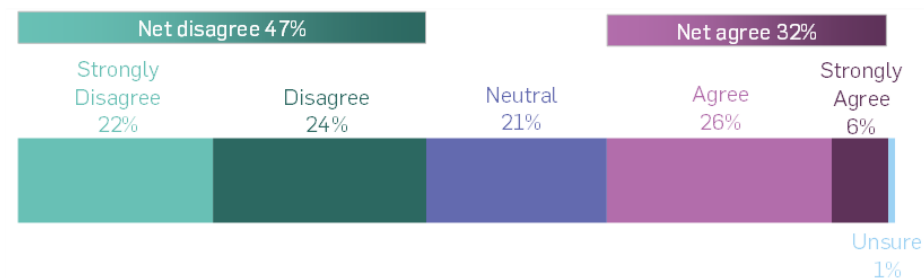
Net **agreement** significant differences

Corporate 42% vs Gov 25%	1-2 41% vs 100+ 25%
8-10 years 36% vs <2 years 25%	N/A
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 39% vs Sydney 31%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Community 55% vs Corp 36%	1-2 25% vs 100+ 43%
8-10 years 28% vs <2 years 46%	N/A
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 26% vs Sydney 37%

Q28. The PLT course was intellectually challenging. (n=2,362)



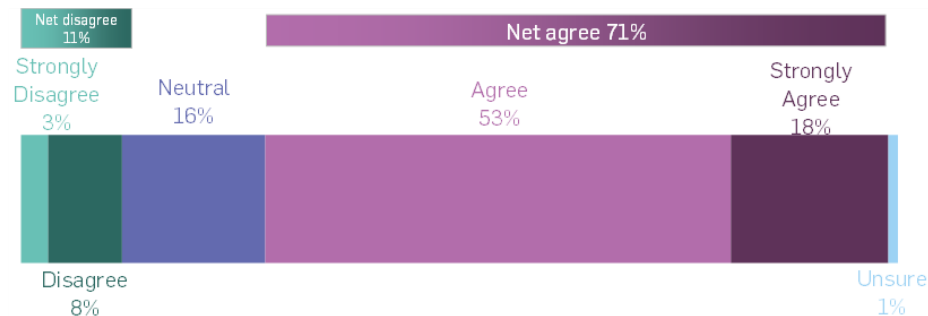
Net **agreement** significant differences

Other provider 47% vs Gov 27%	1-2 46% vs 100+ 21%
8-10 years 39% vs 4-5 years 26%	Other providers 62% vs CoL 29%
Self 36% vs Employer 20%	F2F 36% vs Online 31%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 46% vs Sydney 30%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Bar 71% vs Corporate 36%	1-2 33% vs 100+ 60%
8-10 years 37% vs <2 years 48%	UNSW 76% vs UTS 29%
Self 41% vs Employer 60%	F2F 41% vs Online 49%
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 30% vs Sydney 49%

Q29. The PLT course workload was manageable. (n=2,362)



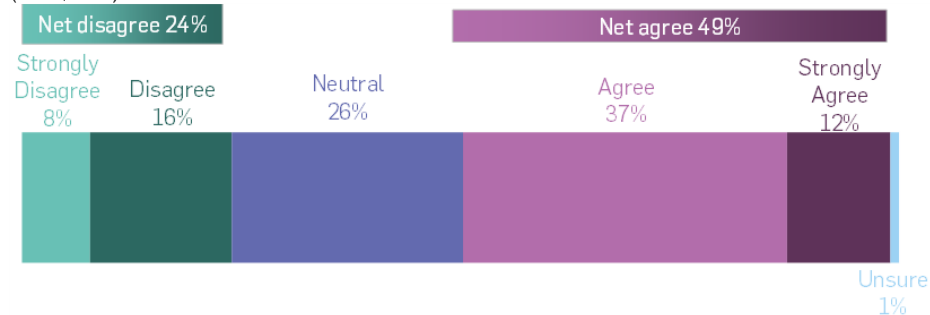
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	No significant difference
8-10 years 77% vs <2 years 65%	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference

Net **disagreement** significant differences

No significant difference	No significant difference
8-10 years 8% vs <2 years 16%	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference

Q30. I felt supported by my teachers and other PLT course provider staff. (n=2,340)



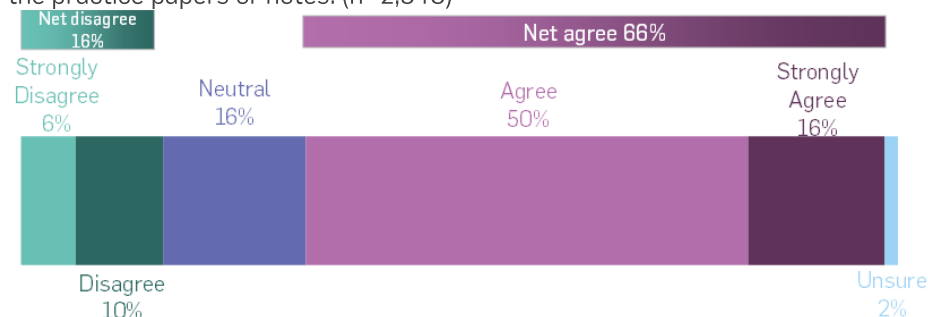
Net **agreement** significant differences

Private practice 51% vs Gov 40%	1-2 57% vs 100+ 45%
8-10 years 55% vs <2 years 44%	University of Newcastle 80% vs CoL 46%
No significant difference	F2F 59% vs Online 44%
No significant difference	No significant difference

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Corp 20% vs Private practice 22%	1-2 16% vs 100+ 29%
8-10 years 17% vs <2 years 27%	No significant difference
No significant difference	F2F 17% vs Online 27%
No significant difference	No significant difference

Q31. I received resources in each course that contributed to my learning, such as the practice papers or notes. (n=2,340)



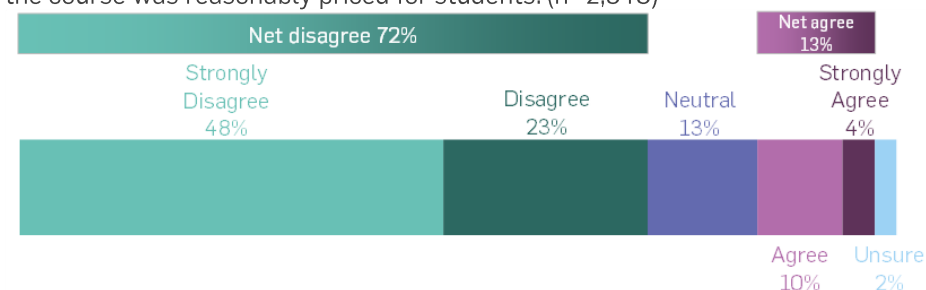
Net **agreement** significant differences

No significant difference	1-2 71% vs 100+ 61%
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	Rest of NSW 72% vs Sydney 65%

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Gov 21% vs Corporate 10%	1-2 13% vs 100+ 20%
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference
No significant difference	No significant difference

Q32. When considering the content, delivery methods, and outcomes achieved, the course was reasonably priced for students. (n=2,340)



Net **agreement** significant differences

Private practice 14% vs Gov 8%	1-2 26% vs 100+ 6%
8-10 years 23% vs <2 years 7%	UTS 24% vs CoL 11%
Self 19% vs Employer 7%	F2F 20% vs Online 10%
Full-time 15% vs Part-Time 10%	No significant difference

Net **disagreement** significant differences

Gov 83% vs Private practice 69%	1-2 56% vs 100+ 81%
8-10 years 55% vs <2 years 84%	CoL 76% vs UTS 50%
Self 66% vs Employer 76%	F2F 59% vs Online 77%
Full-time 70% vs Part-time 75%	Rest of NSW 64% vs Sydney 73%

GRADUATE SURVEY QUESTIONS BY PROVIDER

The below table outlines the questions asked of the graduates split by provider type. The green (↑*↑) and red (↓*↓) symbols denote significant differences among demographics, net agree and net disagree. For example, a cell with ↑ is significantly higher than a cell with ↓, and a cell with * is significantly higher than a cell with *.

	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Australian National University	Other
Base	2,152	55	139	55	137	60
What sector of the legal profession do you currently work in?						
Private practice	65%	71%	65%	60%	53%	60%
Corporate / in-house legal department	11%	11%	14%	9%	9%	13%
Government including CSO, DPP, Legal Aid	16% ↓	9%	14%	20%	27% ↑	13%
Community Legal Centre	3% ↓	4%	4%	11% ↑	2%	10% ↑
Bar	3%	2%	2%	0%	6%	0%
Other	3%	4%	1%	0%	3%	3%
How many solicitors work at your current law firm, company or department?						
1-2	13%	15%	22%	16%	19%	23%
3-5	14% ↓	4% ↓	17%	15%	13%	30% ↑
6-20	20%	18%	22%	15%	18%	15%
21-50	9%	4%	6%	7%	7%	10%
51-100	6%	4%	2% ↓	13% ↑	8%	2%
100+	38%	56% ↑	31% ↓	35%	24%	20% ↓
Region (based on ABS regionality categories)						
Inner regional NSW	6%	2%	1% ↓	9% ↑	11% ↑	13% ↑
Major cities of NSW	6% ↓	2% ↓	4% ↓	51% ↑	9% ↓	8% ↓
Outer regional NSW	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	2%
Remote NSW	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Sydney CBD	63% ↑	76% ↑	60%	27% ↓	53%	40%
Sydney Suburban	23%	15%	33% ↑	9% ↓	23%	30%
Other postcode	2%	2%	1%	2%	4%	7%

	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Australian National University	Other
How long ago did you complete your PLT course?						
Within the last 2 years	22%↓*	45%↑	9%*	9%	0%	17%
2-3 years	15%↑	20%↑	14%↑	13%↑	1%↓	8%
4-5 years	21%	35%↑	17%	22%	13%↓	11%
6-7 years	18%↑	0%↓	15%↓	15%↓	26%↑	15%↓
8-10 years	23%↓*	0%*	45%↑	42%↑	61%↑	48%↑
The cost of my PLT course was paid for:						
By me (including family or friends)	27%	24%	31%	24%	25%	41%
By an advance under the HELP-HECS scheme	47%↓*	22%*	62%	75%↑	52%	47%
By my employer	24%↓*	45%↑	6%*	2%*	21%	5%*
By other	2%	9%	1%	0%	2%	7%
The teaching of my PLT course was conducted:						
Full-time face-to-face (in person)	21%↓	7%↓	54%↑	80%↑	12%	37%
Full-time online or hybrid	49%↑	64%↑	29%	7%↓	42%	38%
Part-time face-to-face (in person)	8%	4%	10%	11%	6%	13%
Part-time online or hybrid	22%	25%	7%↓	2%↓	39%↑	17%
On average, how many live hours of teaching (either online or in-person) did you receive per subject?						
0-2	33%↑	27%	8%↓	0%↓	23%	11%
3-5	21%↑	35%↑	16%	16%	9%↓	17%
6-10	8%↓	15%	17%↑	9%	19%↑	13%
11-20	2%↓	7%	19%↑	15%	4%	17%↑
20+	2%↓	4%	12%↑	20%↑	2%↓	15%↑
Unsure	33%	13%	28%	40%	43%	27%
What was the extent of work experience as part of your PLT course?						
0-15 days (Full-time equivalent)	10%	6%	6%	11%	12%	21%
16-30 days (Full-time equivalent)	9%	16%	5%	21%	13%	25%
31-50 days (Full-time equivalent)	10%	42%	13%	30%	13%	16%
51-75 days (Full-time equivalent)	22%	8%	31%	15%	14%	16%
75+ days (Full-time equivalent)	49%	28%	46%	23%	44%	21%

	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Australian National University	Other
I was satisfied with the amount of live (in-person or online) hours in the teaching of my PLT course for the purpose of preparing me to commence legal practice						
Net disagree	44%	49% ↑	14%	9% ↓	34%	10%
Neutral	24%	22%	22%	15%	21%	22%
Net agree	32% ↓	25%	64% ↑	76% ↑	43%	67% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	4%	1%	0%	2%	2%
I was satisfied with the quality of the teaching provided by the instructors throughout the PLT course						
Net disagree	39% ↑	44% ↑	17%	4% ↑	26%	18%
Neutral	20%	15%	13%	13%	17%	13%
Net agree	41% ↓	42%	70% ↑ *	83% ↑ * ^	55% * ^	67%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%
I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted by the instructors throughout the PLT course						
Net disagree	41% ↑	55% * ^	18% ↑ *	9%	29%	20%
Neutral	22% ↑	11%	14%	9%	20%	5% ↓
Net agree	36% ↓	35% ↓	67% ↑	81% ↑	48% ↓	73% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%
I was satisfied with the quality of teaching during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program						
Net disagree	26%	36% ↑	15%	4% ↑	18%	15%
Neutral	20%	18%	15%	7%	1%	17%
Net agree	52% ↓	44% ↓	62%	81% ↑	63%	67%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	2%	7%	7%	4%	2%
I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program						
Net disagree	27%	40% ↑	18%	7% ↓	15% ↓	13%
Neutral	21%	20%	12%	9%	13%	15%
Net agree	50% ↓	38% ↓	64% ↑	76% ↑	67% ↑	70% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	2%	7%	7%	5%	2%

	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Australian National University	Other
The skills I was expected to develop in each of the courses were clear to me						
Net disagree	33% ↑	44% ↑	20% ↓	20%	28%	12% ↓
Neutral	23%	22%	19%	20%	15%	12%
Net agree	23% ↑	22% ↑	19%	20%	53%	12% ↓
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%
Grading standards and policies were clearly communicated to me						
Net disagree	24%	29% ↑	17%	6% ↓	13%	14%
Neutral	23%	17%	13%	22%	26%	16%
Net agree	51% ↓	54%	68% ↑	69%	55%	68%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	0%	2%	2%	6%	2%
I received adequate opportunity to provide meaningful feedback about the course						
Net disagree	30% ↑	25%	27%	10% ↓	23%	16%
Neutral	25%	27%	17%	22%	23%	25%
Net agree	38% ↓	44%	52% ↑	65% ↑	42%	52%
Unsure/ not applicable	7%	4%	4%	2%	12%	7%
The assignments provided were practical and relevant to my career						
Net disagree	37%	50% ↑	24% ↓	18%	34%	21%
Neutral	22%	15%	17%	24%	15%	16%
Net agree	41% ↓	33% ↓	59% ↑	57%	49%	59%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%	4%
The oral exams tested my knowledge of the course effectively and comprehensively						
Net disagree	28%	35% ↑	21%	10%	20%	11% ↓
Neutral	20%	19%	17%	16%	21%	18%
Net agree	49%	33% ↓	56%	63% ↑	48%	63% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	13%	7%	10%	12%	9%
I was provided with helpful feedback on the assignments and oral exams						
Net disagree	29% ↑	31% ↓	19%	6% ↓	27% ↑	18%
Neutral	24%	19%	25%	24%	21%	14%
Net agree	44% ↓	48%	54%	67% ↑	45%	63%
Unsure/ not applicable	3%	2%	2%	2%	7%	5%

	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Australian National University	Other
The compulsory subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice						
Net disagree	39%	60% ↑	34%	32%	41%	20% ↓
Neutral	21%	10%	18%	22%	13%	18%
Net agree	39% ↓	29%	47%	46%	45%	59% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	2%	2%	0%	2%	4%
The contents of the compulsory subjects were logically structured and well organised						
Net disagree	21%	33% ↑	11% ↓	6% ↓	15%	13%
Neutral	26%	27%	24%	28%	27%	20%
Net agree	51%	40%	64%	64%	55%	64%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	0%	2%	2%	4%	4%
My elective subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice						
Net disagree	35%	54% ↑	27%	22%	33%	11% ↓
Neutral	23%	12%	20%	18%	14%	16%
Net agree	40%	33%	43%	58%	48%	59%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	2%	11%	2%	5%	14%
The contents of my elective subjects were logically structured and well organised						
Net disagree	19%	29% ↑	13%	8%	11% ↓	9%
Neutral	29%	27%	18%	24%	25%	14%
Net agree	49%	44%	58%	66%	58%	61%
Unsure/ not applicable	3%	0%	11%	2%	6%	16%
The work experience component assisted me in building practical legal skills which were useful when I commenced legal practice						
Net disagree	12%	16%	13%	19%	11%	7%
Neutral	12%	12%	5%	2%	7%	13%
Net agree	73%	72%	81%	79%	76%	71%
Unsure/ not applicable	3%	0%	2%	0%	6%	9%
The PLT course was intellectually challenging						
Net disagree	49% ↓ *	76% ↑	29% *	17% *	37%	25% *
Neutral	21%	12%	21%	28%	17%	11%
Net agree	29% ↓	12% ↓	50% ↑	55% ↑	43% ↑	62% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%

	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Australian National University	Other
The PLT course workload was manageable						
Net disagree	12%	16%	13%	4%	8%	9%
Neutral	17%	16%	14%	17%	13%	11%
Net agree	70%	68%	73%	79%	75%	76%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	0%	0%	5%	4%
I felt supported by my teachers and other PLT course provider staff						
Net disagree	26% ↑	16%	13% ↓	4% ↓	19%	15%
Neutral	27% ↑	22%	28% ↑	6% ↓	28% ↑	15%
Net agree	46% ↓	61%	59%	89% ↑	49%	69%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%
I received resources in each course that contributed to my learning, such as the practice papers or notes						
Net disagree	15% ↓	41% ↑	23%	13% ↓	17% ↓	9% ↓
Neutral	16%	16%	21%	19%	21%	17%
Net agree	68% ↑	41% ↓	56%	68%	57%	70% ↑
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	2%	0%	0%	5%	4%
When considering the content, delivery methods, and outcomes achieved, the course was reasonably priced for students						
Net disagree	76% ↑	76%	50% ↓ *	19% *	58%	43%
Neutral	11%	12%	20%	28%	16%	15%
Net agree	11% ↓ *	12%	24% *	45% ↑	21% *	37%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	0%	6%	9%	6%	6%

GRADUATE SURVEY QUESTIONS BY TIME SINCE PLT COMPLETION

The below table outlines the questions asked of the graduates split by provider type. The green (↑*^) and red (↓*^) symbols denote significant differences among demographics, net agree and net disagree. For example, a cell with ↑ is significantly higher than a cell with ↓, and a cell with * is significantly higher than a cell with *. Significance testing was not conducted for up to 5 years and over 5 years columns.

	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
Base	529	370	536	462	702	1,435	1,164
What sector of the legal profession do you currently work in?							
Private practice	69% ↑	65%	65%	62%	60% ↓	67%	61%
Corporate / in-house legal department	9% ↓	11%	10% ↓	10%	15% ↑	10%	13%
Government including CSO, DPP, Legal Aid	15%	14%	18%	20%	15%	16%	17%
Community Legal Centre	4%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	2%
Bar	0%	1%	2%	5%	5%	1%	5%
Other	3%	5%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%
How many solicitors work at your current law firm, company or department?							
1-2	9% ↓	12% ^	10% *	16% ↑ *	22% ↑ * ^	10%	19%
3-5	14%	13%	14%	15%	14%	14%	14%
6-20	18%	23%	21%	19%	20%	20%	20%
21-50	8%	8%	10%	8%	9%	9%	9%
51-100	5%	5%	7%	4%	6%	6%	5%
100+	46% ↑	38% ↑	39% ↑	38% ↑	29% ↓	41%	33%
Region							
Inner regional NSW	6%	5%	7%	8%	6%	6%	7%
Major cities of NSW	4%	8%	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%
Outer regional NSW	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Remote NSW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sydney CBD	65%	60%	61%	62%	59%	62%	60%
Sydney Suburban	22%	23%	22%	21%	25%	22%	23%
Other postcode	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%

	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
With which provider did you complete your PLT?							
College of Law	90%*	88%↑	85%↑	84%*^	72%*↓^	88%	77%
UNSW	5%	3%	4%	0%	0%	4%	0%
UTS	2%	5%	4%	5%	9%	4%	7%
UON	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Other	2%	2%	5%	10%	16%	3%	13%
The cost of my PLT course was paid for:							
By me (including family or friends)	22%↓	29%*#	21%↓*	26%↓^	35%↑^#	24%	32%
By an advance under the HELP-HECS scheme	46%	45%*	55%↑*	50%	47%↓	49%	48%
By my employer	29%	22%	22%	23%	16%	25%	19%
By other	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
The teaching of my PLT course was conducted:							
Full-time face-to-face (in person)	10%↓	6%*	15%*	31%↑*	47%↑*	11%	40%
Full-time online or hybrid	61%↑	59%*	56%^	38%↓*^	27%↓*^	59%	31%
Part-time face-to-face (in person)	2%	4%	5%↓	11%	14%↑	4%	13%
Part-time online or hybrid	26%↑	31%↑*	24%↑	19%↑*	13%↓*	27%	16%
On average, how many live hours of teaching (either online or in-person) did you receive per subject?							
0-2	53%*	41%↓*	28%↓*^	24%↓*#	11%↓*^#	40%	16%
3-5	21%	23%	22%	20%	18%	22%	19%
6-10	8%	7%	12%	9%	10%	9%	10%
11-20	4%	4%	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%
20+	3%↓	2%↓	3%	2%↓	7%↑	3%	5%
Unsure	12%↓	24%↑*	32%↑*^	40%↑*^	50%↑*^	22%	46%
What was the extent of work experience as part of your PLT course?							
0-15 days (Full-time equivalent)	14%↑	11%	10%	7%↓	10%	12%	9%
16-30 days (Full-time equivalent)	4%↓	9%↑	11%↑	11%↑	13%↑	8%	12%
31-50 days (Full-time equivalent)	6%↓*	9%*	12%↑	13%↑	15%↑*	9%	14%
51-75 days (Full-time equivalent)	29%↑	29%↑	20%↓	19%↓	16%↓	25%	17%
75+ days (Full-time equivalent)	47%	43%	47%	50%	46%	46%	48%

	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
I was satisfied with the amount of live (in-person or online) hours in the teaching of my PLT course for the purpose of preparing me to commence legal practice							
Net disagree	51%↑*	49%↑	43%↑	40%↑*	25%↓	47%	31%
Neutral	21%	24%	24%	28%	20%	23%	23%
Net agree	27%↓	27%↓	32%↓	31%↓	52%↑	29%	44%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
I was satisfied with the quality of the teaching provided by the instructors throughout the PLT course							
Net disagree	42%↑	41%↑	39%↑	37%↑	25%↓	41%	30%
Neutral	19%	21%	19%	19%	19%	19%	19%
Net agree	39%↓	38%↓	41%↓	44%↓	56%↑	39%	51%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted by the instructors throughout the PLT course							
Net disagree	46%↑	47%↑	40%↑	39%↑	26%↓	44%	31%
Neutral	21%	20%	23%	19%	21%	21%	20%
Net agree	33%↓	32%↓	36%↓	40%↓	53%↑	34%	48%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
I was satisfied with the quality of teaching during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program							
Net disagree	29%↑	26%↑	27%↑	28%↑	17%↓	27%	22%
Neutral	16%	21%	19%	20%	20%	18%	20%
Net agree	53%	51%	51%↓	50%↓	60%↑	52%	56%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	2%	4%	1%	3%	3%	2%
I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program							
Net disagree	28%↑	31%↑	27%↑	29%↑	18%↓	28%	22%
Neutral	15%	22%	20%	21%	20%	19%	20%
Net agree	54%	45%↓	49%↓	48%↓	58%↑	50%	54%
Unsure/ not applicable	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%

	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
The skills I was expected to develop in each of the courses were clear to me							
Net disagree	32% ↑	33% ↑	37% ↑	33% ↑	25% ↓	34%	28%
Neutral	25%	23%	24%	21%	19%	24%	20%
Net agree	43% ↓	44% ↓	38% ↓	45% ↓	55% ↑	41%	51%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Grading standards and policies were clearly communicated to me							
Net disagree	25%	26%	22%	23%	18%	24%	20%
Neutral	22%	19%	24%	23%	22%	22%	23%
Net agree	53%	54%	52%	51%	54%	53%	53%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	1%	2%	3%	6%	1%	5%
I received adequate opportunity to provide meaningful feedback about the course							
Net disagree	27%	32%	31%	29%	27%	30%	28%
Neutral	25%	23%	23%	27%	25%	23%	26%
Net agree	46% ↑	39%	40%	35% ↓	39%	42%	38%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	6%	6%	9%	9%	5%	9%
The assignments provided were practical and relevant to my career							
Net disagree	34%	36%	42% ↑	39% ↑	29% ↓	37%	33%
Neutral	21%	19%	19%	22%	23%	20%	22%
Net agree	44%	45%	38% ↓	38% ↓	47% ↑	42%	43%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The oral exams tested my knowledge of the course effectively and comprehensively							
Net disagree	29% ↑	27%	31% ↑	28% ↑	20% ↓	30%	23%
Neutral	18%	23%	18%	22%	20%	19%	21%
Net agree	51%	48%	47%	47%	54%	49%	51%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	2%	3%	3%	6%	2%	5%
I was provided with helpful feedback on the assignments and oral exams							
Net disagree	31%	25%	28%	27%	26%	28%	27%
Neutral	23%	25%	26%	24%	22%	25%	23%
Net agree	46%	48%	44%	46%	46%	46%	46%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	1%	2%	4%	5%	1%	5%

	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
The compulsory subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice							
Net disagree	35%↓	40%	46%↑	45%↑	32%↓	41%	37%
Neutral	19%	22%	19%	21%	20%	20%	20%
Net agree	44%↑	37%*	34%↓	34%↓	48%*	39%	42%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
The contents of the compulsory subjects were logically structured and well organised							
Net disagree	25%↑	25%↑	20%↑	18%	13%↓	23%	15%
Neutral	24%	24%	27%	30%	25%	25%	27%
Net agree	50%	51%	51%	48%↓	58%↑	51%	54%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%	4%
My elective subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice							
Net disagree	33%	34%	41%↑	39%↑	28%↓	36%	32%
Neutral	23%	24%	20%	22%	21%	22%	21%
Net agree	42%	41%	37%↓	37%↓	47%↑	40%	43%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	4%
The contents of my elective subjects were logically structured and well organised							
Net disagree	24%↑	22%↑	19%↑	16%	12%↓	22%	14%
Neutral	26%	25%	28%	32%	27%	26%	29%
Net agree	49%	52%	49%	47%	55%	50%	52%
Unsure/ not applicable	2%	1%	4%	4%	6%	2%	5%
The work experience component assisted me in building practical legal skills which were useful when I commenced legal practice							
Net disagree	14%	13%	12%	12%	10%	13%	11%
Neutral	13%	11%	9%	12%	10%	11%	11%
Net agree	71%	73%	74%	73%	77%	73%	76%
Unsure/ not applicable	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%

	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
The Work Experience Journal / Declaration allowed me to apply, test and reflect on what was learnt within my period of work experience and to reflect on the nature of legal practice more broadly (College of Law only)							
Net disagree	47%↑	42%	43%	43%	32%↓	44%	37%
Neutral	25%	20%	25%	23%	26%	23%	25%
Net agree	25%	34%	28%	27%	30%	28%	29%
Unsure/ not applicable	3%	4%	5%	6%	12%	4%	9%
The Continuing Professional Education program modules helped me acquire business and technological tools and practical skills to assist me when I commenced legal practice (College of Law only)							
Net disagree	46%↑	37%	34%↓	34%↓	28%↓	39%	30%
Neutral	22%	22%	23%	25%	27%	22%	26%
Net agree	25%	35%	34%	33%	36%	31%	35%
Unsure/ not applicable	7%	6%	9%	8%	10%	7%	9%
The PLT course was intellectually challenging							
Net disagree	48%↑	46%↑	55%↑	50%↑	37%↓	50%	42%
Neutral	20%	21%	19%	20%	22%	20%	21%
Net agree	32%	32%	26%↓	29%↓	39%↑	29%	35%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
The PLT course workload was manageable							
Net disagree	16%↑*	14%↑	10%*	12%	8%↓	13%	9%
Neutral	17%	19%	16%	19%↑	13%↓	17%	15%
Net agree	66%↓	66%↓	74%	68%↓	77%↑	69%	74%
Unsure/ not applicable	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
I felt supported by my teachers and other PLT course provider staff							
Net disagree	27%↑	29%↑	27%↑	23%	17%↓	28%	20%
Neutral	28%	26%	25%	27%	26%	26%	26%
Net agree	44%↓	45%	47%	50%	55%↑	45%	53%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%

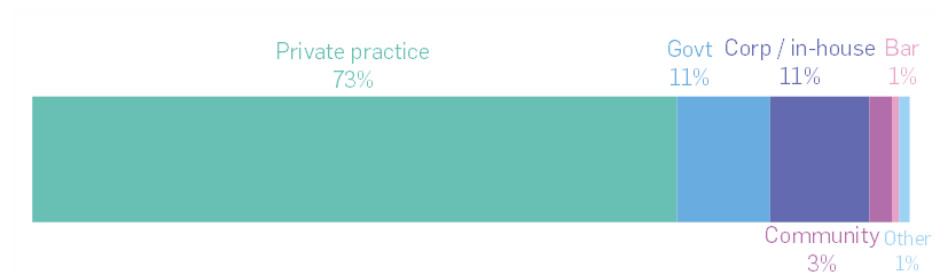
	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Up to 5 years	Over 5 years
I received resources in each course that contributed to my learning, such as the practice papers or notes							
Net disagree	14%	21%	19%	15%	14%	18%	15%
Neutral	16%	14%	17%	20%	15%	16%	17%
Net agree	69%	65%	64%	63%	68%	66%	66%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	2%
When considering the content, delivery methods, and outcomes achieved, the course was reasonably priced for students							
Net disagree	84% ↑	77%*	75% ↓ ▲	76% ↓ ▲	55% ↓* ▲	79%	63%
Neutral	9%	11%	12%	11%	17%	11%	15%
Net agree	7% ↓	11% ↓	11% ↓	11% ↓	23% ↑	10%	18%
Unsure/ not applicable	0%	1%	2%	2%	5%	1%	4%

APPENDIX B

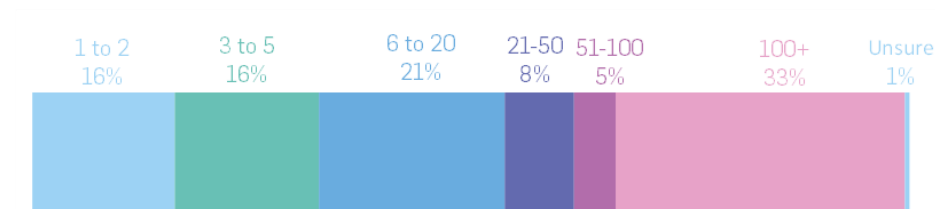
SUPERVISOR SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic questions

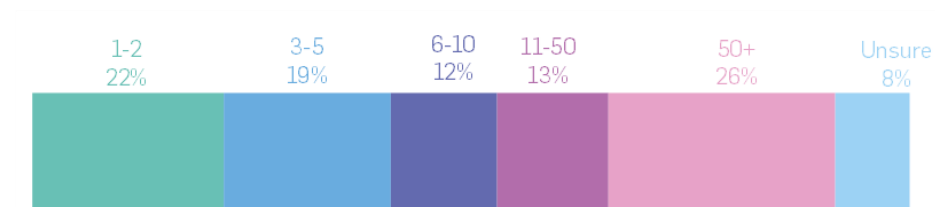
Q1. What sector of the legal profession does your law firm, company, department operate in? (n=2,063)



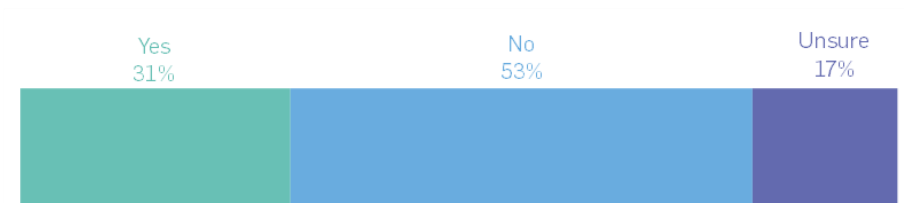
Q2. How many solicitors work at your law firm, company or department? (n=2,063)



Q3. How many law graduates or early career lawyers has your law firm, company or department employed over the last five years? (n=2,063)



Q4. Do you fund or reimburse entry-level lawyers for their PLT? (n=2,063)

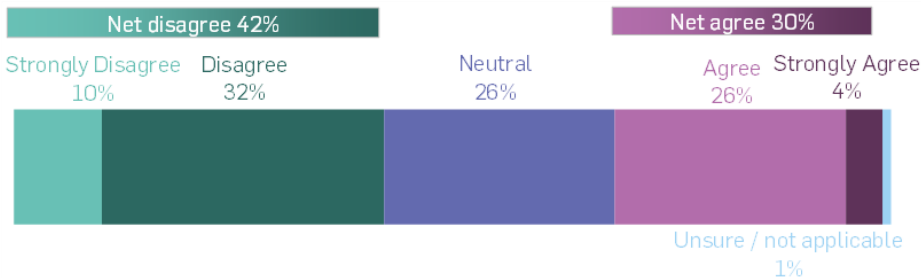


Experiential questions

The following sets of questions detail the question data as a chart, followed by significant differences for the question net agreement and net disagreement, or net always/often and never/rarely.

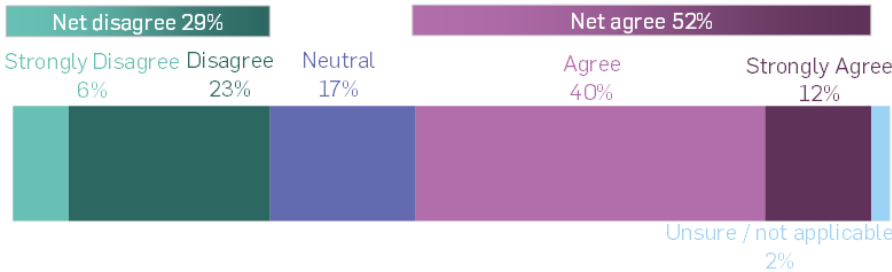
A number of significant differences were identified throughout the data, however analysis was undertaken to identify recurring difference among groups and differences between groups with sample sizes greater than n=25. These have been included in reporting, one-off differences between groups have not necessarily reported.

Q5. I am satisfied with the practical legal skills demonstrated by entry-level lawyers. (n=2,063)



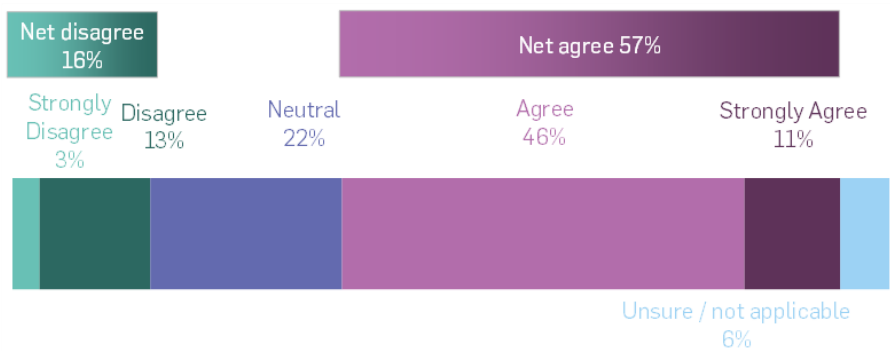
	Net disagreement notable significant differences	Net agreement notable significant differences
Sector	Private practice (44%) vs corporate /in-house legal (33%)	Community (47%) vs private practice (28%)
Firm size	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	6-10 50% vs 1-2 39%	1-2 (33%) vs 50+ (34%)
Employer funded	No significant difference	No significant difference

Q6. I know what skills students are expected to develop in PLT. (n=2,062)



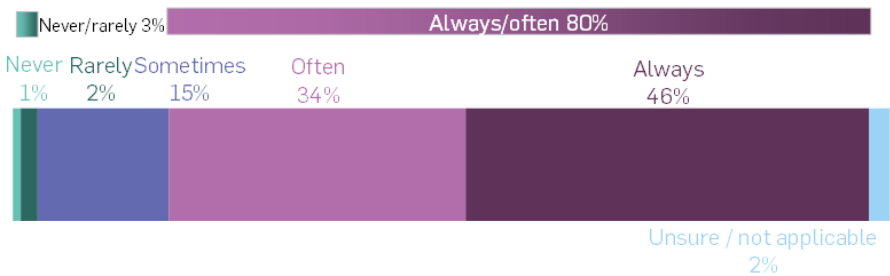
	Net disagreement notable significant differences	Net agreement notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	3-5 (20%) vs 100+ (39%)	1-2 (59%) vs 100+ (42%)
Firm graduate number	1-2 (20%) vs 50+ (40%)	1-2 (58%) vs 50+ (42%)
Employer funded	Funded (33%) vs not funded (26%)	Funded (49%) vs not funded (56%)

Q7. Law graduates are able to adequately manage PLT coursework and employed work. (n=2,062)



	Net disagreement notable significant differences	Net agreement notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	1-2 (18%) vs 100+ (11%)	1-2 (46%) vs 100+ (66%)
Firm graduate number	6-10 (22%) vs 50+ (11%)	1-2 (47%) vs 50+ (69%) 6-10 (51%) vs 50+ (69%)
Employer funded	Funded (10%) vs not funded (20%)	Funded (70%) vs not funded (49%)

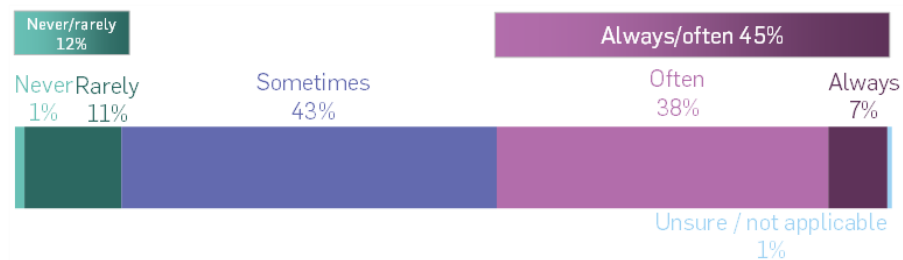
Q8. How often do you feel the need to supplement practical legal training of entry-level lawyers in order for them to perform entry-level legal tasks? (n=1,988)



	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	Private practice (82%) vs Corp (72%)
Firm size	No significant difference	1-2 (74%) vs 100+ (83%)
Firm graduate number	No significant difference	1-2 (72%) vs 50+ (82%) 6-10 (87%) vs 50+ (82%)
Employer funded	No significant difference	No significant difference

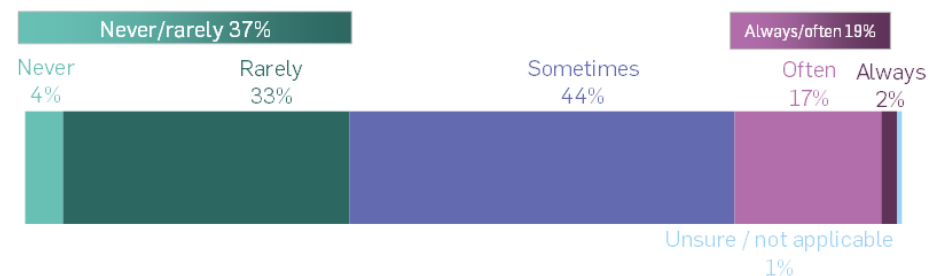
Q9. In your experience, to what extent do entry-level lawyers demonstrate competence to an acceptable standard in the following areas?

(a) Effective written communication in plain English (n=1,915)



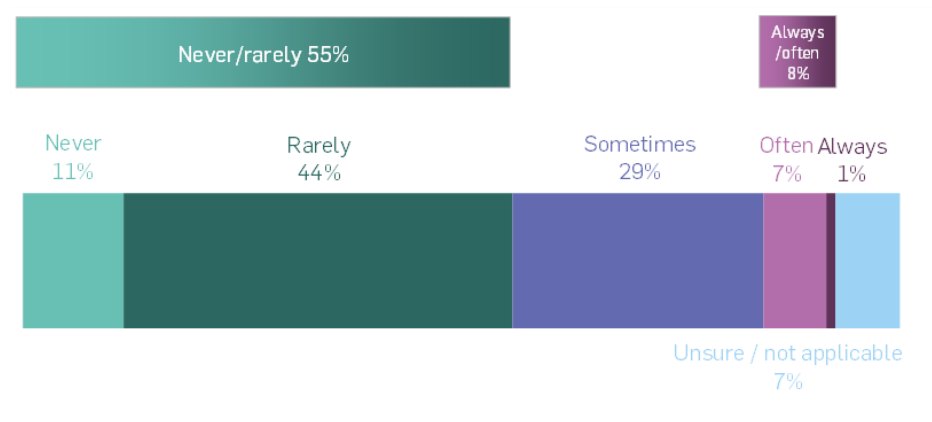
	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	No significant difference	6-10 (35%) vs 50+ (50%)
Employer funded	Funded (9%) vs not funded (15%)	Funded (51%) vs not funded (41%)

(b) Drafting quality legal letters, advices and other documents (n=1,915)



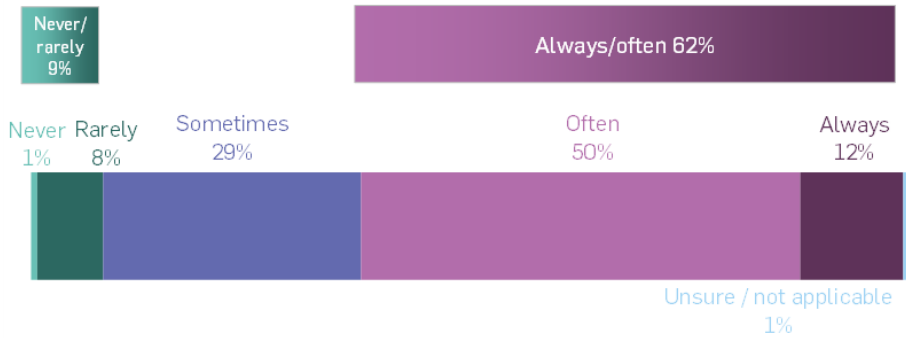
	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	Private practice (37%) vs Gov (26%)	Private practice (17%) vs Gov (26%)
Firm size	6-20 (42%) vs 100+ (32%)	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	6-10 (45%) vs 50+ (33%)	6-10 (35%) vs 50+ (50%)
Employer funded	Funded (31%) vs not funded (41%)	No significant difference

(c) Dispute resolution skills including negotiation, mediation, facilitation and conciliation (n=1,915)



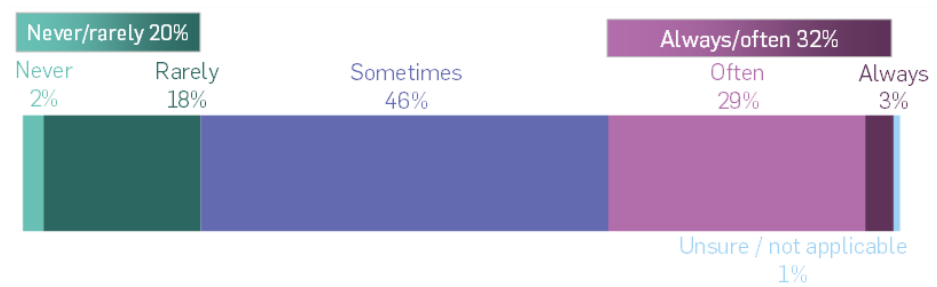
	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	No significant difference	1-2 (11%) vs 100+ (5%)
Firm graduate number	No significant difference	1-2 (11%) vs 100+ (5%)
Employer funded	No significant difference	No significant difference

(d) Developed legal research and fact gathering skills (n=1,915)



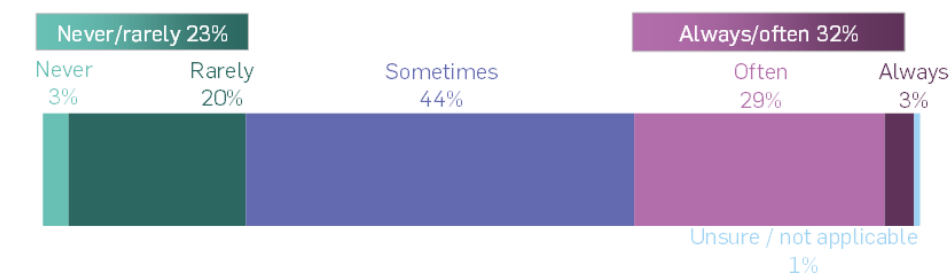
	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	3-5 (12%) vs 100+ (6%)	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	6-10 (13%) vs 50+ (5%)	6-10 (54%) vs 50+ (66%)
Employer funded	Funded (5%) vs not funded (10%)	Funded (67%) vs not funded (59%)

(e) Legal competency, expertise and knowledge of the law (n=1,915)



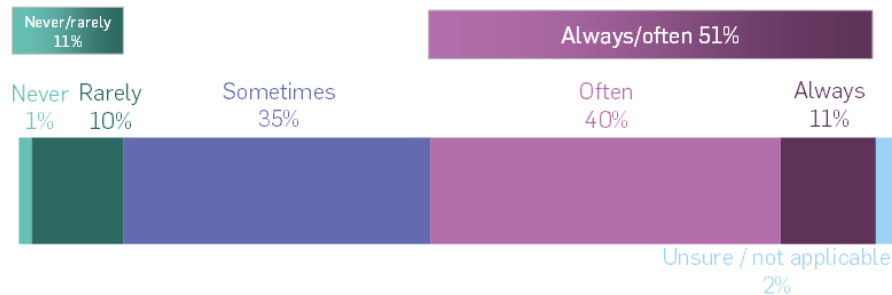
	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	6-10 (26%) vs 50+ (17%)	6-10 (24%) vs 50+ (35%)
Employer funded	Funded (14%) vs not funded (24%)	Funded (38%) vs not funded (30%)

(f) Appropriate time management skills and the ability to comply with deadlines (n=1,915)



	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	Private practice (29%) vs Gov (52%)
Firm size	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	1-2 (32%) vs 100+ (16%)	No significant difference
Employer funded	Funded (14%) vs not funded (24%)	Funded (38%) vs not funded (30%)

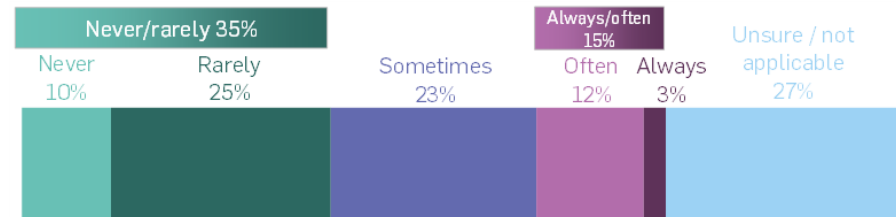
(g) Professional and ethical decision-making



	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm size	1-2 (17%) vs 100+ (8%)	1-2 (45%) vs 100+ (55%)
Firm graduate number	1-2 (15%) vs 50+ (8%) 6-10 (15%) vs 50+ (8%)	1-2 (46%) vs 50+ (57%)
Employer funded	No significant difference	Funded (55%) vs not funded (48%)

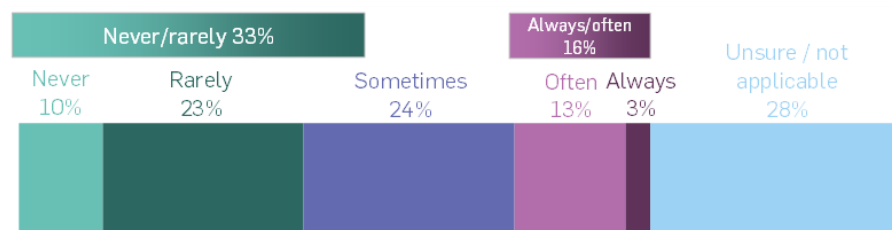
Q10. In your experience, to what extent do entry-level lawyers demonstrate competence to an acceptable standard in the following areas?

(a) Understanding fiduciary and other trust accounting duties (n=1,911)



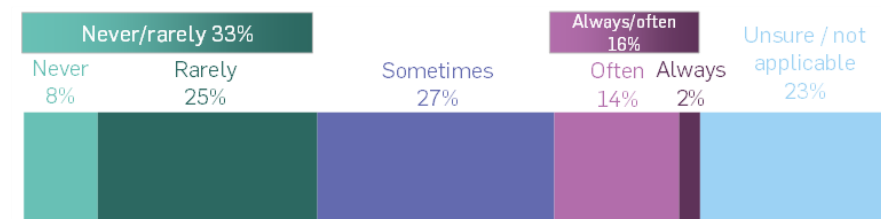
	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	Private practice (40%) vs Gov (15%)	No significant difference
Firm size	1-2 (43%) vs 100+ (27%)	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	1-2 (37%) vs 50+ (28%) 6-10 (47%) vs 50+ (28%)	No significant difference
Employer funded	Funded (31%) vs not funded (39%)	No significant difference

(b) Understanding obligations for receiving client money and making payments (n=1,911)



	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	Private practice (38%) vs Gov (17%)	No significant difference
Firm size	No significant difference	No significant difference
Firm graduate number	6-10 (42%) vs 50+ (31%)	No significant difference
Employer funded	No significant difference	No significant difference

c) Rendering bills accurately (n=1,911)



	Net never/rarely notable significant differences	Net often/always notable significant differences
Sector	Private practice (38%) vs Gov (17%)	Private practice (19%) vs Gov (7%)
Firm size	No significant difference	1-2 (22%) vs 6-20 (13%)
Firm graduate number	6-10 (42%) vs 50+ (31%)	No significant difference
Employer funded	No significant difference	No significant difference

APPENDIX C QUESTIONNAIRE

Practical Legal Training – Profession Survey

Introduction

The **Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB)** has engaged independent research agency, Urbis, to undertake research into the experience of **practical legal training (PLT) in New South Wales undertaken prior to admission to practice**.

The feedback that you provide in this survey will inform consideration of the current state of the provision of practical legal training (PLT) in New South Wales.

The survey will take approximately **10 minutes to complete** and is intended for legal practitioners admitted in the last 10 years and/or legal practitioners who have supervised or are responsible for the work of law graduates or early career lawyers.

All information you submit for this survey is collected on behalf of the LPAB and is considered as **confidential**. Your name and personal details will not be collected and any specific information you submit which if combined with other information could lead to your identification will not be disclosed. All information you submit is collected and will be used and retained in accordance with the New South Wales Department of Community and Justice privacy policy which is available [here](#).

SCREENER

Question (single response, required question)	Yes	No	Unsure
S1. Have you completed your practical legal training (PLT) in the last 10 years?			

Question (single response, required question)	Yes	No	Unsure
S2. Have you supervised or been responsible for the work of law graduates or early career lawyers in the last 10 years?			

IF S1=NO or NOT SURE and S2=NO OR NOT SURE TERMINATE, Screen out message: Thank you for your time. Unfortunately, you do not qualify for the survey at this time.

IF S1=YES, SHOW: SURVEY – PLT GRADUATE SURVEY

IF S2=YES, SHOW: SURVEY – LEGAL EMPLOYER SURVEY

(Note: if respondents select 'Yes' for both S1 and S2 they will receive both surveys).

PLT GRADUATE SURVEY

This set of questions will provide insight into your representation across the NSW legal profession.
Answers will not be attributed to individuals in any way.

Question (single response, required question)	Private practice	Corporate / in-house legal department	Government including CSO, DPP, Legal Aid	Community Legal Centre	Bar	Other (please specify)
1. What sector of the legal profession do you currently work in?						

Question (single response, required question)	1-2	3-5	6-20	21-50	51-100	100+
2. How many solicitors work at your current law firm, company or department?						

Question (required question)	
3. What is the postcode where your main employment / practice is located?	[type in: range 0 to 9999]

Question (single response, required question)	Within the last 2 years	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-10 years	Unsure
4. How long ago did you complete your PLT course?						

Question (single response, required question)	College of Law	University of New South Wales	University of Technology Sydney	University of Newcastle	Other: please specify
5. With which provider did you complete your PLT?					

Question (single response, required question)
6. The cost of my PLT course was paid for: (i) By me (including family or friends) (ii) By an advance under the HELP-HECS scheme (iii) By my employer (iv) By other

Question (single response, required question)
7. The teaching of my PLT course was conducted: (i) Full-time face-to-face (in person) (ii) Full-time online or hybrid (iii) Part-time face-to-face (in person) (iv) Part-time online or hybrid

Question (single response, required question)	0-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	20+	Unsure
8. On average, how many live hours of teaching (either online or in-person) did you receive per subject?						

These next sets of questions will ask about your experience with your PLT.

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
9. I was satisfied with the amount of live (in-person or online) hours in the teaching of my PLT course for the purpose of preparing me to commence legal practice.						
10. I was satisfied with the quality of the teaching provided by the instructors throughout the PLT course.						
11. I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted by the instructors throughout the PLT course.						
12. I was satisfied with the quality of teaching during the live workshops at the beginning of the PLT program.						
13. I was satisfied with the methods of teaching adopted during the live workshops at the						

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
beginning of the PLT program.						
14. The skills I was expected to develop in each of the courses were clear to me.						

IF Q9-14 = All 'Strongly disagree or disagree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have disagreed with the previous statements.

IF Q9-14 = All 'Strongly agree or agree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have agreed with the previous statements.

IF Q9-14 = All neutral or anything else show: Please provide any further comments on your previous answers.

IF Q9-14 = All unsure/not applicable: Skip to Q15

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
Click the ? for examples of compulsory and elective subjects ? <Pop-up text box: Compulsory subjects could include lawyer skills, ethics and professional responsibility, litigation practice, property law practice, and commercial practice. The elective subjects could include administrative law, criminal law, family law, consumer law, employment and industrial law, planning and environmental law, wills and estates, and banking and finance.>						
15. The compulsory subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice.						
16. The contents of the compulsory subjects were logically structured and well organised.						
17. My elective subjects provided me with legal skills and knowledge which I found to be useful when I commenced legal practice.						
18. The contents of my elective subjects were logically structured and well organised.						

IF Q15-18 = All 'Strongly disagree or disagree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have disagreed with the previous statements.

IF Q15-18 = All 'Strongly agree or agree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have agreed with the previous statements.

IF Q15-18 = All neutral or anything else show: Please provide any further comments on your previous answers.

IF Q15-18 = All unsure/not applicable: Skip to Q19

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
19. Grading standards and policies were clearly communicated to me.						
20. I received adequate opportunity to provide meaningful feedback about the course.						
21. The assignments provided were practical and relevant to my career.						
22. The oral exams tested my knowledge of the course effectively and comprehensively.						

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
23. I was provided with helpful feedback on the assignments and oral exams.						

IF Q19-23 = All 'Strongly disagree or disagree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have disagreed with the previous statements.

IF Q19-23 = All 'Strongly agree or agree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have agreed with the previous statements.

IF Q19-23 = All neutral or anything else show: Please provide any further comments on your previous answers.

IF Q19-23 = All unsure/not applicable: Skip to Q24

Question (single response, required question)	0-15 days (Full-time equivalent)	16-30 days (Full-time equivalent)	31-50 days (Full-time equivalent)	51-75 days (Full-time equivalent)	75+ days (Full-time equivalent)
24. What was the extent of work experience as part of your PLT course?					

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
25. The work experience component assisted me in building practical legal skills which were useful when I commenced legal practice.						
26. <i>(only show if Q5 = College of Law)</i> The Work Experience Journal / Declaration allowed me to apply, test and reflect on what was learnt within my period of work experience and to reflect on the nature of legal practice more broadly.						
27. <i>(only show if Q5 = College of Law)</i> The Continuing Professional Education program modules helped me acquire business and technological tools and practical skills to assist me when I commenced legal practice.. <i>(only show to College of Law)</i>						
28. The PLT course was intellectually challenging.						
29. The PLT course workload was manageable.						

IF Q25-29 = All 'Strongly disagree or disagree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have disagreed with the previous statements.

IF Q25-29 = All 'Strongly agree or agree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have agreed with the previous statements.

IF Q25-29 = All neutral or anything else show: Please provide any further comments on your previous answers.

IF Q25-29=All unsure/not applicable: Skip to Q30

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
30. I felt supported by my teachers and other PLT course provider staff.						
31. I received resources in each course that contributed to my learning, such as the practice papers or notes.						
32. When considering the content, delivery methods, and outcomes achieved, the course was reasonably priced for students.						

Please provide any further comments on your experience of completing your PLT.

If you wish to make a further detailed submission, please email it to pltsurvey@urbis.com.au. All responses will be passed on in full to the Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) and will be kept confidential in accordance with the New South Wales Department of Community and Justice privacy policy.

IF S2=YES SHOW:

Thank you for completing the survey for PLT graduates. You also indicated that you have supervised or have been responsible for the work of law graduates or early career lawyers in the last 10 years. Would you like to complete some additional questions about this experience? This will only take around five minutes to complete.

1. Yes (continue to legal employer survey)
2. No (show thank you message above)

LEGAL EMPLOYER SURVEY

Note that this survey is designed to be completed by legal practitioners who have supervised or are responsible for the work of law graduates or early career lawyers. The survey should not be completed by human resources or similar non-legal departments.

IF S1=YES (completed graduate survey), skip Q1 and Q2.

Question (single response, required question)	Private practice	Corporate / in-house legal department	Government including CSO, DPP, Legal Aid	Community Legal Centre	Bar	Other (please specify)
1. What sector of the legal profession does your law firm, company, department operate in?						

Question (single response, required question)	1-2	3-5	6-20	21-50	51-100	100+	Unsure
2. How many solicitors work at your law firm, company or department?							

Question (single response, required questions)	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-50	50+	Unsure

3. How many law graduates or early career lawyers has your law firm, company or department employed over the last five years?						
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Question (single response, required questions)	Yes	No	Unsure
4. Do you fund or reimburse entry-level lawyers for their PLT?			

Please provide your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: (single response, required questions)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Unsure / not applicable
5. I am satisfied with the practical legal skills demonstrated by entry-level lawyers.						
6. I know what skills students are expected to develop in PLT.						
7. Law graduates are able to adequately manage PLT coursework and employed work.						

IF Q5-7 = All 'Strongly disagree or disagree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have disagreed with the previous statements.

IF Q5-7 = All 'Strongly agree or agree' show: Please provide further comments on why you have agreed with the previous statements.

IF Q5-7 = All neutral or anything else show: Please provide any further comments on your previous answers.

IF Q5-7 = All Unsure/not applicable, skip to Q8

Question (single response, required question)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Unsure / not applicable
8. How often do you feel the need to supplement practical legal training of entry-level lawyers in order for them to perform entry-level legal tasks?						

Please provide any additional comments on the additional training required for entry-level practice.

9. In your experience, to what extent do entry-level lawyers demonstrate competence to an acceptable standard in the following areas? (single response, required questions)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Unsure / not applicable
(a) Effective written communication in plain English						
(b) Drafting quality legal letters, advices and other documents						
(c) Dispute resolution skills including negotiation, mediation, facilitation and conciliation						
(d) Developed legal research and fact gathering skills						
(e) Legal competency, expertise and knowledge of the law						
(f) Appropriate time management skills and the ability to comply with deadlines						

9. In your experience, to what extent do entry-level lawyers demonstrate competence to an acceptable standard in the following areas? (single response, required questions)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Unsure / not applicable
(g) Professional and ethical decision-making						

10. In your experience, to what extent do entry-level lawyers demonstrate competence to an acceptable standard in the following areas? (single response, required questions)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Unsure / not applicable
(a) Understanding fiduciary and other trust accounting duties						
(b) Understanding obligations for receiving client money and making payments						
(c) Rendering bills accurately						

Please provide any further comments on the matters addressed by this survey.

If you wish to make a further detailed submission, please email it to pltsurvey@urbis.com.au. All responses will be passed on in full to the Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) and will be kept confidential in accordance with the New South Wales Department of Community and Justice privacy policy.

That's the end of the survey. Thank you for taking part. If you have any questions about the survey or the research, please contact:

Urbis at pltsurvey@urbis.com.au

