



**Arnold Bloch Leibler  
Clerkships 2009**



**Our solution to your career**

At Arnold Bloch Leibler, we recognise that everyone is unique. We understand that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to attracting and retaining the best. So when recruiting seasonal clerks and graduate trainees (formerly known as articled clerks), we look for people who are seeking, and can provide, something out of the ordinary. We value our people who bring a diverse range of skill, talent and experience to the firm, however we have no preconceived notions of how potential talent is packaged. Because we view today's clerks and graduate trainees as our future competitive advantage, we offer them opportunities beyond the usual run-of-the-mill clerkship experience.

At Arnold Bloch Leibler, we are known for doing things a little differently. Regarded as one of the country's leading commercial law firms, our philosophy is to look for solutions. Where others see challenges, we see opportunities.

**Real work, real responsibility and real law**

For some, a clerkship can be pretty much a hit or miss affair. Depending on the luck of the draw, your experience can be working your own files, or working the photocopier. But at Arnold Bloch Leibler, like you, we believe that clerkships and graduate traineeships are really important. You have a right to expect real work and real responsibility, and the opportunity to make a real contribution to the firm. Right from day one.

Because you will be an integral part of the firm from the moment you walk through the door, we will make sure you feel confident to tackle the challenges of working in a busy law firm.

As at any leading commercial law firm, you will be involved in great matters and cases—anything from multi-billion dollar transactions and corporate collapses to defending class actions. At Arnold Bloch Leibler, however, you will get to play a bigger part because we operate a little differently.

To preserve our hands-on and personalised approach, we have chosen to limit the size of the firm to protect our unique culture and style. But that has not limited our reputation. Our track record on widely publicised cases, and highly confidential ones, keeps the clients coming. And many of our senior lawyers are acknowledged as leaders in their fields.

While our lawyers do focus on a particular area of law, we expect them to be generalists too, with skills across a range of areas. They are not pigeon-holed in over-specialised departments. Instead, they need to be able to identify a broad range of legal issues and get involved in a greater variety of work. To become a skilled and savvy lawyer, the same will be required of you.

### **Rapid results**

There are a lot of reasons why Arnold Bloch Leibler's graduate trainees progress quickly. Smaller teams ensure our trainees are supported and do not get lost. And less hierarchy means more independence and opportunity to hone your skills and broaden your knowledge. This allows you to reach your potential more quickly. Another reason is that we do not rotate our trainees through practice areas. Our experience has shown that the best way for you to get a handle on what you are doing is to see matters through from start to finish.

Before you commence at Arnold Bloch Leibler, we will discuss your preferences to identify a practice area that matches your interests. And by remaining with this area, you will see events unfold. That is immensely satisfying. It is also the best way to learn.

By joining, and staying with, a practice area, you will still gain exposure to a variety of legal areas and people because you will be working in fluid, multi-disciplinary teams. And you will work with lawyers from other practice areas who also contribute their expertise.

If you were to join, for example, our property & development practice, you would work every day alongside lawyers who negotiate and draft construction, acquisition or leasing agreements, see to the financing arrangements and make planning and environmental applications. And, depending on the transaction, you would also have the opportunity to work with lawyers who handle any workplace advisory, stamp duty or dispute resolution aspects.

By staying with a practice area, you will also find that partners and senior legal staff will invest greater effort in your training and development, knowing you are going to be a permanent part of their team. And you will not just meet the clients, you will develop a relationship with them.

This is not going to happen if you are passing through a department on your way to your next rotation. But this does not mean that we are not flexible. We understand that sometimes people change their mind about their initial choice. So if it turns out your first practice area preference is superseded by a genuine desire to pursue a career in another area, or if you are keen to try something different, we will do our best to make it happen.

At Arnold Bloch Leibler there is no set formula for promotion, so if you have what it takes, you will be quickly operating at a high level.

### **Making the transition**

Let's face it, being a lawyer can be tiring, stressful and challenging. While life at Arnold Bloch Leibler is busy, dynamic and stimulating, you will be coping with a heavy workload, adjusting to people who may have different working styles and expectations, and learning new skills. Welcome to life in a busy law firm. However, to assist you through this challenging time, we have systems and solutions in place.

During the first few months of a graduate traineeship at Arnold Bloch Leibler, you will be eased into professional life with real work and practical, hands-on training that covers everything from reading clients' financial statements and marketing 101 to working with your secretary. From time to time, you will also be invited to join senior lawyers or external presenters for a boardroom lunch to hear them discuss current matters and new developments in the law. Regular practice area meetings are another opportunity to learn and have your say.

On a daily basis, a supervising partner will guide you, assign work and provide advice on your development. Ongoing feedback and a mini-review every three months give you plenty of opportunities to discuss your progress. On arrival, you will also be introduced to a 'buddy'—a recently qualified lawyer—who will be on hand for support and to help with the numerous questions you are bound to have.

Because you are not expected to go it alone, we provide the tools you need to meet the challenges. These include: education and training; secretarial support; comprehensive library and research facilities; computer and knowledge management systems; and marketing and business development assistance. Also, we do not take more graduate trainees than we need. This means there is no 'cull' at the end of the year. If we hire you, we believe you have got what it takes to make it here. And we will do our very best to help you become a great lawyer.

The firm has high expectations of its people, so it is only right that they are provided with benefits and support to help keep the balance between work and life outside the office. Through our social club you can participate in wine tastings, staff drinks, sport and other activities. We take good care of you in other ways too with regular staff lunches, free gym memberships, winter flu shots, fresh fruit every morning, and much more to help you stay fit and healthy. We also order in meals from local restaurants if you have work back late.

The firm also provides a range of other staff benefits, such as BlackBerry devices for all lawyers, retail discounts and access to financial services.

**Standing out from the crowd**

One of the qualities that sets us apart is that we think like business people and not just like lawyers. We look beyond the paperwork to get a feel for our clients, their industry and their way of doing business. Then we look at the law. We know we stand out from the crowd, and we are looking to recruit those who stand out too.

Arnold Bloch Leibler is a great firm with a great reputation and is recognised for its innovative, commercially focused advice. The firm is regularly involved in some of the most significant transactions in the country, helping clients with their most important or difficult legal matters—when their reputation is at risk, in crisis situations or before embarking on key initiatives. There are plenty of law firms out there, but only a few offer something truly unique. We are one of the few.

Smart clients—hot-shot entrepreneurs, family empires, established blue-chip corporations and business stars of tomorrow—demand quality legal work. That is a given.

The large number of charitable and not-for-profit organisations with which our public interest law practice works share the same expectation. For some, we have helped with ground-breaking matters—like the Yorta Yorta peoples' historic land management agreement with the Victorian Government. For others, our work may not make the news, but is equally important.

These are the clients that choose Arnold Bloch Leibler. And while some of our clients may give their run-of-the-mill-work to Australia's largest firms, when it comes to 'betting the farm'—when their future, finances or freedom are at stake—they turn to Arnold Bloch Leibler. Because they expect more.

Whether our clients are a household brand, or have a name you barely recognise, what they are all really looking for is a law firm that delivers solutions and recognises business is as much an art as a science—a firm that will not tell them why they cannot do something, but rather will show them how.

**What we look for**

While we have a track record of attracting top graduates, academic results are only part of the story. Because we ask our lawyers to challenge convention and seek solutions and possibilities where others see problems, we look for the same attributes in our clerks and graduate trainees.

At Arnold Bloch Leibler, we value imagination as well as intelligence, lateral thinking as highly as logic, and life experience in addition to academic excellence. We are not a one-dimensional firm and we do not want one-dimensional lawyers, so we like to see that you have got a life. Successfully combining study with sporting, musical, community or other personal interests tells us you are good with people, and good with your time. That is not to say that your academic record is not important. It is. Good grades indicate not just ability, but also that you have the application and commitment to achieve results. However, we do not have any preconceptions about how talent should be packaged. We just know it when we see it.

And you will know that you are in the right law firm when you experience it. Corporate culture refers to the personality of an organisation—its values, beliefs, ethics and rules of behaviour. You might say it is 'how things are done around here'. When it comes to a satisfying career, you'd be surprised how critical finding the right cultural fit can be. Our culture offers you the best of both worlds—the buzz of a high-profile commercial law firm, plus the friendly, hands-on environment of a boutique operation.

## **A snapshot of our programmes**

### **Seasonal clerkships**

After years of lectures, assignments and exams, you are probably planning to sleep in late and relax during the holidays. Tempting as that may be, if you want to get ahead, consider doing a seasonal clerkship at Arnold Bloch Leibler.

A seasonal clerkship at Arnold Bloch Leibler offers you the opportunity to experience first-hand life as a lawyer and our stimulating and unique culture. We do not hide behind smoke and mirrors. Instead, we offer a programme where you have the opportunity to be an integral part of our firm.

Arnold Bloch Leibler offers approximately 40 seasonal clerkships each year, timed to coincide with university holidays. A clerkship runs for four weeks, and there are three main intakes yearly: June/July, December and January/February. With only 10 to 12 clerks at any given time, you will not get lost in the crowd.

Generally, we only take students in their second-last year of study. Our experience has shown that, by this stage, students have reached a level of their education that can be developed further with us.

### **Graduate traineeships**

*Formerly known as articulated clerkships*

During your first few days with us as a graduate trainee, you will undertake a short orientation programme, including comprehensive training, covering everything from a writing skills workshop and an overview of our practice areas to library and IT training.

You will assist partners and lawyers on real work and attend client meetings or court hearings. You will learn on the job, from the feedback provided by the people you work with, and by watching them practice.

You will be assigned to a practice area to allow you to see matters through from beginning to end and become an integral member of the team. But you will still be exposed to a wide variety of legal work, as our practice areas are fluid and multi-disciplinary.

We offer between 14 and 16 graduate traineeship positions each year and graduate trainees generally commence work in early March. But if you have your heart set on six months in Europe, let us know, as we are pretty flexible about starting dates.



**Catherine Macrae**  
Articled Clerk 2008  
Seasonal Clerk 2006  
Work placement 2006

While completing my Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of International Relations, I spent time studying at Lady Shri Ram College in New Delhi, India, and completed a mentorship programme under the guidance of a magistrate in the Children's Court. These experiences, coupled with my time volunteering at a community legal centre, strengthened my sense of social justice, and I wanted to work for a firm that contributes to the broader community.

After I undertook a work placement in Arnold Bloch Leibler's public interest law practice and then a seasonal clerkship with the firm, I was excited to discover that this area of practice intersects with every area of the firm.

At Arnold Bloch Leibler, I discovered I could combine these aspirations with my ambition to work on complex commercial litigation. My work is intellectually stimulating and often challenging, but there are always people on hand if I need to ask for advice. A 'buddy' and more senior team members are available to provide guidance about everything from substantive questions to everyday queries.

From day one, I have been exposed to a variety of matters ranging from white collar crime defence and intellectual property disputes to corporations law and insolvency issues. Working directly with partners, many of whom are leaders in their field, has given me wonderful opportunities to learn. As a member of the litigation team, my work includes drafting letters of advice, preparing research memoranda and briefs, and corresponding with counsel. I also attend client meetings and court.

Another thing I enjoy is that I am able to maintain a healthy work-life balance. We are encouraged to work effectively when in the office, rather than to pull long hours. All firms encourage you to have a 'life outside of work', but here the firm's culture and structure actually make this possible. I value the fact that I have been able to continue my active lifestyle after finishing university; life would not be the same without my morning run.



**Daniel Mote**  
Lawyer 2008  
Articled Clerk 2007  
Seasonal Clerk 2006

As a law student, real responsibility and access to high quality work were two of the main criteria I was looking for in a firm. I also wanted to be placed in a commercial team after completing a degree in commerce. Throughout my time at Arnold Bloch Leibler, I have been continually challenged and given the opportunity to really develop as a lawyer.

My first impression of the firm was one of surprise at the closeness of the team environment—not just in the commercial group where I was placed, but across the whole firm. I found the seasonal clerkship at Arnold Bloch Leibler highly rewarding because my involvement was really representative of the work the commercial group does. I was invited to client meetings, asked to undertake tasks that arose from those discussions and worked closely with my supervising partner on a range of interesting commercial transactions. I certainly felt that my contribution to the team was used to address actual legal and commercial problems. Now as a lawyer, I work closely with graduate trainees and seasonal clerks. I enjoy involving them in matters and providing them with guidance—it does not seem so long ago that I was in their shoes.

In addition to the team being great to work with, there is also an excellent social scene and time for my other interests, so the days are busy and enjoyable. It is also good that my group, and the firm in general, are not only supportive of other personal commitments, but also genuinely interested in them.



**Jorja Cleeland**  
Senior Associate 2008  
Lawyer 2004  
Articled Clerk 2003  
Seasonal Clerk 2001

When I chose to do a seasonal clerkship at Arnold Bloch Leibler, I had no idea where that choice would take me. I am now a senior associate, working in commercial and corporate law, with an emphasis on public company work. Along the way, I was given the opportunity to do a secondment for eight months as a legal adviser to the Takeovers Panel. This gave me a great insight into the way the market operates and the issues that arise—and tactics that are used—in takeovers.

My experience as a seasonal clerk in the commercial group at Arnold Bloch Leibler confirmed to me that I wanted to be a commercial lawyer. One of the things I liked about the firm is that I was able to stay in the commercial team from the start of my articles. Having decided I wanted to be a commercial lawyer, I was not forced to do a rotation in, for example, litigation or property—I could focus on what I really wanted to do.

Right from the start of my articles, I was involved in real deals with real responsibility, working closely with clients and learning directly from partners and senior associates. The work I did covered the whole spectrum of commercial law from day-to-day general commercial and corporate law advice to major projects and acquisitions. This variety of work has given me a good general experience and helped me acquire skills across a range of areas, while allowing me to develop a speciality in public company law.



**Ben Mahoney**

Partner 2006  
Senior Associate 2003  
Lawyer 1999  
Articled Clerk 1998  
Seasonal Clerk 1997

Starting out at a law firm, whether as a seasonal clerk or graduate trainee, presents a steep learning curve. I completed several seasonal clerkships with top tier Melbourne firms, including one at Arnold Bloch Leibler, and began each one without preconceptions or assumptions about professional life as a lawyer. In hindsight, this allowed me to choose the firm that provided the best fit with my strengths and career aspirations.

I completed articles at Arnold Bloch Leibler in 1998 and later worked at a major offshore legal firm in Europe, which allowed me to indulge two of my passions: top-quality finance work, and French cheese and wine. I returned to Arnold Bloch Leibler two years later (a little wiser, but considerably larger) as a senior associate in 2003 and was made a partner in 2006.

Arnold Bloch Leibler is a dynamic, commercially focused firm, driven by results rather than processes. The flat structure and lack of hierarchy mean young lawyers have the opportunity to engage and develop relationships with top quality clients and other professionals early in their careers. The firm welcomes, and is energised by, different personalities and approaches to professional practice. These qualities originally attracted me to Arnold Bloch Leibler and continue to motivate me today.

Above all else, I genuinely believe that Arnold Bloch Leibler presents the opportunity to learn more rapidly about the practice of law, and your potential to excel, than any other firm in the country.



**Nancy Collins**

Lawyer 2007  
Articled Clerk 2006  
Seasonal Clerk 2005

As a mature age student, starting out as a lawyer after almost 10 years as a stay-at-home mum has had its challenges. Obviously, it was very important to find the right firm that would recognise my life experience, value my skills and respect my family responsibilities.

Today, I feel as though I have grown wings. I have gained great experience by being deeply involved in matters and through working with excellent senior colleagues.

I initially completed a seasonal clerkship at Arnold Bloch Leibler, and was immediately impressed. I knew I wanted to work in litigation, and that I wanted to work somewhere I could gain expertise and responsibility as quickly as possible.

I also wanted, and needed, a firm that would recognise my family commitments and be flexible. On the day I decided to accept an offer at Arnold Bloch Leibler, a partner had called to say he was taking the day off to watch his daughter's swimming competition. I thought that any firm where a partner could say that aloud would be a good place to work.

My articled clerkship lived up to my expectations. From very early on, I had client contact and was included in strategy discussions. I received excellent training, worked on interesting matters and was given real responsibility with direct partner supervision and support.

It might be a product of my age, but I am very focused and efficient with my time. I pack as much as I can into the hours I spend in the office, and then I am out the door. I have a BlackBerry to stay in touch if necessary, but I am happily able to separate the office from my time at home. It can get busy at times, but long hours are the exception. Managing work and family can be a challenge, but the culture at Arnold Bloch Leibler has made it far easier than I anticipated.



**Edward Russell**

Articled Clerk 2008  
Paralegal 2007  
Seasonal Clerk 2006

After completing a seasonal clerkship at Arnold Bloch Leibler in July 2006, I stayed on as a paralegal before commencing articles. Though I thoroughly enjoyed all of my seasonal clerkships, I was drawn to Arnold Bloch Leibler by its smaller size and its cutting-edge work.

The firm's other main draw-card is the variety of people who work here—there is certainly no 'typical ABL person'. For instance, my interest in Indonesian culture and politics saw me spend semesters at the law faculties of the University of Indonesia and Padjadjaran University during the course of my undergraduate studies. I then returned to Indonesia to work as a translator and as a participant in an exchange programme run through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The people I work near at Arnold Bloch Leibler include Japanese, French and Latin linguists, football players, marathon runners, boat enthusiasts, musicians, ski-buffs and a former architect. This makes Arnold Bloch Leibler a genuinely interesting place to work.

In one sense, starting your legal career is definitely a challenge and tests your problem-solving abilities. At the same time, however, people at the firm are more than happy to answer questions when you become stuck—as I have frequently been.

In terms of what I actually do, my work has ranged from preparing research memos and drafting court documents to assisting in writing conference papers and two chapters the firm is contributing to international texts on anti-cartel enforcement. As well as being varied and interesting, these tasks have seen me work closely with my supervising partner and senior litigation lawyers, and interact with clients and counsel from day one.

## Applying at Arnold Bloch Leibler

The application calendar for both seasonal clerkships and graduate traineeships is co-ordinated by the Law Institute of Victoria and the procedure is pretty much the same with all firms.

Following is our step-by-step guide to applying at Arnold Bloch Leibler:

- 1. Applying:** Submit your application form at [www.cvmil.com.au](http://www.cvmil.com.au), attaching your CV and a covering letter.
- 2. Reviewing applications:** We will let you know your application has been received and then set about reviewing the thousand or so applications we get each year. We will be looking for a few things: good grades, extra-curricular activities and a special something that makes us take a second look. If we find it, we will invite you in for an interview.
- 3. Interview time:** You will meet with two of our partners and a senior human resources representative. It is also a chance for you to give us the once-over, so feel free to ask away.
- 4. Crunch time:** The phones run hot as offers go out.

If you want to know more about applying at Arnold Bloch Leibler, visit our careers pages at [www.abl.com.au](http://www.abl.com.au). There you will find lots of useful information, including tips on preparing your application letter and how to handle the interview. We have also included some words of wisdom from our recent articulated clerks.

You can also contact Kate Clark, Director of Human Resources, at [kclark@abl.com.au](mailto:kclark@abl.com.au) or on (03) 9229 9999.

## Key dates 2009

### Graduate traineeships

*Formerly known as articulated clerkships*

Applications open	Monday 8 December 2008
Applications close	Sunday 11 January 2009
Priority offers	Wednesday 11 February 2009 (9 am)
Interviews commence	Monday 16 February 2009
Non-priority offers	Monday 16 March 2009 (9 am)

### Seasonal clerkships

Applications open	Monday 16 February 2009
Applications close	Sunday 15 March 2009
Interviews commence	Monday 6 April 2009
Offers	Monday 18 May 2009 (9 am)

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