
Reflections from our 2022 Summer Clerk – Isabella Strauss

Isabella is a descendent of the Yamatji people in Western Australia and was born and raised in Kingaroy, Queensland. She completed her schooling at Kingaroy State High School and moved to Brisbane in 2018 to begin university. Isabella is in her fourth year of a Bachelor of Justice (Criminology and Policing)/Laws (Honours) at the Queensland University of Technology.

Isabella Strauss
Gilshenan & Luton
Summer Clerk 2022



Here are Isabella's reflections on her clerkship.

Why did you apply for the clerkship?

I had no prior experience in a criminal law firm. I thought this would be an excellent opportunity to gain an understanding of how a criminal law firm works and confirm whether criminal law is what I would like to pursue after university.

What did you get up to during the clerkship?

The clerkship allowed me to attend court for different matters, engage in various legal tasks and participate in workshops that assisted in my professional development and legal skills.

The workshops touched on research skills, legal writing, how to write a memorandum, how to brief counsel, dealing with clients and building your career. The workshops gave me an opportunity to hear from lawyers about their experiences and stories. They also shared some practical and non-practical legal skills tips that I can take with me in the future.

Attending court was a significant highlight of the clerkship. I attended mentions in different courts, a coronial inquest, a District Court sentence, and a Court of Appeal hearing. Before the clerkship, I had attended court only a handful of times. At G&L, I was able to gain a better understanding of how each court works, observe a variety of matters and watch lawyers and barristers advocate for their clients.

What was your most memorable day?

It is difficult to pick one day, but a memorable day was attending the District Court for a sentence. I observed how counsel and the solicitor engaged with the client before, during and after the sentence. This experience showed me how important it is to not only be legally equipped, but the importance of communicating effectively with your client.

What will you take away from the clerkship?

During the clerkship, each day was exciting, challenging and rewarding. The clerkship has given me a meaningful and realistic snapshot of what it would be like to be a criminal lawyer. I am very grateful to have been involved with a team that ensured I felt included and comfortable every day. It has been invaluable to experience the operations of a criminal law firm. Significantly, it has been an incredible personal experience for me to further develop my legal career and legal skills.