Understand business from a legal perspective

What impact does law have on business? What are my obligations as a supplier of goods or services? As a professional person, in what circumstances will I be liable for providing incorrect or misleading information or advice?

As the accountability and potential personal liability of professionals, business managers and public servants continues to grow, a grounding in basic legal concepts and a reasonable familiarity with those areas of the law that are directly relevant to business and professional activities is becoming increasingly important.

Business managers and professional people constantly find themselves confronted by the need to make decisions with significant, and often frightening, legal ramifications. As a result the line between ‘business’ decisions and ‘legal’ issues is becoming increasingly blurred.

This is why students who graduate with a Business Law Major so often find that it is a qualification which is highly attractive to prospective employers.

The Business Law Major focuses on the fundamental relationship between law and business. As such it is a sensible choice for students who are planning careers in a wide range of business areas, including: professional accounting, business management, international trade and industrial relations, as it is also for those interested in careers within government regulatory agencies.

The Business Law Major will equip you with analytical, problem solving and communication skills that will enable you to recognise, analyse and, where possible, avoid many of the legal problems and pitfalls that arise in the course of many common business transactions. It will also help you to develop important skills in research, analysis, teamwork and communication.

You will also be well positioned to choose to continue your studies with the UWA’s professional practice law qualification, the Juris Doctor. If you choose to go on and pursue a career in Law by undertaking the Juris Doctor programme, the Business Law major is a useful ‘pre-law’ grounding in the principles underpinning the Australian legal system.
Chosing your majors

UWA’s flexible undergraduate course structure allows you to take two majors within your course.

Studying two majors can increase your employability and allow you to choose from a wider range of career paths.

Studying a degree in Commerce?
If you are studying for a Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), you can choose to take the Business Law Major as your degree specific major, or, so as to supplement and increase your overall business knowledge, you can study Business Law as your second major.

Alternatively, if you are studying Business Law as your degree specific major within the BCom, you can widen your skill base by taking a second major from another undergraduate degree:
- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Design

The following are a selection of popular majors to take with Business Law:
- Accounting
- Economics
- Engineering Science
- Finance
- Human Resource Management
- Law and Society
- Marketing

Studying a degree other than Commerce?
If you choose to study a BA, BDes or BSc you can select Business Law as your second major. Students in this position are not required to complete the four complementary units listed in the unit sequence.

Whatever degree you are studying for a sound knowledge of the principles and practice of business law and legal systems and the social context in which the law operates will equip you for career success.

Studying a B Phil (Hons)?
As a student enrolled in the BPhil (Hons) you can nominate Business Law as either your degree specific major or as a second major.

Unit sequence

LEVEL 1 core units
- ACCT1101 Financial Accounting
- LAWS1104 Introduction to Law

LEVEL 2 core units
- LAWS2301 Company Law
- LAWS2201 Legal Framework of Business
- LAWS2206 Taxation Law

LEVEL 3 core units
- LAWS3306 Finance Law
- LAWS3328 International Commercial Law
- LAWS3308 Marketing, Management and the Law

Complementary units
Students nominating Business Law as their degree-specific major in the Bachelor of Commerce or Bachelor of Philosophy (Honours) course must also study:
- STAT1520 Economic and Business Statistics
- MGMT1135 Microeconomics: Prices and Markets
- ECON1101 Organisational Behaviour

“As an independent contractor, negotiating with large companies has been quite a challenge due to the imbalance of power, but while studying Business Law at The University of Western Australia, I gained valuable knowledge of the technicalities of contract law, which has since helped me to successfully negotiate to my advantage.

I would recommend studying Business Law at UWA, not just for people like me who run their own businesses, but for anyone involved in commercial transactions; the practical knowledge you will learn will help you to negotiate better because you will have a stronger understanding of the technical aspects of the law and of your legal rights and obligations.”

Neil Hardinge Welder Diver | Business Law Major Student UWA
Combine your interests – Choose two majors

Degree: Bachelor of Commerce
Degree-specific major: Business Law

Broadening Units

This feature of UWA undergraduate studies gives you the opportunity to broaden your perspective

These are a requirement of all five bachelor’s degrees and will provide you with knowledge beyond the fields in which you choose to specialise. You will be required to take four broadening units from outside your degree area, including at least one with a global or cultural focus (Category A).

For more information visit: studyat.uwa.edu.au/broadeningunits

Category A broadening units offered by the Faculty of Law
- Law, Conflict and Change

Category B broadening units offered by the Faculty of Law
Nearly all units offered at a Level 1 undergraduate level can be selected as Category B broadening units, giving you hundreds of choices.

Units offered by the Faculty of Law:
- Australian Legal Principles and Institutions
- Crime and Society
- Introduction to Law

Units offered at Level 2 undergraduate level by the Faculty of Law also count as Category B, however you may need to have completed some pre-requisite units at Level 1 in order to enrol.
Graduating with a Business Law Major from UWA, you will have a thorough grounding in the principles and concepts of the law affecting business transactions. Studying Business Law enables students to develop a combination of knowledge and skills that are of great value to anyone engaged in any kind of business endeavour.

Law is a fundamental business discipline and Business Law graduates are well suited for a variety of roles including careers in business management, marketing, international trade, banking and finance, public service, industrial relations and related professions and business endeavours.

Consider your further study options

After finishing your undergraduate degree course you have a number of options. You can choose to start your new career by directly entering the workforce, or you can undertake additional university studies. Further studies will increase your knowledge and skills in your field and increase your employability.

The UWA pathway to Law

If you want to pursue a career as a Lawyer the UWA Juris Doctor (JD) is your pathway to become the Lawyer you want to be and that the world needs.

As a student of the postgraduate Juris Doctor Program you will:

- Study and build lifelong connections with a diverse and vibrant cohort of future leaders
- Enter the competitive graduate market with an edge, armed with both an undergraduate degree and the JD, a prestigious qualification offered by institutions such as Harvard, Yale and Columbia
- Join the ranks of nationally and internationally renowned UWA Law School graduates including: Rhodes Scholars; the highest ranks of the Judiciary and legal profession; as well as leaders at the very highest level of business and government

JD Course details

Intake: February only
Fee type: Commonwealth-supported (HECS available)
Number of places: approximately 350 places available for domestic and international applicants per year.

JD Course structure

The JD is a three year postgraduate coursework program (six years part-time) involving the completion of 24 units (eight per full-time year), including a combination of core and option units. More information can be found at: law.uwa.edu.au/courses/postgrad/jd

Pathway to Law

Undergraduate degree (3 years*):
Bachelor’s degree in any discipline

Law School Admissions Test (LSAT)**

Postgraduate degree (3 years):
Juris Doctor***

* Students who undertake a Bachelor of Philosophy (Honours) will take four years to complete their undergraduate degree.

** The LSAT is only required by students who do not hold an assured pathway to the JD for more information visit law.uwa.edu.au/courses/juris-doctor-jd/about-the-lsat

*** Practical Legal Training is required before admission to practice.

Faculty of Law

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