

Thursday, 3 March 2022

Access for students at the heart of legal practice training

The University of Tasmania will call for tenders from accredited legal training organisations to provide its Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice from 2023.

The Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice is a 26-week course that comes at the end of a law degree, and which must be completed for lawyers to enter the profession.

The University of Tasmania has offered the course through an external provider for many years.

“We want to make legal education and the law more accessible to more Tasmanians and a high-quality, flexible legal practice training course is critical to achieving that goal,” the Dean of Law Professor Michael Stuckey said.

“We have had a long and very fruitful agreement with the current provider, the Centre for Legal Studies, and we will be inviting them to submit an expression of interest.”

Professor Stuckey said the 26-week course had previously been offered once a year but, due to students now graduating from the undergraduate Bachelor of Laws degree either in the middle or at the end of the year, it was hoped the Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice could be offered twice yearly. This would avoid some students being disadvantaged by having to wait six months to start the final part of their legal education.

“In addition to the twice yearly offering, we are fully committed to making legal education accessible to as many students as possible, regardless of their geographic location, stage of life, family background, age or gender.

“We want the Diploma of Legal Practice to be accessible to students who may live a long way from Hobart and who may be juggling the demands of work and family.”

To achieve this accessibility and flexibility for students, the University would like to offer the course in a blended mode of delivery. This means certain essential course components could be taught face to face while students could also have the option of online study for other components.

The current agreement expires at the end of 2022 and the University will seek expressions of interest from potential providers in line with its procurement policy.

The course will continue to sit within a national regulatory framework and will comply with the relevant competencies set out by the Law Admissions Consultative Committee (LACC) and the Australasian Professional Legal Education Council (APLEC).

This next step to improving access builds on the introduction this year of a [new Diploma of Paralegal Practice](#), which can be studied in Burnie, Launceston, Hobart or online.

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