

# Bond University

Australian Journal of  
Clinical Education



Volume 9

Issue 1

---

2021

An Overview of Australian Clinical Legal Education in Pandemic Times: Possible Impacts on the Development of Graduate Employability Skills

Francina Cantatore  
Bond University

Kana Nakano  
Bond University

---

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ajce.scholasticahq.com/>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 Licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

## **An Overview of Australian Clinical Legal Education in Pandemic Times: Possible Impacts on the Development of Graduate Employability Skills**

**Francina Cantatore<sup>\*</sup> and Kana Nakano<sup>\*\*</sup>**

---

<sup>\*</sup> PhD MA BA LLB (Hons) GDLP, Associate Professor, Bond University, Australia.

<sup>\*\*</sup> PhD Candidate, LLB (Hons), Assistant Teaching Fellow, Bond University, Australia.

## **Abstract**

As clinical legal education (CLE) is intrinsically a practice-based learning experience for law students, the COVID-19 pandemic has in many respects challenged traditional models of CLE. It has directly affected clinicians and clinical legal educators' ability to provide students with the same learning experience as had been offered to their peers in prior semesters. These challenges have required educators to think creatively and laterally about ways in which to sustain and enhance the student experience in CLE during pandemic times. Whilst many existing face-to-face interaction opportunities were lost, at least temporarily, other opportunities for learning emerged as a more technology-centred approach was embraced in teaching practices. This paper examines the short-term and projected longer-term effects of the pandemic on the development of law graduate employability skills in CLE. It considers the ways in which COVID-19 challenges have been addressed by tertiary institutions in Australia and envisages the emergence of new opportunities to prepare students for legal practice in the future, even reimagining traditional CLE models by embracing technology in future offerings.

## I INTRODUCTION

Predicting what lies ahead for the legal profession is problematic. Suffice it to say that change and innovation will continue but at what pace and with what impact only time will tell.<sup>1</sup>

Rarely has the increased importance of technology skills been more ubiquitous than in the evolving and uncertain work environment created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly in the clinical legal education ('CLE') landscape where the focus has traditionally been experiential learning involving — in many instances — real client interaction, practitioners have had to apply innovative approaches to ensure students obtain a fruitful learning experience. While many institutions had already been implementing remote client engagement, even pre-COVID,<sup>2</sup> the events during 2020 demanded tertiary institutions to re-examine pedagogical models and teaching strategies to cope with the demands of distance learning.

This paper provides a snapshot overview of how Australian universities have dealt with the initial and ongoing COVID-19 challenges in the context of CLE. It focuses on the novel challenges experienced by clinicians in providing law students with an optimal learning experience during pandemic situations and ways in which problems have been addressed in teaching practices. It also considers new opportunities for developing graduate employability skills that have emerged in these circumstances. It argues that the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on universities in general and more specifically, CLE, has indirectly resulted in the acceleration of unexpected graduate employability skills which will benefit law graduates when entering legal practice. This is principally due to a more technology-centred approach being embraced in both teaching practices and practice-based student interactions with partner institutions such as Community Legal Centres ('CLCs').

## II TRADITIONAL CLE MODELS AND GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

CLE is generally defined as a student's involvement with 'real clients' in a legal centre<sup>3</sup> or in-house campus clinic; or through a placement program or internship.<sup>4</sup> In the context of this discussion, the term refers to 'any law school course or program in which law students participate in the representation of actual clients under the supervision of a lawyer/teacher'.<sup>5</sup> CLE has been incorporated in most law schools in Australia in diverse areas of the law and in various formats.<sup>6</sup> A comprehensive review of law school clinics in Australia by Evans et al revealed that most

---

<sup>1</sup> Law Society of New South Wales, *Future of Law and Innovation in the Profession* (Report, 2017) 4 <<https://lawsociety.cld.bz/online-flip-report/114/>> ('FLIP Report').

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the Rural, Regional and Remote Priority Advice Line implemented by the Women's Legal Services <<https://wlsq.org.au/services/rural-regional-and-remote-priority-advice-line>>. Furthermore, a free helpline has been available from Legal Aid in every state and territory.

<sup>3</sup> See, eg, Adrian Evans et al, *Australian Clinical Legal Education: Designing and Operating a Best Practice Clinical Program in an Australian Law School* (ANU Press, 2017) 40-41; Susan Campbell, 'Blueprint for a Clinical Program' (1991) 9(2) *Journal of Professional Legal Education* 121, 122; Frank Bloch, 'The Andragogical Basis of Clinical Legal Education' (1982) 35(2) *Vanderbilt Law Review* 321, 326.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of external placement programs, see, eg, Linda F Smith, Jeff Giddings and Leah Wortham, 'Risks and Rewards of Externships: Exploring Goals and Methods' (2017) 24(3) *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* 30; Graeme Coss, 'Field Placement (Externship): A Valuable Application of Clinical Education' (1993) 4(1) *Legal Education Review* 29; Cf Laura Lundy, 'The Assessment of Clinical Legal Education: An Illustration' (1995) 29(3) *Law Teacher* 311; Janet Motley, 'Self-Directed Learning and the Out-of-House Placement' (1989) 19(1) *New Mexico Law Review* 211.

<sup>5</sup> Bloch (n 3) 326.

<sup>6</sup> Francina Cantatore, 'Boosting Law Graduate Employability: Using A Pro Bono Teaching Clinic to Facilitate Experiential Learning in Commercial Law Subjects' (2015) 25(1) *Legal Education Review* 147, 150 ('Boosting Law Graduate Employability').

Australian law schools had implemented CLE programs.<sup>7</sup> Although the models vary in scope and implementation, the focus of these clinics are invariably practice-based and skills orientated.<sup>8</sup>

Significantly, clinical pedagogy accords with a number of the threshold learning outcomes ('TLOs') for LLB and JD degrees,<sup>9</sup> such as ethics and professional responsibility,<sup>10</sup> thinking skills,<sup>11</sup> research skills,<sup>12</sup> and communication and collaboration.<sup>13</sup> It has also been proposed that CLE is interconnected with the notion of 'personal and social responsibility' within the profession, as well as focusing on the transferrable skills pedagogy of clinical education, for example, effective collaboration and communication with other lawyers and clients.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in addition to meeting substantive TLOs, law clinics provide an opportunity for students to develop additional important skills required in the workplace. It has been posited that CLE programs in particular, provide a suitable framework within which to introduce students to the increased demands of legal practice in the technology age.<sup>15</sup>

For example, in 2017 the Law Society of New South Wales suggested that law students should be trained in the skills needed to develop new ways to communicate legal information and provide legal services,<sup>16</sup> which included enhanced technology skills. The broader areas of concern identified in the Future of Law and Innovation in the Profession ('FLIP') Report included the attributes of 'resilience, flexibility and ability to adapt to change',<sup>17</sup> which have increased in importance in the context of a global pandemic. In addition, law firms are demanding more of law graduates when they enter practice, due to increased client expectations and rapid technological advances.<sup>18</sup>

Traditional graduate employability skills recognised by Oliver et al<sup>19</sup> in the Graduate Employability Indicators ('GEI') — which include the following attributes: knowledge, writing, speaking, thinking, quantitative skills, using ICT, teamwork, independent learning, intercultural understanding, problem-solving, values and ethics, community engagement, industry awareness and social context — have been applied in the context of CLE research<sup>20</sup> and found to improve, to varying degrees, during the clinic experience. From a service-learning perspective, it has also

---

<sup>7</sup> Adrian Evans et al, *Best Practices: Australian Clinical Legal Education* (Final Report, 2012), 7. See also Kingsford Legal Centre, *Clinical Legal Education Guide 2019–20* (Guide, University of New South Wales, 2019) <<https://www.klc.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/2924%20CLE%20guide-WEB.pdf>>; National Pro Bono Resource Centre, *Pro Bono and Clinical Legal Education Programs in Australian Law Schools* (Information Paper, August 2004) <[http://www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/documents/PUBLISHEDVERSION\\_000.doc](http://www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/documents/PUBLISHEDVERSION_000.doc)>.

<sup>8</sup> See Evans et al (n 7). It is noted that all Australian law schools offer some type of practical or experiential learning, although not all identify as clinical programs.

<sup>9</sup> Cantatore, 'Boosting Law Graduate Employability' (n 6) 150–151.

<sup>10</sup> Sally Kift, Mark Israel and Rachael Field, *Learning and Teaching Academics Standards Project* (Statement, Australian Learning and Teaching Council, December 2010) 14 <<https://cald.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/KiftetalLTASStandardsStatement2010.pdf>> ('LTAS Project'); Council of Australian Law Deans, *Juris Doctor: Threshold Learning Outcomes* (TLOs, March 2012) 8 ('JD TLOs').

<sup>11</sup> LTAS Project (n 10) 17; JD TLOs (n 10) 10.

<sup>12</sup> LTAS Project (n 10) 19; JD TLOs (n 10) 13.

<sup>13</sup> LTAS Project (n 10) 20; JD TLOs (n 10) 14.

<sup>14</sup> Phyllis Goldfarb, 'Back to the Future of Clinical Legal Education' (2012) 32(2) *Boston College Journal of Law and Social Justice* 279, 301.

<sup>15</sup> Francina Cantatore, 'New Frontiers in Clinical Legal Education: Harnessing Technology to Prepare Students for Practice and Facilitate Access to Justice' (2019) 5(1) *Australian Journal of Clinical Education* 1 <<https://ajce.scholasticahq.com/article/11191>> ('New Frontiers in Clinical Legal Education').

<sup>16</sup> FLIP Report (n 1) 77.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid 79.

<sup>18</sup> Francina Cantatore et al, 'A Comparative Study into Legal Education and Graduate Employability Skills in Law Students through Pro Bono Law Clinics' (2020) *The Law Teacher* 1 ('Comparative Study into Legal Education'); Richard Susskind and Daniel Susskind, *The Future of the Professions: How Technology Will Transform the Work of Human Experts* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Beverley Oliver et al, *Building Course Team Capacity to Enhance Graduate Employability* (Final Report, Australian Learning and Teaching Council, 2011) <[https://ltr.edu.au/resources/CG8-735\\_CUT%20Oliver\\_Final%20Report%202011.pdf](https://ltr.edu.au/resources/CG8-735_CUT%20Oliver_Final%20Report%202011.pdf)>.

<sup>20</sup> See, eg, Cantatore, 'Boosting Law Graduate Employability' (n 6) 150; Cantatore et al, 'Comparative Study into Legal Education' (n 18).

been recognised that extra-curricular community engagement enhances graduate employability by combining experiential learning, coursework and community service.<sup>21</sup>

### III PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

#### A University restrictions during COVID-19

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on educational institutions has been immediate and radical. Law schools, like other higher education disciplines, were severely impacted by measures taken at state and federal levels after the onset of COVID-19 in early 2020, in addition to a significant loss of international and interstate students unable to travel across borders.<sup>22</sup> The COVID-19 measures have included temporary closures of some institutions and an immediate move to remote learning in most institutions.<sup>23</sup> During the scramble to accommodate classes and facilitate end of semester exams, online remote teaching became the only viable means of educating students, which had a direct effect on in-person practice-based experience opportunities such as CLE. In addition, some partner organisations such as CLCs faced closures and were driven to move to telephonic or online client appointments and consultations.<sup>24</sup> Their ability to accommodate student CLE placements has been further compromised by lock-down measures enforced in some states<sup>25</sup> and ongoing social distancing requirements. Furthermore, financial strain on universities may have impacted on their ability to offer CLE opportunities, especially in instances where staff cutbacks occurred.<sup>26</sup>

All of these issues have necessarily impacted on CLE programs and traditional notions of what a clinical experience would usually entail — such as client contact, interviewing, or interaction with legal professionals — and the ability of educators to meet student expectations. At the time of writing, in mid 2021, universities are still in a state of flux and subject to government border closures and regulation of student mobility, exacerbated by increased financial strain caused by the loss of international students (at least during 2020-2021). Additionally, there is an element of

---

<sup>21</sup> Shelley Kinash et al, *Supporting Graduate Employability from Generalist Disciplines Through Employer and Private Institution Collaboration* (Final Report, Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching, 2015) 11.

<sup>22</sup> See, eg, Peter Hurley, *Coronavirus and International Students* (Report, Victoria University, October 2020) <<https://www.vu.edu.au/mitchell-institute/tertiary-education/australia-to-lose-half-its-international-students-by-mid-2021>>; and more recently, Farrah Tomazin, Royce Millar and Adam Carey, 'International Student Losses Set to Punch \$18 Billion Hole in Economy', *The Age* (online, 4 April 2021) <<https://www.theage.com.au/national/international-student-losses-set-to-punch-18-billion-hole-in-economy-20210403-p57ga7.html>>.

<sup>23</sup> For example, at Bond University, multi-modal teaching has occurred in all law subjects since the latter part of 2020. See also Natasha Ziebell et al, *Australian Education Survey: Examining the Impact of COVID-19 Report Summary* (Report, University of Melbourne, 2020) 10 <[https://education.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/3413996/Australian-Education-Survey.pdf](https://education.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/3413996/Australian-Education-Survey.pdf)> ('*Australian Education Survey Report*').

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, the Aboriginal Legal Service, 'Access to Legal Help During Coronavirus' (Web Page, 2021) <[https://www.alsnswact.org.au/coronavirus\\_information](https://www.alsnswact.org.au/coronavirus_information)>; Kingsford Legal Centre, 'KLC Services During COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown' (Web Page, 2021) <<https://www.klc.unsw.edu.au/>>.

<sup>25</sup> At the time of writing, lockdowns that had recently been in place in four Australian states and territories have now been reduced to one state. However, many states and territories are enforcing varying degrees of border closure measures, mask requirements and social distancing rules. See Olivana Lathouris, 'Australia's COVID-19 Crisis: State-by-State Guide to Border Restrictions and Lockdowns', *Nine News* (online, 12 July 2021) <<https://www.9news.com.au/national/coronavirus-update-australia-facing-biggest-threat-yet-covid19-spreads-across-country-state-by-state-breakdown/72e6e48d-a0f3-43d0-b575-a56dfe35b844>>; Nick Pearson and Richard Wood, 'COVID-19 Breaking News: Southeast Queensland Goes into Lockdown', *Nine News* (online, 29 June 2021) <<https://www.9news.com.au/national/australia-breaking-news-live-coronavirus-updates-headlines-june-29-2021-australia-vaccination-overhaul/87545b0c-987c-4f38-ab62-02448a72c049>>.

<sup>26</sup> See Universities Australia, '17,000 Uni Jobs Lost to COVID-19' (Media Release, 3 February 2021) <<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/17000-uni-jobs-lost-to-covid-19/>>; Ian Marshman, Elizabeth Baré and Janet Beard, 'As Universities Face Losing 1 in 10 Staff, COVID-driven Cuts Create 4 Key Risks', *The Conversation* (online, 28 September 2020) <<https://theconversation.com/as-universities-face-losing-1-in-10-staff-covid-driven-cuts-create-4-key-risks-147007>>.

uncertainty which prevails, requiring educators to be innovative in finding ongoing teaching solutions.

## **B The COVID-19 effect: Impact on CLE programs and courses**

A desktop snapshot of Australian university websites was undertaken during December 2020 to January 2021 in order to reveal the ways in which CLE programs had been impacted by the pandemic,<sup>27</sup> although the extent of the impact was not always clear from online information. A second desktop snapshot was undertaken in July 2021 to illustrate the continuing effects of COVID-19 on university CLE programs.<sup>28</sup> It is acknowledged that the number of programs impacted could be greater than what was gathered from the desktop snapshots as changes to CLE programs may not have been reflected on publicly accessible university websites. Further research in this area is required to establish the true impact of COVID-19 on various CLE programs in the future. In the meantime, some of the major discernible changes which were effected to existing CLE programs are discussed below.

### **1 January 2021**

Although CLE opportunities vary considerably between institutions, it appeared that nearly half of the programs/courses had not recorded any notable changes to their operations (see below in Table 1).

**Table 1**  
**Online overview of 107 Australian CLE programs and courses in January 2021**

<b>Action taken in respect of CLE: January 2021</b>	<b>Number of programs/courses (34 universities)</b>
No notable changes	52
Moved to an online format	17
Presented in blended/mixed mode format	9
Making use of telephone contact	15
Closed or cancelled	14

Out of the 107 clinic opportunities/courses (offered across 34 universities) listed in **Appendix A** (see the “Initial Impacts” column), 52 of them showed no identifiable changes in their operation on their web pages. However, it should be noted that this may not have been an accurate reflection of their status during the COVID-19 pandemic, as most courses offered in the latter half of 2020 would have been inadvertently affected by COVID-19 restrictions to some extent, at least as much as other face-to-face tertiary offerings. Most of the information available on the remaining clinic opportunities reflected some COVID-19 related measures, although universities responded in different ways.

It was evident that many clinics continued to operate in an altered format after the initial restrictions. As noted above, at least 17 of the identified clinics indicated on their web pages that they had moved to an online format, while nine were shown to have embraced a ‘blended’ or ‘mixed-mode’ format. There were also 15 clinics that indicated they were using a telephonic format (although they may have already utilised this model pre-COVID). CLE opportunities requiring overseas or inter-state travel had of necessity been cancelled, but in total, the online information showed that only 14 clinics appeared to have been cancelled or closed (including international clinics). It is unclear whether they were all closed due to COVID-19, but it is a likely conclusion.

<sup>27</sup> Depicted in **Appendix A**, in the “Initial impacts” column.

<sup>28</sup> Depicted in **Appendix A**, in the “Continued impacts” column.

## 2 July 2021

The second desktop snapshot reveals that there are still almost half the number of programs/courses recording no changes (see below in Table 2). However, it should be noted again that this may not be an accurate representation of their status, as some courses are likely to have been affected by the various state and territory lockdown measures enforced during 2021.<sup>29</sup> In addition, a number of the 53 clinics are representative of CLE programs that have in fact moved back to an in-person format, which is evident when the observed initial impacts to the 107 clinical opportunities is compared against the continued impacts observed in July 2021 (see the “Continued Impacts” listed in **Appendix A**).

**Table 2**  
**Online overview of 107 Australian CLE programs and courses in July 2021**

Action taken in respect of CLE: July 2021	Number of programs/courses (34 universities)
No notable changes <sup>30</sup>	53
Moved to an online format	3
Presented in blended/mixed mode format	23
Making use of telephone contact	12
Closed or cancelled	16

While three clinics remain in an online format and twelve continue to make use of the telephonic format, it appears that far more clinics have opted to embrace a ‘blended’ or ‘mixed mode’ format. The increasing number of clinics relying on the multi-modal format is perhaps indicative of a lasting change to the delivery of CLE. However, this may not be the case if all universities return to ‘business as usual’ (ie, in-person format). Of course, as noted above, further research is necessary to identify the lasting impacts of the pandemic on CLE in the future.

The online information in July 2021 also revealed that an additional two clinics — bringing the number to 16 — have been cancelled or closed. It is likely that the pandemic impacted the majority of these clinics, particularly those requiring international or interstate placements, even though COVID-19 was not mentioned as the reason for cancellation or closure in every instance.

Whilst the information provided online is incomplete and lacks sufficient detail, what the two desktop snapshots reveal is that most CLE opportunities are continuing to be on offer — at least 91 of the 107 — albeit in revised formats. This demonstrates a strong commitment by educators and partner organisations to continue providing learning opportunities for students and community assistance to vulnerable people at a time when help is sorely needed, whether to individuals, small businesses or non-profit organisations. In addition, this has meant that many law students still had opportunities to develop graduate employability skills through CLE.

## IV CLE AND GRADUATE SKILLS IN PANDEMIC TIMES: LOSSES AND GAINS

Being technologically literate and possessing hands-on experience in aspects of technology are now recognised as desirable attributes for future law graduates, and these are likely to become imperative in the future.<sup>31</sup>

With the onset of the pandemic, the implementation and use of technology has rapidly escalated from ‘desirable’ to ‘essential’ in tertiary institutions. From a pedagogical perspective, this has required unexpected resilience and creativity on the part of educators. These expectations have been even more amplified in CLE due to the interactive nature of the student

<sup>29</sup> For example, at the time of writing, a lockdown is occurring in one state of Australia.

<sup>30</sup> Includes programs/courses that have moved back to in-person format.

<sup>31</sup> Cantatore, ‘New Frontiers in Clinical Legal Education’ (n 15) 19.



learning experience. A recent special issue of the *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* presented various perspectives on responses to COVID-19 and the experiences of law teachers in dealing with the crisis.<sup>32</sup> From the eight practice reports drawn from the UK, USA and India, it was evident that the challenges were universal in nature. The issue also focuses on how CLE programs can find new and sustainable ways to deliver legal services to their clients.<sup>33</sup> In addition, it features an article on the important aspect of mental wellbeing of students during pandemic times.<sup>34</sup> A common theme in these reports is the significant efforts of law teachers to provide flexible teaching and innovative teaching methods. Whilst the adverse impacts of COVID-19 are acknowledged and lamented, the overall approach by educators has been pragmatic and outcomes-focused — from both a client service perspective and the student experience. Matt, Bellinger and McDonald outlined the process of converting their in-person clinic to a remote service, ‘by detailing steps taken such as developing a remote operating student training manual, establishing a new case triage system, utilising Zoom sessions, and developing a user focused website.’<sup>35</sup> These measures, while necessitated by COVID-19, provide a foundation to increase clinic services and broaden the student experience in the future, by allowing for remote delivery. Therefore, it is foreseen that students will benefit from this type of experience by being introduced to alternative means of client contact and service delivery, honing their technology skills in the process. Thus, the authors argue that there is a ‘silver lining in the black cloud of COVID-19’.<sup>36</sup>

### **A The challenges**

The greatest challenge presented by COVID-19 was that it was unexpected and required almost instantaneous change and adjustment by tertiary institutions. This was evidenced by the immediate adoption of online and remote teaching (and later, multi-modal teaching)<sup>37</sup> in law schools.

For CLE programs, these changed delivery modes presented additional challenges due to the face-to-face nature and client interaction required in many clinics. In addition, there is often a strong reliance on industry partnerships to support student placements where students are supervised by experienced lawyers. Some firms and community legal centres faced their own challenges following the onset of COVID-19, with many incorporating more remote work conditions for staff,<sup>38</sup> resulting in fewer supervisors being available. Some may have struggled with the logistics of moving to online delivery and implementing new systems, while others have experienced staff cuts, resulting in an inability to accommodate student placements, especially where they take the form of unfunded volunteer opportunities. These issues have resulted in diminished clinic opportunities for student cohorts and consequently their opportunities to develop graduate employability skills, such as, community engagement, industry awareness and social context.

From clinical educators’ perspectives, COVID-19 has necessitated acquiring new skills under pressure and in record time to continue course and clinic offerings. In many instances, there may

<sup>32</sup> Hugh McFaul and Francine Ryan, ‘Special Issue: Clinical and Public Legal Education’ (2020) 27(4) *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* 1.

<sup>33</sup> See, eg, Tia Ebarb Matt, Natasha Bellinger and Kim McDonald, ‘The Silver Lining in the Black Cloud of COVID-19’ (2020) 27(4) *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* 135, which discusses the University of Exeter’s transformation from an in person to a remote delivery service.

<sup>34</sup> Emily Wapples, ‘Promoting Positive Mental Health in International Postgraduate Law Students at a Time of Global Uncertainty: A Case Study from QLegal at Queen Mary University of London’ (2020) 27(4) *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* 107.

<sup>35</sup> Matt, Bellinger and McDonald (n 33) 136.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> For example, Bond University adopted multi-modal teaching in all law subjects since the latter part of 2020.

<sup>38</sup> See, eg, Albany Community Legal Centre Inc, *Annual Report 2019-20* (Report, 2020) 4 <[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f8fd9541642720312c358fe/t/5f979b0f2171b96b6634c95d/1603771159101/ALCLC\\_AnnualReport2020\\_Web.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f8fd9541642720312c358fe/t/5f979b0f2171b96b6634c95d/1603771159101/ALCLC_AnnualReport2020_Web.pdf)>; LawRight, *Annual Report 2020* (Report, 2020) 8 <<https://www.lawright.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/LawRight-2020-Annual-Report.pdf>>; Barwon Community Legal Service, ‘Services Update – COVID-19 Response’ (Web Page, 17 March 2020) <<https://www.barwoncommunitylegal.org.au/services-update-covid-19-response/>>.

also be expectations of increased teaching due to university staff cuts, which places further pressure on educators.<sup>39</sup> This has a knock-on effect which includes increased stress,<sup>40</sup> and may affect the mental wellbeing and resilience of educators. This in turn may affect educators' teaching and their ability to assist students in developing graduate employability skills to the fullest extent. As an example of action taken to address some of these issues, at Bond University, one of the authors has led the establishment of a new partnership with LawRight to facilitate the ongoing operation of two on-campus client advice clinics (A Commercial Law Clinic and Property Law Clinic). Ongoing COVID-19 challenges have also necessitated adaptability in relation to remote client appointments and ongoing student supervision requirements. These have been addressed by improving technology in the clinics and providing communication options other than traditional in person appointments.

The long-term effects of the pandemic are yet to be assessed, but there have been increased reports of mental health issues as a result of the pandemic generally,<sup>41</sup> and also within the ranks of academic staff.<sup>42</sup> In a report prepared by Melbourne University,<sup>43</sup> it was found that the lockdown period exacerbated existing issues and resulted in the emergence of significant wellbeing and mental health problems.<sup>44</sup> Preparation for teaching also became more time-consuming as educators spent a lot of their time recording videos or sourcing information in a form with which students could engage.<sup>45</sup> In addition, it was reported that:

Teachers raised concerns about their personal health and wellbeing while they were working from home, due to feelings of isolation, physical workspace, excessive screen time and dealing with stress. They also reported exhaustion due to the additional workload remote learning has created and, in some cases, they were attempting to manage teaching on-site and via remote learning at the same time.<sup>46</sup>

It is conceivable that these pressures would be even more pronounced in CLE, where practice-based learning is the focus and external constraints require additional flexibility and resilience.

From a student perspective, various recent studies have shown an increase in depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts in university students during COVID-19.<sup>47</sup> The adverse effects on student wellbeing are caused by a variety of factors, including uncertainty, concerns about the pandemic, social isolation and having to deal with technology and remote learning.<sup>48</sup> The Melbourne University report observed that 'for more vulnerable students, providing additional support has been severely impeded by remote learning modes.'<sup>49</sup> These issues are relevant in all disciplines; however, clinic students may be more severely impacted by the restrictions and constraints imposed during the pandemic.

<sup>39</sup> See, eg, Madeleine Heffernan, 'Casuals Bore the Brunt as COVID Drove Unis to Shed 7500 Jobs', *The Age* (online, 12 May 2021) <<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/casuals-bore-the-brunt-as-covid-drove-unis-to-shed-7500-jobs-20210511-p57qrj.html>>; Naaman Zhou, 'Australian Universities Flag More Budget Cuts, Job Losses in the Next Year', *The Guardian* (online, 26 February 2021) <<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/feb/26/australian-universities-flag-more-budget-cuts-job-losses-in-the-next-year>>.

<sup>40</sup> Antonio Arturo Fernandez and Graham Paul Shaw, 'Academic Leadership in a Time of Crisis: The Coronavirus and COVID-19' (2020) 14(1) *Journal of Leadership Studies* 39.

<sup>41</sup> Melissa M Sloan et al, 'Pandemic Emotions: The Extent, Correlates, and Mental Health Consequences of Personal and Altruistic Fear of COVID-19' (Working Paper, University of South Florida, 2020).

<sup>42</sup> Virginia Gewin, 'Pandemic Burnout is Rampant in Academia', *Nature* (Article, 15 March 2021) <<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00663-2>>.

<sup>43</sup> *Australian Education Survey Report* (n 23) 10.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> See, eg, Changwon Son et al, 'Effects of COVID-19 on College Students' Mental Health in the United States: Interview Survey Study' (2020) 22(9) *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 1 <**Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**<https://www.jmir.org/2020/9/e21279/>>; Nicola Meda et al, 'Students' Mental Health Problems Before, During, and After COVID-19 Lockdown in Italy' (2021) 134 *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 69.

<sup>48</sup> Changwon Son et al (n 47); Nicola Meda et al (n 47).

<sup>49</sup> *Australian Education Survey Report* (n 23) 10.

CLE is by nature a practice-based activity focused on enabling students to put theory into practice and develop graduate employability skills.<sup>50</sup> CLE benefits to students include interaction with 'real' clients and cases; development of social responsibility, empathy and interpersonal skills; networking and integrating with legal professionals; and promotion of ethical behaviour in students.<sup>51</sup>

It is conceivable that the restrictive measures imposed by COVID-19 could impact on the student clinic experience and their ability to develop employability skills in the following respects:

- A loss of clinical opportunities and placements where law firms and community organisations have experienced constraints or have undergone structural transformations;<sup>52</sup>
- A temporary loss of personal interaction with clients where clinics are being run telephonically or online;<sup>53</sup>
- Altered methods of client communication;<sup>54</sup>
- The need to have access to technology;<sup>55</sup>
- Reduced opportunities for teamwork;
- Reduced opportunities for networking and personal contact with legal professionals;<sup>56</sup>
- Uncertainty about in-person opportunities (where impacted by COVID-19 restrictions); and
- Less personal interaction with educators.

Whilst more research will need to be undertaken on the long-term effects of COVID-19 on the development of student graduate employability skills in CLE, it is conceivable that students may have experienced reduced benefits in terms of traditional CLE experiences. For example, due to clinic closures and delivery of CLE online, students will have had diminished opportunities to develop some of the GEI attributes (eg, teamwork, intercultural understanding, community engagement and industry awareness). However, implemented changes to CLE during the pandemic may have also increased law student skills in other, unexpected ways.

## **B Opportunities for growth**

The continued persistence of the CLE sector in the face of COVID-19 challenges has been evident in recent publications,<sup>57</sup> particularly in respect of moves towards remote and multi-modal teaching and online/telephonic engagement with both clients and external providers. Educators have seized the opportunity to harness technology to achieve clinic outcomes despite the impediments of COVID-19, and many will be retaining mixed-modal delivery moving forward.<sup>58</sup> Some of the perceived benefits for educators may be:

- Improved technology skills;

<sup>50</sup> Francina Cantatore, 'The Impact of Pro Bono Law Clinics on Employability and Work Readiness in Law Students' (2018) 25(1) *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education* 147.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid 150.

<sup>52</sup> See EY, *Legal Need and the COVID-19 Crisis: Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria* (Report, April 2020) 3; Jeff Giddings, 'Clinic in the Times of COVID19' (2020) 11(2) *Jindal Global Law Review* 229; Community Legal Centres NSW, 'Community Legal Centres Anticipate Significant, Long-term Increases in Demand for Key Services Due to COVID-19 Crisis' (Web Page) <<https://www.clcnsw.org.au/community-legal-centres-anticipate-significant-long-term-increases-demand-key-services-due-covid-19>>.

<sup>53</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>54</sup> See eg, Community Legal Centres Queensland, *Impact Report 2021* (Report, 2021) 12, 23, 33-34.

<sup>55</sup> See generally Sarah O'Shea, Paul Koshy and Catherine Drane, 'The Implications of COVID-19 for Student Equity in Australian Higher Education' (2021) 43(6) *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 576, 583-4.

<sup>56</sup> Due to lockdowns and remote working and learning.

<sup>57</sup> See, eg, Matt, Bellinger and McDonald (n 33); Wapples (n 34).

<sup>58</sup> Matt, Bellinger and McDonald (n 33) 153.

- Developing a diverse set of teaching and learning skills on different platforms;
- A greater awareness of the mental wellbeing of students, especially in remote learning situations;
- The ability to provide alternative solutions to traditional placements;
- The ability to provide enhanced client services, especially to rural, regional and remote clinic clients.

For students, COVID-19 has also presented significant opportunities for growth, particularly in relation to:

- The need to engage with clients remotely,<sup>59</sup> necessitating improved technology skills;
- Increased self-confidence and resilience as a result of dealing with unexpected challenges of this nature;
- Fostering increased empathy for clinic clients in need, especially rural, regional and remote clients;
- Increasing practice-based skills in online communications with educators and industry partners.<sup>60</sup>

It is significant to note that a number of the skills listed above were recognised in the FLIP Report as skills needed for future legal practices.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, while COVID-19 has impacted the traditional ways in which CLE is offered to students, the altered forms of delivery (ie, online, telephonic and mixed-modal) still provide opportunities for students to increase their employability skills.

## V CONCLUSION

It is evident from the snapshot overview that CLE providers in Australian universities have generally taken a proactive approach in maintaining clinical opportunities for students, albeit in altered structures. This is significant in ensuring not only that students are able to obtain experiential learning opportunities, but also to facilitate access to justice for those in need in pro bono clinics. According to the Global Health Justice Partnership, our goal for the world after the pandemic should be to 'build a new infrastructure of care that supports our collective wellbeing in the long-term.'<sup>62</sup> As Buhler stated in her recent essay, 'Clinics can continue to be vital sites for theorizing justice and legal practice for our post-pandemic world.'<sup>63</sup> In this regard, the Australian CLE community has been robust in embracing change and harnessing new opportunities.

At the time of writing, there are still instances of COVID-19 lockdowns being experienced in some Australian states, impacting on the ability to run CLE programs in their traditional format.<sup>64</sup> In general, clinicians have worked to overcome COVID-19 challenges, as evidenced by the reports referred to above, and the fact that at least 91 of the 107 clinics surveyed continued to operate in 2021 and were still operating at the time of writing — with some returning to in-person delivery. There has been a reimagining of CLE practices, not only in Australia but worldwide, and

<sup>59</sup> See eg, Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria, 'Community Legal Centres and COVID-19' (Web Page) <<https://www.fclc.org.au/covid19>>; University of South Australia, *Legal Advice Clinic* (Annual Report, 2020) 16; Monica Taylor, 'Legal Clinics Get a Boost from UQ Law Students' (UQ News, 13 May 2020) <<https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2020/05/legal-clinics-get-boost-uq-law-students>>.

<sup>60</sup> See eg, Monash University, *Monash Law Clinics Annual Report 2019-2020* (Annual Report, 2020) 11.

<sup>61</sup> *FLIP Report* (n 1) 78-9.

<sup>62</sup> Sarah Buhler, 'Law Schools, Clinical Legal Education, and the Pandemic Portal' (2020) 25(4) *Lex Electronica* 204, 208 <<https://canlii.ca/t/t0l3>>.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Lathouris (n 25); Calla Wahlquist, 'Melbourne Lockdown Extended as Victorian Government Seeks Federal Payments for Workers', *The Guardian* (online, 2 June 2021) <<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/jun/02/victoria-covid-update-melbourne-lockdown-extended-as-state-seeks-federal-payments-for-workers>>; Pearson and Wood (n 25).

much can be gleaned from the initiatives and resourcefulness exhibited by practitioners in Australia and other jurisdictions. The global pandemic has shown that tertiary institutions have the ability to change and adapt as needed to remain viable, and the same is true for CLE programs. The challenge is to use the insights gained from this experience to improve and increase clinic offerings going forward.

## APPENDIX A: CLE IN AUSTRALIA: A SNAPSHOT<sup>65</sup>

University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
<b>Australian Catholic University</b>	<i>Refugee Law Project</i> : No identifiable changes on the website.	No identifiable changes.
<b>Australian National University</b>	<i>Clinical courses overview</i> : Environmental Law Clinic, International Law Clinic and Youth Law Clinic: No identifiable changes.  <i>Prison Legal Literacy Clinic, Kimberley Aboriginal Justice Clinic and Legal Education for True Justice</i> : Indigenous Perspectives and Deep Listening on Country: Cancelled for Sem 2 2020 due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements and still appears to be closed.	<i>Clinical courses overview</i> : No identifiable changes.  <i>Prison Legal Literacy Clinic and Community Law Clinic</i> : Now in-person only. <i>Legal Education for True Justice</i> : Indigenous Perspectives and Deep Listening on Country: course offering in 2021 is multi-modal (both online and in-person). <i>Kimberley Aboriginal Justice Clinic</i> : No offerings for 2021.
	<i>Myanmar Law Clinic</i> : Cancelled for 2021 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.	
	<i>Community Law Clinic</i> : No identifiable change to the program apart from allowing both online and in-person modes of delivery for the second semester 2020.	No identifiable changes.
	No current offerings for the Indigenous Community Law Clinic course or Public Interest Law Clinic for 2021.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
<b>Bond University</b>	<i>Bond Law Clinic Program</i> : Commercial Law Clinic and Property Law Clinic: Closed in Sem 2 & 3 2020 due to Covid-19 and are not currently operating. No identifiable changes to, and currently offering Community Law Clinic, Start-up Law Clinic, Legal Tech Clinic, Criminal Law Clinic and Human Rights Clinic. The Legal Tech Clinic also offers online student opportunities.	Community Law Clinic is currently not on offer. Criminal Law Clinic, Human Rights Law Clinic, Legal Tech Clinic and My Community Legal Clinic: No identifiable changes; however, web pages note that the clinic offerings are 'subject to change'. Introduction of a LawRight Commercial Law Clinic and LawRight Property Law Clinic from September 2021.
	<i>Litigation Clinic</i> : No identifiable changes, but students were able to attend LawRight placement in person or participate via Zoom in Sem 3, 2020.	No identifiable changes and appears to be offered in-person in Sem 3 of 2021.
	<i>Clinical Legal Placement</i> : No identifiable changes. Offered in Sem 1 2021.	No identifiable changes.
	<i>Family Dispute Resolution Clinic</i> : The web page indicates that the clinic is not currently taking any new client appointments. It is unclear whether this is as a result of COVID-19.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.

<sup>65</sup> The table contains web links to Australian CLE offerings displayed online. The initial impacts gathered from the web pages were last viewed on 12 January 2021 and the continued impacts were last observed on 7 July 2021.

University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
	<i>Solomon Islands Law Immersion:</i> Unavailable since Sem 2, 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
<b>Central Queensland University</b>	CQUniversity Law Clinic: Students off-campus have been utilising Zoom to attend the clinic. It is unclear whether the use of technologies such as Zoom is as a result of COVID-19 or has always been implemented. The program, however, has not been available for offer during or after Sem 2 2020, which may be the result of COVID-19.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
<b>Charles Darwin University</b>	<i>The Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic:</i> This clinic involves a one-month internship in the US. As a result of COVID-19 likely not currently available.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Legal Clinic:</i> Offered in Sem 2 2021 via online learning.	Offered in Sem 2 2021 via online and in-person learning.
<b>Curtin University</b>	<i>John Curtin Law Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes.	No identifiable changes.
<b>Deakin University</b>	<i>Deakin Law Clinic:</i> Civil and Commercial Law Clinic; Criminal Law Clinic; Employment Law Clinic; Family Law Clinic; and Venture Law Clinic: No identifiable changes. The current website notice states: "Access to campus remains restricted under current government guidelines..."	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
<b>Edith Cowan University</b>	<i>Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre:</i> No identifiable changes to the elective unit, Community Legal Practice.	No identifiable changes.
<b>Flinders University</b>	<i>Flinders Legal Centre:</i> The appointments for the elective unit, Law in Action are conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams through video conferencing as a result of COVID-19. The website states that all interviews and legal advice work continues to be supervised by experienced legal practitioners.	No identifiable changes.
<b>Griffith University</b>	<i>Innocence Project Legal Clinic:</i> The course was not offered for Sem 2 2020. It is offered again in Sem 1 2021 in blended format.	The course is offered in 2021 in blended format.
	<i>Advanced Family Law Clinic:</i> Offered in in blended format.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Internship Clinic:</i> Offered online in Sem 2 & 3 2020, and in mixed mode in Sem 1 2021.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Legal Clinic:</i> Offered in Sem 1 2021 in blended format.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Social Justice Lawyering Clinic:</i> Placements with LawRight are offered in Sem 1 2021 in blended format.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>International Experience Clinic:</i> No identifiable change; however, it is unclear whether international travel is required, which would be impacted by COVID-19.	Offered in blended format and includes an 'in-field' requirement in 2021. However, it is still unclear whether international travel is required.

University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
	<i>Extended Internship Clinic:</i> Offered in Sem 3 2020 and Sem 1 2021 in blended format.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Refugee Law and Policy Clinic:</i> Offered as a placement at Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS) in Sem 2 2020 in an online format and Sem 1 2021 in blended format.	Offered in 2021 in blended format.
	<i>Community Lawyering Clinic:</i> Offered as a placement at Gold Coast Community Legal Centre and Advice Bureau Inc (GCLC) online in 2020 and in blended format in Sem 1 2021.	Offered in blended format in 2021.
	<i>Trimester in Practice Clinic:</i> Offered in Sem 2 2020 and Sem 1 2021 in an online format.	Offered in Sem 2 of 2021 in a blended format.
<b>James Cook University</b>	<i>Clinical Legal Studies:</i> No identifiable changes.	Course is offered for 'mixed attendance' in 2021.
<b>La Trobe University</b>	<i>Public Interest Law Practice:</i> Appears to be running in 2021 online with a placement component in a not-for-profit, public interest or government agency. <i>Legal Practice and Conduct Clinical Placement:</i> No identifiable changes made to this program and appears to be running in 2021.	Appears to be running in 2021 and the location for the work-based learning is 'flexible'.
<b>Macquarie University</b>	<i>Macquarie Social Justice Clinic:</i> Appears to be running in 2021 and involves a placement through the <i>Social Justice and Legal Tech Clinics</i> subject. The web page states: 'This unit may include a special circumstance offering, designed to ensure learning activities and assessment are provided safely in accordance with COVID-19 restrictions. Units commencing from 27 July may include modified activities.' For the 'special circumstance' offering, it appears that the clinical placement is undertaken via remote teaching and supervision conducted via video chat and email.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
<b>Monash University</b>	<i>Monash Law Clinics (Clayton and Melbourne CBD):</i> There is a COVID-19 update which notes that the clinic is currently operating remotely for clients. The service is being provided to clients by telephone.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Springvale Monash Legal Service (SMLS):</i> There is an update for legal assistance during Covid-19 which states that the legal service has opened a phone service for clients to access free and confidential legal assistance.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>LLB Professional Practice:</i> The web page notes that the clinical period will be conducted remotely.	The web page notes that clinical period 2 was conducted with both onsite and remote attendance.
	<i>Family Law Assistance Program:</i> The web page notes the clinical period will be conducted remotely.	The web page notes that the program is conducted with onsite and remote attendance.
<b>Murdoch University</b>	<i>Murdoch Law Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes to the operation of the clinic, which is run in collaboration with the Southern Communities	No identifiable changes from January 2021.



University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
	Advocacy Legal and Education Services Inc (SCALES).	
Queensland University of Technology	<i>Legal Clinic (Organised Program)</i> : No identifiable changes and appears to be running in Sem 1 2021.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>International Legal Placement</i> : Appears not to be on offer for 2021 as it involves international externships.	No identifiable changes.
RMIT University	<i>Clinical Legal Practice</i> : No identifiable changes. The website states 'In Semester 1 2021, learning will happen through a mix of face-to-face and online activities.'	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
Southern Cross University	<i>Clinical Legal Experience</i> : Appears to be offered in 2021 and requires placement within a legal office.	Offered in Sem 3 of 2021 in an online format.
University of Adelaide	<i>Adelaide Outreach Services</i> : There is an option to either have interviews face to face at the university or conduct interviews online via Zoom teleconferencing.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Magistrates Court Legal Advice Service</i> : Appointments can be booked either for online Zoom conference calls or face to face at Adelaide Magistrates Court.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Equal Opportunity Commission Legal Advice</i> : A notice when booking an appointment states: 'Due to COVID-19 virus all appointments will be conducted via telephone and/or Zoom online video conferencing.'	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Entrepreneur and Venture Advice Clinic</i> : Appears not to be currently operating.	Appears to be running and conducting face-to-face appointments.
	<i>Administrative Appeals Tribunal Legal Advice Service</i> : The web page states 'COVID-19 Changes: For the foreseeable future, AAT will hold hearings over the phone. These meetings will still occur at your appointed time and date.'	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Clinical Legal Education Program</i> : No identifiable changes. All students appear to be able to participate in this program even though the clinics themselves are running remotely.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
University of Canberra	<i>Legal Advice Clinic</i> : Unclear how the course has changed, however the web page states: 'Possible changes to your unit's learning activities and assessment items: These changes will not be updated in the published unit outline, but will be communicated to you via your unit's UCLearn (Canvas) teaching site.'	Offered throughout 2021 and states that the mode of delivery is 'internship'; however, it is unclear whether this is in-person, remote or multi-modal.
University of Melbourne	<i>Melbourne Law School Clinics: Disability Human Rights Clinic, Indigenous Legal Advocacy Clinic, Legal Internship, MLS Tax Clinic, NDIS and Disability Benefits Clinic, Sustainable Business Clinic, Street Law and Public Interest Law Clinic</i> (This clinic involves potentially being placed at JobWatch (a telephone information service);	Disability Human Rights Clinic and Street Law: Not offered in 2021. Legal Internship, Law Apps Clinic, and Public Interest Law Clinic are offered in 2021 as multi-modal delivery.

University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
	Refugee Legal (all advice and assistance given through telephone and video conferencing); or Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (which appears to be a telephone service). The web page shows no identifiable changes to the clinics in 2021, although they would have been impacted by the Victorian restrictions during 2020.	Other clinics show no identifiable changes from January 2021.
University of Newcastle	<i>University of Newcastle Legal Centre: Free legal clinics:</i> The web page states that 'in order to manage the risks posed by the COVID-19 outbreak, until further notice the Free Legal student popup clinics will take place by telephone rather than face to face meetings.' Available clinics include the <i>Public Interest Environmental Law Clinic</i> and <i>Morning Advice Clinic</i> .	The clinics now appear to be running face-to-face including both the <i>Public Interest Environmental Law Clinic</i> and the <i>Morning Advice Clinic</i> .
	<i>Law on the beach:</i> Appears to be operating in January & February 2021.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
	<i>Older persons legal clinic:</i> The web page states that the advice clinics are taking place by telephone rather than face to face meetings as a result of the risks posed by COVID-19.	The clinics now appear to be running in-person.
	<i>Pop-up clinic for students:</i> Only taking place by telephone because of COVID-19; however, the dates indicate that it has not been operating since May 2020.	Appears to be running in-person, however, no dates are provided for future sessions.
	<i>Pro bono services:</i> No identifiable change. Newcastle Law School's Legal Centre provides free legal services to the community.	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
University of New South Wales	<i>Kingsford Legal Centre Clinics:</i> The Centre includes a <i>Community Law Clinic</i> ; <i>Employment Law Clinic</i> and <i>Family Law Community Education Clinic</i> . The KLC web page states that they are 'providing all advice appointments over the telephone' as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. <i>Human Rights Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes. <i>Land and Environment Court Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes. <i>Police Powers Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes.	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.
University of Notre Dame	<i>Notre Dame Legal Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes.	No identifiable changes.
University of Queensland	<i>Legal Clinic:</i> The web page states 'COVID-19 Update: Clinic offerings will be in mixed-mode delivery (online and face-to-face where possible), in accordance with Government restrictions and the latest UQ advice...' <i>UQ Pro Bono Centre:</i> The Centre involves multiple projects, including: <i>Manning St Project:</i> No identifiable changes. A partnership with Caxton Legal Centre with no indication that its operation has changed to online, for example.	No identifiable changes to any CLE programs from January 2021.

University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
	<p><i>Law Education and Outreach:</i> No identifiable changes.</p> <p><i>Barrister Assistance Team:</i> No identifiable changes.</p> <p><i>Climate Justice Initiative:</i> No identifiable changes.</p>	
University of South Australia	<i>Legal Advice Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes and appears to be running in 2021. The web page for the clinic does not indicate that interviews are being conducted online.	The web page states: "During 2021 we are providing free legal advice via our secure and confidential Tele-law services."
University of Sunshine Coast	<p><i>Advice Clinic:</i> Operates in partnership with the Suncoast Community Legal Service (the web page indicates that 'despite the current COVID-19 pandemic we still provide support services to our community through phone appointments only.')</p> <p><i>Specialist Law Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes and unclear whether it will be running in 2021 as the course outline is unavailable.</p> <p><i>Law Professional Practice:</i> No identifiable changes and also unclear whether it will run in 2021.</p>	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.
University of Sydney	<p><i>Public Interest law Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes; but as it involves placement within partner community legal centres, therefore any changes to the operations of those legal centres would have affected this clinic in 2020. The web page states: 'For 2021 it is currently planned to resume usual face-to-face classes and onsite placements.'</p> <p><i>Law and Social Justice Clinic:</i> Involving a placement at the Redfern Legal Centre, it will not be offered in summer of 2021 but will continue to run throughout the rest of 2021.</p>	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.
University of Tasmania	<p><i>Clinical Legal Education:</i> No identifiable changes, but any COVID-19 related changes to the partner organisations would likely have resulted in changes to the CLE program.</p> <p><i>Community Legal Practice:</i> Involves a placement at the Student Legal Service Clinic; however, the program is currently unavailable. It is unclear whether that is as a result of COVID-19.</p>	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.
University of Technology Sydney	<i>Strategic Litigation Clinic:</i> No identifiable changes. This subject entails 'working on strategic litigation cases' but it is unclear whether placements are involved.	The subject appears to be offered in 2021 and is delivered online.
University of Western Australia	Clinical Legal Education (Mediation): No identifiable changes to the program, and unclear whether it will run in 2021. It requires a placement in the <i>UWA Mediation Clinic</i> .	No identifiable changes from January 2021.
Western Sydney University	<i>Western Sydney University Justice Clinic:</i> This clinic does not have a drop-in service or a general advice line. Clinic work involves	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.

University	Initial Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>January 2021</i>	Continued Impact of COVID-19 on CLE programs/courses: <i>July 2021</i>
	<p>responding to and informing law reform and access to justice issues.</p> <p>Clinical Legal Placement: This subject requires a placement at the Paramatta Community Justice Clinic but is not currently on offer.</p>	
<b>Victoria University</b>	<p><i>WEstjustice</i>: This program includes the following services: <i>Family Violence and Family Law Clinic</i>; <i>Fines Clinic</i>; <i>“Hear Me” Legal Triage Clinic</i>; and <i>Sunshine Youth Clinic</i>. The web page for WEstjustice states, ‘As a health precaution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have decided to close our offices to the public. However, our legal advice clinics will continue to operate via phone.’</p> <p>Partnership with Victoria Legal Aid Melbourne (VLA) which involves a number of services. The web page for VLA states that from 23 March 2020 the majority of duty lawyer services will be delivered via phone or other conferencing facilities and not face to face, noting that the Federal and Family Courts have already moved to phone-based services; they will provide limited in person appearances while working with the courts to move to remote service delivery; are not be accepting clients and visitors are their office reception areas and many of the staff are moving to work from home arrangements.</p> <p><i>Victoria Police Program</i>: No identifiable changes. Unclear if this is currently being offered.</p> <p><i>State Trustees Program</i>: No identifiable changes. Unclear if this is currently being offered.</p>	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.
<b>Swinburne University of Technology</b>	<p>There appear to be no legal clinics run by the university; however, the law degree requires students to take three subjects which entail 20 days of law placements. Any changes to the operation of placement organisations would have affected how students experience this placement component.</p>	No identifiable to any CLE programs changes from January 2021.