

DWL ADVOCACY PROGRAM HANDBOOK 2024

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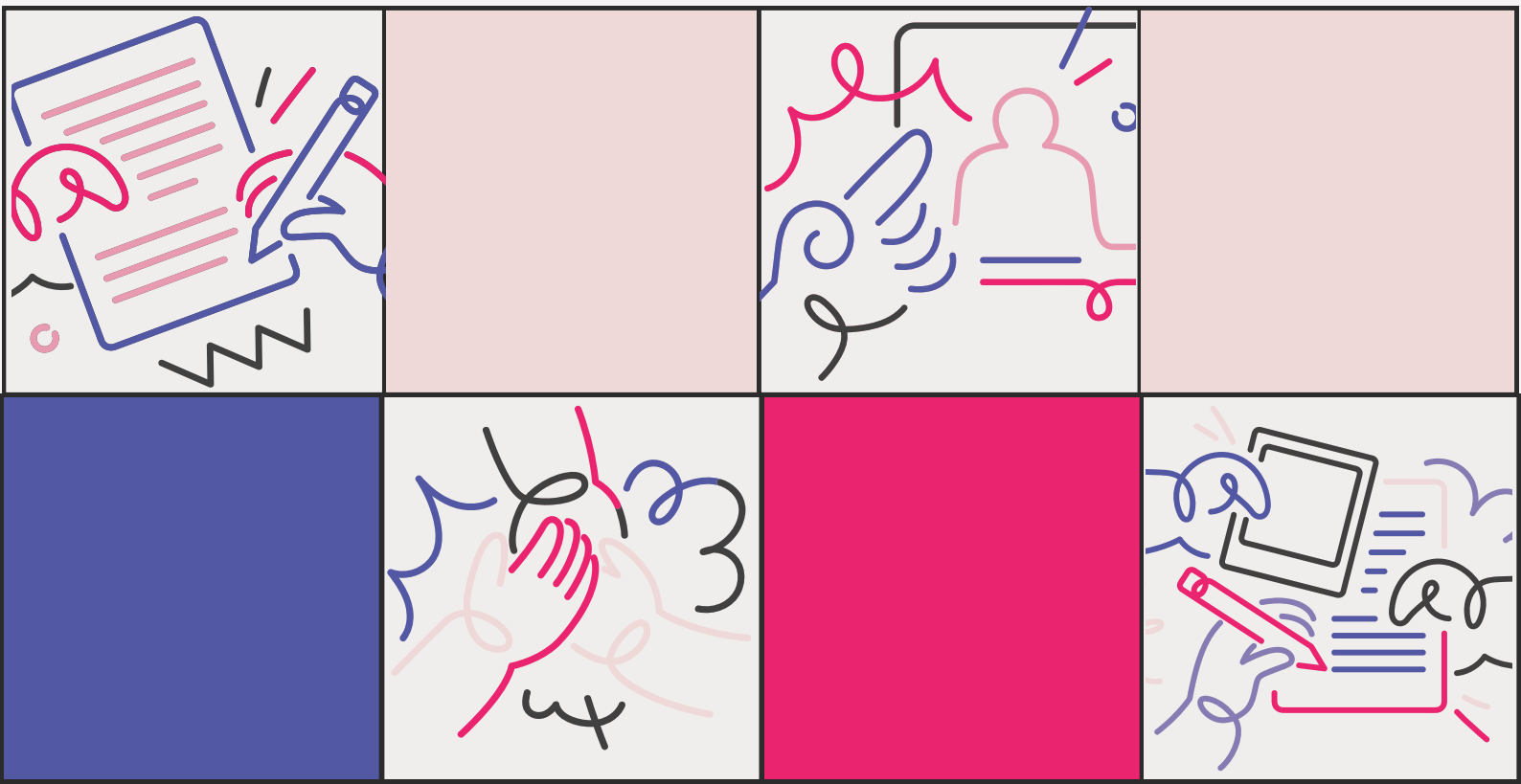
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Overview

Diverse Women in Law (DWL) is excited to launch the DWL Advocacy Program 2024. This comprises a civil law Moot (Moot), and criminal law Witness Examination Competition (Witness Examination).

The initiative promotes intersectionality, diversity and inclusion. DWL students have the opportunity to gain advocacy and alternative dispute resolution skills, meet peers from diverse backgrounds, and network with accomplished legal advocates.

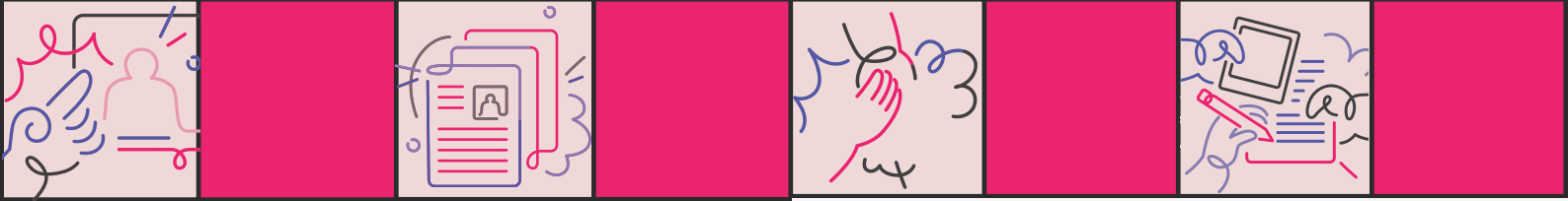
The DWL Advocacy Program runs between June and August and comprises of:

- the civil law Moot competition;
- the criminal law Witness Examination competition; and
- an awards night to be held in October.

Each event is advertised separately and subject to its own individual application process. Students can participate in either the Moot or Witness Examination; they cannot actively partake in more than one event. However, Workshop participants are encouraged to attend the competition rounds as spectators.

Each affiliated law school in NSW can nominate one team of three people for the Moot, and a one person-team for the Witness Examination. Overall, we envisage eight Moot teams and eight Witness Examination teams. If a university seeks to nominate an additional team, they must provide evidence as to why an additional registration advances inclusion at their university.





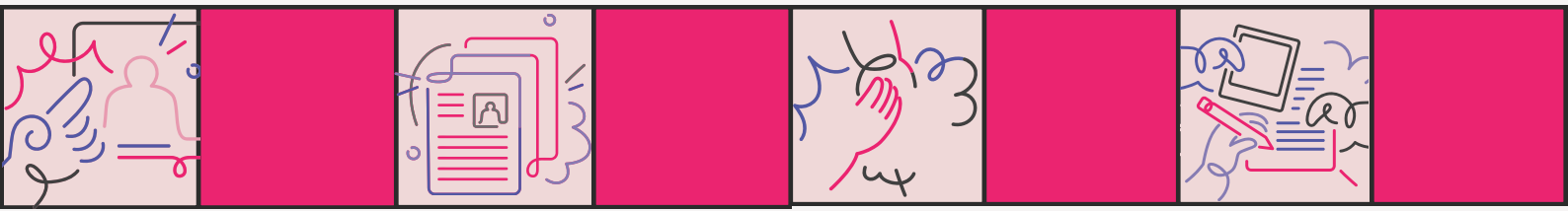
Participant Eligibility Criteria

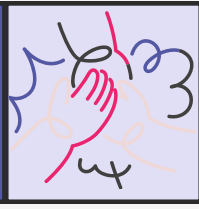
The DWL Advocacy Program is open to persons who:

1. self-identify as a woman, non-binary or gender diverse; and
2. self-identify as being from one or more of the following underrepresented backgrounds, including (but not limited to):
 - culturally and linguistically diverse persons;
 - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons;
 - LGBTQI+ persons;
 - Living with a disability;
 - people who experience or have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage;
 - people with caring responsibilities; and
3. are studying tertiary-level law courses in New South Wales.

Location

The competition will be held across various locations including Western Sydney University, UNSW, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Parramatta, Corrs Chambers Westgarth, King and Wood Malesons and Thomson Geer.





Program Structure

Civil Moot

The civil law Moot is targeted at pre-penultimate and penultimate year law students who identify as Diverse Women. Teams of three students can apply. Each team has the opportunity to meet and practise with a barrister coach on a date arranged by the Bar. Previous mooting experience is not a requirement. Non-mooters can still be involved by offering research assistance to their team. Applicants can be from any year of law, however those in the third to fifth year of their degree are encouraged to apply.

Witness Examination

The criminal law Witness Examination is targeted at all year-level students who identify as Diverse Women. Students can apply individually. Previous competition experience is not a requirement. Applicants can be from any year of law, however knowledge of the rules of evidence is advantageous. Therefore, students who have studied courses in criminal law and evidence are encouraged to apply.





Moot Breakdown

Each team is connected with a barrister coach to assist them in preparation for the Moot.

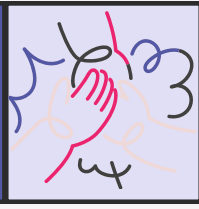
Beyond this session, students are welcome to organise additional coaching sessions at a mutually convenient time.

The Moot involves written and oral submissions focused on one problem - a civil law appellate matter. During the preliminary round each team moots once. The preliminary rounds are followed by Semi-Finals and Grand Finals. Each round is scheduled for 90 minutes. Teams are awarded scores by judges. Written submissions are judged separately, prior to oral submissions to ensure consistency in marking. The highest scoring team wins each round. In determining progression, organisers first look at the number of wins of each team, and then to the point margins of their rounds.

Role of Coaches

- Coaches assist with oral and written advocacy skills.
- Written memorandum: Students do all research, drafting and final editing of memorandum themselves (without assistance). Coaches can comment on persuasiveness of submissions and help to identify issues.
- Oral hearings: No restriction on the amount of coaching a team receives in preparation for oral submissions. Coaches can query, question and test students on how well they know facts and precedent surrounding particular points of law.





Witness Examination Breakdown

Competitors take on the role of a barrister in a simulated criminal trial, examining and cross-examining witnesses to prove their case. Two competing students represent Counsel for the Defence and Prosecution. The competition tests students' ability to develop a case theory and understand evidentiary issues. Competitors are bound by the rules of evidence and must act within those parameters.

Witness Examination requires no prolonged formal preparation. Students are given the relevant materials and witness statements prior to the competition round. Each competitor has their own volunteer witness, whom they meet for 30 minutes before the 'trial'. Witnesses are DWL volunteers.

Each round involves a new factual scenario. The preliminary rounds allow students to represent one side for a particular factual scenario. This is followed by Semi-Finals and Grand Finals. Teams are awarded scores by judges. The highest scoring team wins each round. In determining progression, organisers first look at the number of wins of each team, and then to the point margins of their rounds.

The competition round is structured as a defended hearing and proceeds as follows:

- a. Appearances
- b. Opening by Prosecution: 2 mins
- c. Examination in Chief by Prosecution: 10 mins
- d. Cross-Examination by Defence: 15 mins
- e. Opening by Defence: 2 mins
- f. Examination in Chief by Defence: 10 mins
- g. Cross Examination by Prosecution: 15 mins
- h. Break before Summation: 3 mins
- i. Summation by Prosecution: 3 mins
- j. Summation by Defence: 3 mins





The DWL Advocacy Program is unique

Law school competitions are a strong tradition and are one of the oldest forms of legal training

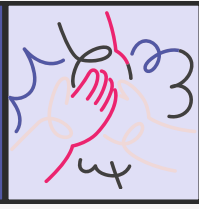
Law school advocates have an 'edge'. They possess knowledge of the law and court procedure, can research and work through complex issues, make sense of precedent and apply legal principles to make persuasive arguments in novel and creative ways to solve legal problems.

However, law school competitions are often male-dominated, and can be hostile and intimidating to the female voice. The advocacy environment often belongs to an insular student community. It can be an inhospitable place for those who do not fit the archetype, namely diverse women.

The Bar is not visibly representative of a cross-section of society

Diversity is vital for law school competitions because budding student advocates tend to pursue careers at the Bar, which is the main feeder profession for the judiciary. Currently, 25.74% of practising barristers in NSW are women. 15.04% of Senior Counsel in NSW are women. Our purpose is to make the Bar more inclusive and representative by providing DWL students with the necessary skills and confidence to pursue careers in this underrepresented space.





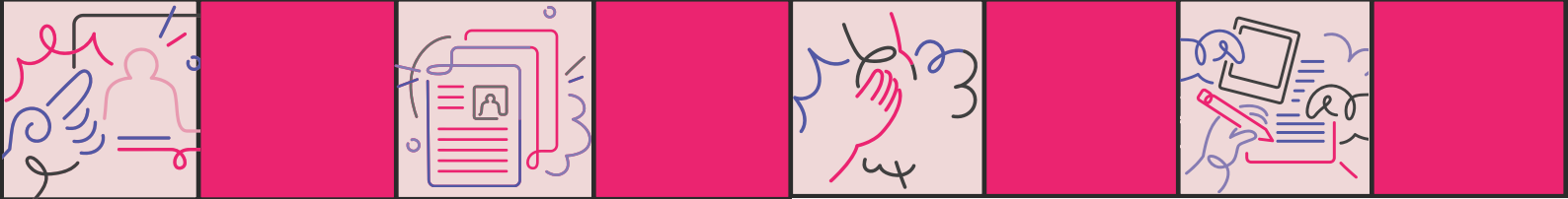
‘Market Gap’

There is no existing intervarsity moot or witness examination competition that caters solely to diverse women and provides them with targeted advocacy skills and coaching. The DWL Advocacy Program fills this gap. Indeed, it is the first of its kind. This unique, inaugural initiative celebrates diversity and addresses the challenges that exist in this space. Coaches, sourced from the Bar, will impart skills and help DWL students see advocacy as a viable career path. Competitors and Workshop participants will develop the advocacy skills, confidence and strong industry connections so that they can eventually become advocates for diversity and change.

“SEND A MESSAGE TO THOSE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS: IF YOU ARE BRIGHT, ARTICULATE AND HARD WORKING YOU WILL SUCCEED AT THE BAR REGARDLESS OF YOUR GENDER, ETHNIC OR CULTURAL BACKGROUND”

- INGMAR TAYLOR, SC





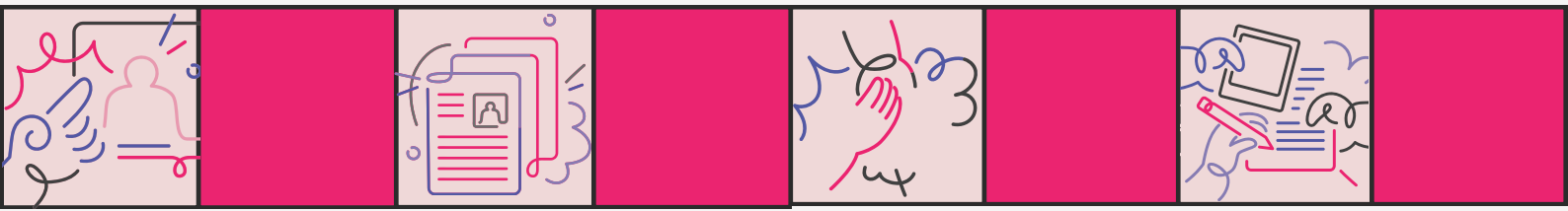
Schedule of Events

Round	Location	Date
Moot Preliminary Round	Western Sydney University and UNSW	24, 25 June, 1 July 2024
Witness Examination Preliminary Round	ODPP Parramatta	2 and 4 July 2024
Moot and Witness Examination Semi Final	Corrs Chambers Westgarth	22 July 2024
Moot and Witness Examination Grand Final	King and Wood Mallesons	July or August 2024 (date TBC)
Awards Night	Thomson Geer	October 2024 (date TBC)

DWL Contacts




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Keerthi Ravi - Founder & Board member
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2024 Criminal Law Witness Examination Competition

Diverse Women in Law (DWL) invites all law students to participate in the Witness Examination competition. Law schools across NSW may nominate a one person-team for the Witness Examination.

<p>Develop a case theory and navigate evidentiary issues within the rules of evidence</p>		<p>Two competing students represent Counsel for the Defence and Prosecution</p>	
	<p>Take on the role of a barrister, examining and cross-examining witnesses to build your case</p>	<h2>Key Dates</h2> <p>Applications close on 17 May 2024</p> <p>Competition dates: 2 and 4 July (preliminary rounds), 22 July (semi final)</p> <p>Venue: ODPP Parramatta, Corrs Chambers Westgarth and King & Wood Mallesons</p> <p>Apply Here</p>	
<p>Enhance your legal skills and gain practical advocacy experience</p>			

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2024 Civil Law Moot Competition

Diverse Women in Law (DWL) proudly presents the inaugural Civil Law Moot competition. The competition is designed for all law students, however those in years 3 - 5 are encouraged to apply. Every NSW university may nominate one team of three people to participate in the Moot.



Experience personalised coaching and mentoring from experienced barristers



Receive feedback on your written and oral submissions from barristers before the moot competition

Key Dates

Applications close on 17 May 2024

Competition dates: 24, 25 June and 1 July (preliminary rounds), 22 July (semi final)

Venue: UNSW, Western Sydney University, Corrs Chambers Westgarth and King & Wood Mallesons

[**Apply Here!**](#)

Participate in a moot competition designed specifically for diverse women entering the profession



No previous mooting experience required

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