



President's Report 2025

By Sabrina Feher

Overview

As President of the Deakin Law Students' Society Geelong (DLSSG) for 2025, I served as a key spokesperson to external stakeholders and leader within our committee.

This year began with a strong focus on recruitment. Following the 2024 AGM, several Director roles remained unfilled. Through proactive marketing and meeting with interested students, we successfully filled all director positions by early Trimester 1. These new Directors went on to be some of the most dedicated team players of our committee. We then continued to build a vibrant Officer team until the committee reached full capacity. I'm proud to now observe the strong application numbers leading into our AGM, which should allow the 2026 committee to begin the year focused on early event organisation.

Thanks in large part to highly proactive and well-organised Directors, my role remained predominantly one of oversight rather than hands-on event planning. The role required adaptability, as no one period of the year was the same, and though our events schedule varied, it was constant. As such, I was in ongoing communication with various portfolios, stepping in to provide guidance wherever needed, and attending all events.

Further, the Executive team was an absolute blast to work with. In particular, I worked closely with Erica, our Secretary. Her exceptional organisational skills eased my workload and her opinions were invaluable.

It was also a pleasure to engage with Deakin Law Faculty and the Business and Law Student Engagement team, who provided leadership development opportunities and consistent advice.



One standout observation from 2025 was the high level of engagement from junior students across our events, and among our committee.

Key responsibilities

My core responsibilities included, but were not limited to:

- Ensuring committee members remained engaged in their roles;
- Regularly checking in as to portfolio's progress, including facilitating monthly committee meetings;
- Supporting Rylee, our Sponsorship Director, in maintaining positive relationships with our sponsors;
- Engaging with Deakin's Faculty of Business and Law, including sitting as a member of Deakin's School of Law Advisory Board;
- Maintaining consistent communication with DUSA;
- Working alongside Julia, our Treasurer, on budgeting decisions; and
- Providing guidance and creative input across events.

This is a role where a variety of leadership styles can succeed. Personally, I was seldom the loudest in the room, but took a measured approach, underpinned by early planning and regular check-ins. My prior experience as Competitions Director and Officer was invaluable in understanding the workings of the committee and how to secure event engagement. As such, I believe similar experience would be valuable for my successor to have.

2025 Goals

I set the following goals at the start of 2025, with their progress outlined:

1. Achieve strong engagement from the first social event of the year, and increase recruitment from it:

Our first social event of the year sold out nearly a week in advance. Targeted social media posts and secure bashing, particularly aimed at junior students, was instrumental in this outcome. Many attendees went on to attend our other events.



2. Support sponsorship in maintaining sponsor connections, and seeking to diversify options:

We retained all existing sponsorships that had proven effective previously and continued to use a tiered model to tailor our sponsorship packages to firm's needs. We also added Wighton's Lawyers as a sponsor. Further, we met virtually with a Melbourne-based firm interested in sponsorship, though they ultimately decided to reconsider for 2026 due to timing. I will ensure next year's committee reaches out to them again.

3. Raise awareness for alternative careers in the law

I ultimately prioritised running 'Beyond the Books' due to demand from our sponsors for a second Careers event, and due to time constraints, was unable to concurrently run an alternative careers event.

However, this remains a valuable opportunity. I strongly encourage the 2026 team to consider running an Alternative Careers event or even a simple online series like our Employability Seminars.

4. Take a flexible and personal approach to communication and conflict resolution

While no conflicts arose this year, I maintained a flexible and personal communication style, fostering relationships across the committee.

Looking into the future

I believe I've left the committee in a stronger position than I found it concerning recruitment. While Trimester 3 2024 was largely focused on rebuilding the team, I anticipate the incoming committee can begin event planning instead.

On the sponsorship front, I recommend next years executive reconnect with the interested Melbourne firm from 2025 and continue to sustain our existing relationships.

While our annual events remain the backbone of the DLSSG, I believe the incoming committee has the capacity to expand and innovate. This is an attitude I have held throughout my time on the committee, reflected through the now cemented Client Counselling Competition I created, running for its second iteration this year, and Beyond the Books running for its first iteration this year. Though an Alternative Careers event did not come to fruition this year, I believe adding this to our event portfolio would greatly diversify



our offerings. That said, it is entirely the discretion of next years committee as to whether this is prioritised.

Further, I urge the new committee to continue prioritising junior student engagement. Legally Accountable in particular served as a key gateway to secure engagement.

Based on the quality of applications received, I am confident that my successor will be more than capable of leading the DLSSG with vigour and integrity. My advice to the 2026 President is to trust your instincts, take initiative, and don't be afraid to do things differently.

Concluding

Serving as the DLSSG President has been the most rewarding leadership experience of my life. The most significant personal growth I've experienced has been in my confidence to engage with a wide range of personalities, which has flowed into all areas of my life. The role also enabled a strong bond with my fellow committee members and broader law cohort.

However, while the responsibilities of the role are profoundly positive in nature, keeping track of the many moving pieces, especially when juggling external work commitments, can be taxing. However, this is a necessary trade-off for the transformative leadership experience that comes with this role.

As I enter my fourth year of my degree, I will remain available as a resource and sounding board for the incoming team. I look forward to observing the trajectory of our committee.