



A DAY IN THE LIFE

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A focus on international practice

Choosing Baker McKenzie from amongst the sea of other firms was largely due to the Firm's strong global presence and focus on building and nurturing international partnerships. The International Clerkship program represented a unique opportunity to be involved on a global scale, even at such an early stage in my legal career. I have always been interested in the growing relationship between Australia and Asia so I knew that Baker McKenzie was the right choice for me to further explore this area and get firsthand experience on the ground in a place where strong partnerships had already been forged.

Following my Summer Clerkship, I was fortunate enough to be selected for an International Clerkship in Hong Kong. A city that is known for being one of the largest international financial hubs in the world and the melting pot in which Eastern and Western culture come together seamlessly. As part of my family is from Hong Kong, I had previously had the opportunity to visit as a tourist, but the International Clerkship promised a different perspective of everyday life as a professional in a top law firm, as well as a local finding my place in a new home.

Hong Kong

As soon as I stepped out of the taxi from the airport, the first thing I noticed was how vibrant and alive the city felt. The constant buzz of people hurriedly walking on the street, bumping into each other with reckless abandon. The constant beeping of the traffic. There was a limitless array of new sights and smells as I made my way to my accommodation in the Mid-Level area of Hong Kong island. Given the island's size, it is hugely dense and you rarely have to travel far to find a new restaurant or café.

My first day in the Baker McKenzie office was a great way to start the journey. I was introduced to the Intellectual Property Group, the team with whom I would work with most closely during my time in Hong Kong. Everyone was inviting and made me feel right at home. Similar to the view from the Baker McKenzie office in Barangaroo, the Hong Kong office overlooks a beautiful body of water: the famed Victoria Harbour after which Hong Kong is named - *Hong Kong* means "fragrant harbour" in Chinese.

It is a credit to a firm like Baker McKenzie that I was able to have such an inspiring and unique experience in an exotic and far-away place. It will have a lasting impact on

my personal and professional development moving forward.

Intellectual property group

I had the opportunity to work on a variety of matters during my stay with the Intellectual Property Group, including conducting research on data privacy and artificial intelligence issues, drafting cease and desist letters, generating trademark reports, and preparing internal presentations on technology updates. My experience in the Hong Kong office has exposed me to the complex relationship between Hong Kong and China especially when a matter involves both jurisdictions. Due to their different legal systems, we are often required to communicate with our colleagues in China to resolve a mutual issue. This is an area in which Baker McKenzie has proven to excel continuously and without disappointment. Because of our strong global presence and tight knit community, we are able to resolve cross-border, complex legal issues efficiently.

I was grateful to join the team during the Chinese New Year period, which represents the most important holiday in the Chinese calendar. During Chinese New Year, all businesses are closed for a week and people typically feast with their friends and families. This period is also famous for handing out "lai see" or "red pocket money" where the most senior and respected figures show their appreciation for their junior staff members by rewarding them with red envelopes. As the most junior person in the firm, this was definitely a highlight!

I also had the opportunity to join the Global Legal Hackathon with a few Baker McKenzie colleagues. The Hackathon is an event for people to come together to collaboratively build and launch technology-based solutions aimed at solving a particular problem. My team and I came up with a precedents management software used to efficiently manage internal firm documents. Although we didn't win, it was definitely a great learning experience.

Developing long lasting friendships

The Intellectual Property Group took me under their wing and truly made me feel like we were friends rather than colleagues. I am extremely grateful for this International Clerkship experience as it allowed me to develop long lasting relationships with people in Hong Kong. Now I have fantastic contacts for any cross-border matters I might be involved in and when I visit Hong Kong again in the future.

Baker McKenzie.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Khushaal Vyas

Graduate at Law, Sydney
International Clerk, London



Why Baker McKenzie?

As a law student reaching the business end of my degree, identifying the drawcards and differences between the top firms in Australia was a daunting task. I was fortunate to receive an offer from Baker McKenzie. As a firm with a renowned global presence, it promised to provide exposure to major Australian matters for both domestic and international clients as well as cross-border work involving offices from across the globe. The Summer Clerkship provided me with an insight into the Firm's Australian presence and its multi-jurisdictional work across various practice groups. During my rotations in the IP/Tech and Dispute Resolution practice areas, I had the opportunity to work on cutting edge Australian matters that also influenced international operations. I also had the opportunity to explore the Firm's Pro Bono and Community Services practice and to pitch and organise my own project. The diversity of experience on offer at Baker McKenzie is highlighted by the International Clerkship program. I undertook my international clerkship in London and experienced firsthand the full international force of the Baker McKenzie brand.

Sydney to London

Leaving Sydney during an unseasonably cold winter was a great decision. This was made even better when London was showcasing a rare few weeks of sunshine just as I touched down. Having just graduated from university, I was looking forward to living and working overseas in a completely new city. However, I didn't fully appreciate how much I would learn and experience in my month-long adventure in London.

The International Clerkship Experience

During my time in London, I rotated through the Dispute Resolution team. The London office is the largest Bakers office worldwide. This, combined with a Disputes team that was incredibly energetic and completely packed to the brim with major cases and arbitrations, there was no shortage of new experiences each and every day. I had the opportunity to compile and review evidence briefs to identify issues with evidence and legal arguments relating to a major arbitration taking place in the Middle East. I researched options to minimise public liability risks relating to the supply chains of a major US corporation's operations in the UK. I also drafted advice regarding the product liability risks facing medical manufacturers in their domestic and international business.

Other tasks included identifying privileged documents in response to service of documents requests and undertaking legal research into domestic and international transactional and dispute resolution matters. I was also lucky to be working in the London office at a time where the Disputes team was trailing new technology assisted review software. The experience gave me a behind the scenes insight into the implementation of innovative technologies in the legal industry.

The Fun

Life in London was not just limited to the office. Having never been to London, or Europe, before – it was a particularly exciting trip. I joined the Firm's futsal squad which, in a football-fanatical country, was a challenging step up to say the least. Outside of sport, walking along the Thames to work, working by day and catching whatever took my fancy on the West End by night was incredible. I spent hours at the Tower of London and the Churchill War Rooms, saw a giant squid in the vaults of the Natural History Museum, ate at as many food stalls as possible in the Borough Market and visited iconic places like Stonehenge and Oxford on weekends. With the International Clerkship taking place between the Summer Clerkship and the beginning of my Graduate Program, I took the opportunity travel for the next 4 months around Europe visiting France, Belgium, Italy, Austria, Germany, Iceland and capping off the adventure by catching the US Open Final in New York.

Reflection

It is largely unheard of to have the opportunity to travel for work as such a young lawyer. Baker McKenzie's International Clerkship experience is another offering that sets Baker McKenzie apart. The Firm actively demonstrates a commitment to providing the best experiences and learning & development opportunities for its youngest lawyers to become the best lawyers that they can be – right from the start. I've learnt an incredible amount through the program and become close friends with my colleagues in London; people who I speak with almost daily. I am still buzzing from how lucky I am to have had such an opportunity and can't wait for the next chapter in my journey at the Firm as a Graduate.