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Executive Brief

The College of Law

Chief Academic Officer

October 2026

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Advertisement

Chief Academic Officer The College of Law

About the College

The College of Law is the school of professional practice for lawyers, with locations in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Auckland. A non-university higher education provider with self-accrediting authority, it delivers practical legal training, continuing legal education and fully accredited postgraduate programs in applied law. More than 60,000 graduates have come through the College, and more than 400 staff support its work.

The Role

As the College's most senior academic leader and a member of the Executive Committee, the Chief Academic Officer is accountable for the quality, integrity and relevance of everything the College teaches. Reporting to the Group Chief Executive Officer, you will establish a clear academic direction and a robust academic culture. Your responsibilities include:

- Leading academic governance, compliance and quality assurance with higher education regulators and admitting authorities, and supporting the independent Academic Board, which you may chair.
- Providing strategic leadership of award curricula, ensuring qualifications are rigorous, professionally relevant and future focused.
- Leading teaching quality and the capability of the College's academic and teaching workforce.
- Championing student learning, achievement and outcomes.
- Leading a research and scholarship strategy aligned to the College's mission.
- Building relationships with the legal profession, law firms, courts, regulators and universities, as a senior ambassador for the College.

The College is considering an alternative organisational design. This role will continue, although some accountabilities may change.

What We Are Looking For

You are a senior academic leader with significant experience leading academic strategy, curriculum, and teaching and learning in a complex higher education environment, preferably in a legal education or related professional discipline. You hold a doctoral-level postgraduate qualification or equivalent academic and professional standing, with a strong record of academic achievement, scholarship, research or professional practice.

You understand academic governance, quality assurance, academic integrity and the Australian higher education regulatory environment. You have credibility and networks in the legal profession or higher education sector, and you lead change, build high-performing academic teams and operate confidently at executive and governing body level. You are collegial, able to challenge and influence at senior levels, and committed to student success.

The role requires flexible working hours and interstate and international travel to support operations across Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

How to Apply

For a confidential discussion about the position, please contact Emma Alberici on 0419 683 660.

For more information and to apply, please log on to Derwent Search at <https://www.derwentsearch.com.au/> and click on "Search Jobs" to download the brief. Your application will require a (no more than two page) cover letter and a (no more than four page) resume.

Applications close at 11:59pm 25 October 2026.

About The College of Law

As part of the College of Law Group, which has a presence across Australia, New Zealand, Asia and England, The College of Law is the school of professional practice for lawyers. It delivers innovative, practice-focused legal education and training to enhance the careers of practising professionals across Australasia and its region.

The College is unique in having locations in each of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Auckland, as well as providing onsite training in key regional centres. The College as a whole has over 60,000 graduates and more than 400 staff, with all teaching staff having extensive practising experience.

Graduates of all law schools in Australia and New Zealand come to The College to undertake a comprehensive program of practical legal training, leading to admission into the profession. The College is the largest provider in both countries.

For legal practitioners, The College provides a large suite of continuing legal education programs, both face-to-face and online, across a range of practice and skill areas.

The College offers fully accredited postgraduate degree programs in applied law. As a non-university higher education provider with self-accrediting authority (SAA), it has been recognised as achieving superior academic standards, governance and quality. The Applied Law programs, including the LLM (Applied Law), are differentiated by their focus on the practice of law, enabling students to develop existing practice specialisations or move into new areas of practice, conducted primarily online to meet the needs of busy practitioners.

About the Role

The Academic Secretariat is led by the Chief Academic Officer, who may also serve as chair of the College of Law Academic Board (COLAB). The Academic Secretariat is responsible for academic governance, higher education compliance, academic policy and the quality of teaching and learning across all programs offered by The College of Law Limited that qualify for an academic award. The Secretariat also exercises national oversight of the co-operative Practical Legal Training (PLT) courses delivered to a variety of national law firms.

The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) is the College's most senior academic leader, responsible for providing academic leadership and oversight to ensure the quality, integrity, relevance and sustainability of the College's educational offerings.

The CAO is accountable for, and leads, academic governance, award curricula, academic staff, teaching, students, research and scholarship, and engagement with the legal profession. The CAO ensures that the College's academic offerings are rigorous, professionally relevant and contemporary, responsive to the changing needs of the legal profession, and meet applicable regulatory, accreditation and quality standards.

Working closely with the CEO, Executive Committee, Academic Board and academic and professional leaders, the CAO will establish a robust academic culture and clear academic direction for the College.

Position Details

Position title	Chief Academic Officer
Band Classification	Executive Committee Member
Department	Academic Secretariat
Location	540 George Street, Sydney
Reports to	Group Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports	Academic Secretary, Senior Academic Officer, Director TLD, National Executive Director, Director Academic Quality

Key Responsibilities

Academic Governance

Accountable for providing strategic academic leadership and executive accountability for the effectiveness of the College's academic governance, academic compliance, regulatory assurance, academic quality and integrity across the College and with higher education regulatory authorities. Where appointed in accordance with the Academic Board Charter, chairs the Academic Board and supports it to exercise its independent academic oversight and decision-making responsibilities.

- Provide informed strategic and practical academic advice to the CEO, Executive Committee, Academic Board and governing body on academic matters, risks, opportunities and emerging developments.
- Provide executive leadership to support the Academic Board to exercise its independent academic oversight and decision-making responsibilities.
- Lead and continuously strengthen the College's academic governance framework and structure, ensuring clear academic authority, accountability, decision-making and compliance with the higher education regulatory authorities.
- Support the effective and independent operation of the Academic Board in accordance with its Charter.
- Establish and maintain effective academic oversight and assurance of teaching, learning, curriculum, assessment, research, scholarship, academic integrity and student outcomes.
- Ensure that proposals for new or revised programs, qualifications and academic initiatives are subject to appropriate independent academic scrutiny and approval.
- Establish an integrated academic assurance framework, supported by reliable data, to monitor academic standards, academic quality, student outcomes and emerging risks and identify opportunities for improvement.
- In conjunction with the Chief Governance Officer, ensure maintenance of higher education accreditations and compliance with the requirements of the College's provider category.
- Maintain oversight of academic policies, regulatory requirements, academic risk and quality assurance, including preparation for external reviews and accreditation.
- Ensure compliance with the requirements of professional regulators, including admitting authorities.
- Ensure academic governance supports continuous improvement and appropriately incorporates student, academic and professional input.
- Maintain a strong connection between academic and corporate governance, ensuring the governing body has a clear view of academic quality, performance and risk.
- Contribute to the effective academic governance of the College of Legal Practice (COLP) through membership of COLP's Academic Committee.



Academic Self Assurance

Establish and oversee a program of academic self-assurance.

- Establish and oversee a program of academic self-assurance that provides the Academic Board and governing body with reliable evidence of compliance, academic quality, student outcomes and continuous improvement, supported by external references, documentation and tracked amendments.

Award Curricula

Provide strategic leadership of the College's award curricula, ensuring qualifications are academically rigorous, professionally relevant and future focused.

- Oversee the design, development, approval, delivery, monitoring, comprehensive review and continuous improvement of the College's award programs throughout their lifecycle.
- Ensure curricula align with qualification requirements, learning outcomes, professional expectations and regulatory and accreditation requirements.
- Ensure curriculum reflects contemporary legal practice and emerging developments in law, technology, regulation and the nature of legal work.
- Ensure student learning outcomes of curricula develop legal knowledge, reasoning, professional skills, ethical practice, technological capability and other attributes required of contemporary legal professionals.
- Promote appropriate innovation in curriculum design and delivery while maintaining academic standards and integrity.
- Oversee academic standards, learning outcomes, assessment and moderation to ensure valid, reliable and consistent assessment of student achievement.

- Lead systematic course and curriculum review, informed by benchmarking, student outcomes, changing work requirements, scholarship, research and the expectations of the legal profession.

Strategic Academic Leadership

Translate College strategy into clear academic priorities, plans and outcomes.

- Develop and articulate the College's academic vision and strategy in partnership with the Group Chief Executive Officer and Academic and Executive Committees.
- Provide a strong and independent academic voice in executive decision-making and contribute to the overall strategic leadership of the College.
- Lead academic change and innovation while maintaining academic quality, integrity and staff engagement.
- Identify emerging opportunities and risks affecting legal education and the legal profession and ensure these inform academic strategy.
- Develop academic leadership capability and foster a culture of academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, professional relevance and continuous improvement.
- Work collaboratively across the College and ensure academic priorities are reflected in planning, resource allocation and investment.



Teachers and Teaching

Provide academic leadership for the quality, capability, professional development and peer review of the College's teaching workforce.

- Establish clear and robust expectations and frameworks for teaching quality, including peer review, academic capability, professional practice and continuous improvement.
- Ensure the College has sufficient appropriately qualified, experienced and professionally current academic and teaching staff.
- Provide academic leadership in the recruitment, appointment, onboarding, training, development and deployment of academic and teaching staff.
- Ensure academic staff maintain contemporary disciplinary and professional knowledge and engage in appropriate scholarship and professional development.
- Promote evidence-based and innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment across all modes of delivery.
- Monitor teaching quality through student feedback, academic review, student outcomes and other evidence, and lead improvement where required.
- Promote a culture in which teaching excellence, collaboration and the sharing of effective practice are valued.



Students and Learning

Provide strategic academic leadership to ensure students experience high-quality learning and achieve the intended educational and professional outcomes of their programs.

- Maintain a clear focus on student learning, achievement, progression, retention and completion in conjunction with high academic standards.
- Ensure students have an effective learning environment and appropriate academic resources and support.
- Monitor student academic outcomes and identify and address barriers to successful learning.
- Ensure student feedback is meaningfully incorporated into curriculum, teaching and academic quality improvement.
- Promote effective and innovative approaches to learning that respond to diverse student cohorts and modes of learning.
- Maintain oversight of assessment standards and ensure students are assessed fairly and consistently against intended learning outcomes.
- Ensure appropriate consideration of equity, accessibility and inclusion in academic and learning practices.
- Ensure the student experience develops the knowledge, skills and professional capabilities required for meaningful participation in the legal profession.

Research and Scholarship

Provide leadership across academic research and scholarship to strengthen the College's contribution to legal education, scholarship and the profession.

- Develop, lead and implement a research and scholarship strategy aligned to the College's mission and strategic priorities.
- Foster a culture of research, scholarship, intellectual inquiry and evidence-based academic practice.
- Support academic staff to undertake research and scholarship relevant to their disciplines, teaching and professional practice.
- Ensure research and scholarship informs curriculum design, teaching, assessment and academic practice.
- Encourage research and scholarship to address contemporary issues affecting the legal profession, legal education and access to justice.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with universities, professional bodies, courts, government and other relevant organisations.
- Promote the dissemination and application of research and scholarship through appropriate publications, conferences and professional forums.
- Ensure appropriate governance, ethics, integrity and quality assurance of research and scholarly activity.

Engagement with the Profession

Build strong relationships between the College, the legal profession and the broader legal and professional community to ensure all academic offerings meet the needs of the profession.

- Establish and maintain the College's position as a respected contributor to the development of the legal profession and legal education.
- Develop strong relationships with leading practitioners, law firms, professional bodies, courts, government, regulators, universities and other relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure the experience and expectations of the profession inform curriculum, teaching, assessment, research and academic strategy.
- Identify emerging professional capability requirements and translate these into academic and curriculum priorities.
- Maintain a strong understanding of developments in legal practice, including technological, regulatory and societal change, and their implications for legal education.
- Create opportunities for practitioners, judges, academics and other legal professionals to contribute to teaching, curriculum development, assessment and scholarship.
- Represent the College in relevant professional and academic forums and build partnerships that enhance its academic standing and professional relevance.
- Act as a senior ambassador to enhance the College's academic reputation and contribution to the legal profession.

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Education and Professional

- A postgraduate qualification at doctoral level, or equivalent academic and professional standing appropriate to the role.
- Significant senior academic leadership experience within higher education, preferably within legal education or a related professional discipline.
- A strong record of academic achievement, scholarship, research and/or professional practice.
- Demonstrated understanding of contemporary legal education and the changing needs of the legal profession.

Leadership and Governance

- Significant experience leading academic strategy, curriculum, teaching and learning within a complex higher education environment.
- Strong understanding of academic governance, quality assurance, academic integrity and the Australian higher education regulatory environment.
- Demonstrated ability to balance academic standards, student needs, professional relevance, regulatory requirements and organisational priorities.
- Proven ability to lead change, build high-performing academic teams and operate effectively at executive and governing body level.

Professional and Personal

- Established credibility and networks within the legal profession and/or higher education sector.
- Exceptional communication, influencing and relationship-building skills.
- Collegial and collaborative leadership style with the ability to constructively challenge and influence at senior levels.
- Commitment to student success, academic excellence and the development of the legal profession.

Inherent Role Requirements

- Working hours flexibility: this role requires flexibility in working hours to support national and international operations across Australia, the UK and New Zealand.
- Travel: interstate and international travel may be required from time to time to support the national and international operations across Australia, the UK and New Zealand.

Note: The College is currently considering an alternate organisational design. Whilst this role will continue to exist, some of the accountabilities may be changed and/or amended.

Our Values

The six behaviour anchors underpin the values and behaviours expected of employees of The College.

1. Growth and Customer Focus

Recognises that The College needs to think differently in order to grow, and does a superb job for customers every day in quality, delivery, value and technology. Understands the needs of the organisation and its customers, internal and external, and provides a sound level of service, treating the customer with respect. Has the courage to say no, interacts with the best interests of the organisation in mind, and supports the vision for growth.

2. Achieves Results

Takes accountability for the achievement of great results and translates The College's requirements into action. Comfortable accepting accountability for self, displays determination to undertake and complete activities, and shows adaptability and resilience. Motivated, displays initiative and is results focused.

3. Find Better Ways

Optimises key processes by finding better, more efficient and more effective ways of doing things in cooperation with others. Recognises where improved performance is required, communicates why, plans for improvement, participates in designing and developing solutions, and implements and evaluates the results.

4. College-Wide Mindset

Views work and opinions from all relevant perspectives and sees The College as an integrated body. Understands when a “best for College” decision needs to be made and supports it, works against silo thinking and behaviour, clearly articulates issues, actively listens, and is careful and considered in the use of language and tone.

5. Teaching, Technical and Functional Expertise

Is capable and effective in their own area of expertise, holds the necessary qualifications, and has the experience and demonstrated competency to operate in their field. Is dependable and responsible, transacts work in an ethical, professional and legal manner, and is encouraging and supportive.

6. Teamwork

Interacts and collaborates with others to build good working relationships across The College. Works effectively as a team member, encourages a greater sense of trust between team members, and helps identify and remove barriers to the team functioning effectively. Recognises that people have different values and opinions which individuals have a right to hold, and is self-aware of the impact of their own actions.



Marcus Martin

Chief Executive Officer

Marcus Martin brings extensive management experience from the legal and education industries, as well as the not-for-profit sector, to his role of Group Chief Executive Officer at the College of Law. A commercially successful CEO, Marcus holds a comprehensive understanding of the not-for-profit client and regulatory stakeholder needs. Balancing commercial and service obligations, he demonstrates a clear strategic vision that retains core revenue streams and embraces future business opportunities.

An engaged leader, Marcus works to continually motivate his staff to appreciate and achieve personal performance targets, while working together to exceed organisation goals. Motivated by complex business challenges, Marcus looks to innovative yet highly informed business solutions that account for budgetary and time constraints.

Previously CEO of the College of Law New Zealand, General Manager of the Auckland District Law Society, in leadership roles at UK-based law firms Nabarro Nathanson and Cripps Harries Hall, as well as AXA PPP Healthcare in the UK, Marcus will be guiding the College of Law's next pivotal phase across Australia, New Zealand and the UK. Acutely aware of the College's internal and external

Application Process

Apply: submit a resume (no more than four pages) and cover letter (no more than two pages) outlining relevant experience against the position requirements.

Shortlist: applicants are assessed on their written application against the position requirements.

Interview: shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview, held in person, by phone or by video. Applicants should be prepared to discuss examples of past and present achievements and challenges faced.

Referees: referees may be contacted for further assessment of suitability and are only approached for applicants under consideration for the position. Candidates will be notified before referees are contacted.

Offer: following final assessment, an offer will be extended to the preferred candidate. All applicants will be notified of the outcome.

The Search Process

The College of Law has engaged Derwent Search on an exclusive basis to conduct this appointment. Derwent will identify and assess candidates through targeted advertising.

Indicative Timeline

- Weeks 1–2: Brief and launch.
- Weeks 3–5: Outreach and screen.
- Weeks 6–7: Interviews and longlist.
- Week 8: Shortlist to client.
- Weeks 9–10: Client interviews.
- Week 11: Offer and confirm.

Assessment and Probity

Shortlisted candidates will be assessed against the criteria above, together with reference checks and standard pre-employment checks prior to offer.

Contact Us

Thank you for your interest in this opportunity with The College of Law.

For a confidential conversation or to learn more, please reach out using the contact details below.



Emma Alberici

0419 683 660

ealberici@derwentsearch.com.au