



# The making of lawyers: Expectations and experiences of first year New Zealand law students

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

This report presents the first, baseline, collection of data in a longitudinal study of law students at the University of Auckland, the University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato. The expectations and experiences of New Zealand law students have been little studied and this project aims to present those involved in the teaching and learning of law students with a comprehensive pool of data to inform both their individual teaching practices and the potential enhancement of the general law school experience in New Zealand. It is intended that, over time, a complete law student profile will be developed which will detail the expectations, views and experiences of law students during each year of their law studies and in their first years in the workforce after completing their law degrees.

## Methodology

This initial phase of the study was broken down into four parts. The first part was the completion of a literature review of empirical studies and analytical commentary on student profiles and/or the development of student profiles. This was followed by two online surveys of students enrolled in first year law papers at the University of Auckland, the University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato in 2014. The first survey was undertaken at the beginning of the academic year and included questions directed at students' backgrounds, expectations as to the purpose and skills delivered by the degree and well-being questions. A total of 1740 students were invited to complete this survey and 713 did so. The second survey was administered at the beginning of the final term in 2014 to see what had changed, what had actually been delivered to students and whether the students' future plans had altered. Invitations to complete the second online survey were sent to the 713 students who completed the first survey. Four hundred and fifty four students completed the second survey. The data collected was then analysed across the entire survey cohort and by law school, gender and ethnicity.

## Law Students' Expectations and Experiences

The analysed data is presented under ten headings: core demographic information; education and family background; reasons for enrolling in a law degree; future plans; skills (expected and gained); relationships with teachers; study habits; social experiences; debt levels; and feelings of confidence and well-being.

### *Demographic data:*

- New Zealand European/Pākeha students were the largest ethnic group participating in the study (47 percent of students), followed by Pasifika students (12 percent), Māori students (7 percent), Chinese students (7 percent), Korean students (7 percent) and Indian students (7 percent).
- Sixty five percent of the study cohort were female and 35 percent were male.
- Seventy percent of the study cohort were aged 18-20.
- Sixty three percent had spent 2013 at high school, 19 percent were in employment and 19 percent in other tertiary study.
- Eighty percent lived in the same region as the law school in which they were enrolled.
- Two percent reported that they had a disability.

### *Education and family background*

- Only six percent of study participants had already completed a university degree.
- The most commonly held qualification by both mothers and fathers of study participants was a Bachelor degree.
- Sixty seven percent of students had no family connection to the legal profession.
- The most commonly selected reason for choosing to enrol in a law degree was a wish to be a lawyer.
- Of those students intending to complete a law degree, the most commonly selected reasons for doing so were being passionate about law and justice and wanting to make a difference.
- Seventy five percent of students were interested or very interested in pursuing a legal career. Of these students, the most popular career choice was private practice as a lawyer.
- The areas of law in which students were most interested were criminal justice and international law.

### *Skills (expected and gained)*

The substantive knowledge first year law students expected to gain from their first year course fell across three broad categories. The first of these was an understanding of the structures and operation of New Zealand's legal system, followed by a working knowledge of some basic legal principles and concepts. Thirdly, there was an expectation that theoretical understandings of the Law and legal system would be instilled and developed. The second survey revealed that the first two expectations had been met for 90 percent of students, and that the expectation of development of theoretical understandings of the Law had been met for 70 percent.

In addition to substantive knowledge acquisition, student responses identified a wide variety of skills that were hoped for or expected from their first year course. These included critical analytical thinking skills, literacy skills (with a particular reference on enhanced writing skills, sometimes referred essays) and specific Legal Method skills (i.e. case analysis, statutory interpretation). The second survey showed that 80 percent of students felt they had gained Legal Method skills, and 70 percent critical thinking analytical skills. Less than 40 percent of the students overall reported enhancement of their literacy skills.

### *Relationships with teachers*

Students most frequently reported that they had contact with their law teachers in lectures (76 percent), but a majority also reported some contact with their teachers outside of class. Fifty six percent reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they had received from their teachers.

### *Study habits*

There was some variation in the hours students indicated they expected to spend on their law studies each week at the time of the first online survey across the three participating law schools. There was also variation across the law schools in the second survey when students reported the actual number of hours they had spent on their studies. A common theme across all law schools was that students reported spending less time on their legal studies than they had expected to at the beginning of the academic year.

Sixty eight percent of students reported that they had studied with other students over the course of the academic year.

The factors most commonly reported as having an impact on students' legal studies were home and family issues and personal issues.

### *Social experiences*

Quite different patterns of membership of law students' associations were reported across the three law schools, with membership rates being far higher at Canterbury. Eighty eight percent of students reported using social media to contact other students.

### *Debt levels*

The most commonly reported level of student debt towards the end of the academic year (47 percent of students) was \$5001-\$10,000.

### *Confidence and well-being*

Eighty four percent of students reported at the beginning of the academic year that passing their law courses was extremely important to them. At the beginning of the year a majority of students felt confident about their university studies and about being admitted to second year law, even at law schools (Auckland and Canterbury) where entry to second year law is limited. Reported confidence levels about being admitted to second year law dropped over the course of the academic year, with the largest drop in confidence being reported at Auckland and Canterbury. Nonetheless, at the end of the academic year, 74 percent of students reported that there were at least likely to continue their law studies no matter what the outcome of any selection process.

Forty eight percent of students reported that they had received results in their law courses that were largely in line with their expectations, but 55 percent reported that they had not been prepared, or had only been a little prepared, for their law studies by their high school experience.

At the beginning of the academic year, students reported a wide range of feelings about their legal studies: nervousness, excitement and feeling a bit stressed all ranked highly. Eighteen percent already felt very stressed. By the end of the academic year, most students (48 percent) reported feeling "ok", with 25 percent feeling "good", 14 percent "not feeling too good" and 5 percent feeling "terrible". Overall, 62 percent reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with their law school experience.

## **Comment**

### *Overall trends*

Overall, as the above summary indicates, law students in this study commenced their law studies at their local university as a homogenous group and, for the most part, reported similar expectations and experiences.

What is particularly interesting about this study is that a more detailed analysis by gender and ethnicity reveals particular groups with experiences that were either more positive or more negative than the norm. It is these results, which are summarised further below, that we believe require further investigation and attention.

### *Gender*

Aside from the gender imbalance in the cohort group itself (35 percent male and 65 percent female), significant differences between male and female students were few in terms of the core demographic data.

Male students were slightly more likely to have chosen to study law because one of their parents or siblings was a lawyer and because law was a good, steady profession. Female

students were slightly more likely to have chosen to study law because they felt passionate about law and justice, wanted to help people or wanted to make a difference.

A greater proportion of male students were interested in commercial and company law, information technology law and law and sport. A greater proportion of female students were interested in traditionally female dominated areas of legal practice, particularly family law.

With respect to the law school experience, male and female students were in broad agreement about both the skills they expected to gain and the skills they felt they had gained by the time of the second survey. There were no significant differences between male and female students reported satisfaction levels with the support they received from their law lecturers or in overall satisfaction with the law school experience.

A notable difference between male and female students occurred in reported confidence levels. A greater proportion of male students felt 'confident' or 'very confident' about studying law at the time of the first survey. By the time of the second survey, a greater proportion of male students reported themselves to be "not too badly prepared" or "well prepared" by high school for their legal studies. By the time of the second survey, a greater proportion of male students were "pretty confident" they would do well enough to be admitted to second year law. A greater proportion of female students were more likely to be very worried that their grades would not be good enough.

A greater proportion of male students indicated they felt confident about their law studies in the first survey. Proportionately, more female students felt nervous or very stressed. In the second survey male and female students reported their well-being as being "OK" and "not too good" in approximately the same proportions. However, a greater proportion of female students reported themselves as feeling terrible and a greater proportion of male students as feeling great.

Overall, although female students were likely to have chosen to study law for idealistic reasons, they were consistently over-represented, although not always by a large margin, when it came to reporting negative experiences or feelings. They were less confident about their studies, more unsure of what they were good at, and more likely to feel nervous or stressed. Nevertheless these negative feelings did not appear to have an impact on overall reported satisfaction rates with the law school experience or in the support received from teaching staff.

### *Ethnicity*

In terms of core demographics, Māori students had the greatest proportion of students aged over 21 (30 percent) and the greatest proportion of students studying part-time (14 percent). Māori students were proportionately more likely to report a disability affecting their ability to study and learn compared than other ethnic groups (13 percent did so).

Māori students were less likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a Bachelor degree or higher and more likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a school qualification.

Māori students were more likely to have chosen to study law because they wanted to help people or to make a difference and were less likely to see pay or the respect accorded to the legal profession as significant. Working for a non-governmental or community organisation appealed to a greater proportion of Māori students in the first survey. By the time of the second survey, Māori students were more likely than most other groups to intend to use their law degree (once completed) in a career other than private practice.

Although at the time of the first survey Māori students were amongst the least confident about studying at university, at the time of both the first and second survey they (along with



New Zealand European/Pākehā students) were more likely to report high confidence levels about being admitted to second year law in both the first and second surveys. They were also more likely to report that they were very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the support they had received from their law lecturers.

Overall where the results reported by Māori students differed from other groups, it was largely for positive reasons.

In terms of core demographics, 78 percent of Pasifika students were female, a significantly higher proportion than in other ethnic groups. A greater proportion of Pasifika students were aged over 21 than in all other groups except Māori students.

Pasifika students were less likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a Bachelor degree or higher and more likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a school qualification.

Pasifika students were more likely to have chosen to study law because they wanted to help people or to make a difference and less likely to see pay or the respect accorded to the legal profession as significant. Working for a non-governmental or community organisation appealed to proportionately greater numbers of Pasifika students. They were more interested in community and family law than any other ethnic group. By the time of the second survey, Pasifika students were more likely than students from other ethnicities to intend to use their law degree (once completed) in a career other than private practice.

Pasifika students were the most likely to have reported in the second survey that they had spent only one to two hours on their legal studies, as well as being the most likely to report spending nine or more hours each week on their studies. They were the most likely to report that they had studied with other students.

Pasifika students were amongst those most likely to report they that were not confident of being admitted to second year law in both the first and second surveys. They were more likely to have reported in the second survey that they were unsure of whether they would continue their legal studies. They were less likely to have reported themselves very satisfied or extremely satisfied with their law school experience and were among those least likely to report feeling good or great at the time of the second survey.

Overall, where the responses of Pasifika students differed from other groups, it was for largely negative reasons.

Chinese students were amongst those most likely to have a parent with a law degree, were most likely to have chosen to study law because it is a well-respected profession, and were more interested in company and commercial law than other ethnic groups.

Chinese students were amongst those most likely to report receiving results that were lower or much lower than their expectations and also amongst those most likely to report they that were not confident of being admitted to second year law in both the first and second surveys. They were more likely to report feeling very stressed at the time of the first survey and most likely to report they were feeling terrible or not good in the second survey. They were also amongst the least likely to report feeling good or great or to be very or extremely satisfied with their law school experience.

The number of Chinese students responding to the surveys was not necessarily representative of the total number of Chinese students in total first year cohort: overall the participating law schools report that Asian students make up a far greater proportion of the total cohort. However it is a point of concern that the Chinese students answering both the first and second surveys stood out in terms of negative responses.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on the first, baseline, collection of data in a longitudinal study of law students at the University of Auckland, the University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato.<sup>1</sup> The expectations and experiences of New Zealand law students have been little studied and this project aims to present those involved in the teaching and learning of law students with a comprehensive pool of data to inform both their individual teaching practices and the potential enhancement of the general law school experience in New Zealand. It is intended that, over time, a complete law student profile will be developed which will detail the expectations, views and experiences of law students during each year of their law studies and in their first years in the workforce after completing their law degrees.

In this first phase of the study, two online surveys of the cohort of first year students enrolled in first year law papers at the participating law schools in 2014 were undertaken, the first survey taking place at the beginning of the academic year, the second towards the end. Given that this is the first and baseline report, an extensive range of data was collected from core demographic information through to relationships with teaching staff and other students, family background, future intentions and general well-being. The methodology employed is detailed in Part II of the paper with results and accompanying commentary being detailed in Parts III and IV. Results were analysed globally, as well as by specific law school, gender and ethnicity. A key finding is that although the majority of student expectations and experiences were positive, a more detailed analysis by gender and ethnicity revealed groups within the larger cohort with experiences that were either more positive or negative than the cohort norm.

Study data and analysis will be disseminated to the New Zealand Law schools<sup>2</sup> and the wider legal community for use in development of student profiles and better law teaching and learning practice. The project is multi-layered and unique to New Zealand law schools. It is expected to produce rich data for a number of years to come.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The project design is mixed method sequential research involving both quantitative and qualitative strategies, mainly using surveys, as well as interviews and focus groups where appropriate. Our approach to data collection is based on an 'is/ought model' – surveying is carried out to determine what the current situation is, followed by soliciting views about what should subsist, and analysis of all data collected. The project is broken down into a number of substantive stages.

The first phase, which is the subject of this paper, comprised a number of steps carried out in 2014. Initially, a literature review of empirical studies and analytical commentary on student profiles and/or the development of student profiles was carried out. Second (the heart of the study), an online longitudinal survey of the 2014 first year law class was developed. This class is to be surveyed in each year of their studies. Two surveys were carried out in the first phase of the project. An initial survey conducted in the first half of

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<sup>2</sup> Waikato and Auckland law schools receive individual reports containing the data on their student body.

2014<sup>3</sup> included background, expectations as to the purpose and skills delivered by the degree and well-being questions. A second survey was administered at the beginning of the final term to see what had changed, what had actually been delivered to students and whether the students' future plans had altered. The longitudinal study was administered to students at three law schools – Canterbury, Auckland and Waikato.<sup>4</sup> The latter two law schools agreed to take part in the longitudinal study after it was developed for the Canterbury cohort.<sup>5</sup> Surveys were then adapted for the separate law schools and administered online by the Canterbury research team.

The survey was promoted beforehand to the relevant classes in each law school. The student subjects were then contacted by email and invited to take part in a 15 minute online survey. Students responding to the first survey were assigned a digital identifier which was only used to contact individuals for the following survey. Students completing the surveys were eligible to be entered in a prize draw to win a \$150 book voucher. To enter, students were asked to supply an email address and these were used only for entry in the prize draw. Canterbury Law staff researchers do not have access to any identifying information and cannot identify any student responses, to ensure there is no possibility that participation can affect student academic progress. However, if survey responses showed a student was at risk in terms of well-being, provision was made for that student to be identified by an independent consultant and offered assistance if necessary.

Participation in the study is voluntary. Students have the right to withdraw at any stage with no penalty, in which case relevant information is removed from the data if requested, provided this is practically achievable. Only members of the Canterbury research team and their assistants working on the project have access to the raw data, which is dealt with in confidence and securely stored at the Law School at Canterbury University. The data will be destroyed five years after the project has been completed.

The first online survey contained basic demographic questions covering ethnicity, age, gender, disability, prior experience and location, educational and family background. This was followed by questions investigating the reasons for studying law and for studying at the chosen law school, future plans and intentions, and expectations around the law degree and the planned study of law. A final set of questions dealt with wellbeing and confidence at the start of the study year. The second survey was adapted to remove the demographic questions and to allow comparison of the actual experience with the initial expectations captured in the first survey. Questions focused on whether students expected, at this later stage of their first year studies, to continue studying law in 2015, on the skills they had gained, the support they had received and the contact they had had with their law teachers and other students. Questions were also directed at the students' actual study experiences feelings of general well-being. One final subset of questions was directed at how the students' first year experience could have been improved

A total of 1740 students enrolled in first year law courses across the three participating law schools were invited to complete the first online survey and 713 (41 percent) did so. Invitations to complete the second online survey were sent to the 713 students who completed the first survey. Four hundred and fifty four students completed the second survey. This group of 454 students represent 64 percent of the students who completed the

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<sup>3</sup> The survey was administered in March/April at Canterbury and in May/June at Waikato and Auckland law schools.

<sup>4</sup> All of the New Zealand law schools were invited to participate in the project and Auckland and Waikato law schools accepted the invitation.

<sup>5</sup> The study is therefore, strictly speaking, not collaborative but co-operative – it is being carried out by Canterbury researchers with the co-operation of the other law schools which provided contact data for their first year law classes to allow the survey to be administered to those students.

first online survey and 26 percent of the 1740 students who were invited to complete the first survey.

Across the three participating law schools, as Table 1 illustrates, completion rates for both the first and second online surveys were highest at the University of Canterbury with 184 of the 327 students invited to complete the first online survey doing so (56 percent). Members of the research team were involved in the teaching of the first year law courses at Canterbury at the time the first survey was administered and we speculate this may be why this law school had the highest student response rate: students had a personal connection with at least some of the research team.

**Table 1. Surveys 1 & 2: Invitation and completion rates by law school**

	Total invited for survey 1	Numbers completing survey 1	Numbers completing survey 2	% of those completing survey 1 who completed survey 2
Auckland	1216	438 (36.01%)	262 (21.55%)	59.82
Canterbury	327	184 (56.27%)	135 (41.28%)	73.37
Waikato	197	91 (46.19%)	57 (28.93%)	62.64
Total	1740	713 (40.98%)	454 (26.09%)	63.67

### III. LAW STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Results were analysed across the entire survey cohort and by law school, gender and ethnicity. The results of the analysis by gender, ethnicity and individual law school are included only where they differ significantly from the total cohort. Individual law school results, where included, are presented in order of Auckland, Canterbury and Waikato.

#### 1. Demographics

##### a. Ethnicity

Across all law schools, as shown in Figure 1, the largest ethnic group completing the first survey was New Zealander/Pākehā (330 students, 47 percent of the 696 students who answered this question). The proportion of students identifying as New Zealander/Pākehā was lowest at Auckland (164 students, 38 percent) and highest at the Canterbury (118 students, 66 percent). Forty eight students (53 percent) at Waikato identified as New Zealander/Pākehā.

Across the law schools, only 45 students in the first survey identified as Māori (seven percent of the total). Individually, this comprised 27 students from Auckland (six percent), five from Canterbury (three percent) and 14 from Waikato (15 percent).

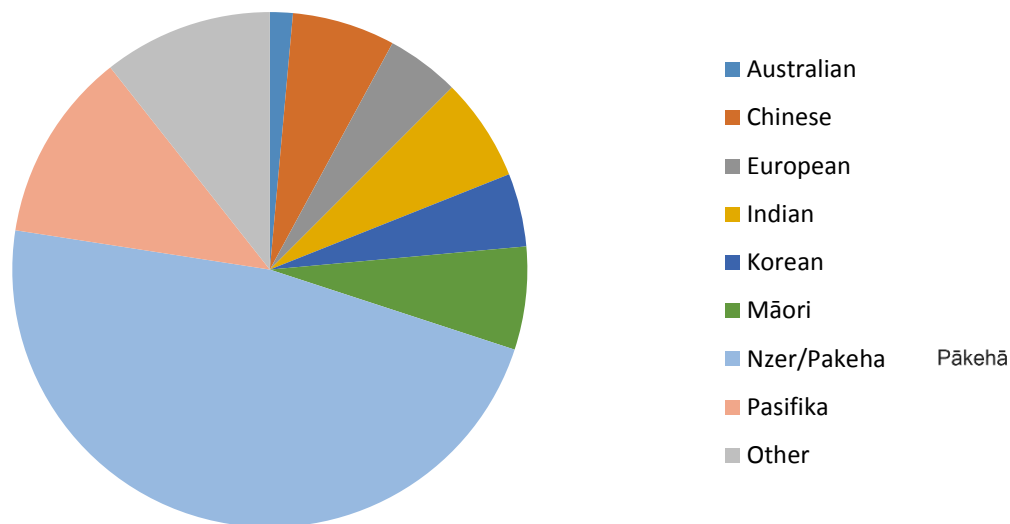
Eighty three students (12 percent of the total) identified as Pasifika in the first survey. Pasifika students made up nearly 15 percent of Auckland respondents, ten percent of Waikato students and six percent of Canterbury students.

Across all three law schools, 45 students (seven percent) identified as Chinese in the first survey, with 45 (seven percent) identifying as Indian and 45 (seven percent) as Korean). The

proportion of students who identified as belonging to these ethnic groups was highest at Auckland.

With one exception, the ethnic groupings of students responding to the first survey were approximately representative of the total first year cohort at the participating law schools. The exception was Asian students (those identifying as Chinese and Korean) who were disproportionately under-represented in the study.

**Figure 1. Survey 1: Ethnicity**



Of the 454 students who completed the second survey, 50 percent (225) identified as New Zealand European/Pākehā, 10 percent (46) as Pasifika, seven percent (33) as Chinese, six percent (29) as Māori, five percent (24) as Indian, and four percent (19) as Korean.

Eighty seven percent of students were New Zealand citizens.

**b. Gender**

More female students responded to the first and second surveys than did male students. Of the 700 students who answered the gender question in the first survey, 35 percent (248) were male, 449 (64 percent) were female, with the remaining one percent indicating that they were either gender queer or gender fluid. The same proportions of male and female students responded to the second survey. Although the greater percentage of female students electing to complete the surveys reflects a pattern emerging from New Zealand and Australian empirical studies of law students,<sup>6</sup> it also reflects actual enrolment patterns. The actual female/male gender split across the total first year cohort was 60/40 at Auckland, 56/44 at Canterbury and 71/29 at Waikato.











<sup>6</sup> Sixty five percent of students in a study of level 200 and level 300 students at Victoria University of Wellington in 2004 were female: Caroline Morris “A ‘Mean Hard Place’? Law Students Tell It As It Is” (2005) 26 VUWLR 197 at 202. In a survey of 371 first year LLB students at Monash University in 2009, 59 percent were female: Melissa Castan, Jeannie Paterson, Paul Richardson, Helen Watt and Maryanne Dever “Early Optimism? First-Year Law Students’ Work Expectations and Aspirations” (2010) 20 Legal Educ Review 1 at 5. In a survey of first year LLB and JD students at the University of Melbourne, 62 percent of LLB students and 65 percent of JD students were female: Wendy Larcombe, Pip Nicholson and Ian Malkin “Commencing Students” Interests and Expectations: Comparing Undergraduate and Graduate Cohorts” (2008) 1 JALTA 227 at 229. In a survey of first year LLB students at the University of Western Australia in 2004 focusing on mental wellness, 72 percent of students were female: Judy Allen and Paula Baron “Buttercup Goes to Law School: Student wellbeing in stressed law schools” (2004) 29 Alt Law Journal 285 at 286.

Male and female students were proportionately represented across all but three ethnic groups. Female students made up 40 percent of Australian students, 53 percent of Korean students and 78 percent of Pasifika students.

**c. Age**

As Table 2 shows, by far the greatest proportion of the 701 students who answered the question relating to age were aged 18-20: 487 students (70 percent). A smaller percentage (52 percent) reported being in this age bracket at Waikato. Although, overall, 83 percent of students responding to this question were aged between 16-20, this was only so for only 66 percent of Waikato students.

**Table 2. Survey 1: Age on 28 February 2014**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
16-17		13.1%	92
18-20		69.5%	487
21-25		7.0%	49
26-30		2.6%	18
31-35		3.0%	21
36-40		2.0%	14
41-45		1.1%	8
46-50		0.7%	5
51-55		0.7%	5
56-60		0.3%	2
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>701</b>

Male students made up proportionately more of the 21-25 age group (43 percent) and proportionately less of the 16-17 year age group (29 percent).

A greater proportion of Māori (30 percent) and Pasifika students (22 percent) were aged over 21 or over, compared to 17 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students.

**d. Prior experiences**

Although most of the students who completed the first online survey were aged 20 years or younger, not all had commenced their law studies straight from school, as Table 3 shows. Students were asked what they were doing in 2013 and were given a range of responses to select from. Students could select more than one option. Seven hundred and one students answered this question and 444 (63 percent) reported that they had been at high school, with 134 (19 percent) reporting they had been in employment and 130 (19 percent) in other tertiary study. Consistent with the slightly different age demographic at Waikato, 54 percent of Waikato students reported they had been at high school, with a far higher proportion (35 percent) reporting that they been in employment.

Table 3. Survey 1: Prior experiences

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
At High School		63.3%	444
Gap year		4.6%	32
In employment		19.1%	134
Caring for dependants		1.3%	9
Other tertiary study		18.5%	130
Voluntary work		2.4%	17
Beneficiary		0.7%	5
Other, please specify...		4.7%	33
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>701</b>

*e. Previous place of residence*

Five hundred and fifty three students (80 percent of the total of 690 who answered this question) reported that in 2013 they had mostly lived in the same region as the law school in which they had enrolled in 2014.

Of the total of 29 students who had lived in another country in 2013, six reported they had lived in the United Kingdom; four in each of Australia and Hong Kong, three in France; two in each of Malaysia, China and Singapore; and one in each of South Korea, Papua New Guinea, Taiwan, South Africa, the Cook Islands and the United Arab Emirates.

*f. Disability status*

Six hundred and eighty nine students answered the question asking whether they had a disability that affected their ability to study and learn in the law degree. Most (655, 93 percent) did not. Seven students (two percent) indicated that they did have a disability and were receiving support from the university in which they were enrolled. Twenty nine students (four percent) responded that they did have a disability but were not receiving support from the university in which they were enrolled.

Māori students were proportionately more likely to report a disability affecting their ability to study and learn than other ethnic groups. Thirteen percent of Māori students reported a disability compared to eight percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students and six percent of Pasifika students. Māori students were also less likely to be receiving university assistance for their disability – 20 percent of Māori students were receiving assistance compared to 39 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students.

Although male and female students were equally affected by a disability, male students were less likely than their female counterparts to be receiving university assistance.

*g. Study status*

Students were asked whether they were studying part-time or full-time. Ninety five percent of Auckland students and 94 percent of Canterbury students were studying full time. Sixteen percent of students from Waikato were studying part-time, over double the proportions at Auckland and Canterbury.

Proportionately, more Māori students (14 percent) were studying part-time than New Zealand European/ Pākehā students (six percent) or Pasifika students (nine percent).

A greater proportion of male students were studying part-time.

#### ***h. Degrees pursued in 2014***

The final question in the category of core demographics asked students what degrees they were pursuing in 2014. Some differences in enrolment patterns were apparent across the three law schools. At Auckland and Canterbury, the majority of students were enrolled in a double degree programme, with the most popular combination being a BA/LLB, followed by a BCom/LLB combination. Twenty eight percent of Canterbury students were enrolled only in a LLB degree, compared to eight percent of Auckland students. The proportion of students enrolled only in an LLB degree was even higher at Waikato (52 percent). Of the students enrolled in a double degree programme at Waikato, the most popular combination was again a BA/LLB programme, followed by a BMS/LLB combination. A possible explanation for the differing enrolment patterns is that entry into second year law is limited at Auckland and Canterbury; it may be that students enrol in a second degree programme as a back-up option if they are unsuccessful in gaining entry into second year law.

## **2. Educational and family background**

#### ***a. Previous tertiary study***

Students were asked in the first survey whether they had already completed one or more degrees. Given that most of the students responding to the first survey were aged 20 or younger, it was not surprising that of the 689 students answering this question, 656 (94 percent) had not. Again, consistent with the core demographics of the student cohort at Waikato law school with respect to age, a higher proportion of students at Waikato (nine percent) had already completed one or more degrees.

Students who had completed a degree had the option of specifying their qualification. The qualification most commonly reported was a Bachelor of Arts (20 students), followed by a business degree (nine students).

#### ***b. Educational qualifications of parents***

Students were also asked in the first survey to identify the educational qualifications held by each of their parents. Seven hundred students answered this question and the results are shown in Table 4. Students were given a range of options to select from and could select more than one of those options. Across all three universities the qualification most commonly held by both mothers and fathers was a Bachelor degree. In the case of mothers, the next most commonly held qualification across all three universities was a school qualification, followed by a post-school qualification. This was also true of the fathers of Auckland and Canterbury students. The next most frequently held qualification of fathers of Waikato students was a school qualification followed by a post-school qualification.

Across all universities, mothers with Bachelors and post-graduate degrees outnumbered fathers with those qualifications.



**Table 4. Survey 1: Educational qualifications of parents**

	Mother	Father	Total Responses
Doctorate	12 (30.8%)	29 (74.4%)	39
Graduate qualification (e.g. MA)	87 (64.0%)	84 (61.8%)	136
Degree	230 (73.0%)	188 (59.7%)	315
Other post-school qualification	136 (64.8%)	128 (61.0%)	210
School	191 (76.4%)	165 (66.0%)	250
Not applicable	28 (47.5%)	49 (83.1%)	59
Don't know	64 (58.2%)	90 (81.8%)	110
	<b>Total responses</b>		<b>700</b>

**c. Family connections to the law**

Students were asked in the first survey whether anyone in their family had a law degree. Students were given a range of options to select from. Students who had more than one family member with a law degree could select more than one option. Seven hundred students answered this question and the response most commonly selected by students, as Table 5 shows, was that they had no family member or other significant person with a law degree who had influenced them.

**Table 5. Survey 1: Family connections to the law**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Parent I lived with while growing up		6.9%	48
Uncle, aunt or cousin		21.3%	149
Sister or brother		2.9%	20
Other relative or significant person who influenced you		10.0%	70
No one		67.4%	472
	<b>Total Responses</b>		<b>700</b>

A greater proportion of Chinese (76 percent) and Korean students (78 percent) reported no family member or significant person with a law degree, compared to 62 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā, 70 percent of Indian students, 65 percent of Māori students and 45 percent of Pasifika students.

Male students made up a higher proportion (54 percent) of students with a parent with a law degree. A similar trend was apparent in those students whose sister or brother had a law degree. In contrast, a proportionately greater number of female students claimed that an “other relative or significant person” had a law degree.







### 3. Reasons for enrolling in a law degree

Students were asked why they chose to study law in 2014. Six hundred and seventy nine completed this question. Students were given a range of options to select from and could also specify other reasons. Students were able to select more than one option.

Table 6 shows that, of the given options, the most commonly selected across all three law schools was “I want to be a lawyer”, followed by “keeping options open to do law” and “it is a useful or interesting paper to take”.

The most common “other” reason given by students was that studying law would provide assistance in the development of other career paths – examples mentioned included entering politics, the police or the private sector. Parental or family expectations also featured, but to a lesser extent.

**Table 6. Survey 1: Why did you choose to study law in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
I want to be a lawyer		55.7%	236
Keep my options open to do law		45.0%	191
It is a useful or interesting paper to take		34.2%	145
It fits well with my timetable		2.8%	12
It fits well with my proposed major		8.5%	36
Other, please specify...		13.0%	55
<b>Total responses</b>			<b>679</b>

Students were also asked if they intended to complete a law degree and, if so, their reasons for doing so. Six hundred and seventy three students completed this question and the results are shown in Table 7. Students were given a range of options to select from and were also given the option to add additional reasons.

In terms of the given options, those indicating a significant degree of idealism and/or altruism strongly featured. “I am passionate about law and justice” was the most common reason (57 percent), followed by “I want to make a difference” (55 percent) and “I want to help people” (53 percent). A view that law was a well-paid career was also important for a significant proportion of students (43 percent), as was the respect accorded to the legal profession (51 percent).

Consistent with responses to other questions, only a small proportion of students selected as a reason the fact that a family member was a lawyer. A small proportion of students also indicated that they were intending to complete a law degree because of someone else’s suggestion.

Of the “other” reasons given by students, providing assistance with other career paths was the most commonly occurring.

Analysis of the answers to this question by gender revealed that a greater proportion of male students selected the options relating to having a parent/sibling who is a lawyer (male students made up 40 percent of the total responses) and law being a good, steady profession (39 percent). Proportionately, more female students selected the options relating

to being passionate about law and justice (female students made up 69 percent of total responses), wanting to help people (72 percent) and wanting to make a difference (71 percent). Male and female responses to the options relating to law being well-paid and law being a respected profession were approximately even.

Māori and Pasifika students were more likely to have chosen to study law because they wanted to help people and/or to make a difference. They also selected the options relating to pay and the respect accorded to the legal profession less frequently. In contrast, Chinese and Korean students were more likely to have chosen to study law because it was a well-respected profession.

**Table 7. Survey 1: If you are intending to go on to complete a law degree, what are your reasons?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
One or more of my parents/ siblings/ close relatives are lawyers		6.2%	42
It is a good, steady profession		44.6%	300
I am passionate about justice and the law		56.8%	382
Someone else suggested it (e.g.: parent, teacher)		15.8%	106
I want to help people		53.0%	357
I want to make a difference		55.0%	370
It is a well-paid career		42.9%	289
It is a respected profession		51.1%	344
Other, please specify...		11.7%	79
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>673</b>

Students were also asked for the reason(s) why they enrolled at their chosen law school. Six hundred and seventy eight students answered this question. Students were given a range of options to choose from, and were also given the option to add other reasons. Students were able to select more than one reason.

Most students indicated they had enrolled at their chosen law school because it was at their local university (59 percent) and/or their family lived locally (51 percent). These reasons far outweighed the influence of friends, a reason selected by only 16 percent of students.

Significant numbers of students also considered their chosen law school to be the “best law school) (55 percent of Auckland students, 21 percent of Canterbury students and 22 percent of Waikato students) or had heard “good things about it” (42 percent of Auckland students, 49 percent of Canterbury students and 39 percent of Waikato students).

The significance of “good scholarships” being on offer was of less importance and was selected by only ten percent of students.

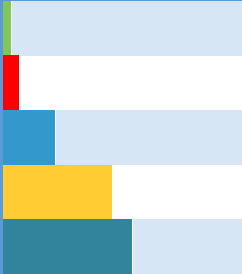
Some differences in the “other” reasons given by students were apparent across the three law schools. The most frequently occurring “other” reason given by ten Auckland students

was Auckland law school’s good reputation. The most common “other” reason given by four Canterbury students was that they liked living in Christchurch. Other reasons offered by Waikato students were the bi-cultural nature of the law school (four students) and the ability to access online lectures (three students).

#### 4. Future plans

Students were asked in the first survey to indicate their interest in pursuing a legal career on a five point scale with 1 representing no interest and 5 representing extreme interest. The results are presented in Table 8 below. Six hundred and eighty nine students answered this question. Responses to earlier questions focusing on the reasons why students had chosen to study law suggested that most students had enrolled in a law degree intending to complete it. Responses to this question revealed that a majority of students (75 percent) were either very interested or extremely interested in pursuing a legal career.






**Table 8. Survey 1: Interest in pursuing a legal career**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
1 No interest		3.2%	22
2		5.4%	37
3		16.7%	115
4		34.3%	236
5 Extreme interest		40.5%	279
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>689</b>

Students were then asked if they were interested in pursuing a legal career, what type of career appealed to them. Students were given a range of options to select from and also had the option to write in other types of legal career. Students were able to select more than one option. A total of six hundred and fifty six students answered this question and, as Table 9 shows, the most popular option, selected by 70 percent of students, was private practice as a lawyer.

What was notable, particularly given the idealism and altruism apparent in the responses to the question focusing on the reasons why students intended to complete a law degree, is the smaller proportion of students (26 percent) intending to pursue a career in a non-governmental or community based organisation. Working for such an organisation did however appeal to proportionately greater numbers of Māori and Pasifika students.

**Table 9. Survey 1: What type of legal career appeals to you?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Private practice (working in a law firm)		69.7%	457
Government position		47.4%	311
In house lawyer for employer that is not a law firm		25.6%	168
Non-governmental or community organisation		26.2%	172
Other, please specify...		9.6%	63
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>656</b>

Of the “other” career options given by students, the most frequently occurring response (seven students) was working for an international organisation such as the United Nations. Other options included becoming a judge, a legal academic, working for a trade union or joining the police force.

Students were asked in the first survey about the area(s) of law in which they had an interest and Table 10 illustrates the responses received. Students were given a range of responses to choose from and could also add other non-listed options. Students were able to select more than one option. Six hundred and eighty five students answered this question. The most popular areas of law were criminal justice (60 percent) and international law (50 percent). These results illustrate a degree of dissonance with private practice as the preferred career destination of the majority of students given that neither criminal justice nor international law is likely to feature frequently in this particular career path. The options selected by students are however more in line with the idealistic reasons given by students when asked why they intended to complete a law degree. It was also the case that a number of traditional areas of private practice (commercial and company, property law and family law) attracted strong interest. We intend to measure the extent to which students’ views about their preferred legal career change in subsequent surveys.

**Table 10. Survey 1: Areas of law in which students had an interest**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Commercial and company		43.2%	296
Community		28.0%	192
Criminal Justice		59.7%	409
Estates and Wills		14.9%	102
Information and Technology		11.4%	78
Media		24.2%	166
International		49.9%	342
Maori Land and Resource Law		13.9%	95
Property law and land transfer		26.7%	183
Public		32.7%	224
Family		41.9%	287
Law and Sport		15.6%	107
Law and Medicine		17.1%	117
Other, please specify...		9.3%	64
None		1.6%	11
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>685</b>

“Other” responses included environmental law, intellectual property law, human rights and employment law.

Given male students make up only 35 percent of the first survey cohort, male students were proportionately more interested than female students in the following subjects: information and technology (male responses made up 67 percent of total number of students selecting this option ) and law and sport (49 percent of total responses). Female students were proportionately more interested than their male students in community (female students made up 74 percent of total responses selecting this option), family (80 percent of total responses) and medicine (70 percent of total responses).

New Zealand European/Pākehā students were far more interested in criminal justice than other groups. Pasifika students were the group most interested in community and family law. Māori students were the group most interested in Māori land and resource law. Indian and Chinese students were the groups most interested company and commercial law.

A follow up question in the second survey asked students whether, as a result of their study in 2014, they wanted to practice as a lawyer, use their law degree in some other career or not complete or use a law degree in any profession. A total of 454 students answered this question. As Table 11 shows, the proportion of students who indicated they wanted to

practice as a lawyer decreased with this option attracting 48 percent of responses, down from 70 percent in the first survey.

Māori and Pasifika students were proportionately more likely to intend to use their law degree in some other career: 52 percent of Māori students and 52 percent of Pasifika students selected this option, compared to 43 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students, 42 percent of Korean students, 39 percent of Chinese students and 29 percent of Indian students.

**Table 11. Survey 2: What type of legal career are you interested in?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Want to practice as a lawyer?		47.7%	216
Think you will use your law degree in some other career?		44.2%	200
Not complete or use a law degree in any profession?		8.2%	37
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>453</b>

## 5. Skills (expected and gained)

In the first survey students were asked a qualitative question: what skills to you expect to gain from your law studies in 2014? Five hundred and ninety students answered this question.

The responses from all three law schools highlighted that the substantive knowledge first year law students expected to gain from their first year course essentially fell across three broad categories. First, and most commonly, there was an expectation from student respondents that they would finish the course with an understanding of the structures and operation of New Zealand’s legal system. “A clearer understanding of the New Zealand government and the New Zealand constitution and to understand how law shapes and impacts, and is impacted by both” was how one Waikato student phrased this expectation. Secondly, students expected to acquire a working knowledge of some basic legal principles and concepts; and, thirdly, there was an expectation from some students (especially in Auckland) that theoretical understandings of the Law and legal system would be instilled and developed, or, as one Auckland student noted, “[a] wider knowledge of law and sociology, and how history and modernity has sculptured the law, and our understanding of it.”

The second survey revealed that the first two expectations had been met for 90 percent of the respondent students, and that the expectation of development of theoretical understandings of the Law had been met for 70 percent.

In addition to substantive knowledge acquisition, the students in their responses identified a wide variety of skills that were hoped for or expected from their first year course. Notably, critical analytical thinking skills, literacy skills (with a particular reference on enhanced writing skills, sometimes referred essays) and specific Legal Method skills (i.e. case analysis, statutory interpretation) were most commonly identified. The second survey showed that 80 percent of the respondent students felt they had gained Legal Method skills, and 70 percent critical thinking analytical skills. Less than 40 percent of the students overall reported enhancement of their literacy skills.

From the first survey, oral communication skills (referenced both to generic public speaking/debating skills and specific mooted/court advocacy skills), skills in effective argument, and training for future career path also emerged with some frequency. A number of the respondent students in the first survey revealed they simply expected the first year course to prepare them for their future years of LL.B study, and research skills were highlighted by a few students at each of the Law Schools.

Inevitably there was the occasional student who expressed some uncertainty over the skills he or she expected to acquire. Much more typically, however, students would identify and proceed to list a variety of expected skills. One Canterbury student replied in this way: “[t]horough and excellent analysis skills, research and writing skills, be able to develop strong and informed arguments, and a whole lot more I can’t wait to learn!”

Personal skills were identified by a number of students at all the law schools, with increased personal confidence being identified in particular by many within this group, and attention to detail and organisation also being specified by a few. Time management skills also surfaced as a distinct and specific desired skill. Additionally, many students proffered skills that did not fit particularly neatly into any of the above designated categories. Thus the following were amongst the miscellaneous expectations put forward by the various respondents: “commercial awareness,” “good listening skills,” “prediction skills,” “good network of graduate friends,” “being able to absorb information and absorb it like a sponge,” “writing incredibly fast,” “open-mindedness,” “work ethic,” “stamina and energy,” and finally, and presumably not entirely seriously, “dressing well”.

## **6. Relationships with teachers**

In order to gauge initial student expectations about their relationships with their teachers, students were asked a qualitative question in the first survey: what sort of support/contact do you expect from your law teachers this year? Five hundred and fifty nine students responded to this question.

The most frequently mentioned expectation with respect to contact (18 percent) was that teachers would be available and approachable via a variety of mediums – including email, one-to-one meetings during office hours or after class, and via online learning systems.

A follow up quantitative question in the second survey asked students the ways in which they had had contact with their law lecturers. Four hundred and fifty four students answered this question. Students were given a range of responses to select from and could also add their own response. Students were able to select more than one response.

The most frequently occurring response (76 percent), as Table 12 shows, was that contact had occurred in lectures. Contact during lectures might involve listening to the lecture, asking or answering questions during class time, or discussion with a lecturer immediately before or after class. Although this figure appears to suggest that a quarter of students overall did not attend lectures, it may be partially explained by the high rates of reported use of recorded lectures, particularly by Auckland and Waikato students.










A majority of students reported some contact with their lecturers outside of lectures, but this most frequently occurred by electronic means (email or via an online learning platform). What is not clear is the extent to which this electronic communication was personalised or an all-class communication.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Pasifika students reported the most contact with their lecturers during office hours: 22 percent of Pasifika students reported having done so, compared to 17 percent of Māori students, 16 percent of Korean students; 11 percent of



New Zealand European/Pākehā students and three percent of Chinese students. Although Pasifika students reported the greatest frequency of face-to-face contact, they also reported the least contact by email.

**Table 12. Survey 2: In what ways have you had contact with your law lecturers in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
In lectures		75.7%	343
Communication on Moodle, Blackboard, Learn or other online learning platform		20.3%	92
Recorded lectures		43.0%	195
Office hours		12.4%	56
email		50.6%	229
phone		1.8%	8
social occasions		7.7%	35
No contact except attending lectures		21.9%	99
Other, please specify...		3.3%	15
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>453</b>

Students were also asked a qualitative question in the second survey: what could have been done to improve contact with your law lecturers in 2014? Two hundred and nineteen students responded. The most common response was that students were satisfied with the level of contact available, but the most interesting set of comments answered the question by recognising that it was the responsibility of students to initiate contact and to approach lecturers for help.

“UC provides students with multiple ways of getting in touch, it is up to the student to take full advantage of this.” (Canterbury)

“The lecturers are available as much as possible, I just need to make more use of them.” (Waikato)

“It is down to the individual motivation of students whether they want to talk to their lecturers.” (Auckland)

Of the students who did suggest ways in which contact could have been improved, the greatest number related to the desirability of regular contact in a smaller group setting: suggestions on this theme included individual ‘check-in’ type sessions with lecturers, or lecturers attending or taking tutorials or teaching in smaller classes. Another common request was for contact via online learning platforms, with one reason given for this being anonymity in asking questions. A small number of students (13) noted that lecturers can seem unapproachable.








Of those students who expected to receive additional assistance from their law teachers (all but 66), the most frequently occurring expectation at the time of the first survey (20 percent of the total) was that teachers would provide extra assistance as and when it was needed by

students. As one Auckland student noted, “I do expect my lecturer to be able to (and want to) answer any queries I have to regarding course content if I struggle to find the answers through my own study.” Other common categories included support associated with effective teaching; assistance and/or guidance in completing assessment tasks; receiving appropriate feedback on completed assessments; and general encouragement or support.

In the second survey students were asked to specify the forms of support they had received from their law lecturers in 2014. Students were given a range of options to select from and could also add their own response. Students were able to select more than one response. Three hundred and fifty eight students answered this question and Table 13 summarises their responses. The most frequently selected options were feedback on assignments, general encouragement and receipt of extra assistance when needed. These responses suggest that, for the most part, the support students received had met their initial expectations.

Analysis by ethnicity did reveal a number of differences. Māori students reported most frequently that they had received assistance with assessment tasks, but were also the group that reported receiving general encouragement to succeed the least frequently. Pasifika students, in contrast, were the group that reported receiving assistance with assessment tasks least frequently, but the group that reported receiving general encouragement to succeed most frequently.

**Table 13. Survey 2: What other forms of support have you had from your law lecturers in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Extra assistance when needed		25.7%	92
Assistance with assessment tasks		20.7%	74
Feedback on assignments		57.3%	205
General encouragement to succeed		63.1%	226
Career guidance		10.6%	38
Support around personal/family issues		4.5%	16
Other, please specify...		5.6%	20
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>358</b>

Students were also asked in the second survey how satisfied they were with the support they had from their law lecturers in 2014. Students were asked to select from a five point scale, with one representing ‘very dissatisfied’ and five representing ‘very satisfied’. The most frequently occurring response, as Table 14 shows, was point four on the scale (44 percent) – an indication of being satisfied. Whilst it is again not clear whether all of the support received by students was of a personalised and individual kind, it is apparent that, overall, students were generally satisfied with the support they received. Eighty six percent of students selected point three on the scale or higher.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Māori students were proportionately more likely to be satisfied or very satisfied (59 percent) when compared to other ethnic groups. Forty five percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students ranked their satisfaction levels in these terms as did 50 percent of Pasifika students and 39 percent of Chinese students. Chinese and Korean students were slightly more likely to report low or very low satisfaction levels with 18 percent of Chinese students and 16 percent of Korean students doing so. Fifteen percent of Pasifika students reported low or very low satisfaction levels, as did 14 percent of Māori students and 12 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students.

**Table 14. Survey 2: Satisfaction with support received from law lecturers**



Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
1 Very dissatisfied		1.8%	8
2 Dissatisfied		12.1%	55
3 Neutral		30.2%	137
4 Satisfied		43.8%	199
5 Very satisfied		12.1%	55
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>454</b>

Students were also asked in the second survey to specify the contact they had with their law tutors in 2014. Responses are summarised in Table 15 below. Four hundred and fifty four students answered this question. Students were given a range of responses to select from and could also add their own response. Students were able to select more than one response.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Māori and Pasifika reported greater attendance at office hours: 17 percent of Pasifika students and 14 percent of Māori students reported this form of contact, compared to eight percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students, six percent of Chinese students, five percent of Korean students and four percent of Indian students.

**Table 15. Survey 2: What contact have you had with your law tutors in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
In tutorials		85.5%	388
Communication on Moodle, Blackboard learn or other online learning platform		11.0%	50
Recorded lectures		3.3%	15
Office hours		8.6%	39
email		36.3%	165
Phone		1.1%	5
Social occasions		2.0%	9

No contact except attending tutorials		20.7%	94
Other, please specify...		1.8%	8
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>454</b>

Students were also asked a follow-up qualitative question asking how contact with tutors could be improved. Two hundred students responded. Again, the most frequently occurring answer was that the amount of contact was acceptable. One area that was raised as a concern was contacting tutors outside of lectures as sometimes contact details were not supplied. A small number of students used this question as an opportunity to indicate a desire for more tutorials.

## 7. Study habits

The study habits of students were explored in a series of questions in the first and second surveys.

Students were asked in the first survey how many hours of study per week outside lecture and tutorial times they expected to devote to their law studies in 2014. Students were given a range of responses to choose from. A total of 650 students answered this question.

Unlike responses to many of the other questions, different patterns of answers emerged across the three law schools. The most frequently occurring response of Auckland students (40 percent) was that students expected to spend three-five hours on their law studies each week. The most frequent response from Canterbury students (33 percent) was that they expected to spend 6-8 hours studying each week. In contrast, the most frequently chosen response by Waikato students (36 percent) was that they expected to spend more than ten hours studying per week.

Analysis by ethnicity showed that, proportionately, Māori and Korean students expected to spend more time on their studies than other ethnic groups. Forty three percent of Māori students and 48 percent of Korean students expected to spend nine or more hours on their law studies each week compared to 31 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students, 30 percent of Pasifika students and 33 percent of Chinese students.

In proportionate terms, slightly more female students expected to spend nine or more hours each week on their studies than male students, with female students making up 72 percent of the total responses in these categories (female students made up 65% of the total cohort of students responding to the first survey). Proportionately, slightly more male students expected to spend only one to two hours each week on their studies – male students made up 41 percent of responses in this category.

A follow up question in the second online survey asked students how many hours per week on average they had actually spent on their law courses in 2014. A total of 443 students answered this question. Three-five hours of study per week remained the most frequently chosen option by Auckland students, but the proportion of students selecting this option increased from 40 percent to 50 percent over the two surveys. The most frequently chosen option by Canterbury students in the second survey was three-five hours of study (55 percent), down from six-eight hours (33 percent) in the first survey. Student responses from Waikato gave the options of three-five hours and six-eight hours equal top placing with both attracting 29 percent of responses.

Analysis of the follow-up question by ethnicity revealed that Pasifika students were proportionately more likely to have spent only one to two hours on their law studies per week: 24 percent of Pasifika students identified as falling into this category compared to 18 percent of Chinese students, 17 percent of Māori students, 12 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students and 11 percent of Korean students. On the other hand, 17 percent of Pasifika students reported spending nine or ten hours on their studies, compared to 16 percent of Korean students, 14 percent of Māori students and 13 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students.

A greater proportion of female students spent more than ten hours on their studies than did their male counterparts with female students making up 84 percent of the responses in this category. On the other hand, proportionately more male students spent only one – two hours on their studies (55 percent of total responses). The proportion of male and female students spending between three – ten hours per week was approximately equal.






What is notable is that although students at the three law schools began with different expectations in terms of the hours they expected to spend per week on their law studies, what was consistent in the responses in the second survey was that students were studying fewer hours per week than they had anticipated when responding to the first survey. The reasons for this can only remain speculative at this stage, but we see this data as concerning and justifying further investigation. Whilst the overall responses to some other questions (such as satisfaction with support received from teachers, overall satisfaction and future career intentions) do not suggest that large numbers of students were disengaging from their studies, the responses to this question do suggest that the actual experience of studying law is somewhat different to what many students had anticipated. Follow up questions to determine exactly what students are doing in the hours that they spend on their law studies will be asked in subsequent surveys.

Students were asked in the second survey whether they had studied with other students. Of the total of 446 students who answered this question, a majority (68 percent) had done so.

Korean students were the least likely to report studying with other students: 53 percent of Korean students reported that they did so, compared to 61 percent of Chinese students, 67 percent of New European/Pākehā students, 76 percent of Māori students, 79 percent of Indian students and 85 percent of Pasifika students.

A follow up question asked the students who did study with other students how often this occurred. A total of 305 students answered this question and, as Table 16 shows, most reported that they did so frequently: overall 63 percent of students reported studying with other students fortnightly or more frequently.

**Table 16. Survey 2: How often do you study with other students?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Once a week or more often		44.1%	134
Every two weeks or so		19.1%	58
Once a month		9.9%	30
Less than once a month		3.0%	9
Only for tests and exams		24.0%	73
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>304</b>

A slightly greater proportion of female students reported studying with other students more frequently than did male students. Forty four percent of female students reported studying with other students either once a week or every two weeks or so, compared to 34 percent of male students. On the other hand, 18 percent of male students reported studying with others only for tests and exams, compared to 14 percent of female students.

Students were asked in the second survey how often they physically visited the law library and 444 students answered this question. Different patterns of attendance emerged across the law schools, as Table 17 shows. Auckland and Canterbury students reported that they visited the law library far less frequently than did students from Waikato where 42 percent of students reported that they visited the library weekly or more often. The reasons for the disparity in attendance are not clear, but may include differences in the availability of study space within the law library and/or the frequency with which students are referred to materials only available in hard copy at the law library.

Analysis by ethnicity showed that that Māori students were more likely to report visiting the library on a fortnightly or weekly or more often basis than other groups: 24 percent of Māori students reported doing so, compared to 15 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students, 13 percent of Pasifika students, 12 percent of Chinese students, eight percent of Indian students and five percent of Korean students.

**Table 17. Survey 2: How often have you physically visited the law library in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Never		34.7%	154
Occasionally		37.8%	168
Monthly		11.5%	51
Fortnightly		7.9%	35
Weekly or more often		8.1%	36
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>444</b>

Students were also asked how often they used online legal resources available through their University library. A total of 444 students answered this question. Again, different patterns of use emerged across the three law schools, with students from Waikato reporting use of such materials far more frequently than students from Canterbury or Auckland. Sixty four percent of Waikato students reported that they used online legal resources available through their law library either fortnightly or weekly compared to 27 percent of Canterbury students and 14 percent of Auckland students.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Māori students and New Zealand European/Pākehā students were the groups reporting the most frequent use of online resources.

Students were also asked to respond to a qualitative question in the second survey by detailing the factors that helped them to settle in to law school in 2014. Two hundred and ninety nine students responded. The most common response across all three law schools was having a support network, either an existing network (family) or creating a new network through the making of friends or forming study groups. As one Auckland student reported, it was “having friends in the same classes, who [sic] could relate to what I was going through”

that helped. A Waikato student noted that “talking with other students and sharing our results” helped in understanding “what other things that lecturers could be looking for in our work”.









Another frequently noted factor was self-motivation or getting into good study habits. The importance of enjoying classes and of having approachable lecturers were also seen as relevant.

Another question in this category asked students what sorts of things had impacted on their law studies in 2014. Four hundred and twenty three students responded. Students were given a range of options to select from and could also specify “other” matters. Students were able to select more than one option.

Overall, as Table 18 shows, the most frequently selected responses were home/family issues and personal issues. Things to do with study was also ranked highly on an overall assessment, but an analysis by law school showed that this factor was ranked far lower by Waikato students. On the other hand, and perhaps reflecting the greater numbers of part-time students at Waikato law school, work and employment issues were ranked more highly by Waikato students.

The least important factors impacting on study were accommodation issues and relationship issues.

**Table 18. Survey 2: What sorts of things impacted on your law studies in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Home and family issues		49.9%	211
Relationship issues		23.6%	100
Personal issues		49.6%	210
Work and employment issues		32.6%	138
Accommodation issues		12.1%	51
Financial issues		25.8%	109
Things to do with studying at university		45.4%	192
Other, please specify...		13.7%	58
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>423</b>

## 8. Social experiences

A number of questions in the second survey were directed at the students’ social experience at law school. The first question of this nature was whether students were members of a law students’ association. A total of 445 students answered this question. Quite different patterns of membership emerged across the three law schools. Whilst a majority of Auckland students (83 percent) and Waikato students (58 percent) were not members of a students’ association, the opposite was true at Canterbury students where 69 percent of students were members of an association.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Pasifika students and New Zealand European/Pākehā students were most likely to be members of a Law Students' Association: 37 percent of Pasifika students and 43 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students. In contrast, only 12 percent of Chinese students answered "yes" to this question, as did 28 percent of Māori students, 31 percent of Korean students and 25 percent of Indian students.

Students who were members of a students' association were then asked how important to them was the Law Students' Association and the activities it organised. Across the three law schools it was apparent that students were ambivalent about membership of the association and/or the activities it organised: 51 percent of Auckland students reported that it was neither important nor unimportant, as did 50 percent of Canterbury students and 44 percent of Waikato students. Just over 25 percent of students at each of the law schools indicated that membership and/or activities were quite important to them.

The final question in this category asked students whether they used social media to communicate with other students. Eighty eight percent of the total of 304 students who answered this question had done so.

## 9. Debt levels

A question directed at levels of student debt was asked in the second survey. Of the 441 students who answered this question, the most frequently reported level of debt (47 percent of all students) was \$5001 to \$10,000, a pattern that was consistent across the three law schools. Overall responses to this question are summarised in Table 19.

**Table 19. Survey 2: Levels of student debt**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
None at all		20.4%	90
Up to \$5,000		13.8%	61
\$5,001 to \$10,000		47.2%	208
\$10,001 to \$20,000		12.9%	57
More than \$20,000		5.7%	25
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>441</b>

## 10. Feelings of confidence and well being

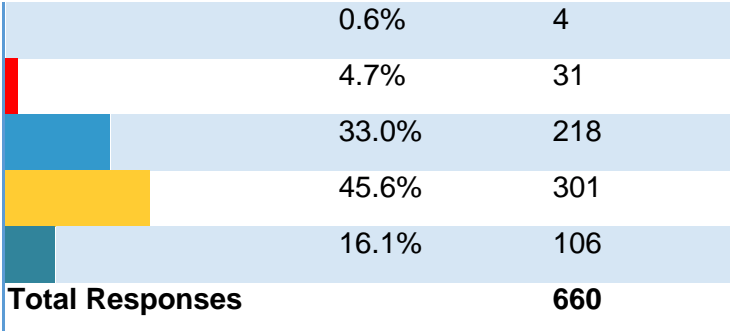
### a. Confidence

Students asked in the first survey how confident they were about studying at university. Students were given a five point scale to select from with one representing not at all confident and five representing very confident. Six hundred and forty nine students answered this question and, as Table 20 shows, the majority (62 percent, 407) indicated they felt confident or very confident.

**Table 20. Survey 1: Confidence about university study**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
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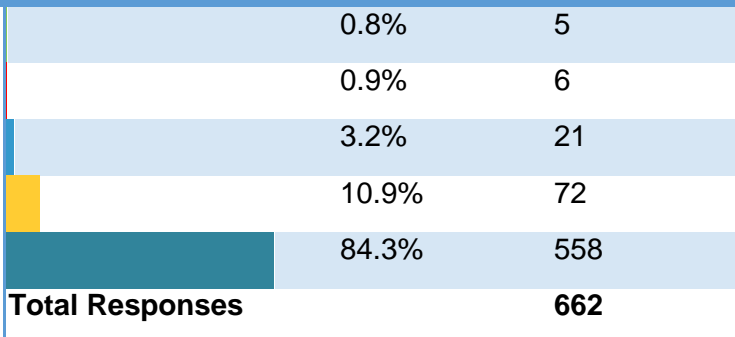
1 Not confident at all		0.6%	4
2		4.7%	31
3		33.0%	218
4		45.6%	301
5 Very confident		16.1%	106
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>660</b>

A slightly higher proportion of male students indicated they were confident or very confident about university study with male responses making up 42 percent of the total in these categories.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed interesting trends. Sixty five percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students felt confident or very confident, as did 61 percent of Indian students, 56 percent of Chinese students, 59 percent of Pasifika students, 53 percent of Māori students and 48 percent of Korean students. Korean students and Māori students were also disproportionately represented in the students who indicated they had little confidence about their studies.

Consistent with the responses indicating that a majority of students had enrolled in a law degree intending to complete it, Table 21 shows that a high proportion of students indicated that passing their law courses in 2014 was very important to them. Students were asked in the first survey how important passing their law course(s) was to them. Students were given a 5 point scale to select from with 1 representing not at all important and 5 representing very important. Of the 651 students who answered this question, 84 percent selected point 5 on the given scale.

**Table 21. Survey 1: Importance of passing law courses**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
1 Not important		0.8%	5
2		0.9%	6
3		3.2%	21
4		10.9%	72
5 Very important		84.3%	558
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>662</b>

Students must pass their first year law courses to have the opportunity to enrol in second year law courses. Auckland and Canterbury students must also survive an additional limitation of entry hurdle. Consistent with the confidence levels about university study, most students were confident at the beginning of the year that they would be admitted to second year law. In the first survey students were asked to rank their confidence in being admitted to second year law on a scale of 1 to 5 with one representing no confidence and 5 representing very confident. Because it may be possible for a student to enrol concurrently in both first and second stage law courses, this was given as a further option. An alternative option was

given to Waikato students, to reflect current practice at that law school, that as long as students pass their first year law courses they will automatically be admitted into second year law. A final option, of not intending to study second year law papers, was also given.

Six hundred and seventy eight students responded to this question across the three universities. The majority of Waikato students (57 percent) selected the option that as long as they passed their courses they would automatically be admitted to second year law. At Auckland and Canterbury where entry into second year law is limited, a majority of students selected point 3, the neutral point, on the 5 point scale, (47 percent of Auckland students and 45 percent of Canterbury students). More Canterbury students were very confident of being admitted (42 percent), than Auckland students (14 percent). Overall 60 percent of Auckland students selected points 3, 4, or 5 on the scale, compared to 89 percent of Canterbury students.

Consistent with responses to earlier questions indicating that most students intend to complete a law degree, very few selected the option that they did not intend to study second year law papers (six percent of Auckland students and no Canterbury and Waikato students).

Analysis by ethnicity revealed a number of interesting trends. Overall, New Zealand European/Pākehā and Māori students were the most confident at this point in time. Thirty-three percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students and Māori students were confident or very confident, compared to 17 percent of Pasifika students, 18 percent of Chinese students, 18 percent of Korean students and 10 percent of Indian students. Thirteen percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students and 14 percent of Korean students indicated that were not at all confident or not very confident about their admittance prospects, compared to 21 percent of Māori students, 26 percent of Indian students, 27 percent of Chinese students and 21 percent of Pasifika students.

This question was repeated in the second survey and 458 students answered it.

A smaller proportion of Auckland students indicated confidence in being admitted to second year law (31 percent compared to 60 percent in the first survey.) The responses from Canterbury and Waikato students also showed an overall drop in confidence levels. Eighty nine percent of Canterbury students indicated confidence in the first survey, but only 48 percent did so in the second survey. Ninety four percent of Waikato students indicated confidence in the first survey, but only 65 percent did so in the second survey. A sizeable proportion of Auckland and Canterbury students (31 percent and 20 percent respectively), indicated that they did not know whether they would do well enough to be admitted to second year law. Confidence levels dropped most at the law schools with limited entry into second year law.

Overall, however, it was still only a small proportion of students (nine percent) who indicated that they did not intend to study law in 2015.






Given that male students make up only 35% of the total survey cohort, male students were slightly more likely on a proportionate basis to indicate that they were pretty confident that they would do well enough to be admitted to second year law (male responses made 42 percent of the total selecting this option). Again proportionately, more female students were very worried that their grades would not be good enough (female responses made up 74 percent of total selecting this option).

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that confidence in being admitted to second year law remained highest amongst Māori students and New Zealand European/Pākehā students. Chinese and Pasifika students remained the least confident of being admitted.

Despite the overall drop in confidence, students generally responded positively to a question in the second survey asking if, no matter what the outcome of any selection process, they intended to continue studying law in 2015. For those no longer confident that they would be admitted to second year law, this would likely entail repeating stage one law courses in 2015. A total of 455 students answered this question and results are summarised in Table 22 below. Eighty two percent of Waikato students were definite that they would do so, compared to 64 percent of Canterbury students and 39 percent of Auckland students. Twenty six percent of Auckland students were likely to do so, compared to 22 percent of Canterbury students and five percent of Waikato students.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Pasifika students were the least certain of whether they would continue their law studies: 35 percent indicated that they intended to do so, but 35 percent indicated they were unsure. In contrast, 62 percent of Māori students intended to continue their legal studies, with only 14 percent being unsure. Fifty two percent of Chinese students intended to continue, as did 45 percent of Indian students, 53 percent of Korean students and 53 percent of New European/Pākehā students.

**Table 22. Survey 2: No matter what the outcome of any selection process, do you intend to continue studying law in 2015?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes I will		51.8%	235
It is likely		22.2%	101
I am unsure		15.9%	72
Probably not		4.0%	18
Definitely not (please state reason)		6.2%	28
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>454</b>

Student views on the likelihood of their being admitted to second year law were likely to be informed by the assessment results they had received. Students were asked in the second survey to what extent, on average, the results they had received in their law courses reflected their expectations. As Table 23 shows, the option most frequently selected was “they were about what I expected.” Overall 48 percent of students selected this category, with a further 20 percent receiving results that were higher or much higher than expected. When considered in light of the overall drop in confidence in expectation of being admitted to second year law, it seems likely that, for many students, the appreciation that continuing with their law studies might be more difficult than originally anticipated was a matter of self-realisation, rather than a result of receiving unexpectedly poor results.

Analysis by ethnicity revealed that Chinese and Indian students were more likely to have received results that were lower or much lower than their expectations: 46 percent of Indian students fell within this category, as did 42 percent of Chinese students, compared to 32 percent of Korean students, 30 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students, 28 percent of Pasifika students and 21 percent of Māori students.

**Table 23. Survey 2: To what extent, on average, have the assessment results you have received in your law courses reflected your expectations?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
They were much lower than I expected		5.9%	26
They were lower than I expected		25.7%	114
They were about what I expected		48.4%	215
They were higher than I expected		16.9%	75
They were much higher than I expected		3.2%	14
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>444</b>

The second survey also asked students to reflect on how prepared they had been by their high school experience for starting their law studies. Across the three law schools, a majority of students did not feel well prepared. Table 24 shows that, of the 446 students who completed this question, nearly 55 percent indicated they were not prepared at all or only a little prepared.

Korean students were more likely to report that they were not prepared at all or only a little prepared: 79 percent of Korean students did so, compared to 63 percent of Indian students, 61 percent of Chinese students, 59 percent of Māori students, 52 percent of New Zealand European/Pākeha students and 50 percent of Pasifika students.

Proportionately, more male students considered themselves to be not too badly prepared or quite well prepared by their high school studies than did female students – male students making up 44 percent of the responses in these categories.

**Table 24. Survey 2: How prepared were you by your high school experience for starting your law studies?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Not applicable		14.8%	66
Not prepared at all		29.0%	129
A little prepared		27.6%	123
Not too bad		17.5%	78
Quite well prepared		8.3%	37
Very well prepared		2.7%	12
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>445</b>







Students were asked in the first survey what they were good at in terms of academic work, with the results shown in Table 25 below. Six hundred and sixty one students answered this

question. Students were given a range of responses to select from and were also able to add their own “other” option. Students were able to select more than one response. Fifty eight percent of students considered themselves to be good at essays, 53 percent at in-class work, 38 percent at oral presentations, but only 24 percent at examinations. A sizeable proportion of students (20 percent) did not know what they were good at.

A greater proportion of male students thought they were good at examinations (43 percent of total responses) and oral presentations (42 percent of total responses). Proportionately, more female students were unsure of what they were good at (72 percent of total responses).

Korean students were significantly more likely to consider themselves to be good at examinations.

**Table 25. Survey 1: What students consider themselves to be good at?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Examinations		24.2%	160
Essays		57.8%	382
In-class work		52.6%	348
Oral presentations		37.5%	248
Other, please specify...		6.1%	40
I don't know what I am good at		20.3%	134
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>661</b>

**b. Wellbeing**

Questions directed at students’ feelings of wellbeing were included in both the first and second surveys.








The wellness question in the first survey asked students how they felt about studying law. Students were given a range of responses to choose from and also had the option of adding their own response. Students were able to select more than one response. Six hundred and fifty one students answered this question.

Overall responses to this question are presented in Table 26. Responses indicated that students had a wide range of feelings about their legal studies: nervousness, excitement and feeling a bit stressed all ranked highly. Of note, however, is the proportion of students already feeling very stressed at the time of the first survey (18 percent overall, but 22 percent of Auckland students, 12 percent of Canterbury students and 13 percent of Waikato students).

A greater proportion of male students indicated they felt confident (male responses made up 51 percent of total selecting this option, although males made up only 35 percent of the survey cohort). In contrast, slightly more female students felt nervous (70 percent of total responses) with a greater proportion feeling very stressed (78 percent of total responses).

Chinese students were proportionately more likely to indicate they felt very stressed.

**Table 26. Survey 1: How do you feel about studying law?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Nervous		57.7%	382
Excited		61.0%	404
Confident		16.9%	112
OK		24.0%	159
A bit stressed		52.1%	345
Very stressed		18.1%	120
Other, please describe...		5.3%	35
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>662</b>

This question was repeated in qualitative form in the second survey. Three hundred and forty students responded. The most common responses indicated a positive view, examples including the following:

“It has been tough but very interesting and rewarding.” (Canterbury)

“Confident and content- I’ve learned a lot (I hope) and enjoyed the process.” (Auckland)

“I love law. I love studying at Waikato, and feel that the atmosphere really encourages us all to succeed. Everyone wants to do well but they also want to see everyone else do well. People help each other.” (Waikato)

Comments relating to being stressed and nervous were the next most common response, particularly from Auckland and Canterbury students. Many students combined their answers, reporting feeling both stressed and positive.

Forty six students did report feeling dissatisfied, or feeling negative about their studies. One final interesting response was that a small number of students (ten) reported feeling less stressed at the end of the year than they did at the time of the first survey.

The second survey also asked students to rate their feelings of general well-being. A total of 440 students answered this question and, as Table 27 shows, the most frequently selected response was that students felt “OK”. A higher proportion of students at Waikato (46 percent) reported feeling good or great compared to 27 percent of Auckland students and 36 percent of Canterbury students. Twenty three percent of Auckland students reported feeling terrible or not too good, as did 17 percent of Canterbury students and 11 percent of Waikato students. Feelings of well-being by the time of the second survey were lowest at the law schools (Auckland and Canterbury) with limited entry into second year law.

**Table 27. Survey 2: Feelings of general well-being**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
I feel terrible		4.8%	21
I don't feel too good		14.3%	63
I am OK		48.2%	212
I feel good		25.0%	110
I feel great!		7.7%	34
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>440</b>

Analysis by ethnicity showed that Māori students were the most likely to report feeling ‘good’ or ‘great’ (52 percent) compared to 35 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students, 33 percent of Indian students, 31 percent of Korean students, 21 percent of Chinese students and 13 percent of Pasifika students.

Chinese students were proportionately more likely to report feeling ‘terrible’ or ‘not too good’: 33 percent did so compared to 21 percent of Korean students, 21 percent of Indian students, 20 percent of Pasifika students, 17 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students and 10 percent of Māori students.

Female and male students rated their wellbeing as being ‘OK’ or ‘not too good’ in roughly equal proportions. However, proportionately, slightly greater numbers of female students indicated that they felt ‘terrible’ (70 percent of total responses) and proportionately greater numbers of male students indicated that they felt ‘great’ (47 percent of total responses).

The quantitative wellbeing question in the first survey was tied specifically to the students’ law studies, but the question in the second survey was not, thus preventing a direct comparison between the results of the first and second survey. However the numbers of students reporting negative feelings (high levels of stress in the first survey and feeling ‘terrible’ or ‘not too good’ in the second survey) was generally consistent across the two surveys, although by the time of the second survey this was skewed in the sense that greater proportions of Auckland and Canterbury students fell into this category.

The results from the first and second surveys appear to show levels of wellbeing greater than those reported in Australian studies of first year law students. As an example, in a recent study focusing on first year law student wellbeing at Australian National University, 85 percent of students surveyed in the first two weeks of their first semester of study reported normal or mild rates of depression, yet by the end of the first year of study, one third of students reported rates of depression at moderate, severe or extremely severe levels.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Molly Townes O'Brien, Stephen Tang and Kath Hall “Changing Out Thinking: Empirical Research on Student Wellbeing, Thinking Styles and the Law Curriculum” (2011) 21 Legal Educ Rev 149 at 159. Similar results were obtained in surveys of first year law students at Monash University: Anthony Lester, Lloyd England and Natalia Antolak-Saper “Health and Wellbeing in the First Year: The Law School Experience” (2011) 36 Alternative Law Journal 47. Similar results have also been reported in the USA: see Andrew Benjamin, Alfred Kaszniak, Bruce Sales and Stephen Shanfield The Role of Legal Education in Producing Psychological Distress Among Law Students and Lawyers” (1986) 11 American Bar Foundation Research Journal 225 at 241; Kennon Sheldon and Lawrence Krieger “Does legal education have undermining effects on law students? Evaluating changes in motivation, values, and well-being” (2004) 22 Behavioral Sciences and the Law 261 at 271.

Similar results occurred when levels of stress were investigated. Reported levels of wellbeing at the beginning of the year had also dropped significantly by the end of the year.

There are no similar studies focusing on the wellbeing of first year New Zealand law students. However reported levels of wellbeing in this study again appear to be higher than those reported in a survey of law students across the six New Zealand law schools carried out by the New Zealand Law Students' Association in 2013. Eight hundred and eighty students completed the survey with 64 percent reporting that they had high levels of stress as a result of their legal studies and 27 percent reporting they had developed a clinical mental health problem since beginning their university studies.<sup>8</sup>

The students participating in this study did not reveal levels of well-being significantly different from the general population. A 2004 New Zealand Mental Health report by the Ministry of Youth Development showed that 28.6 percent of young people aged 16-24 reported experiencing a mental health disorder in the previous 12 months with anxiety (17.7 percent) and mood disorders (12.7 percent) being the most frequently reported.<sup>9</sup> Almost identical statistics were reported in a Ministry of Health Report in the 2006 New Zealand Mental Health Survey.<sup>10</sup>

One final question in the second survey, although not strictly a well-being question, asked students how satisfied they were with their experience at law school in 2014. Table 28 shows that, of the total of 443 students who answered this question, 50 percent or more were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied', a trend apparent across each of the three law schools. However, analysis by ethnicity revealed that Pasifika students were least likely to report themselves as satisfied or very satisfied: 39 percent of Pasifika students did so compared to 42 percent of Chinese students, 47 percent of Korean students, 58 percent of Indian students, 59 percent of Māori students and 71 percent of New Zealand European/Pākehā students.

**Table 28. Survey 2: How satisfied are you with your experience at Law School in 2014?**

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Very dissatisfied		1.6%	7
Dissatisfied		5.2%	23
Neutral		30.9%	137
Satisfied		50.6%	224
Very satisfied		11.7%	52
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>443</b>

#### IV. COMMENT

##### 1. Overall trends

For the most part, the law students in this study commenced their law studies at their local university as a homogenous group. Although there was some variation when the data for

<sup>8</sup> <[www.nzlsa.co.nz](http://www.nzlsa.co.nz)> accessed 4 June 2014.

<sup>9</sup> <[www.youthstats.myd.govt.nz](http://www.youthstats.myd.govt.nz)> accessed 31 January 2015.

<sup>10</sup> These statistics were subsequently cited in a 2011 Mental Health Commission report, "Child and Youth Mental Health and Addiction", suggesting these were the most current statistics.



Waikato law school was separately analysed, overall, students were, for the most part, young with no prior tertiary education experience. They entered law school for idealistic reasons, although, for many, these were tempered with a degree of pragmatism. They demonstrated a clear commitment to completing a law degree and most contemplated a future career in the law. Most had no family connection with the law.

Although many considered they had not been prepared by their experience at high school for the study of law, most appeared to be willing to rise to the challenge they faced. They were generally clear about the skills they expected to gain and, for the most part, reported achieving their expectations. They reported high levels of contact with teaching staff and were, for the most part, satisfied with the support they received from their teachers. Most also appeared to develop a relationship with their law student peers, with many reporting studying with other students on a regular basis.

Although most reported feeling confident to some degree about being admitted to second year law at the beginning of the year, the practical reality is that not all will achieve this. Some may not pass their first year papers, others studying at Auckland and Canterbury may not be invited into second year law due to limitation of entry even if it is the case that they pass their first year law courses. By the time of the second survey, confidence levels had dropped, but a majority remained committed to the study of law. The drop was most notable at Auckland and Canterbury, the law schools with limited entry to second year law. Most also reported receiving assessment results in line with their expectations. Their overall reported levels of well-being did not appear to change over the course of their year of study and remained consistent with reported levels in the wider community. Again, however, when results were separately analysed by law school, reported levels of well-being were lower at the law schools with limited entry into second year law by the time of the second survey. However, overall, most students reported themselves satisfied with their law school experience.

What we believe is particularly interesting about this study is that a more detailed analysis by gender and ethnicity reveals particular groups with experiences that were either more positive or more negative than the norm. It is these results, which are summarised further below, that we believe require further investigation and attention.

## **2. Gender**

Aside from the gender imbalance in the cohort group itself (35 percent male and 65 percent female), significant differences between male and female students were few in terms of the core demographic data.

However some differences emerged in the reasons selected by male and female students for choosing to study law. Male students were slightly more likely to have chosen to study law because one of their parents or siblings was a lawyer and because law was a good, steady profession. Female students were slightly more likely to have chosen to study law because they felt passionate about law and justice, wanted to help people or wanted to make a difference.

Differences of note also emerged in the subject areas in which male and female students indicated an interest. A greater proportion of male students were interested in commercial and company law, information technology law and law and sport. A greater proportion of female students were interested in traditionally female dominated areas of legal practice, particularly family law. There were however no significant differences in the reported career intentions of male and female students in the second survey.

With respect to the law school experience, male and female students were in broad agreement about both the skills they expected to gain and the skills they felt they had gained

by the time of the second survey. There were no significant differences between male and female students reported satisfaction levels with the support they received from their law lecturers or in overall satisfaction with the law school experience.

Proportionately, female students were slightly more likely to study with other students. Of those male and female students who reported studying with other students, female students did so more frequently than male students. Male and female students reported that they had used the law library and online legal resources with approximately the same frequency. There was no difference in the reported membership rates of law students' associations.

A notable difference between male and female students occurred in reported confidence levels. A greater proportion of male students felt 'confident' or 'very confident' about studying law at the time of the first survey. By the time of the second survey, a greater proportion of male students reported themselves to be "not too badly prepared" or "well prepared" by high school for their legal studies. By the time of the second survey, a greater proportion of male students were "pretty confident" they would do well enough to be admitted to second year law. A greater proportion of female students were more likely to be very worried that their grades would not be good enough.

A greater proportion of male students indicated they felt confident about their law studies in the first survey. Proportionately, more female students felt nervous or very stressed. In the second survey male and female students reported their well-being as being "OK" and "not too good" in approximately the same proportions. However, a greater proportion of female students reported themselves as feeling terrible and a greater proportion of male students as feeling great.

Overall, although female students were likely to have chosen to study law for idealistic reasons, they were consistently over-represented, although not always by a large margin, when it came to reporting negative experiences or feelings. They were less confident about their studies, more unsure of what they were good at, and more likely to feel nervous or stressed. Nevertheless these negative feelings did not appear to have an impact on overall reported satisfaction rates with the law school experience or in the support received from teaching staff.

Studies reporting greater negativity on the part of female law students are not unusual.<sup>11</sup> For example, Caroline Morris concluded in a 2005 survey of second and third year law students at Victoria University of Wellington:<sup>12</sup>

It also seems that increased numbers of women attending law school has had little impact on the negatively gendered nature of the experience. Academically, women law students at VUW found the place more competitive than men, were more dissatisfied with their performance, spoke up less frequently in class and were less happy about it. Socially, they were less engaged with student organisations, and believed that the activities they offered were more appealing to men than women.

Morris's findings were in line with the overall trend emerging from overseas studies:<sup>13</sup>

One constant theme that has emerged from this line of work is that the law school experience is significantly gendered. ... In particular, women enter with identical grades to their male counterparts but leave with lower ones; experience a greater

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<sup>11</sup> For a useful summary of studies from the United States see Catherine Carroll and April Brayfield "Lingering Nuances: Gendered Career Motivations and the Aspirations of First-Year Law Students" (2007) 27 Sociological Spectrum 225.

<sup>12</sup> Caroline Morris "A 'Mean Hard Place'? Law Students Tell It As It Is" (2005) 26 VUWLR 197 at 217-220.

<sup>13</sup> Caroline Morris "A 'Mean Hard Place'? Law Students Tell It As It Is" (2005) 26 VUWLR 197 at 199.

negative shift in their desire to use their degrees in the public interest; and are especially alienated by the teaching methods, particularly Socratic teaching, at law school (citations omitted).

What is notable is that the findings of this study revealed that female students reported more negative feelings right from the beginning of their first year of study, suggesting that these feelings may not necessarily have been engendered by their law studies. What is also notable is that these negative feelings did not appear to have had a significant and/or detrimental impact on their overall perception of their law school experience as male and female students reported very similar satisfaction levels and those satisfaction levels were, for the most part, positive. Whether these trends continue will be monitored in subsequent surveys.

### 3. Ethnicity

This section reports on trends emerging in the responses from Māori, Pasifika, Chinese, Indian and Korean students. Student responses have not been analysed to determine the extent to which they reflect cultural mores and values, such as the tikanga of learning or the tikanga of knowledge in the case of Māori students.<sup>14</sup> This form of analysis is certainly warranted and is intended to be the subject of a future report. The responses are presented as they stand and in comparison with the experiences and views of other groups.

#### a. Māori students

Forty five students identifying as Māori (seven percent) responded to the first survey and 29 (six percent) to the second survey. Although these numbers appear low, it appears that they represent the largest single cohort of Māori law students responding to a published study. There have been very few published studies focusing on the experience of Māori law students<sup>15</sup> and none were located focusing on the first year experience of Māori students.

In terms of core demographics, Māori students had the greatest proportion of students aged over 21 (30 percent) and the greatest proportion of students studying part-time (14 percent). Māori students were proportionately more likely to report a disability affecting their ability to study and learn compared than other ethnic groups (13 percent did so).

Māori students were less likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a bachelors degree or higher and more likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a school qualification.

Māori students were more likely to have chosen to study law because they wanted to help people or to make a difference and were less likely to see pay or the respect accorded to the legal profession as significant. Working for a non-governmental or community organisation appealed to a greater proportion of Māori students in the first survey. By the time of the second survey, Māori students were more likely than most other groups to intend to use their law degree (once completed) in a career other than private practice.

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<sup>14</sup> Tikanga “is the set of beliefs associated with practices and procedures to be followed in conducting the affairs of a group or an individual. These procedures are established by precedents through time, are held to be ritually correct, are validated by usually more than one generation and are always subject to what a group or an individual is able to do”: Hirini Mead *Tikanga Māori – Living by Māori Values* (Huia Publishers, Wellington, 2003) at p 12.

<sup>15</sup> One of the few is the LLM thesis of Mikaere Papuni-Ball focusing on the experiences of 17 of the 23 Māori students who graduated at Waikato Law School’s first graduation ceremony in 1994: Mikaere Papuni-Ball *Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Realities of Being Māori at a Bi-cultural Law School* (unpublished LLM Thesis, Waikato Law School, 1996). The experience of Māori law students at Waikato Law School is also addressed in Stephanie Milroy and Leah Whiu “Waikato Law School; an experiment in bicultural legal education” (2005) 8 Yearbook of New Zealand Jurisprudence 173. In a 2005 report of a study focusing on the experiences of 533 second and third year law students at Victoria University of Wellington, the responses of the 37 Māori students were included: see Caroline Morris “A ‘Mean Hard Place’? Law Students Tell It As It Is” (2005) 26 VUWLR 197.

At the time of the first survey, Māori students expected to spend more time on their law studies than all other groups other than Korean students, although few actually had done so by the time of the second survey, a finding that was consistent across all groups.

Although at the time of the first survey Māori students were amongst the least confident about studying at university, at the time of both the first and second survey they (along with New Zealand European/Pākehā students) were more likely to report high confidence levels about being admitted to second year law in both the first and second surveys. They were also more likely to report that they were very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the support they had received from their law lecturers.

Overall where the results reported by Māori students differed from other groups, it was largely for positive reasons.<sup>16</sup> Whether this result has its source in cultural values or the general and targeted support that is available to Māori students requires further investigation, if only so that it can be shared and applied to the other groups that did not fare so well in a comparative analysis.

#### ***b. Pasifika students***

An initial point of note is the large number of Pasifika students completing the survey: 83 (12 percent) in the first survey and 36 (10 percent) in the second survey. Pasifika students made up the second largest ethnic grouping after New Zealand European/Pākehā students. Given that no other published study focusing on the experience of Pasifika law students was located,<sup>17</sup> this makes the findings of this study of some significance.

In terms of core demographics, 78 percent of Pasifika students were female, a significantly higher proportion than in other ethnic groups. A greater proportion of Pasifika students were aged over 21 than in all other groups except Māori students.

Pasifika students were less likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a bachelors degree or higher and more likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a school qualification.

Pasifika students were more likely to have chosen to study law because they wanted to help people or to make a difference and less likely to see pay or the respect accorded to the legal profession as significant. Working for a non-governmental or community organisation appealed to proportionately greater numbers of Pasifika students. They were more interested in community and family law than any other ethnic group. By the time of the second survey, Pasifika students were more likely than students from other ethnicities to intend to use their law degree (once completed) in a career other than private practice.

Pasifika students were the most likely to have reported in the second survey that they had spent only one to two hours on their legal studies, as well as being the most likely to report spending nine or more hours each week on their studies. They were the most likely to report that they had studied with other students.

Pasifika students were amongst those most likely to report they that were not confident of being admitted to second year law in both the first and second surveys. They were more likely to have reported in the second survey that they were unsure of whether they would continue their legal studies. They were less likely to have reported themselves very satisfied

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<sup>16</sup> This is in contrast to the reported experiences of indigenous law students in Australia: see Heather Douglas "It's Not Just About Me": Indigenous Students Insights About Law School Study" (1998) *Adelaide University Law Review* 315; Asmi Wood "Law Studies and Indigenous Students' Wellbeing: Closing the (Many) Gaps (2011) 21 *Legal Educ Rev* 251.

<sup>17</sup> There is however a recent study focusing on Māori and Pasifika students in a foundation health course at the University of Auckland: see Elena Curtis, Sonia Townsend "Improving Indigenous and ethnic minority student success in foundation health study" (2012) 17 *Teaching in Higher Education* 589.

or extremely satisfied with their law school experience and were among those least likely to report feeling good or great at the time of the second survey.

Pasifika students were proportionately more likely than all other groups (except New Zealand European/Pākehā) to report belonging to a Law Students' Association.

Overall, where the responses of Pasifika students differed from other groups, it was for negative reasons, a matter which warrants further investigation.

#### *c. Indian students*

Forty five students in the cohort responding to the first survey identified as Indian, just under seven percent of the total cohort. Twenty four (5 percent) responded to the second survey. The answers of Indian students stood out from other groups in only a few instances, and for mixed reasons.

Indian students, along with Korean students, were proportionately most likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a bachelors degree or higher.

A career in private legal practice appealed to proportionately greater numbers of Indian students and they were more interested in company and commercial law than most other ethnic groups.

Indian students were proportionately amongst those most likely to report receiving results that were lower or much lower than their expectations.

#### *d. Chinese students*

Forty five students in the cohort responding to the first survey identified as Chinese, just under seven percent of the total cohort, with 33 (six percent) responding to the second survey.

Chinese students were amongst those most likely to have a parent with a law degree, were most likely to have chosen to study law because it is a well-respected profession, and were more interested in company and commercial law than other ethnic groups.

Chinese students were amongst those most likely to report receiving results that were lower or much lower than their expectations and also amongst those most likely to report they that were not confident of being admitted to second year law in both the first and second surveys. They were more likely to report feeling very stressed at the time of the first survey and most likely to report they were feeling terrible or not good in the second survey. They were also amongst the least likely to report feeling good or great or to be very or extremely satisfied with their law school experience.

We note that the number of Chinese students responding to the surveys was not necessarily representative of the total number of Chinese students in total first year cohort: overall the participating law schools report that Asian students make up a far greater proportion of the total cohort. However it is a point of concern that the Chinese students answering both the first and second surveys stood out in terms of negative responses. Further investigative work needs to be done to ascertain the extent to which the responses of the Chinese students participating in this study are representative of Chinese students in general.

#### *e. Korean students*

Forty five students in the cohort responding to the first survey identified as Korean, just under seven percent of the total cohort, with 19 (four percent) responding to the second survey.

Korean students, along with Indian students, were proportionately most likely to have a parent whose highest qualification was a Bachelors degree or higher and the most likely to

have a parent with a law degree. They were more likely to have chosen to study law because it is a well-respected profession and a career in private legal practice appealed to proportionately greater numbers of them.

Korean students were the most likely to report that they were not prepared or only a little prepared by their high school experience for starting their law studies. They expected to spend more time on their law studies than all other groups at the time of the first survey, but most did not fulfil this expectation. They were the group least likely to report they had studied with other students and the most likely to report they were good at examinations. Finally, they were less likely to feel very or extremely confident about their university studies at the time of the first survey.

Korean students, it seems, have slightly different study habits and perceived strengths in comparison with other groups, but this does not appear to have translated into a significantly more negative first year experience, as appears to have been the case with Chinese and Pasifika students. We do however note that the numbers of Korean students participating was not necessarily representative of the total number of Korean students in total first year cohort: overall the participating law schools report that Asian students make up a far greater proportion of the total cohort.

## **V CONCLUSION**

At this early stage of the project only tentative suggestions can be made about possible future directions for the research. Subsequent phases of the project comprise further annual surveys of the same 2014 cohort of students as they progress through their studies and enter the workforce, in order to determine their developing understanding of skills required, and their actual law school, and then, career, experience. A particular challenge is likely to be maintaining the numbers in the cohort especially given that limitation of entry into second year law at both Auckland and Canterbury is likely to have a significant negative impact on the number in the original cohort who are still studying law in 2015.

As the study progresses, focus groups and interviews will be used to 'drill down' further into areas of particular interest. The two areas which currently stand out in our results as requiring more detailed investigation are gender and ethnicity differences with a view to determining why and when the differences we have identified occurred and the extent to which they continue over the students' subsequent years of study. We also intend to investigate whether students' preferred legal career destination changes over the time of their studies and, if so, when the change occurs. One further point for investigation is what students actually do in the time that they spend on their legal studies. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this study, a more detailed investigation of the effect of limited entry into second year study on student well-being and stress levels would also be of interest.

Further phases of the project will enhance these results and enrich the comprehensive database being built up in the study. Independently of the longitudinal survey described above, a survey of the New Zealand law profession and of other employers of law graduates (local bodies, the private sector, government, NGOs and others) will be carried out in 2015. That survey is currently being designed and will ask what skills law graduates bring to their work and what skills prospective employers want. Analysis of that data once collected is intended to identify skills considered important by employers of graduates. This information will be cross-checked against the skills that current students consider to be important skills for graduates, and the actual skills delivered in the law school experience across the three participating law schools. A further cross-check will be made against institutional graduate profiles. This survey will have national significance to the study and practice of law in New Zealand.

The data will be disseminated in the form of comprehensive and publicly available reports such as this one. It is also intended to publish individual papers in journals such as the Journal of the Australasian Law Teachers Association, the Legal Education Review, the Journal of Commonwealth Law and Legal Education and the Law Teacher. An article analysing just the Canterbury results will be submitted to the Canterbury Law Review later this year. We also intend to present a paper at the Australasian Law Teachers Association Conference in July 2015. We are also giving some thought to hosting a symposium in a later phase of the project. All information will be disseminated to all the law schools, and Waikato and Auckland law schools may choose to produce individual reports or articles on the data relating specifically to them. A web page for the project is planned and basic summaries of the results will be sent to participating students before they are invited to take part in the next survey later in 2015.

We are excited at the comprehensive data we have gathered from the first phase this longitudinal study. We believe this data, together with the data to be elicited in later phases of the project, will provide an invaluable resource for all the New Zealand law schools; and it is our hope that the information derived from our project will lead to positive outcomes for the staff and students involved in the teaching and learning of law in New Zealand.

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# APPENDIX ONE

## Figures and Tables

### Figures

Figure 1. Survey 1: Ethnicity

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## APPENDIX TWO

### Survey One

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You should already have received a letter of introduction, inviting you to participate in this study. A longitudinal study is one that takes place over a longer period of time. It is our intention to follow through the current cohort of first year Law students into the law degree and beyond. There will be two surveys this year, then one in each subsequent year for those who continue into the law degree. Once your studies are complete, we hope to follow you as you move into the workforce. The study will be of interest to the legal profession, the university law schools and many other people. There has certainly never been a study like it in New Zealand. As the first survey in the series, this one asks you for some personal information as well as research data. We would like to assure you that your privacy will be maintained – no information about you will ever be revealed. Also, what you tell us is completely confidential. We will only use aggregated data across the whole sample in our reporting. In order to participate in this study, we need you to formally consent. Such consent can be withdrawn in writing at any time. The terms and conditions, and copies of all the ethical documentation, are available [on website]. Your consent to undertake this survey is not intended as a consent for any subsequent survey.

**Do you agree to these terms and conditions?**

If you tick 'no' the survey will end

- Yes
- No

#### **Part 1. Some information about you**

This information is for our administrative purposes only, and to provide some demographic data. Your privacy and confidentiality will be maintained.

**How old were you on 28 February 2014?**

- 16-17
- 18-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 51-55
- 56-60
- 61+

**Are you...**

- Male
- Female
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your ethnicity?**

- New Zealander or pakeha or NZ European
- Māori
- Pasifika
- Australian
- European
- Indian
- Chinese
- Korean
- Japanese
- Other

**Where did you mostly live in 2013?**

- Canterbury, NZ
- Rest of South island, NZ
- North Island, NZ
- In another country, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**What were you doing last year?**

Tick all relevant responses

- At High School
- Gap year
- In employment
- Caring for dependants
- Other tertiary study
- Voluntary work
- Beneficiary
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you already completed one or more degrees?**

- Yes (please write in qualification, e.g. B.A.) \_\_\_\_\_

- No

**Are you....**

- A New Zealand citizen
- A permanent resident
- An international student

**Do you have a disability that affects your ability to study and learn in the law degree?**

- Yes, and I receive assistance from the university
- Yes, and I do not receive assistance from the university
- No

**Question 11**

What is the highest educational qualification achieved by each of your parents?

	Mother	Father
Doctorate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduate qualification (e.g. MA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other post-school qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Who, in your family, has a law degree?**

Tick all relevant responses

- Parent I lived with while growing up
- Uncle, aunt or cousin
- Sister or brother
- Other relative or significant person who influenced you
- No one

**Part 2. About your course of study**

**What degrees are you pursuing this year?**

Please write the degree course(s) enrolled for, e.g. 'B.A., LLB'.



**Are you studying....?**

- Full-time
- Part-time

**Why did you choose to study law this year?**

Tick all relevant responses

- I want to be a lawyer
- Keep my options open to do law
- It is a useful or interesting paper to take
- It fits well with my timetable
- It fits well with my proposed major
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are intending to go on to complete a law degree, what are your reasons?**

Tick all relevant responses

- One or more of my parents/ siblings/ close relatives are lawyers
- It is a good, steady profession
- I am passionate about justice and the law
- Someone else suggested it (eg: parent, teacher)
- I want to help people
- I want to make a difference
- It is a well-paid career
- It is a respected profession
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**Why did you choose to do a law paper at Canterbury?**

Tick all relevant responses

- Local university
- Best law school
- Friends going there
- Family live in Christchurch
- Heard good things about it
- Good scholarships
- Criminal Justice degree offered also
- Its where I need to be to complete the other courses/degrees I am enrolled in
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**How confident are you at this stage of being admitted to second year Laws?**

1 is not confident at all, 5 is very confident

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- I do not wish to enter this programme

**Part 3. Aspirations**

We are interested in your career aspirations at this stage.

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being no interest and 5 being extreme interest, how interested are you at the moment in pursuing a legal career?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

**a. If you are interested in pursuing a legal career, what type of career appeals to you at the present time.**

Tick all relevant responses

- Private practice (working in a law firm)
- Government position
- In house lawyer for employer that is not a law firm
- Non-governmental or community organisation
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**Please identify the area/s of law in which you have an interest**

Tick all relevant responses

- Commercial and company
- Community
- Criminal Justice
- Estates and Wills
- Information and Technology
- Media
- International

- Maori Land and Resource Law
- Property law and land transfer
- Public
- Family
- Law and Sport
- Law and Medicine
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- None

**Part 4 Your expectations as a student in 2014**

**What skills do you expect to have after completing your law studies in 2014?**

(Please explain in your own words.)

**What sort of support/contact do you expect from your law teachers this year?**

(Please explain in your own words)

**What other sorts of help do you expect from the Law School in 2014, if any?**

(Please explain in your own words)

**How do you feel about doing law this year?**

Tick all relevant responses

- Nervous
- Excited
- Confident
- OK
- A bit stressed
- Very stressed
- Other, please describe... \_\_\_\_\_

**How important is passing your law course/s this year to you?**

1 is not important, 5 is very important

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

5

**What are the things that might impact on your study this year?**

Tick all relevant responses

- Family obligations
- Full time job
- Part time job
- My health
- Health of others
- Close relationships
- Law is hard
- Find studying hard
- Non-law study requirements
- Hobby or sport
- Social life
- Voluntary work
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

**In general, how confident are you about studying at University?**

1 equals not confident at all, 5 is very confident.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

**What are you good at?**

Tick all relevant responses

- Examinations
- Essays
- In-class work
- Oral presentations
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- I don't know what I am good at

**Finally, how many hours of study per week outside lecture and tutorial times do you expect to do in law this year?**

- None
- One or two hours
- Three, four or five hours
- Six, seven or eight hours
- Nine or ten hours
- More than ten hours per week

## APPENDIX TWO

### Survey Two

Here is the second and last survey for 2014 for the law students who responded to the first survey earlier this year. Remember that your consent and ethical rights are carried over to this survey.

Where are you currently studying law?

- Auckland University
- University of Waikato
- University of Canterbury

Do you expect to be admitted to the second year of law in 2015?

Different law schools have different entry procedures. Please choose the response which is closest to your understanding of your situation.

- I have already been admitted to the second year
- All I have to do is pass my course, but I am worried about this
- All I have to do is pass my course, and I am reasonably confident of this
- I am worried my grade won't be good enough
- I really don't know whether I will do well enough
- I am pretty confident that I will do well enough
- Yes, no problem, I will be admitted
- I don't intend to study law next year.

No matter what the outcome of any selection processes, do you intend to continue studying law in 2015?

- Yes I will
- It is likely
- I am unsure
- Probably not

- Definitely not (please state reason) \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of your study in 2014, do you....

- Want to practice as a lawyer?  
 Think you will use your law degree in some other career?  
 Not complete or use a law degree in any profession?

What skills have you gained from your law courses in 2014?

Tick all that apply

- Understanding and knowledge of legal system and structure  
 Basic knowledge of law and some legal concepts  
 Theoretical understandings of law and society  
 Critical thinking, analytical skills  
 Literacy skills  
 Legal method skills  
 Oral communication skills  
 Skills in argument/persuasion  
 Skills training for career and or legal profession  
 Baseline law study skills  
 Research skills

In what ways have you had contact with your law lecturers in 2014?

Tick all that apply

- In lectures  
 Communication on Moodle, Blackboard learn or other online learning platform  
 Recorded lectures  
 Office hours  
 email

- phone
- social occasions
- No contact except attending lectures
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

What could have been done to improve contact with your law lecturers in 2014?

In what ways have you had contact with your law tutors in 2014?

Tick all that apply

- In tutorials
- Communication on Moodle, Blackboard learn or other online learning platform
- Recorded lectures
- Office hours
- email
- phone
- social occasions
- No contact except attending tutorials
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

What could have been done to improve contact with your law tutors in 2014?

What other sort of support have you had from your law lecturers in 2014?

Tick all that apply

- Extra assistance when needed
- Assistance with assessment tasks
- Feedback on assignments
- General encouragement to succeed
- Career guidance
- Support around personal/family issues
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_



On a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are you with the support you have had from your law lecturers in 2014?

1= not satisfied at all and 5= very satisfied.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How do you feel about your law studies in 2014?

How important is passing your law courses to you?

- Very unimportant
- Quite unimportant
- Neither important or unimportant
- Quite important
- Very Important

What sorts of things have impacted on your law studies in 2014?

- Home and family issues
- Relationship issues
- Personal issues
- Work and employment issues
- Accommodation issues
- Financial issues
- Things to do with studying at university
- Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours of study per week on average outside lectures and tutorials have you spent on your law courses in 2014?

- One or two
- Three, four or five
- Six, seven or eight
- Nine or ten
- More than ten

What factors most helped you settle in to your law studies in 2014?

How prepared were you by your High School experience for starting your law studies?

- Not applicable
- Not prepared at all
- A little prepared
- Not too bad
- Quite well prepared
- Very well prepared

To what extent, on average, have the assessment results you have received in your law courses reflected your expectations?

- They were much lower than I expected
- They were lower than I expected
- They were about what I expected
- They were higher than I expected
- They were much higher than I expected

Are you a member of a Law Students' Association?

- Yes

- No

How important to you is the Law Students' organisation and the activities it organises?

- Very unimportant
- Unimportant
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Quite important
- Very important

Do you study with other law students?

- Yes
- No

How often do you study with other law students?

- Once a week or more often
- Every two weeks or so
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Only for tests and exams

Do you use social media to communicate with other law students?

- Yes
- No

How satisfied are you with your experience at Law School in 2014?

- Very dissatisfied

- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

How often have you physically visited the law library in 2014?

- Never
- Occasionally
- Monthly
- Fortnightly
- Weekly or more often

How often have you used online legal resources available through your University library?

- Never
- Occasionally
- Monthly
- Fortnightly
- Weekly or more often

What level of student debt do you currently have?

- None at all
- Up to \$5,000
- \$5,001 to \$10,000
- \$10,001 to \$20,000
- More than \$20,000

Finally, how would you currently assess your feelings of general well-being?

- I feel terrible
- I don't feel too good
- I am OK
- I feel good
- I feel great!