



The making of Lawyers: Expectations and experiences of third year New Zealand Law students

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Executive Summary

Background

This report presents the fourth collection of data in a longitudinal study of law students who enrolled in 2014 in a first year law programme at the University of Auckland, the University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato. The focus of the paper is on the students' third year of studies in 2016. The expectations and experiences of New Zealand law students have been little studied and this longitudinal project aims to present those involved in the teaching 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.

Methodology

The initial phase of the study carried out in 2014 was made up of four parts. The first, a literature review, informed the second, the development of two web based surveys. In the third and fourth parts, these surveys were administered at the beginning and end of the students' first year of study. The first survey captured details of students' backgrounds, future career plans, and expectations about their first year of study. The second survey focused on students' actual teaching and learning experiences. The data collected was analysed across the entire survey cohort and by law school, gender and ethnicity.

In the second phase of the project in 2015, a further web based survey was developed and administered towards the end of the students' second year of study. Questions focusing on students' future plans were repeated. More detailed information was sought about students' teaching and learning experiences and their feelings of mental wellness. Results were then analysed again across the entire survey cohort and by law school, gender and ethnicity.

The third phase of the study, and the subject of this report, was carried out two thirds of the way through the 2016 academic year. Questions focusing on students' intended study options and career plans were again repeated, as were key questions focusing on learning and teaching experiences. A new section seeking students' views on assessment practices was included and the section on students' feelings of wellbeing was expanded. The 2016 survey responses have been analysed across the entire survey cohort and by law school and gender. Analysis by ethnicity was not undertaken because the numbers of students in most ethnic groups except New Zealand European/Pākehā were too small to generate statistically robust results. The literature on university student engagement is used to provide a framework for comment on key trends identified through analysis of survey responses.

The student cohort were studying a combination of courses that are compulsory for admission to the Legal Profession (taught in large lectures with supporting tutorials) and optional courses (which vary in size and teaching methods).

Participation rates and demographics

A total of 222 students completed the fourth 2016 survey. Of these, 82 percent (186) were continuing with their law studies. These 186 students represent 84 percent of the 234 students who were continuing with their law studies at the time of the 2015 survey. Almost all of the continuing students (92 percent) were studying full-time.

The overall make-up of the 2016 student cohort is consistent with the larger cohorts who completed the first and second 2014 surveys in terms of gender. Sixty percent of the students completing the 2016 survey were female and 39 percent were male.

Highlights: Continuing students

Career Plans

- Eighty eight percent of students were quite interested or very interested in pursuing a legal career. Of these students, the most popular reported career choice was private practice as a lawyer.
- The areas of law in which students were most interested were criminal law/criminal justice, human rights and company/commercial law.

Classroom Experiences

- A majority of students reported high attendance rates at lectures. However, a majority reported low participation rates in student centred or active learning activities during lectures in large courses (courses in which more than 50 students are enrolled). Students reported higher participation rates in active learning activities during lectures in small courses (less than 50 enrolments). The most frequent reason students gave for accessing the internet or social media during class time was that what was happening in the class was boring.

Self-study

- Students most frequently reported typically spending between 3-5 hours outside of lectures and tutorials on each of their second year courses per week. During this time, students most frequently reported reading cases and writing up or supplementing their lecture notes. Students most frequently reported completing these activities to gain a better understanding of material covered in lectures and tutorials and to complete assessment tasks.
- Eighty percent of students reported that they accessed the online learning site used by their Law School weekly or more frequently. Thirty six percent reported visiting the Law Library weekly or more frequently. Thirty six percent reported accessing online legal resources available through their Law Library on a weekly basis or more frequently.

Relationships with Lecturers

- Just over 50 percent of students reported having had email contact with their law lecturers during the course of 2016, but just over 30 percent reported having had no contact with their lecturers except through attending lectures. A majority of students (59 percent) would like more contact with their law lecturers, with a majority of these students expressing a preference for face-to-face contact.

Relationships with other Students

- Although a minority of students reported working with other students in large lectures, greater numbers reported interacting with their peers during lectures in small courses. Just under half of students reported that they studied regularly with other students out of class.

Law-related Extra-curricular Activities

- Over half of all students reported involvement in a law-related extra-curricular activity.

External Factors Adversely Affecting Students' Studies

- Family, health and personal issues were the factors that most frequently adversely affected students' studies.
- The most commonly reported level of student debt was \$20,001-\$30,000.

Students' Self-Assessment of the Outcomes of their Studies

- In terms of skills gained, students most frequently reported legal research and writing skills.
- Seventy one percent of students reported receiving results that, on average, reflected their expectations.
- The grades that students most frequently reported receiving were B grades.
- Sixty nine percent of students were confident or very confident that they would pass all of their courses in 2016.
- Fifty two percent of students reported that their assessment load was acceptable.
- Students' most preferred assessment types were open book tests/exams, individual essay or assessment and individual take-home tests.
- Sixty two percent of students were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall law school experience in 2016.

Mental wellbeing

Analysis of students' responses to a Kessler-6 scale revealed likely levels of psychological distress higher than those reported within the general New Zealand population, but in line with international studies focusing on law students. Students most frequently reported workload pressure as the factor that had most adversely affected their mental wellbeing on a regular basis. Students' suggestions as to what law schools could do to improve student wellbeing largely focused on assessment.

Highlights: Gender-based trends (continuing students)

Trends apparent in previous surveys largely continued. Female students were more interested in pursuing a legal career. Male students were more interested than female students in "core" areas of legal practice.

Overall, female students continued to report lower confidence levels. They were less likely to ask and answer questions of their teachers during lectures. They were less likely to report contact with their lecturers out of class and also less likely to want increased contact with their lecturers. Female students were also less confident that they would pass their law courses. They were also more likely to have higher levels of psychological distress than male students and to report higher levels of student debt. Nevertheless, in an unexpected finding, they were more likely to be satisfied with their overall law school experience in 2016.

Highlights: University trends

There was little difference in students' responses across law schools, suggesting that the law school student experience is comparable across the participating law schools.

Where to from here?

A key issue is whether students' reported experiences reflect what stakeholders see as desired outcomes for New Zealand legal education. Presently it seems that the institutional context and the current regulatory environment are, to a large degree, driving the student law school experience. The reported student experience of the teaching and assessment in large law classes is that it largely involves passive and individual learning. Students, in turn, report acquiring the knowledge and skills that reflects this experience. Many students also report likely low levels of mental wellbeing.

Working within the current regulatory framework, we recommend that law schools and staff:

- Ascertain and, if necessary, resource staff development in teaching and student learning;
- Review student work and assessment load;

- Include and assess a wider range of outcomes in compulsory courses, including not only legal knowledge and legal thinking and research skills, but skills in collaboration, self-management and a wider range of communication skills, including oral communication.

In the longer term, we recommend that law schools work to initiate a review of the existing regulatory regime with the aim of developing a regime that is grounded in educational research and promotes the adoption of institutional practices that have a proven positive influence on student engagement and learning.

I Introduction

This paper reports on the fourth collection of data in a longitudinal study of law students enrolled at the University of Auckland, the University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato in 2016. The focus of the paper is on students' third year of law studies. For students enrolled only in a law degree, this third year of study represents their penultimate year at law school. Students enrolled in a double or conjoint degree (a five year programme) have now passed the half-way point in their university studies.

The expectations and experiences of New Zealand law students have attracted little attention and this project aims to present stakeholders (law students, law teachers, law schools and the Council of Legal Education) with a pool of data to inform both teaching practices and the design and regulation of undergraduate legal education in New Zealand. It is intended that, over time, a complete law student profile will be developed and 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.

In the first phase of the study, carried out in 2014, two web-based surveys of the cohort (then enrolled in their first year of study) were carried out. The first survey took place at the beginning of the academic year, the second towards the end. Data collected included core demographic information, students' relationships with teaching staff and other students, students' future career intentions and feelings of general wellbeing.

In the second phase of the study, carried out in 2015, a further web-based survey was carried out when students were two thirds of the way through their second year of law studies. Questions focusing on students' intended study and career intentions were repeated. A key focus of the third survey was the collection of data on students' learning and teaching experiences and on their mental wellbeing.

The third phase of the study, and the subject of this report, was carried out two thirds of the way through the 2016 academic year. Questions focusing on students' intended study options and career intentions were repeated. Key questions focusing on learning and teaching experiences were also repeated, but with some modification to take into account students' broader range of course choices in their third year of study. The section on students' mental wellbeing was also expanded.

The methodology employed is set out in Part II below. The broader context in which the findings of this study sit, including a brief literature review, are the subject of Part III. The immediate context for students' studies in 2016 is described in Part IV. Results and accompanying commentary are detailed in Parts V, VI and VII. A discussion and summary of findings is set out in Part VIII. The paper concludes with some suggestions as to how stakeholders might act on the project findings.

The 2016 survey results are analysed across the entire student survey cohort, by law school and by gender. However, the analysis by law school must be read in light of the fact that numbers of participating Waikato students was relatively small (31 students). Analysis of results by ethnicity was not undertaken because numbers of students in most ethnic groups except New Zealand European/Pākehā were too small to generate statistically robust results.

Overall findings reflect those in earlier years. Four key trends emerged. The first was that students reported teaching and learning experiences were largely a reflection of the institutional context in which they were studying. The second was that students' overall levels of mental wellbeing remained low on some measures. The third was the continued differences in the way in which male and female students experience law school. The fourth

key finding is an apparent link between assessment regimes and students' reported skill development and levels of mental wellbeing.¹

II Methodology

The first phase of the longitudinal study, carried out in 2014, involved a number of steps. Initially, a literature review of empirical studies and analytical comment based on student profiles and/or the development of student profiles was carried out. An initial web based survey was then developed. All students enrolled in first year law papers in 2014 at the University of Auckland, the University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato were invited to participate in this survey conducted in the first half of 2014. This survey contained basic demographic questions covering ethnicity, age, gender, and educational and family background. This was followed by questions investigating students' reasons for studying law, students' future plans and intentions with respect to study and careers, and students' expectations around the law degree and the study of law. A final set of questions dealt with wellbeing and confidence at the start of the study year.

All students completing this first survey were assigned a digital identifier by an independent consultant and this was used to invite students to complete the second survey later in 2014. The second survey was adapted to remove the demographic questions and to allow comparison of the students' actual experience with their initial expectations captured in the first survey. New questions asked whether students expected, at this later stage of their first year studies, to continue studying law in 2015, and focused 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 and feelings of general well-being. One final subset of questions was directed at how the students' first year experience could have been improved

In the second phase of the project carried out in 2015, a further longitudinal survey was developed, informed by the responses received to the two 2014 surveys. Questions focusing on students' intended study and career destinations were repeated and more detailed information was sought about their teaching and learning experiences and levels of mental wellbeing. The third survey was promoted to students who were assigned a digital identifier at the time of the first survey in an email reporting key findings from the first and second surveys. The survey was also promoted in class and via an online learning platform at the University of Canterbury. A small number of students who had completed the first survey, but not the second, elected to return to the study and complete the third survey. As the email invitation to complete the survey was tied to students' university email addresses, the invitation only reached students who were continuing their studies at the university in which they were enrolled at the beginning of 2014.

In the latest phase of the project, carried out in 2016, a further web-based longitudinal survey was developed, informed by the responses received to previous surveys. Questions focusing on students' future career intentions and reasons for continuing their legal studies were repeated. Questions focusing on learning and teaching experiences were expanded to take into account that many students were no longer studying only compulsory courses in the degree. A new set of questions in this area sought students' views on assessment. Wellbeing questions included in the 2015 survey were repeated, with further questions added to understand whether it is the law school experience that adversely affects students' wellbeing and, if so, how law schools might respond.

¹ We note that a separately funded Southern Regional Hub project is looking at assessment anxiety as a function of assessment regimes in first year students. One of the first year law courses at the University of Canterbury is part of this study.

The fourth survey was promoted to students who were assigned a digital identifier at the time of the first 2014 survey in an email reporting key findings from the third survey. The survey was also promoted in classes at the University of Canterbury. As was the case with the third survey, because the email invitation was tied to students' university email addresses, the invitation only reached students who were continuing their studies at the university in which they were enrolled at the beginning of 2014.

Research team members do not have access to any identifying information and cannot identify any student responses, to ensure there is no possibility that participation in the study can affect students' academic progress. However, if survey responses indicate that a student may be at risk in terms of well-being, provision is made for that student to be identified by an independent consultant and offered assistance.

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 University of Canterbury. The data will be destroyed five years after the project has been completed.

The study is taking place in accordance with protocols approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee.

As was the case with previous phases of the study, the data collected in this phase and the accompanying analysis will be disseminated to all six New Zealand Law schools² and the wider legal education community for use in development of student profiles and better law teaching and learning practice.

III The Broader Context

In order to place the findings of this study in a broader context and to provide a framework for comment, we have referred to the literature on university student engagement. The literature on this subject is vast.³ Although a uniformly accepted definition of student engagement has yet to emerge,⁴ a positive relationship between student engagement and student outcomes in terms of learning and success is generally accepted. It is therefore useful to consider the extent to which the students participating in this study can be said to be positively engaged with their studies.⁵ Reconciling the differing perspectives that drive the research in this area is beyond the scope of this paper, but key ideas and themes are highlighted below.

² The Law Schools at the University of Waikato and the University of Auckland also receive individual reports containing the data on their student body.

³ A 2012 synthesis of the literature found 2350 articles published in the period 2000-2012: Katherine Wimpenny and Maggi Savin-Baden "Alienation, agency and authenticity: a synthesis of the literature on student engagement" (2013) 18 *Teaching in Higher Education* 311 at 314.

⁴ See, eg, Ella Kahu "Framing student engagement in higher education" (2013) 38 *Studies in Higher Learning* 758; Paula Baron and Lillian Corbin "Student engagement: rhetoric and reality" (2012) 31 *Higher Education Research & Development* 759 at 761.

⁵ See Kahu, above no 4, at 758; Ali Radloff and Hamish Coates, 'Introduction' in Ali Radloff (ed), *Student Engagement in New Zealand Universities* (Ako Aotearoa National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, 2011) v at vi.

The most significant empirical study of student engagement in New Zealand universities is the Australasian survey of student engagement (AUSSE). This study does not report separately the responses of law students and so its findings are of limited use to law schools. The AUSSE defines student engagement as “students’ involvement with activities and conditions that are likely to generate high-quality learning”.⁶ This has been described as a “mainstream” view of student engagement, focusing on interactions between students and the universities at which they are enrolled and on what universities can and should do to improve student engagement.⁷ A further research strand within the mainstream view holds that student success is a product of students’ sense of belonging at the institution at which they are enrolled and focuses on what institutions may do to facilitate this.

Despite the AUSSE emphasis on institutional factors as they affect student engagement, its designers accept that engagement is also influenced by students’ lives “beyond the classroom”.⁸ Tinto and others moot that these personal factors encompass students’ attributes and experiences prior to commencing study, together with their experiences outside of university during the time that they are studying.⁹

Kahu’s helpful summary draws the various research strands together. Student engagement, she says, is “a psycho-social process, influenced by institutional and personal factors, and embedded within a wider social context”,¹⁰ the last point recognising that both personal and institutional factors are a product of a variety of socio-cultural factors such as government policies and economic conditions. Borrowing from research undertaken on student engagement from a psychological perspective,¹¹ Kahu highlights three dimensions of the engagement process which provide a more nuanced framework in which to view the reported actions and feelings of the students participating in this study. The first dimension is *behaviour* which includes “positive conduct and rule following including attendance; involvement in learning, including time on task and asking questions; and wider participation in extracurricular activities”.¹² The second dimension is *cognition*, a “student’s psychological investment in and effort directed towards learning, understanding, or mastering ... knowledge, skills”,¹³ which encompasses “students’ self-regulation and effective use of deep learning strategies”.¹⁴ The third dimension is *affect*, a student’s interest and

⁶ Radloff and Coates, above n 5, at vi. For a similar and widely cited definition, see George Kuh et al “Unmasking the Effects of Student Engagement on First-Year College Grades and Persistence” (2008) 79 *Journal of Higher Education* 540 at 542.

⁷ Nick Zepke “Student engagement research: thinking beyond the mainstream” (2015) 34 *Higher Education Research Development* 1311 at 1312; Gerald Burch et al “Student Engagement: Developing a Conceptual Framework and Survey Instrument” (2015) 90 *Journal of Education for Business* 224 at 224. AUSSE’s focus on the institutional role is illustrated by the measures of student engagement it employs: academic challenge, active learning, student and staff interactions, enriching educational experiences, supportive learning environment and work integrated learning: Radloff and Coates, above n 5, at vii.

⁸ Radloff and Coates, above n 5, at vii.

⁹ Vincent Tinto *Leaving College: rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (University of Chicago Press, 2nd ed, 1993); Kahu, above n 4, at 766.

¹⁰ Kahu, above n 4, at 768.

¹¹ See, eg, J Fredricks et al “School engagement” in K Moore and L Lippman (eds) *What do children need to flourish? Conceptualizing and measuring indicators of positive development* (Springer, 2005) at 305 – 21, cited in Kahu, above n 4, at 768.

¹² Kahu, above n 4, at 766.

¹³ F Newmann, G Wehlage and S Lamborn “The significance and sources of student engagement” in F Newmann (ed) *Student engagement and achievement in American secondary schools* (Teachers College Press, 1992) 12, cited in Kahu, above n 4, at 766.

¹⁴ Kahu, above n 4, 766.

enthusiasm in learning tasks and feelings of belonging.¹⁵ Overall results are considered below in the light of these three dimensions of engagement in Part VIII below.

IV The Immediate Context: Students' 2016 Learning Environment

The broad institutional context in which students completed their studies in 2016 is the subject of this section. Some factors are mandated by external regulation, others by law school and/or overall university policy.

Students in their third year of study would likely have been completing whichever of the five compulsory courses in the Bachelor of Law degree that they did not study (or pass) in 2015. These courses, over which the New Zealand Council of Legal Education has oversight, are Criminal Law, the Law of Contract, the Law of Torts, Land Law, Public Law and Property Law (or both Land Law and Equity/Law of Succession). The compulsory nature of these courses means that they attract large enrolments.¹⁶ The courses are taught at the participating law schools through a combination of large and small face to face classes (lectures and tutorials). At each of the participating universities, the hours timetabled for large face to face classes far exceed those for small classes.

The broad content and assessment of the five compulsory courses in which the students enrol are prescribed by the Council of Legal Education.¹⁷ The focus of the course prescriptions issued by the Council of Legal Education is on doctrinal knowledge.¹⁸ For example, the course content for the Law of Contract is specified as “[t]he general principles of the law of contract and agency”. The Council of Legal Education requires that each of the compulsory courses has an individual written final examination counting for at least 60 percent of the final grade for the course. A Council appointed external moderator for each compulsory course reviews the final examination papers set by all New Zealand law schools to ensure they are of an appropriate standard and adequately cover the course prescription.¹⁹ The moderator also “ensures that the standard of examination is comparable between law schools.”²⁰ The marking of final examination papers is reviewed by a law teacher from another university.²¹

Individual law schools and law teachers may choose the manner in which the remaining 40 percent of students' final grade in each of the compulsory courses is assessed, but the course information systems at each of the participating universities show consistency in how this is done. With the exception of one course at the University of Waikato, remaining course assessment includes an individual compulsory written assignment and an individual compulsory written test. The compulsory test mostly attracts a higher weighting than the written assignment at the universities of Auckland and Canterbury. Auckland law school is unique in that tutorial attendance and/or participation also accounts for between five and eight percent of the total course assessment.

Despite the emphasis in the compulsory course prescriptions on doctrinal knowledge, assessment tasks frequently assess skills, such as students' ability to identify the legal issues arising from an unseen legal problem and to apply relevant legal rules to those issues in order to generate a valid solution to the problem.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ For example, at the University of Canterbury, student enrolments in the each of the compulsory courses consistently exceed 200 in number.

¹⁷ *Professional Examinations in Law Regulations 2008*, reg 3, sch 1.

¹⁸ *Professional Examinations in Law Regulations 2008*, reg 3(2)(a), sch 1.

¹⁹ *Professional Examinations in Law Regulations 2008*, reg 6(3).

²⁰ *Professional Examinations in Law Regulations 2008*, reg 6(3).

²¹ *Professional Examinations in Law Regulations 2008*, reg 3(2)(a).

The balance of students' 2016 courses would have been selected from the range of optional papers offered at the law school in which they were enrolled. The content and assessment of the optional courses is not specified by the Council of Legal Education. Learning outcomes for optional courses are largely determined by the academic staff responsible for teaching them. Some students may have enrolled in optional courses in which they have a particular interest, others in courses they feel may be helpful in assisting them finding employment. There is considerable variation in not only class sizes, but teaching and assessment methods. If an optional course has a final exam, it is subject to moderation by a law teacher from another university before it is sat by students. The marking of the final exam and overall course results are also checked by a teacher from another university. Optional courses without final exams are subject to internal moderation procedures at the participating law schools.

V Findings: Demographics and Participation Rates

A total of 222 students completed the 2016 survey, as shown in Table 1 below. These 222 students represent 13 percent of the 1740 students who were invited to complete the first survey, 31 percent of the 713 students who completed the first 2014 survey, 49 percent of the 454 students who completed the second 2014 survey and 63 percent of the 353 students who completed the 2015 survey. In 2016, 84 percent (186) of the 222 students completing the survey were continuing with their law studies. These 186 students represent 84 percent of the 234 students who were continuing with their law studies at the time of the 2015 survey.

Table 1. Surveys 1-4: Invitation and completion rates by law school

	Total invited (2014)	Numbers completing survey 1 (2014)	Numbers completing survey 2 (2014)	Numbers completing survey 3 (2015)	Numbers completing survey 4 (2016)
Auckland	1216	438	262	204	79
Canterbury	327	184	135	100	76
Waikato	197	91	57	46	31
Total	1740	713	454	353	222

As Table 2 below shows, the trend apparent in previous surveys in terms of the split of female/male students continued in 2016. There was a 60 percent/39 percent female/male split in 2016, compared to a 64 percent/35 percent split in 2014 and a 63 percent/35 percent in 2015. As was the case other years, a small number of students selected the "other" option with respect to gender. Because numbers in this category were so small, their responses have not been separately analysed.

Table 2. Survey 1 2014, Survey 3 2015 & Survey 4 2016: Cohort by gender

	Survey 1 2014	Survey 3 2015	Survey 4 2016	Non- continuing students 2015	Continuing students 2015
Female	449 (64%)	220 (63%)	133 (60%)	22 (61%)	111 (61%)
Male	248 (35%)	122 (35%)	86 (39%)	14 (39%)	72 (39%)
Other	3 (1%)	7 (2%)	2 (1%)		
Total	700	349	222	36	183

Almost all of the 186 continuing students (92 percent, 172) were studying full-time.

VI Findings: Continuing Students

Findings in relation to continuing students are grouped into the following themes: future career plans, classroom experiences, self-study experiences, relationships with teachers, relations with other students, participation in law-related extra-curricular activities, external factors adversely affecting students' studies and students' self-assessment of the outcomes (positive and negative) of their engagement with their studies.

Findings should be read in the light the fact that they relate to a cohort of students who have already demonstrated both academic success and persistence in their studies. This cohort of students passed their first year courses and any accompanying limitation of entry barrier. They have also either passed the second year courses in which they enrolled in 2015 or are choosing to repeat them.

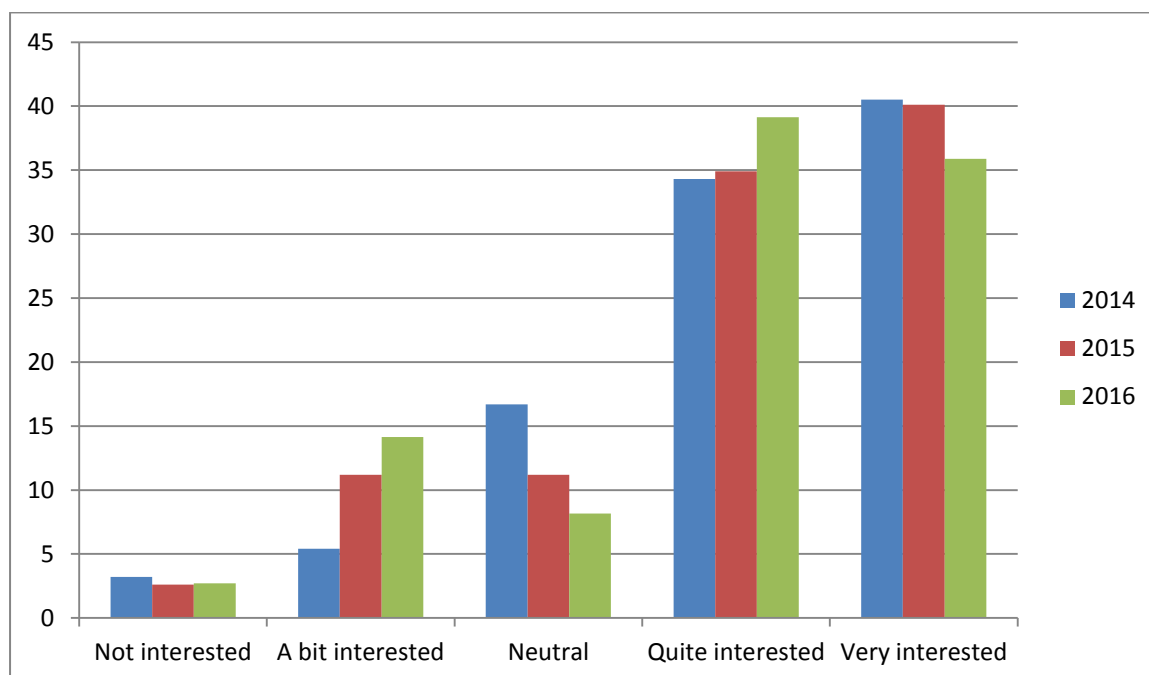
A Career Plans

As was also the case in 2015, we sought to gauge whether the nearly three years that students had spent at law school had altered what can be described as personal factors influencing engagement, that is, students' initial motivation for enrolling to study a law degree and their future career plans. Students were re-asked a number of questions that were first asked in the first 2014 survey and repeated in the 2015 survey. Interestingly, students' views and intentions remained largely the same. As is detailed further below, change, if any, tended to be gradual in nature.

The first repeated question asked students how interested they were at this stage of their studies in pursuing a legal career. Students were asked to indicate their level of interest on a five point Likert-type scale. One hundred and eighty four students answered this question, with a majority (88 percent, 138) indicating were either quite or very interested. As Figure 1 shows, these results mirror those in the first 2014 and 2015 surveys and are not unexpected. Students who have persisted with their law studies generally intend to have a legal career.

On a gender analysis, a greater percentage of female students (66 percent) were quite or very interested in pursuing a legal career, compared to male students (56 percent). A greater percentage of male students (17 percent) indicated they were only a bit interested in having a legal career, compared to female students (eight percent). The greater enthusiasm shown by female students in pursuing a legal career was also apparent in student responses given in 2014 and 2015.

Figure 1. Survey 1 2014, Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: How interested are you at this stage of your studies in pursuing a legal career? (percentage).



Students were then asked their reasons for intending to pursue a legal career, a repeat of a question asked in the first 2014 survey. Students were given a number of options to select from and could also add their own response. As Table 3 shows, the option most frequently selected by the 184 students answering this question was that a legal career is a respected profession. Options relating to altruistic reasons (wanting to help people and/or to make a difference) were also popular, as was the option that law is a well-paid career. Responses selecting the “other” option, mostly described students’ interest in the law and a legal career. These trends were apparent across all law schools.

Some changes are apparent when the 2014 and 2016 responses are compared: the options relating to the respect accorded to the profession and law being a well-paid career were selected with greater frequency in 2016. These options were selected by 65 percent and 56 percent respectively of all students answering this question in 2016, compared with 51 percent and 43 percent in 2014.

Overall responses of male and female students in 2016 were very similar, although female students were more likely to indicate they were passionate about law and justice, a trend that was also apparent in 2014. Male students were more likely to select the option that law is a respected profession in 2016, whereas this response was selected with equal frequency by male and female students in 2014.

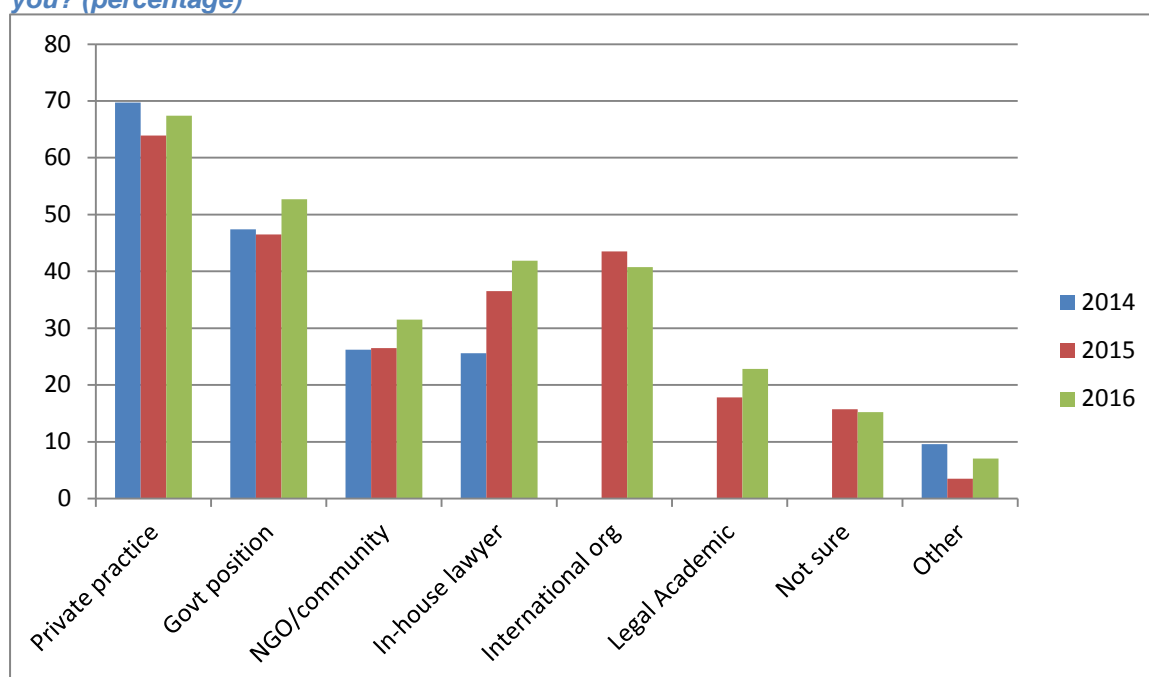
Table 3. Survey 4 2016: What are your reasons for intending to pursue a legal career?

Response	Percentage*	Count
It is a respected profession	65.22	120
I am passionate about law and justice	61.41	113
I want to help people	60.33	111
I want to make a difference	55.98	103
It is a well-paid career	55.98	103
It is a good, steady profession	48.91	90
Someone else suggested it (e.g. parent, teacher)	13.59	25
Other, please specify	9.24	17
One or more of my parents/siblings/close relatives is a lawyer	7.07	13
Total		184

* Percentage of the total answering this question.

Another repeated question asked students what type of legal career appealed to them at this time. One hundred and eighty four students answered this question. Students were given a range of options from which to select and could also add their own option. As Figure 2 shows, the 2016 results were consistent with other years in that private practice as a lawyer (working in a law firm or as a sole practitioner) was the most commonly selected response. Another continuing trend was greater numbers of students in 2015 and 2016 indicating interest in a range of other careers, such as working for the Government, as an in-house lawyer or for a non-governmental/community based organisation. Results were generally consistent across all law schools. There was also little difference between the responses of male and female students save that male students, by a small margin, were more interested in a career in private practice or with the Government.

Figure 2. Survey 1 2014, Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: What type of legal career appeals to you? (percentage)

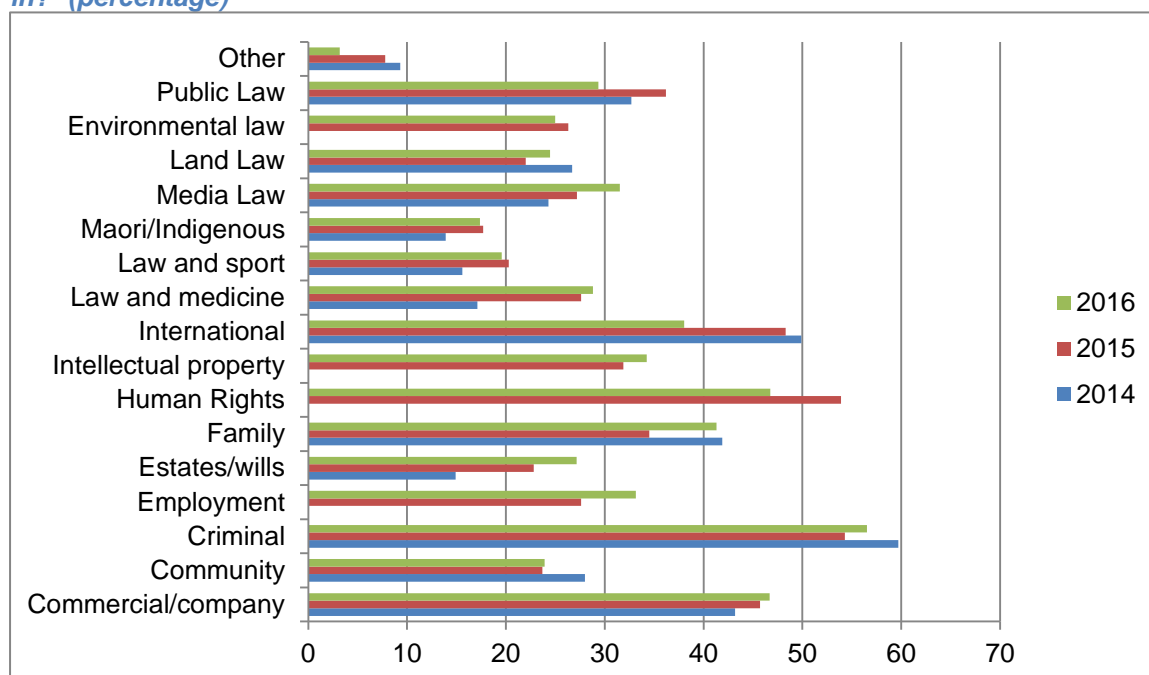


A final repeated question in this category asked students what areas of law they were interested in. As Figure 3 shows, some more popular areas, such as criminal law/criminal justice and company/commercial remained relatively consistent over the period 2014-2016. International law, one of the most popular options in 2014, underwent a decline in popularity in 2016. However, an overall trend in past years continued: two of the three most popular areas (human rights and criminal law/criminal justice) do not reflect mainstream areas of practice in students' most popular intended career path, working as a lawyer in private practice. Interest in some mainstream areas of legal practice (company/commercial, land, and family) has remained fairly consistent. Interest in other mainstream areas of legal practice, such as estates/wills and employment, has increased in popularity over the study, a likely consequence of greater student awareness of these options as they move through law school.

Analysis by law school revealed some differences. The options most frequently selected by Auckland students were company/commercial, criminal law/criminal justice and international. Canterbury students' top three options were criminal law/criminal justice, human rights and family. Waikato students' top three options were criminal justice/criminal law, human rights/estates wills (joint second) and employment. Company/commercial was the fourth most frequently selected option by Canterbury students, but came sixth in terms of areas of interest for Waikato students. International law was the seventh most frequently selected option by Canterbury students (tied with public law) and the fourth most popular option for Waikato students.

Trends apparent in previous years following an analysis by gender also continued. Male students continued to be more interested over a range of core areas of legal practice (such as land law and company and commercial). Female students continued to express more interest in family law and, in 2016, employment law.

Figure 3. Survey 1 2014, Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: What areas of law are you interested in?* (percentage)



* Students were able to select from a greater range of options in 2015 and 2016. The increased options were drawn from the most frequent “other” responses in the first 2014 survey.

Overall, as in previous years, the cohort responding to the survey indicated that they were, for the most part, committed to pursuing a legal career for both altruistic reasons (wanting to help others) and personal benefit (respect and income). Although their most frequently selected career intention, private practice as a lawyer, is realistic, the particular areas of interest for many (human rights, criminal law/criminal justice) make up only a small proportion of the work of most mainstream legal practices. However, as it stands, overall responses to this category of questions are suggestive of likely positive engagement for the majority when assessed in the light of Kahu’s identified dimensions of engagement (positive conduct and rule following, effort directed towards learning and understanding, and interest and enthusiasm in learning tasks).

B Classroom Experiences

A continued focus of the 2016 survey was students’ expectations and experiences in the classroom and during periods of self-directed study. Questions were directed at students’ reported attendance and their experiences in both large lectures (commonplace in the compulsory courses in which students were enrolled) and small lectures (a feature of some optional courses).

1 Attendance

A significant positive relationship between lecture attendance and academic achievement is consistently reported in the literature,²² although the extent to which there is a causal link between the two is subject to some debate given the potential for unaccounted links

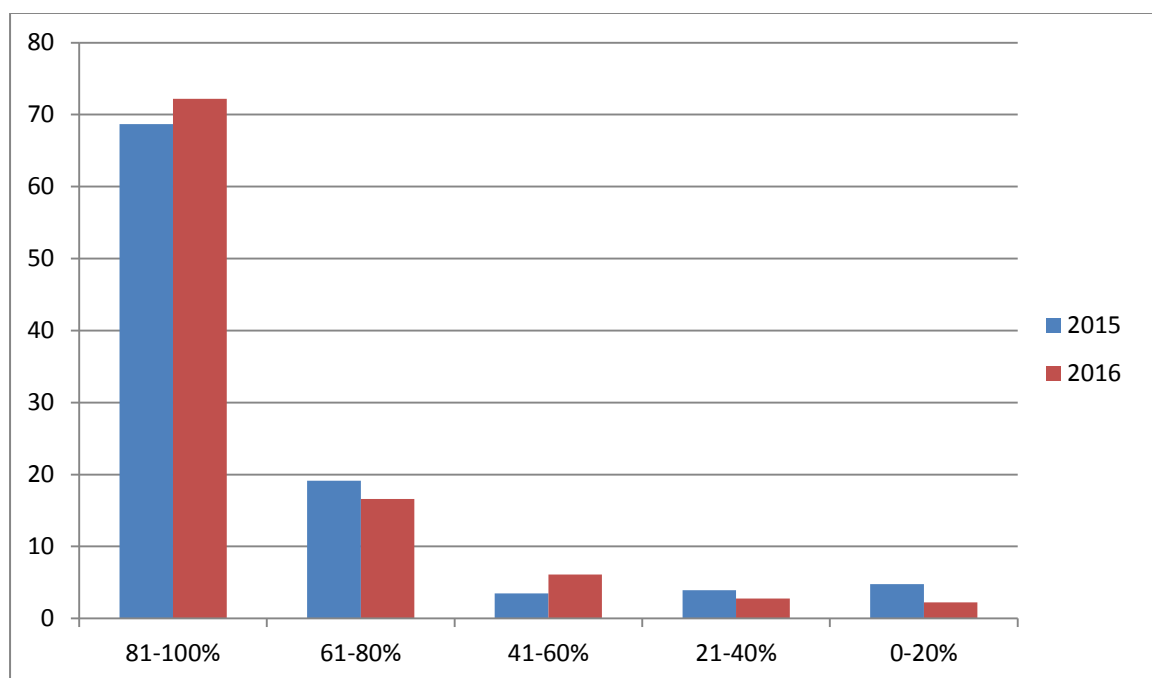
²² See Lilian Corbin, Kylie Burns and April Chrzanowski “If You Teach It, Will They Come? Law Students, Class Attendance and Student Engagement” (2010) 20 *Legal Education Review* 13; Loretta Newman-Ford et al “A large-scale investigation into the relationship between attendance and attainment: a study using an innovative, electronic attendance monitoring system” (2008) 33 *Studies in Higher Education* 699.

between lecture attendance and personal factors such as student’s academic ability, motivation and/or effort.²³ The fact that students participating in this study have gained entry to law school and continued with their studies is an indicator of both academic ability and self-motivation. For many, this motivation is also evident in their responses directed at their future career plans which are summarised in the previous section.

Lecture attendance is not compulsory at any of the participating law schools. For each compulsory course in which they were enrolled, students were timetabled to spend two or three hours in lectures each week across the four term academic year (three hours at each week at the Universities of Auckland and Canterbury and two hours each week at the University of Waikato). Teaching arrangements for optional courses are more variable.

Students reported what we consider to be high attendance rates,²⁴ particularly given the timing of the survey three quarters of the way through the academic year and at a time when assignments are often due.²⁵ As shown in Figure 4, a majority of the 180 students answering this question (72 percent, 130) indicated that they had attended between 81 – 100 percent of lectures, a result that was consistent across all law schools and male and female students. The results were also consistent with those reported by students in 2015. We were unable to assess the extent to which students’ reported attendance rates reflected actual attendance rates, but note other findings that students commonly self-report higher rates of attendance than those captured by objective collection methods.²⁶

Figure 4. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Reported lecture attendance rates (percentage)



²³ See, eg, Wiji Arulampalam, Robin Naylor and Jeremy Smith “Am I missing something? The effects of absence from class on student performance” (2012) 31 *Economics of Education Review* 363 at 364.

²⁴ This is in contrast to the findings of a study of the objectively measured attendance rates of students enrolled in law programmes at Griffiths University: see Corbin, Burns and Chrzanowski, above n 23.

²⁵ This is particularly so given the “U” effect reported in other studies, i.e., initial high attendance at the beginning of the course, followed by a reduction over the remainder of the semester and then a peak during revision lectures or lectures where assessment requirements are communicated: see Gabrielle Kelly “Lecture attendance rates at university and related factors” (2012) 36 *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 17 at 30.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Students were asked what their main reason was for missing lectures. One hundred and eighty students responded to the question. Students were asked to select one of a given range of options. The given options were taken from the most frequently occurring student responses when this question was asked in open-ended form in 2015. The most frequently given reason was illness or accident (23 percent), followed by employment commitments (13 percent), study commitments (12 percent), personal reasons (eight percent), “other” commitments (six percent) and family commitments (five percent). Five percent indicated they could pass without attending lectures, two percent did not like attending lectures and a further two percent selected the reason that lectures were recorded. On the other hand, thirteen percent selected the option “I never miss lectures” and 11 percent selected the “other, please explain” option. The most frequently given “other” reason was lecture clashes. Analysis by gender showed that female students were more likely to select illness or accident as a reason for missing class.

As a follow-up question, students were asked to rank a series of given methods that they had used to catch up when they had missed lectures. Students were asked to “grab and place” their preferred responses. As Table 4 shows, the option most frequently placed as students’ number one choice was using another class member’s notes. Students selecting the “other, please explain option” most frequently focused on the methods of self-study they had used to catch up (with the most frequent of these being reading the course textbook). There were no significant differences in the responses of male and female students.

Table 4: Survey 4 2016: Rank the methods that you have used to catch up missed lectures.

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Self-study	30.56% 4/4	41.67% 6/0	15.97% 2/3	11.81% 1/7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	144
Use notes from another class member	36.81% 5/3	24.31% 3/5	27.78% 4/0	9.72% 1/4	1.39% 2	0.00% 0	144
Listen to a university made recording of the lecture	18.06% 2/6	15.97% 2/3	15.97% 2/3	32.64% 4/7	11.81% 1/7	5.56% 8	144
Listen to recording of the lecture made by another class member	11.81% 1/7	13.89% 2/0	29.86% 4/3	36.81% 5/3	6.94% 1/0	0.69% 1	144

r													
Buy notes offered for sale	0.00%	0	1.39%	2	2.78%	4	3.47%	5	66.67%	9	25.69%	3	144
Other, please explain	2.78%	4	2.78%	4	7.64%	1	5.56%	8	13.19%	1	68.06%	9	144

2 What students report doing during class time

Students were asked what things they regularly did in typical law large and small class lectures. Students were able to select from a range of given options and could also add their own response. Students were able to select more than one option and most did so. A large class was defined for students as one in which more than 50 students are enrolled. This question was a partial repeat of one asked in the 2015 survey, the 2015 question focusing solely on what occurred during a typical second year law lecture.²⁷

Students' reports of their regular activities during large law lectures were largely unchanged from 2015. As Table 5 below shows, the activities most commonly reported by students were listening to what the lecturer had to say and taking notes using an electronic device. Over 90 percent of students selected options indicating they were distracted regularly by their electronic devices during lectures. Reported regular participation in learning activities that did not involve use of electronic devices was much lower. For example, the least frequently selected regularly occurring activities were participation in lecturer directed group activities, answering questions asked by the lecturer and asking questions of the lecturer. This pattern of response was consistent across all law schools. As was the case, in 2015, male students were more likely to ask questions of their lecturers (15 percent, compared to 8 percent of female students) and to answer questions asked by their lecturers (23 percent, compared to 18 percent of female students). However, we note that numbers of students selecting these options were very small.

Overall, as was also the case in 2015, students' responses suggest that a traditional "lecture" (where a lecturer communicates content to students) is the teaching method they most frequently experienced in large law lectures. This was not unexpected as across disciplines this is reported as being the case.²⁸ The effect of this on student engagement is also as expected. Students' responses indicate that passive learning occurs more frequently than active learning. The widespread and frequent use of electronic devices for non-class purposes during class is also consistent with the findings of other studies.²⁹

Students' reported experiences in small classes were very different. Listening to what the lecturer had to say was the most frequently selected regularly occurring activity, but at a lower overall rate than reported for large classes. This may be an indication that students spend longer periods engaged in activities other than listening to the teacher. Consistent with this, listening was followed by active learning activities such as participation in lecturer-directed group activities and answering questions asked by the lecturer. Far smaller

²⁷ As students in their second year are enrolled in compulsory courses, their experience is only of large class law lectures.

²⁸ Catherine Mulryan-Kyne "Teaching large classes at college and university level: challenges and opportunities" (2010) 15 *Teaching in Higher Education* 175 at 180.

²⁹ See, eg, Jeff Sovern "Law Student laptop use during class for non-class purposes: Temptation v incentives" (2013) 51 *University of Louisville Law Review* 483 at 507; James Kraushaar and David Novak "Examining the effects of student multi-tasking with laptops during the lecture" (2010) 21 *Journal of Information Systems Education* 241 at 249.

proportions of the cohort reported being regularly distracted by electronic devices in small law lectures. This pattern of response was consistent across all universities. In a reverse of the position in large law lectures, female students were more likely to report asking questions of their lecturers in small lectures (44 percent, compared to 38 percent of male students). Roughly equal proportions of male and female students reported answering questions asked by their lecturers in small lectures.

We are unable to determine the extent to which students' differing reported experiences in large and small classes are a result of altered teaching methods or other factors. For example, many students may have enrolled in optional courses in which they have a particular interest and so be more willing and prepared to participate in active learning activities that are on offer. Class size may also have had an impact on the results. For example, the lack of anonymity in small classes may be a factor inhibiting the regular use of electronic devices for non-class purposes. Nevertheless these results do present a clear reminder of the significant effect that institutional influences have on student engagement. For this cohort, the literature on student engagement suggests that the greater reported active learning in small classes is linked to a more positive learning experience.

Table 5. Survey 4 2016: What are the things that you regularly do in large and small law lectures?

Option	Large classes 2016 (%)*	Number	Small classes 2016 (%)*	Number	Total**
Listen to what the lecturer has to say	90.29%	158	75.43%	132	175
Take notes by hand	58.65%	61	81.73%	85	104
Take notes on a laptop or other electronic device	95.71%	134	62.86%	88	140
Record the lecture	95.59%	65	27.94%	19	68
Access the internet to locate resources relevant to the lecture	80.99%	98	70.25%	85	121
Access the internet for reasons unconnected with what is happening in class	96.64%	115	42.86%	51	119
Make contact with others outside of class via social media	93.60%	117	43.20%	54	125
Make contact with others inside the class via social media	94.32%	83	36.36%	32	88
Ask questions of your lecturer	22.77%	23	93.07%	94	101
Answer questions asked by your lecturer	37.29%	44	88.98%	105	118
Participate in lecturer-directed group activities	44.19%	57	91.47%	118	129
Participate in lecturer-directed individual activities	58.72%	64	87.16%	95	109
Participate in lecturer-directed online activities	75.32%	58	76.62%	59	77
Other, please specify	33.33%	1	100.00%	3	3

* % of total number of students selecting a particular option.

** Total number of students selecting a particular option.

Given the frequency of students' reported distraction by electronic devices in the 2015 survey, students in 2016 were asked a follow-up open-ended question: "If you access the internet or social media during classes, what are your reasons?" One hundred and forty six students responded to this question and some gave more than one reason. The most frequently given reason, boredom (42 percent, 62), was perhaps not surprising when students' responses are viewed in the context of what they report as regularly occurring activities during large law lectures. In a similar vein, 15 students noted they accessed the internet or social media when they became distracted in class or had reached the end of their attention span. Two students explained they did so when a lecture was not interesting with another two indicating this occurred when they could not keep up with the pace of the class. Seven explained that they only accessed the internet or social media when they were not busy taking notes or were confident in the material covered by the lecturer.

Not all students indicated that they used the internet as a means of "escape" from class. Thirty five (24 percent) explained that they used the internet to search out material relevant to class. However, another 32 explained that they were either socialising with or responding to friends and family and 17 reported that they did so in order to respond to other commitments.

A further open-ended question asked students to think of their favourite law lecturer in 2016 and then to describe, in a few words, what the lecturer did that they valued the most. One hundred and sixty five students provided a response and, as the examples below show, many described more than one valued activity:

She makes class interesting, she is clearly passionate about her area of law, and she understands how to teach people of our ages effectively, and how to grasp our attention and hold it for the whole class!

Followed their lecture outline, spoke clearly and not too quickly, had good lecture skills (i.e. able to speak well in front of a group and grasp their attention), gave breaks every 25 minutes.

The lecturer was clear in their teachings, approachable, organised. They knew what they were talking about, their PowerPoint was concise, they did with us an exam question and told us how they expected us to answer it – which helps us know how to study for the exam! Clear, good speed, concise and helps us with exam technique

The most frequently given responses focused on the lecturer's "performance" in the classroom. Providing clear explanations was noted by 47 students (28 percent), with 23 referring to the lecturer structuring material in a clear and/or logical manner (14 percent). Twenty one students (13 percent) described their favourite lecturer as "engaging", with a further 21 describing their favourite lecturer as "passionate" (21). Twenty students described their lecturer's ability to make lecture material "interesting" whilst eight referred to their lecturer's ability to keep teaching relevant to a student audience. Eighteen students valued their lecturer's use of a speaking voice, referring to use of a pace that allowed them to easily follow the lecture and/or take notes and hear what the lecturer had to say. More students (22) described their favourite lecturer as approachable and/or interested in them than knowledgeable (7). Fifteen students appreciated their favourite lecturer's use of humour.

In terms of specific teaching techniques, 12 described the provision of clear and concise handouts as a factor they valued, whilst another 12 had valued receiving assistance with study and/or exam techniques (including how to answer old exam questions). More students appreciated the use of PowerPoint (12), than not (3). Seven referred to the provision of summaries of materials (at the beginning/end of a lecture and/or topic). Six students

appreciated that their favourite lecturer had taken the time to check that they had understood material.

Small numbers of students referred to their favourite lecturer's use of interactive learning exercises: two referred to the asking of questions, three to the lecturer answering questions and one to the lecture being "interactive".

There were some outliers. The most memorable was the student whose favourite lecturer "[l]ectured like he was reading off a page, [had] little/no interaction with the class, [but provided] great information which resulted in great notes." Another four students described favourite lecturers who sang to them, read poems or played music.

A number of points can be made about students' overall responses to this last question. First, it is not possible from students' responses to determine whether lecturers had taught the students in large or small classes. Second, the clear focus on the lecturer's performance in the classroom suggests that many expect, and appreciate, a teaching method where the lecturer presents content to the class. The third point, likely related to the second and somewhat surprising given students' reported experiences in small classes, is the lack of student focus on use of teaching methods other than the lecturer presenting material orally and/or in written form to the class. It seems that the factors that many students identify as valuable largely reflect the teaching method (a traditional lecture) that they have most frequently experienced to this point in their studies at law school. Students' responses largely describe what we categorise as their perception of the ideal version of this teaching method.

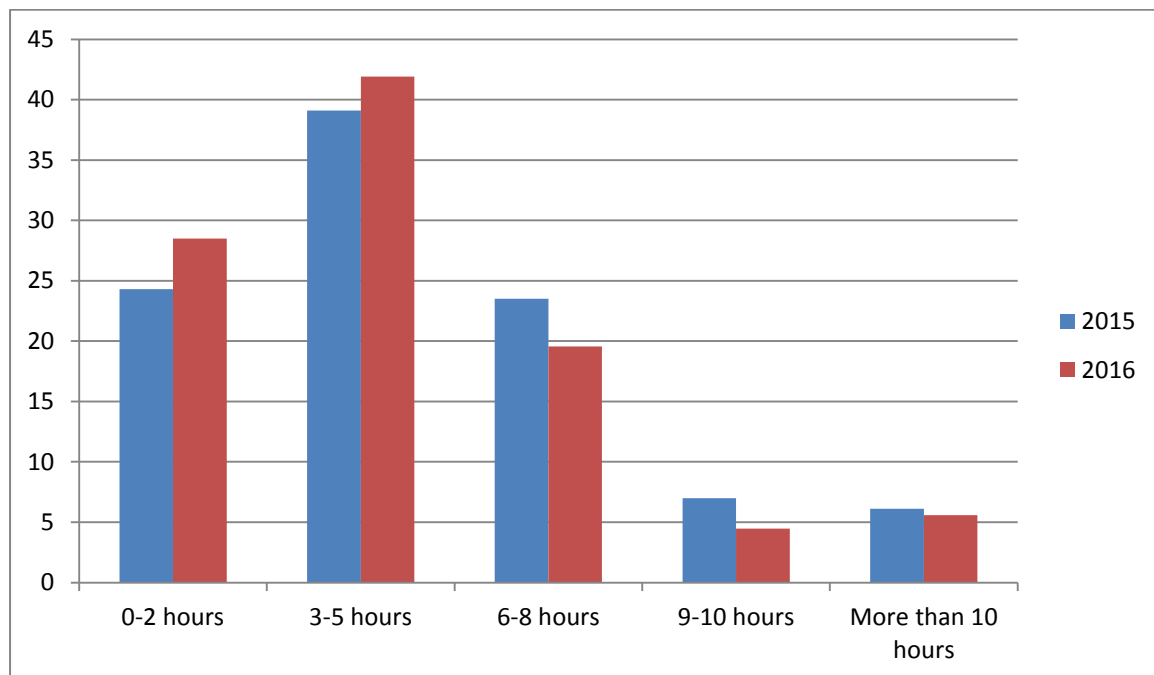
C Self-study

A number of recent studies have identified a significant positive relationship and causal link between time spent on study outside of class and academic performance.³⁰ The university websites for each participating university note that one credit point equates to approximately 10 hours of study. Students in this study were enrolled in courses of varying credit point value. Compulsory courses at the universities of Auckland and Canterbury are worth 30 points, but 20 points at the University of Waikato. Optional courses range from 10 – 20 points at the universities of Auckland and Waikato, but are all 15 points at the University of Canterbury. As a conservative example, a 15 point optional course equates to 150 hours of study, approximately 10 hours per week across a half-year semester. If students spend two-three hours per week in lectures for such a course (as is the norm at the University of Canterbury, for example), they should, on the participating universities own measures, be spending seven-eight hours each week on self-study. As Figure 5 shows, students most frequently reported spending three – five hours per week on each of their law courses (42 percent), with around 28 percent of all students typically devoting between zero and two hours to each of their courses per week. This pattern of responses was very similar to that reported in 2015 when students were asked the same question. Although results from Canterbury students reflected this overall pattern, the options most frequently selected by Auckland students fell evenly across two categories (0–2 hours and 3–5 hours). For Waikato students, 3–5 hours was the most frequently selected category, followed by 6–8 hours. Male students were more likely to report spending between zero and two hours on their studies than female students (28 percent of male students compared to 20 percent of female students). Female students, on the other hand, were more likely to report spending between three and five hours (36 percent compared to 29 percent of male students).

³⁰ See, eg, Ralph Stinebrickner and Todd Stinebrickner, 'Time-use and college outcomes' (2004) 121(1) *Journal of Econometrics* 243; Ralph Stinebrickner and Todd Stinebrickner, 'The causal effect of studying on academic performance' (2008) 8(1) *B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy* 8; Vincenzo Andrietti and Carlos Velasco, 'Lecture Attendance, Study Time and Academic Performance: A Panel Data Study' (2015) 46(3) *Journal of Economic Education* 239.

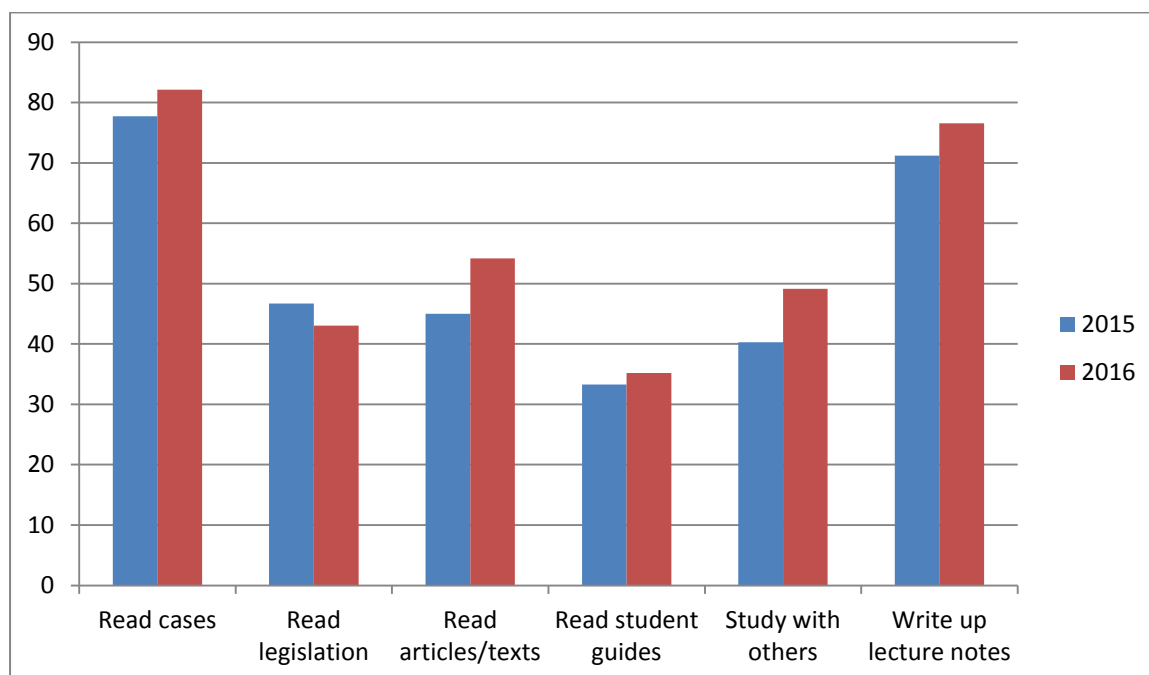
Given the positive behaviour that students report in terms of class attendance rates and their overall likely motivation levels (to achieve in academic terms and pursue a legal career), we suggest that the time students report spending on self-study result is a likely consequence of institutional influences, particularly teaching practice and assessment design. We surmise that many students are devoting the time to their studies that they perceive to be necessary to achieve their desired level of success.

Figure 5: Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Average hours spent on each enrolled course each week (percentage)



Another repeated question asked students what things they regularly did when focusing on their law studies outside of lectures and tutorials. Students could select from a range of responses and most selected more than one option. As Figure 6 shows, students' responses show an increase over all activities, except reading legislation. These results are not unexpected given this is a cohort of successful students who can now be described as experienced law students. Responses were also consistent across universities. Some differences were apparent when students' responses were analysed by gender. Although students reported reading cases and legislation and studying with others at roughly equivalent rates, male students were more likely to report reading material of a more scholarly nature such as texts and articles (51 percent compared to 38 percent of female students) and female students were more likely to report reading student guides (33 percent compared to 21 percent of male students).

Figure 6. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Things students regularly do when focusing on their law studies outside of lectures and tutorials (percentage)



In another repeated question, students were then asked for what purposes they carried out the activities identified in the previous question. Students were given a range of options to select from and were able to select more than one option or add their own “other” response. Results were consistent across law schools and were very similar to those given in the 2015 survey. Eighty six percent of students reported completing a range of tasks outside of lectures and tutorials to gain a better understanding of material covered in those classes (compared to 88 percent in 2015). Reflecting the apparent assessment focus of many, 79 percent of students reported engaging in these tasks in order to complete assessment tasks (the same percentage as in 2015). Again a minority (25 percent) carried out these activities for general interest (compared to 27 percent in 2015). Some minor differences were apparent on a gender analysis. Male students were more likely to report carrying out activities for assessment purposes (69 percent compared to 61 percent of female students).

In other repeated questions, students were asked how frequently they visited the law library, accessed online legal resources available through their law library or accessed the online learning platform (such as Moodle) available at their university. One hundred and seventy nine students answered each of these questions. In a trend continuing from 2015, online learning platforms were the source that students most frequently accessed, with 80 percent reporting that they did so weekly or more frequently (compared with 67 percent in 2015). Thirty six percent reported accessing online legal resources available through their law library (the same percentage as in 2015). Similar proportions reported accessing their law library weekly or more often (36 percent in 2016, compared with 33 percent in 2015). Students’ reports of the activities they regularly engaged whilst at the law library were also very similar to those reported in 2015. Students most frequently studied alone (82 percent in 2016, 80 percent in 2015), accessed legal resources (60 percent in 2016, 68 percent in 2015) and studied with others (46 percent in 2016, 42 percent in 2015). A minority of students reported consulting a librarian (16 percent in 2016, 19 percent in 2015).

A gender analysis revealed little differences between the responses of male and female students. However, Auckland students were more likely to report visiting their law library weekly or more often (40 percent, compared to 17 percent of Canterbury students and 32 percent of Waikato students). Canterbury students, on the other hand, were more likely to report accessing online legal resources available through the law library (41 percent,

compared to 19 percent of Auckland students and 29 percent of Waikato students). The different pattern of responses from Canterbury students may be a reflection of the limited library space allocated to law texts and resources at this university.

D Relationships with Teachers

Experiencing constructive and supportive interactions with teachers inside and outside the classroom is a factor associated with creating a sense of both belonging and positive student outcomes.³¹ Responses to the question asking what activities they regularly participate in during a typical large lecture show that most students listen to what the lecturer has to say with far smaller numbers reporting that they interact with their lecturers by asking or answering questions. Conversely, in small classes, students reported far greater interaction with their lecturers during class time.

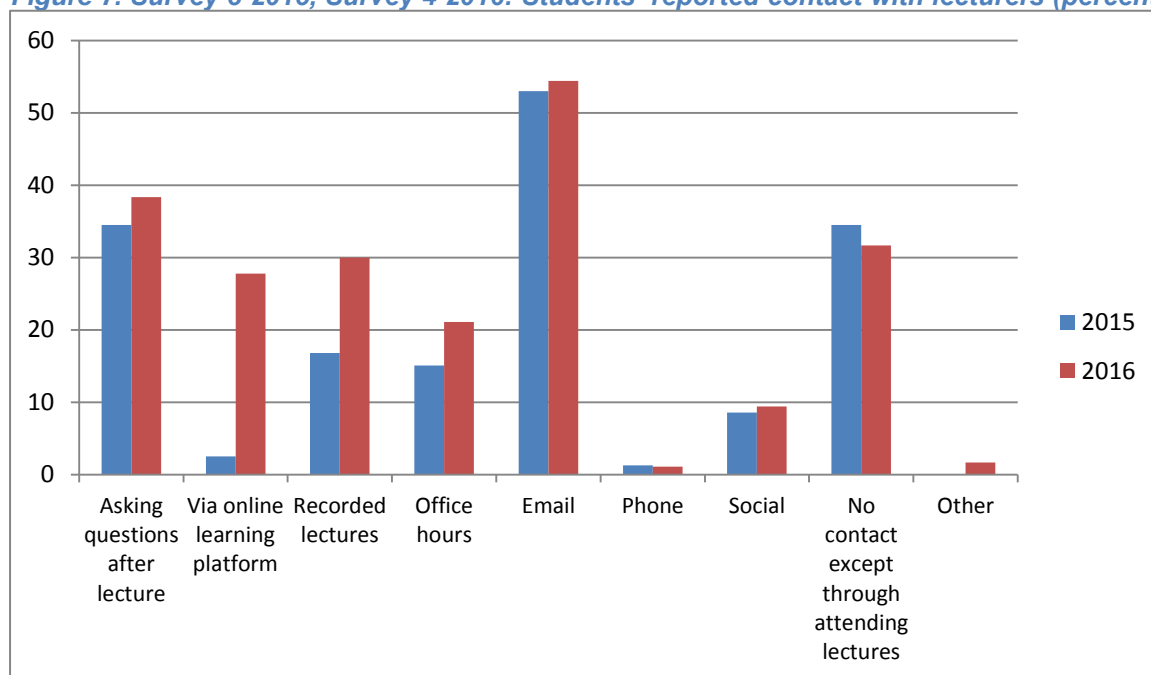
Students were asked a separate question about the contact they had had with their lecturers outside or after class. One hundred and eighty students responded to this question. Students were able to select from a range of given options and most selected one or two of these. As Figure 7 below shows, the most frequently reported contact with lecturers was via email, which was also the case when students responded to a similarly phrased question in the 2015 survey, but what we do not know is the extent to which these are one-to-one or all-class communications. Similar proportions of the cohort reported having no contact with their lecturers except through attending lectures in 2015 and 2016 (32 percent in 2016 and 35 percent in 2015). For the students who did report contact with their lecturers out of class, there was sharp increase in contact via online learning systems, but again we do not know the extent to which these were individual or whole-class communications. Reported instances of face-to-face contact between students and lecturers outside of class (attending office hours or at social occasions) remained low. Responses were generally consistent across all law schools, save that Waikato students were less likely to report having had no contact with their lecturers except through attending lectures (15 percent, compared to 29 percent of Auckland students and 26 percent of Canterbury students).

Male students were more likely to have face to face contact with their lecturers by asking questions after class, attending office hours or at social occasions.

An overall positive trend is apparent when 2015 and 2016 results are compared: students report increased contact across the range of given options. This, we suggest, is likely to be linked to students' reported experiences and/or interest in the optional courses in which they were enrolled.

³¹ Wimpenny and Savin-Baden, above n 3, at 317; Nick Zepke and Linda Leach "Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action" (2013) 11 *Active Learning in Higher Education* 167 at 170; Law School Survey of Student Engagement *Lessons from Law Students on Legal Education* (Indiana University Centre for Postsecondary Research, 2012) at 10; Susan Apel "Principle 1: Good Practice Encourages Student-Faculty Contact" (1999) 49 *Journal of Legal Education* 371 at 373-375.

Figure 7. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Students' reported contact with lecturers (percentage)



In order to assess whether students were happy with their level of reported contact with their lecturers, they were asked whether they would like more contact. One hundred and eighty students answered this question and a majority (59 percent) said that they would. Male students were slightly more likely to express a wish for further contact (55 percent of all male students answering this question) than female students (43 percent of female answering this question selected this option).

Students who were interested in having more contact with their lecturers were asked to explain, in a few words, the form of extra contact that they would like. Seventy five students provided a response. Many suggested more than one form of additional contact. Notably, a majority of responses focused on additional forms of face-to-face contact, most frequently in the form of small-group contact. Ten students expressed a wish for lecturers to take tutorials, with a further seven expressing a wish for smaller group sessions. Three students wanted discussion sessions separate from lectures, two expressed a preference for “drop in” sessions and two wanted lecturers to attend study group sessions.

Ten students indicated they would like to meet one on one with their lecturers and another eight expressed a wish for more frequent office hours.

Eight students wanted to meet with their lecturers socially, with two suggesting that lecturers should attend (appropriate) law student club events.

Five students wanted more guidance and/or support from their lecturers when they needed it, but did not express how they wanted this to occur. Four expressed a wish for lecturers to provide more feedback on assessment tasks.

Five students wanted their lecturers to be less intimidating so that they felt able to approach them.

E Relationships with other Students

Experiencing constructive and supportive interactions with other students both inside and outside the classroom is a further factor associated with creating a sense of belonging and

positive student outcomes.³² A minority reported regular participation in group-related activities in large law lectures (see Table 5 above), suggesting that a solitary rather than co-operative learning experience is the norm in these classes. However a far greater proportion reported interacting with their peers during small law lectures, a positive trend. On another positive note, close to half (46 percent) reported that they studied regularly with other students out of class (see Figure 6 above). We acknowledge these results are limited in that they focus only on students' engagement with their peers in a formal classroom setting and for study-related purposes outside the classroom. Overall, however, students' responses are indicative of a trend towards students having an increasing number of interactions with other students, at least for study related purposes.

F Law-related Extra-curricular Activities

Students' reported participation in law-related extracurricular activities was measured for the first time in 2016. This is an additional indicator of the extent to which students are likely to be experiencing a sense of belonging at law school. Students were asked what other law-related activities they were involved with and given three options from which to select. Students were able to select all options that applied to them. There were no significant differences between male and female responses. Responses were generally consistent between law schools.

One hundred and seventy nine students answered this question and just over half reported involvement in a law-related extra-curricular activity. Twenty percent (35) selected the first option, volunteering with a community law centre. Fifteen percent (26) selected the second option, volunteering with another organisation. Students selecting the second option were given the opportunity to provide further information and 23 chose to do so. A number of these students volunteered for more than one organisation. The most frequently occurring type of organisation was a law students' society (5), followed by the Howard League (3) the Equal Justice Project (3) and Law for Change (3). Other organisations attracting one response included Amnesty International, NZPIP, Prison Information Service, University Advocacy Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, Christchurch Youth Council, UN Youth New Zealand and the Labour Party.

Seventy two percent of students (128) selected the third, "other", option. Students selecting this option were given the opportunity to provide further information and 113 did so. Many listed more than one activity. Seventy students indicated that they were not involved in any law-related activity (41 percent of the total number students responding to this question). Ten students noted they worked for a law firm and six indicated they dealt with law-related issues in their current employment. A number did report involvement in extra-curricular activities under this head: six had been involved in competitions (such as mootings), three had attended law seminars, five had been involved with a law students' society, two were involved with the Legal Research Foundation and two had assisted family members with legal issues. One student had provided law related translation services, one had been a Research Assistant and one had acted as a mentor to a first-year law student.

G External factors

The findings reported to this point largely focus on institutional factors influencing student engagement. However, students were asked also to identify other factors that had generally had an adverse impact on their studies in 2016. One hundred and seventy four students answered this question. The options from which students could select were drawn from the most commonly occurring responses to this question when it was asked in open-ended form

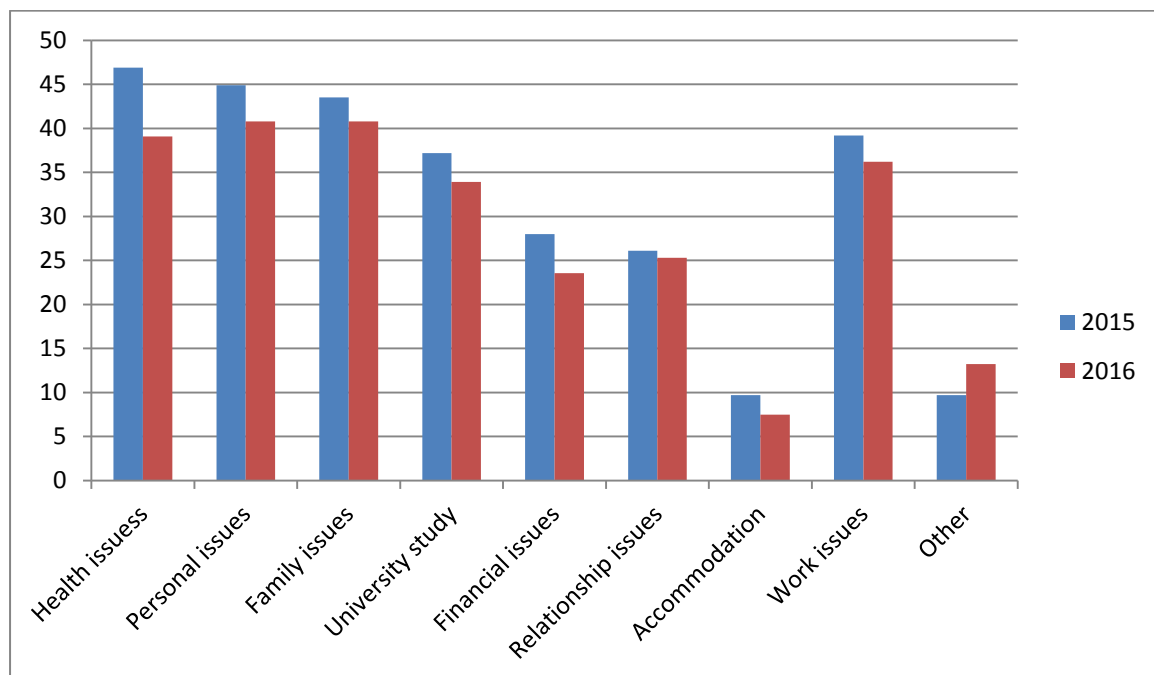
³² Wimpenny and Savin-Baden, above n 23, at 317; Zepke and Leach, above n 32, at 171; Law School Survey of Student Engagement, above n 32, at 12-13.

in the second 2014 survey.³³ For this reason, the options given include one institutional impact, studying at university. Family, health and personal issues were the most frequently selected, each being selected by 40 percent of students. These results are shown in Figure 8. There were some small differences when results were analysed across universities. The three most frequently selected options for Auckland students were “things to do with studying at university”, personal issues and health issues. Canterbury students most frequently selected health issues, followed by personal issues and home/family issues. Waikato students most frequently selected work and employment issues, followed by home/family issues and personal issues.

Most of the given options were selected by roughly equivalent proportions of male and female students. One exception was “studying at university” which was selected by a greater percentage of male students (33 percent of male students compared to 23 percent of female students). Female students were slightly more likely to select “financial issues” (22 percent compared to 14 percent of male students).

It is not clear from these results the extent to which there is any connection between students’ experiences at law school and the health, personal and family issues that affected their studies. The extent of the adverse impact of these factors on students’ studies is also unclear. These are points to explore in subsequent surveys.

Figure 8. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Factors impacting adversely on students’ studies (percentage)



Financial issues were one of the least frequently selected factors having an impact on students’ studies (although it was selected by a substantial minority). However, total amounts of reported student debt did continue to increase. Of the 174 students who answered a question about the level of their student debt, the most frequently reported level of debt (31 percent) was \$20,001 – \$30,000. This is an expected increase from the most frequently reported level of debt in 2014 (\$5001 –\$10,000) and 2015 (\$10,001 - \$20,000). As Table 6 below shows, 24 percent of students reported a student debt of over \$30,000.

³³ See Lynne Taylor et al *Expectations and Experiences of First Year New Zealand Law Students* (Ako Aotearoa, 2015).

Consistent with the slightly greater percentage of female students selecting “financial issues” as a factor having an impact on their studies, some differences were apparent on a gender analysis. A greater percentage of male students reported a debt level of \$10,001 - \$20,000 (26 percent compared to 16 percent of female students).

Analysis by university revealed another interesting trend. Whereas the most frequently selected response of Canterbury and Waikato students who answered this question was a student debt of between 20,001 – \$30,000, Auckland students most frequently selected the \$10,001 - \$20,000 option.

Table 6. Survey 4 2016: Student debt levels

Response	Percentage	Count
Up to \$5,000	1.15%	2
\$5,001 to \$10,000	5.17%	9
\$10,001 - \$20,000	25.29%	44
\$20,001 - \$30,000	31.03%	54
More than \$30,000	24.14%	42
I do not have any student debt	13.22%	23
Total	100%	174

H Students’ Self-assessment of the Outcome of their Studies

The multi-institutional nature of the study means that we are unable to link reported student engagement with objective indicators of student success, such as grades obtained, pass rates and retention rates. However, we are able to report students’ perceptions of the outcomes of their engagement with their studies and do so in this section.

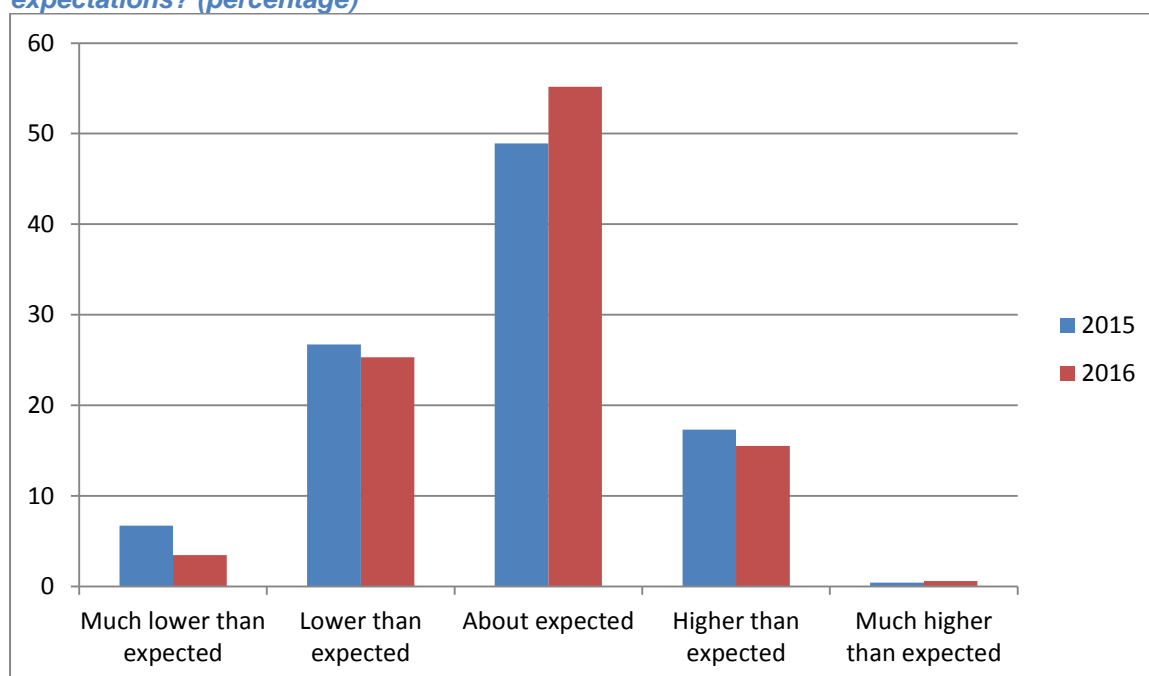
Students were asked the following open-ended question to measure their perception of the knowledge and skills they had gained: “What knowledge and skills have you gained during your third year of law studies?” One hundred and forty one students answered this question and many described more than one factor. Interestingly, students noted they had gained skills more frequently than knowledge.

Given the prevalence of individual written assessments in compulsory courses, it was not surprising that skills relevant to this form of assessment were reported frequently. Legal writing was the skill that students most often reported gaining (37), followed by legal research skills (34). Related to this last skill, 24 students noted that their ability to read and analyse cases had improved and another 16 noted an improvement in their general reading skills. Gaining critical and/or analytical thinking was reported by 31 students and acquiring legal knowledge by 15. Other legal related skills noted were interviewing and/or negotiation (2), advocacy (1) and dispute resolution (1). Skills that could be categorised as transferable in nature were reported less frequently. Twenty four students referred to an improvement in their time management skills, study skills was noted by 12, improved noting taking by eight and “perseverance” by four. A lack of emphasis on oral skills was very apparent: just two students noted gaining or improving this skill.

Again there were outliers. For example, one student referred to the “... the ability to go on with no sleep, fuelled entirely by panic at my procrastination.”

Students were also asked a repeated question: to what extent, on average, the results they had received in their law courses reflected their expectations. Students were asked to select where they sat on a five-point Likert-type scale. By the time of the survey at the end of the third university term, students enrolled in compulsory courses would have received most of the results from the 40 percent of non-Council specified course assessment that they completed over the course of the academic year. As optional courses run over one-semester, students enrolled in such courses would have received their final results for their first-semester courses. As Figure 9 shows, a majority of the 174 students who answered this question (71 percent) had received results that were either as they expected or higher. There were no differences of note when students' responses were analysed by gender. Analysis by university revealed some small differences. Although having received results that were as expected was the most frequently selected option across Auckland and Canterbury students, the most frequently selected option by Waikato students, by a small margin, was that their results were lower than expected.

Figure 9. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Did results received reflect, on average, students' expectations? (percentage)



Students' responses to a question asking what grade they most frequently had received in 2016 showed that a substantial majority had received not just passing grades, but high passing grades. As Table 7 shows, 95 percent of the 175 students who answered this question reported that they most frequently receiving A or B grades. This was a pattern consistent across all universities. Male students were slightly more likely to report receiving A grades (28 percent compared to 23 percent of female students). These reported grades are somewhat higher than the overall grades that Law Schools report awarding to students enrolled in compulsory courses to the Council of Legal Education. Grades awarded in optional courses tend to be somewhat higher, but this is unlikely to account for the high numbers of reported A and B grades. Possible explanations for this apparent discrepancy include over-reporting of achievement or, alternatively, that there are a high proportion of academically able students in the study cohort.

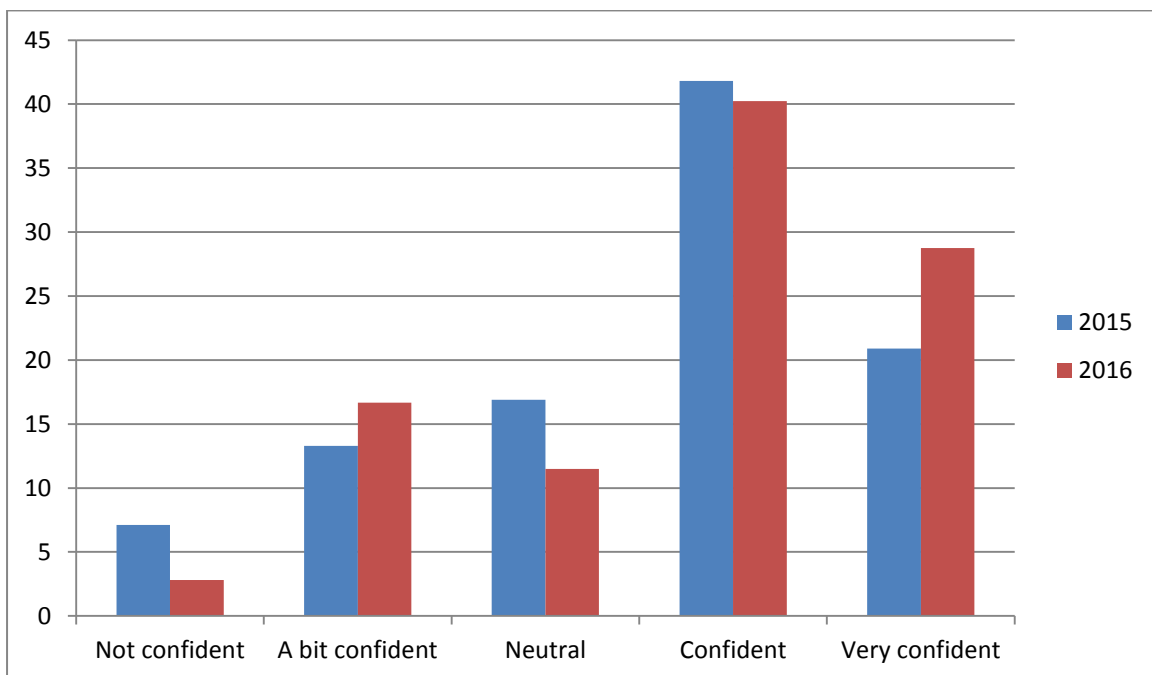
Table 7. Survey 4 2016: Most frequently received grades

Response	Percentage	Number
A grades	32.57%	57
B grades	62.29%	109
C grades	4.57%	8
Less than C grades	0.57%	1
Total	100%	175

The skills, knowledge and results that students reported gaining appeared to stand most in good stead when they were asked to assess their likely academic success in 2016. As Figure 10 shows, a majority (69 percent) of the 174 students answering this question reported that they were confident or very confident of passing all of their courses, with a further 12 percent selecting the “neutral” option. Overall results were very similar to those when this question was asked of students in 2015. In a continued trend, male students were more likely to report being very confident that they would pass all of their courses. Just over one third of male students answering this question selected this option (33 percent), compared to 16 percent of female students. Female students were more likely to select the “confident” option (35 percent compared to 27 percent of male students). On an analysis by law school, the most frequently selected option by the Auckland students who answered this question was “very confident”. Canterbury and Waikato students most frequently selected the “confident” option.

We see the fact that a majority were positive about their likely future academic success as an indication that these students, at least, perceive that they have adapted and are responding to current institutional expectations in relation to student engagement.

Figure 10. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Confidence in passing all law courses (percentage)



A new set of questions directed at students' perceptions of assessment were included in the 2016 survey. The first asked sought students' views on their assessment load. Students were asked to select one of five given options on a Likert-type scale ranging from "too low" to "too high". One hundred and seventy nine students answered this question. As Table 8 below shows, the most frequently selected option was the mid-point "acceptable" option (52 percent). However, close to half (45 percent) rated their assessment load as "high" or "too high". There were no differences of note in the responses of male and female students. Whereas the responses of Auckland and Canterbury students reflected the overall pattern, the response most frequently selected by Waikato students, albeit by a small margin, was that their assessment load was "high".

Table 8. Survey 4 2016: Student perceptions of assessment load

Response	Percentage	Count
Too low	0.00%	0
Low	3.35%	6
Acceptable	51.96%	93
High	35.75%	64
Too high	8.94%	16
Total	100%	179

A second question sought students' views about assessment timing. Students were asked to indicate their agreement with the following statement on a five-point Likert-type scale: "The timing of my assessments in 2016 has been manageable". As Table 9 below shows, of the 178 students who answered this question, the greatest number selected the "somewhat agree" option. Between a quarter and a third (29 percent) somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. There were no differences of note between the responses of male and female students or across universities.

Table 9. Survey 4 2016: Student views of manageability of assessment timing

Answer	Percentage	Count
Strongly disagree	7.87%	14
Somewhat disagree	20.79%	37
Neutral	22.47%	40
Somewhat agree	37.64%	67
Strongly agree	11.24%	20
Total	100%	178

A final question asked students to rank their three most preferred forms of assessments out of the following 11 options:

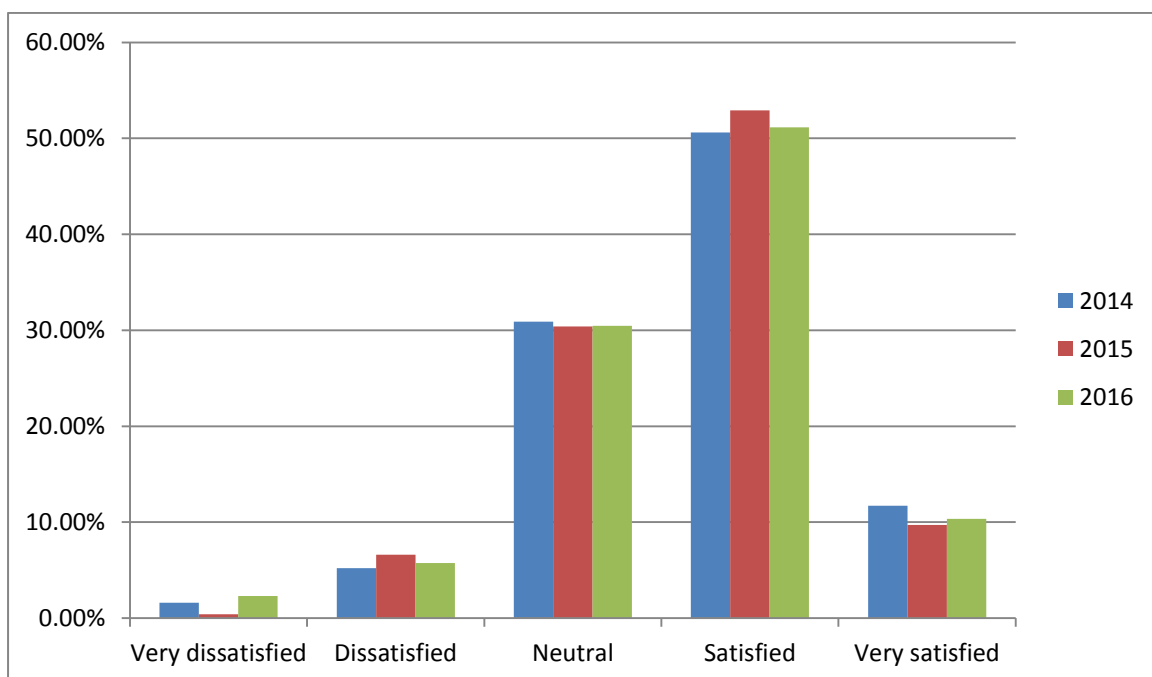
- closed book individual test or exam
- open book individual test or exam
- individual take-home test

- group take-home test
- individual essay/assignment
- group essay/assignment
- computer based individual assignment
- computer based group assignment
- individual oral assessment
- group oral assessment
- other (please explain).

The option most frequently ranked as students' most preferred form of assessment was an open-book test or exam, followed by an individual essay or assignment. An individual take-home test was most frequently ranked as students' second choice. Individual or group oral assessments were amongst the least frequently selected options. There were no significant differences in the responses of male and female students. To a large extent, students' choices reflect the types of assessment they are likely to have most frequently experienced. As noted above in Part IV, student assessment in the compulsory courses generally takes the form of individual written tests and exams. However, the clear preference for open book tests/exams is notable.

Moving on from assessment related questions, the final repeated question in this section asked students to rank their overall satisfaction with their law school experience on a five-point Likert-type scale. As Figure 11 below shows, overall satisfaction rates have remained relatively unchanged over the period 2014 – 2016. Sixty two percent of the 174 students who answered this question were either satisfied or very satisfied. This was a pattern consistent across all law schools. A gender analysis revealed one new trend of note: a greater percentage of female students selected the "satisfied option" (46 percent compared to 30 percent of male students), whereas a greater proportion of male students selected the "neutral" option (28 percent compared to 21 percent of female students).

Figure 11. Survey 2 2014, Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Satisfaction with law school experience (percentage)

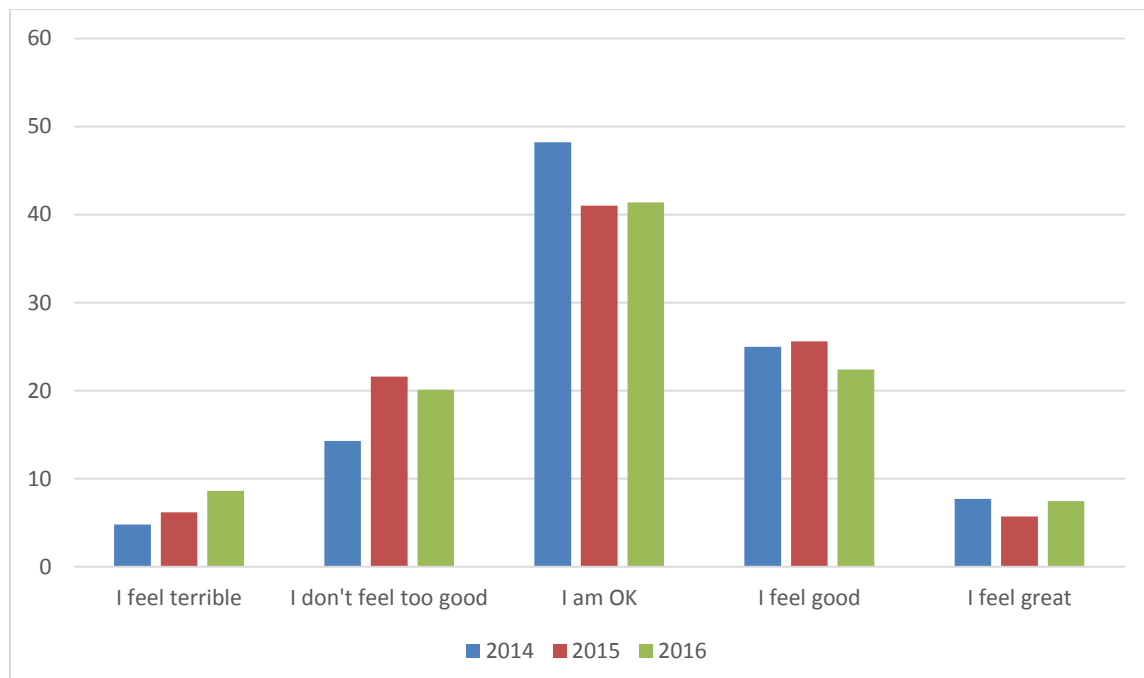


I Wellbeing

Students' reported levels of mental being were investigated in 2016, as they were in 2014 and 2015. As the discussion below indicates, reported levels of mental wellbeing continue to be low on some measures. Although these results are consistent with those reported in 2015 and international trends, they give rise to an interesting conundrum and that is that reported findings directly related to student engagement (see the summary in Part VIII) are not necessarily indicative of generally low levels of mental wellbeing. Rather, students generally report functioning at levels consistent with continued academic persistence and success. This is another issue for further exploration in subsequent surveys.

In a repeated question from 2014 and 2015, students were asked to select, from a range of five given options, the option that best described their current mental state. One hundred and seventy four students answered this question. As Figure 12 shows, and consistent with other years, feeling "ok" was the most frequently selected response. Thirty percent reported feeling "good" or "great" and 29 percent reported not feeling "too good" or "terrible". On the basis of these results, students' feelings of mental well-being have remained consistent over the period of their law studies. Although overall numbers in the following categories were small, a greater percentage of female students selected the "I don't feel too good" option (19 percent compared to 9 percent of male students) and a greater percentage of male students selected the "I feel great" option (9 percent compared to 4 percent of female students). The most frequently selected option across all law schools was "I am ok". For Canterbury and Waikato students, "I feel good" was the second most frequently selected option. For Auckland students, it was, by a small margin, "I don't feel too good".

Figure 12. Survey 2 2014, Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: How would you best describe your current mental state? (percentage)



An additional screening measure of psychological distress, the Kessler-6 scale, included for the first time in the 2015 survey, was repeated in 2016. The results provide a basis for the comparison of the situation of the students in this study with a number of recent overseas studies focusing on the mental wellbeing of law students and lawyers.

The Kessler-6 scale is a set of questions used internationally to screen for levels of reported non-specific psychological stress in large populations.³⁴ “Psychological distress” in this context encompasses a range of symptoms including anxiety, depression or rage.³⁵

Each student was asked how often, in the previous four weeks, he or she felt:

- ... so sad nothing could cheer him or her up
- ... nervous
- ... restless or fidgety
- ... hopeless
- ... that everything was an effort
- ... worthless

For each option, students selected one of five responses. Each option was allocated a score, as set out below:

- None of the time – scores 1
- A little of the time – scores 2
- Some of the time – scores 3
- Most of the time – scores 4
- Almost all of the time – scores 5

Those whose total score was in the range 6-11 are categorised as likely to be mentally well, those who score 12-19 as likely have a mild/moderate mental disorder and those who score 20-30 as likely to have a severe mental disorder.³⁶ As Figure 13 shows, overall 2016 results were consistent with those reported in 2015: 30 percent of students in 2016 scored in the “likely to be mentally well” category (compared to 32 percent in 2015), 50 percent scored in the “likely to have a mild/moderate mental disorder” category (compared to 49 percent in 2015) and 19 percent scored in the “likely to have a severe disorder” category (the same percentage as in 2015).

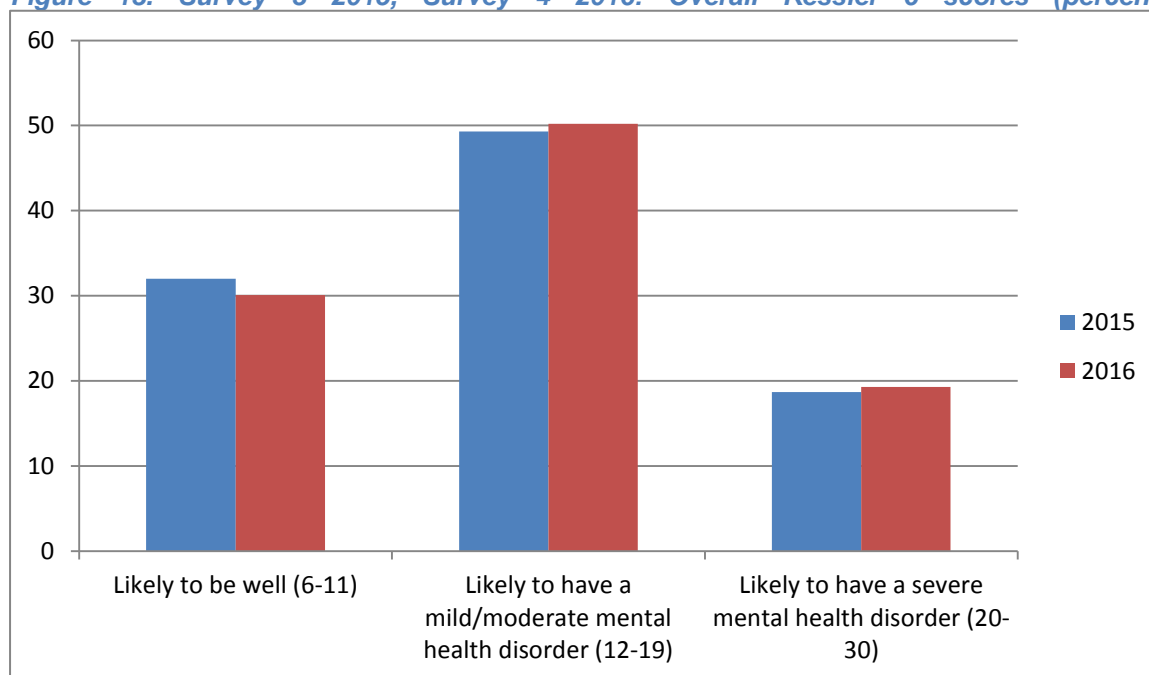
Although no differences of note were apparent on analysis by law school, gender trends apparent in 2015 were more pronounced in 2016. Male students were more likely to score in the “likely to be mentally well” category in 2016 (42 percent, compared to 23 percent of female students). Female students were more likely to score in the “likely to have a severe disorder” category (25 percent, compared to 10 percent of male students).

³⁴ R Kessler, G Andrews, L Colpe, E Hiripi, D Mroczek, S Normand “Short screening scales to monitor population prevalences and trends in non-specific psychological distress” (2002) 32 *Psychological Medicine* 959; Ariana Krynen, Danny Osborne, Isabelle Duck, Carla Houkamau, Chris Sibley “Measuring psychological distress in New Zealand: Item response properties and demographic differences in the Kessler-6 screening measure” (2013) 42 *New Zealand Journal of Psychology* 95 at 95.

³⁵ Ministry of Health *The Health of New Zealand Adults 2011/12: Key findings of the New Zealand Health Survey* (Wellington, Ministry of Health, 2012) at 61.

³⁶ See <http://www.mindhealthconnect.org.au/guide-to-kessler-6>.

Figure 13. Survey 3 2015, Survey 4 2016: Overall Kessler 6 scores (percentage)



We note, as we did in 2015, that when compared with other analyses using the Kessler-6 scale (or the longer Kessler-10 test) to measure levels of psychological distress within the general New Zealand population, the cohort of students participating in this study report experiencing higher rates of both likely mild/moderate and severe psychological distress.³⁷ For example, an analysis of 4,442 Kessler-6 responses from the general population in 2010 reported 77.5 percent of respondents in the well category, 17 percent in the mild/moderate category and just over five percent in the severe category.³⁸

The Kessler-10 scale was used in national surveys conducted by the Ministry of Health in 2006/2007 and 2011/2012. This scale, with 10 questions rather than six, identifies four likely levels of psychological distress: low; moderate, high and very high. The Health surveys report on the prevalence of psychological distress (that is, high or very high scores on the Kessler-10 scale). Again the reported rates of psychological distress are lower than reported in the law student cohort participating in this study. For example, the 2011/2012 Health survey reports that overall rates of psychological distress dropped from 6.6 percent in 2006/2007 to 5.6 percent in 2011/2012.³⁹ The 2011/2012 Health survey also reports on levels of psychological distress by age and sex. Overall, women were more likely to suffer psychological distress (6.6 percent of women compared to 4.5 percent of men).⁴⁰ The age group most likely to experience psychological distress were young women in the 15 – 24 age group, but the reported rate of distress in this group (eight percent) is still significantly lower than overall rates in student cohort in this study.⁴¹

The students' 2016 Kessler-6 scores continue to reflect a number of overseas studies which have shown consistently that law students are likely to be affected to a greater degree by depression and other forms of psychological distress than the general population. One of the

³⁷ We do however acknowledge that we may not necessarily be comparing like with like in terms of the manner in which the Kessler tests were administered across different studies.

³⁸ Ariana Krynen, Danny Osborne, Isabelle Duck, Carla Houkamau, Chris Sibley "Measuring psychological distress in New Zealand: Item response properties and demographic differences in the Kessler-6 screening measure" (2013) 42 *New Zealand Journal of Psychology* 95 at 101.

³⁹ Ministry of Health *The Health of New Zealand Adults 2011/12: Key findings of the New Zealand Health Survey* (Wellington, Ministry of Health, 2012) at 61.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid* at 62.

first Australian studies on this issue surveyed 741 law students across 13 Australian law schools.⁴² Thirty five percent of law students reported high or very high levels of psychological distress on the Kessler-10 scale, compared with 12 percent of young people in the general Australian population.⁴³

Whilst one Australian study reports that law students are likely to experience higher rates of psychological distress than other university students, it also reports that distress levels of all university students are higher than those reported by young people in the general population.⁴⁴ Although one recent Australian study, using a different screening test, reports that non-law students report severe levels of distress in similar proportions to non-law students,⁴⁵ another comparing medical and law students responses to the Kessler-10 test reports that law students have significantly higher likely distress levels.⁴⁶

As a way of probing the causes of the high reported levels of likely student distress, students were asked an open-ended question: "What factors most adversely affected your mental wellbeing on a regular basis?" One hundred and fifty students responded to this question. Some students listed more than one factor. The most frequently occurring response was workload pressure (42). Assessment pressure was noted by 20 students, with nine of these noting they had too many assessments due at the same time. It is likely that there is overlap between these first two categories, with workload pressure being linked to assessment. Twenty five students described the pressure to achieve well as a factor that adversely affected their well-being, whilst 17 students simply noted "stress", without any further explanation.

Eleven students referred to relationship issues, 15 to family or home issues and eight to personal issues. Non-university commitments, including work, had adversely affected 14 students. Financial concerns had affected 10 students.

Nine students referred to concerns about their future, including future job or career prospects.

Just four students referred to health issues, but another eight were affected by a lack of sleep.

Other factors mentioned by one or two students included time management, anxiety, lack of motivation, lack of law school support, the cold (a reference to winter weather), a family bereavement, the difficulty of the material they were studying, boredom and confusion.

We make two points in response to these results. The first is that although students reported a range of external factors as having an adverse impact on their studies (see Figure 8 above), institutional factors are reported with greater frequency than external factors as having an adverse impact on their mental wellbeing. The second is the apparent degree of correlation between students' answers to this question and to the question directed at

⁴² Norm Kelk, Georgina Luscombe, Sharon Medlow and Ian Hickie "Courting the Blues: Attitudes to Depression in Australian Law Students and Lawyers (2009) Brain and Mind Research Institute, Camperdown, NSW.

⁴³ Ibid at 12.

⁴⁴ See, eg, Catherine Leahy, Ray Peterson, Ian Wilson, Jonathan Newbury, Anne Tonkin, Deborah Turnbull "Distress levels and self-reported treatment rates for medicine, law, psychology and mechanical engineering tertiary students: cross-sectional study" (2010) 44 Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry 608 at 611, 613.

⁴⁵ Wendy Larcombe, Sue French, Rachel Sore "Who's Distressed? Not only Law Students: Psychological Distress Levels in University Studies Across Diverse Fields of Study" (2015) 37 Syd LR 243 at 262. See also Christine Parker "The 'Moral Panic' over Psychological Wellbeing in the Legal Profession: A Personal or Political Ethical Response" (2014) 37 UNSW Law Jnl 1103.

⁴⁶ Nerissa Sho, Fiona Burns, Rita Shackel, Bruce Robinson, Michael Robertson and Garry Walter "Law student mental health literacy and distress: finances, accommodation and travel time" (2016) Legal Education Review 29.

assessment workload where approximately 40 percent of students indicated that their assessment load in 2016 had been high or very high. However, we also note that a majority of students reported less time on self-study than the universities at which they were enrolled would expect.

A further follow-up open-ended question was asked of students: "What, if anything, could your law school do to improve your mental wellbeing?" One hundred and thirty four students responded to this question and many offered more than one suggestion.

The largest number of responses was directed at assessment, an issue with a direct link to workload. Twenty four students noted that the timing of assessment items could be improved, with many of these requesting that assessment items not all occur around the same time. Eight students suggested that less weighting be attached to final exams. Two requested fewer assessments and two wanted plussage or a ratchet to be available on all assessments. Ten students requested more feedback and guidance to improve their performance in assessment tasks. Two students requested more flexibility with the availability of extensions and aegrotats. Other assessment related suggestions, each noted by one student, were for more open book tests, easier assessments, pass/fail assessments, relating assessment tasks more closely to legal practice, use of optional assignments and the abandonment of use of exams as an assessment mechanism.

Five students offered the general suggestion that law schools should reduce student workload.

Notably, the second largest group of responses were from students who did not know what law schools could do (10) or thought nothing could be done (24).

A number of responses were directed at teaching related improvements, such as greater flexibility in tutorial attendance requirements (3), more class discussions (1), greater numbers of smaller classes (1), more accessible tutors (1), catering for different learning styles (1) and more individual contact with lecturers/tutors (1).

Other more general suggestions for law schools included recording of lectures (8), provision of better course and careers advice (4) and reduction of limitation of entry barriers (1). Eight students suggested improving law school culture, with four suggesting that a reduction in overall competitiveness was needed. Twelve students suggested the introduction or continuation of wellbeing related measures, such as wellbeing weeks, teaching mindfulness and meditation, provision of accessible and confidential counselling services and of "chill out" rooms.

We suggest that students' responses to the wellbeing questions highlight a need for a continued (and greater) university focus on student wellbeing. The continued reporting of high levels of likely mental distress is a very real concern, particularly given the indication that these high levels are linked to institutional factors (such as workload and assessment). However, as many of the students in the cohort are enrolled in a double degree, reported workload issues may not be linked only to their law school experience. Law schools and teachers, we suggest, should work together with other university colleges/departments and colleagues to review student workload (including assessment load) and to investigate whether students have appropriate skills to manage and cope with an appropriately sized workload. There also appears to be a need for law schools to focus on, and emphasise the importance of, a range of non-law specific and transferable skills, such as self-management and time-management skills.

VII Findings: Non-continuing Students

The 36 students who indicated they were not studying law in 2016 were asked a limited number of questions. We remind readers that these students were all continuing their studies at the same university at which they were enrolled at the beginning of 2014, a precondition for receiving the email invitation to complete the 2016 survey. The percentages of male and female students in this category were identical.

Fourteen of the non-continuing students were completing an arts degree or arts-related papers, 10 were studying a commerce degree or commerce-related papers. Other study options attracting small numbers included science, education, fine arts and criminal justice.

In response to a five point Likert-type question asking whether they intended to complete a law degree in the future, a minority indicated that they definitely (6 percent, 2) or probably (26 percent, 9) would do so. Fourteen percent (5) selected the neutral option, whilst 23 percent (8) indicated they probably would not and 31 percent indicated they definitely would not.

VIII Discussion

This section discusses findings as they relate to continuing students.

We begin by again highlighting the fact that the findings relate to cohort of students who have not only gained entry to law school, but who have elected to persist with their law studies. In other words, they have a demonstrated record of self-motivation and academic success. Although in relation to actual enrolments at the participating universities the non-response bias is unknown, we note that the participating cohort was broadly representative of the wider student body on a number of demographic measures such as gender and full-time study status.

In terms of Kahu's dimensions of student engagement, students generally reported positive *behaviour* in relation to class attendance, but this is likely to be influenced by students' already demonstrated ability to achieve academic success and the intention of many to ultimately pursue a legal career. In relation to *cognition*, (effort directed towards learning and use of deep learning strategies), a majority of students reported that their learning experience during large law lectures was largely passive, but this is a likely consequence of the teaching method (a traditional lecture) that they most frequently experienced. On the other hand, students did report greater use of active or deeper learning strategies in small law lectures (discussions, asking and answering questions). Of further relevance to this dimension is that many students, when asked what things their favourite lecturer did that they valued, indicated a preference for lecturers to provide them with information in a clear, interesting and structured fashion. This too likely reflects students' actual reported classroom experiences, particularly in large lectures. That a substantial minority apparently perceive that not all of their lecturers currently deliver such an experience is evident by the number of students indicating that they access the internet or social media during class time because they are bored.

Notwithstanding students' greater reported engagement during class time in optional courses, a majority of students reported spending less time on periods of self-study than the participating law schools might expect. What students reported doing during periods of self-study was largely unchanged. Nevertheless, a majority were positive about their likely future academic success and reported receiving high academic grades. These results are an indication that these students are likely to feel that they have adapted and acted in accordance with institutional expectations. Notably, students' preferred assessment types reflected those that they have most frequently experienced, that is, individual and written

assessments. Students' classroom and assessment experiences also appear to have influenced, to a significant degree, the skills and knowledge students report they gained in 2016. Students most frequently reported an increase in individual research and written skills.

In terms of *affect*, although students were not asked whether they felt a sense of belonging to a learning community, their responses relating to their relationships with teachers and peers suggest a growing number of interactions with both groups inside the classroom (a likely consequence of students enrolling in optional courses). A majority indicated that they would like greater one-to-one contact with their lecturers, preferably in small group setting. A substantial and increasing minority of students reported regularly studying with their peers outside the classroom. It is also notable that approximately half of the cohort reported participating in a law related extracurricular activity. Nevertheless, students' preferred assessment types were all individual, rather than collaborative, in nature.

Students did report that a range of non-institutional factors (such as health and personal factors) also had an impact on their studies, but we are unable to directly assess the effect this had on each of the three dimensions of student engagement.

If our summary stopped at this point, it would highlight a pattern of student engagement that is largely consistent with previous trends. Where there is change, it is generally positive in nature (greater active learning in small lectures, a wish for increased contact with lecturers, and a slight increase in the numbers of students working with their peers out of class). To some degree these positive trends are expected given the nature of the student cohort, that is, students who have settled into law school and who, absent an unexpected and catastrophic life event, can be expected to complete their degree.

However, findings in relation to reported levels of mental wellbeing preclude an overall positive conclusion. To the extent that there are positive trends in relation to student engagement, these appear not to be reflected in reported levels of likely psychological distress experienced by the participating cohort. Although it is with some relief that we are able to report that students' reported levels of psychological wellbeing have apparently not declined, it remains low for many students. Notably, students reported more frequently that institutional factors had an adverse impact on their mental wellbeing than non-institutional or external factors. Workload pressure, particularly as it relates to assessment, was the most frequently cited institutional factor adversely affecting students' mental wellbeing, although it is likely that this is a university issue, rather than just a law school issue. Students' suggestions for steps that law schools might take to improve their wellbeing were largely focused around assessment.

On a broader note, there was very little difference in students' responses across law schools, suggesting that the law school experience is comparable across the participating law schools.

Analysis of students' responses by gender revealed some differences. In terms of overall trends, these were consistent with those reported in 2014 and 2015. Female students continued to be more interested in pursuing a legal career. Male students were more interested in "core" areas of legal practice. Family law, an area of legal practice traditionally dominated by females, was of more interest to female students than male students.

Continued indications that female students have lower confidence levels were also apparent. Female students were less likely to ask or answer questions of their lecturers in large classes, but not in small classes. Female students were also less likely to report contact with their lecturers. Male students not only reported slightly higher levels of contact with lecturers, but were more likely to want more contact. Male students were more likely to report being "very confident" that they would pass all of their law courses. Male students were also more likely to report a lower student debt level of \$10,001 – \$20,000. Female students were more likely to report high levels of likely psychological distress. Nevertheless, in an unexpected

finding, female students were more likely to be satisfied with their overall law school experience.

IX Where to from here?

As well as providing base line data on student engagement in New Zealand law schools, the reported findings provide some food for thought for interested stakeholders. As we see it, the key issue is whether students' reported experiences reflect what stakeholders' view as desired outcomes for New Zealand legal education.

Overall findings suggest very clearly that the institutional context and, to some degree the current regulatory environment, drives the law school student experience. For example, the student experience in large law lectures (both in 2015 and 2016) highlighted the fact that the experience involved learning that was largely passive and individual in nature. The assessments that students sit are written and individual in nature. Students, in turn, report gaining skills that are individual in nature (research and writing skills). Such reported experiences and skills are unlikely to reflect the reality of legal practice or the workplace generally. Although students' reported a range of different classroom experiences in optional courses, the findings of this study suggest that it is students' experiences in the compulsory courses at the beginning of their time at law school that is the key determinant of the way in which they learn. It is too early to conclude that these learning patterns are largely set for the remainder of students' time at law school, but indications to date suggest that this is likely.

Our view is that there is room within Council of Legal Education regulatory requirements for law schools to alter and improve the nature of their influence on student engagement at the beginning of students' law school experience. We recommend a practice where compulsory courses have a range of outcomes wider than those specified in the Council-issued course prescriptions. We recommend that outcomes include not only legal knowledge and legal thinking/research skills, but skills in collaboration, self-management and a wider range of communication skills (including oral communication), all of which are highly relevant for students to gain employment, either in the legal sector or elsewhere. An increased emphasis on self-management is particularly important given students' reported likely low levels of mental wellbeing, which many report as being linked to workload. We also recommend the redesign of the 40 percent of course assessment in the compulsory courses that is not Council-specified to include a wider range of assessment tasks appropriate to assess more widely drafted course outcomes. However, we emphasise that any such changes should not occur without an assessment and review of students' overall workload to ensure that it is appropriate and balanced. Indeed, given students' feedback regarding workload and assessment (balancing) pressure, we recommend that such a review take place in any case.

A change in outcomes and assessment methods is unlikely to be successful without a change in teaching methods. Although we accept that large class teaching is a necessary consequence of the current funding model for New Zealand universities, we note that much of the literature reports an increase in the quality of student engagement from the additional and regular inclusion of active learning activities during a traditional lecture.⁴⁷ We recommend an increased emphasis on ascertaining and, with appropriate resourcing, then meeting identified staff development needs. For example, at the University of Canterbury, in

⁴⁷ See, eg, Jim Eison *Using Active Learning Instructional Strategies to Create Excitement and Enhance Learning* (2010) <https://www.cte.cornell.edu/documents/presentations/Eisen-Handout.pdf>; B Kennedy et al *Transforming Tertiary Science Education: Improving learning during lectures* (Ako Aotearoa, Wellington, 2013).

response to the study findings, staff development seminars have been held on student engagement, good practice in student assessment, and identifying and assisting students in distress.

The recommended changes are, we suggest, a useful start in improving students' reported law school experience. From a law school perspective, there are good reasons for these changes to occur. Increasing levels of positive student engagement at the beginning of students' law studies is likely to affect how they engage with their studies in subsequent years and may ultimately result in reputational benefits associated with producing high quality graduates. It may also have a positive effect on student wellbeing.

So how might individual law schools act on these findings and recommendations? We suggest that a starting point is the sharing of these findings and recommendations with both staff and students and then adequately resourcing the development of resulting initiatives. At the University of Canterbury this approach has led to the formation of teams of staff and/or students to have oversight of a particular area and/or develop proposals for change. Initiatives that are developed are presented for discussion and adoption on a school or programme wide basis. Initiatives adopted using these processes include:

- The formation of the committees focusing on the first and second year of students' studies to co-ordinate learning, teaching and assessment outcomes with a view to easing students' transition from school to university and from first year to second year. For example, a recent initiative undertaken by the second year committee was the running of a course for students focusing on the skills and information they needed to survive second year.
- A review of both degree and course learning outcomes to reflect a wider range of academic and self-management skills.
- Adoption of a School Wellbeing Plan developed by a committee of staff and student representatives. The aim of the plan is to mainstream the issue of wellbeing. Action undertaken in accordance with this plan includes the collection of data from wellness providers to identify possible initiatives around increasing staff/student contact and increasing students' self-coping and management skills. This data has been shared with staff and student representatives and meetings are underway to settle on projects to adopt for 2017 and 2018. Greater co-ordination between staff and law students' societies on wellness initiatives is occurring and information about maintaining wellbeing is now supplied to students at regular intervals throughout the academic year.
- An increased collaboration with the University's Academic Development Unit to access institutional level data on students and courses, as well as consultation on teaching and assessment practices for academic staff.

In the mid to longer term, if the regulatory regime is to promote the adoption of institutional practices that have a proven and positive influence on law student engagement, we recommend that stakeholders work together to amend the current requirements. Law schools can and should take the leading role in initiating this process.

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APPENDIX TWO

Survey One 2014

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 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
- Māori 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?

I 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 THREE

Survey Two 2014

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!

APPENDIX FOUR

Survey Three: 2015

Welcome back to the second year of the Law School longitudinal study.

Are you studying second year law in 2015?

- Yes
- No

Why are you not studying second year law in 2015?

- I didn't gain entry to second year law and am repeating first year law paper(s).
- I didn't gain entry to second year law and have chosen not to re-enrol in first year law papers.
- I gained entry to second year law, but declined to take up my place (please explain)
- Other, please explain... _____

In 2015, are you studying....?

- Full time
- Part time

Are you enrolled in a double degree?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is that other degree and major?

What are your reasons for doing that other degree?

How interested are you at this stage of your studies in pursuing a legal career?

- Not interested
- A bit interested
- Neutral
- Quite interested
- Very interested

If you are interested in pursuing a legal career, what type of career appeals to you at this time?

Choose as many responses as you wish

- Private practice (working as a lawyer in a firm or by yourself)
- Government position
- Non-governmental or community organisation
- In-house lawyer for a private employer that is not a law firm
- In-house lawyer for an international organisation, such as the United Nations
- Legal academic
- Not sure yet
- Other, please explain... _____

What areas of law are you interested in?

Choose as many responses as you wish

- Commercial and company
- Community
- Criminal law or criminal justice
- Employment
- Estates and wills

- Family
- Human rights
- Intellectual property
- International
- Information technology
- Law and medicine
- Law and sport
- Māori land and indigenous law
- Media law
- Land law
- Environmental law
- Public law
- Other, please specify... _____

How are you finding second year law study?

- It is easy
- Few problems so far
- I am finding it OK
- Difficult, I'm struggling
- Overwhelming

What are the things that you regularly do in a typical second year law lecture?

- Listen to what the lecturer has to say
- Take notes by hand
- Take notes on a laptop or other electronic device
- Record the lecture
- Access the internet to locate legal resources relevant to the lecture
- Access the internet for reasons unconnected with what is happening in class
- Make contact with others outside of class (via text, email or similar)
- Make contact with others inside class (via text, email or similar)
- Ask questions of your lecturer
- Answer questions asked by your lecturer
- Participate in lecturer-directed group activities
- Participate in lecturer-directed individual activities
- Other, please specify... _____

In what ways have you had contact with your law lecturers in 2015?

- Asking questions after lectures
- Communication via 'Learn' or other online learning platform
- Recorded lectures
- Office hours
- Email
- Phone
- Social occasions
- No contact except attending lectures
- Other, please specify... _____

In a few words, describe your ideal second year law lecture.

What are the things that you regularly do in a typical second year law tutorial?

- Listen to what the tutor has to say
- Take notes by hand
- Take notes on a laptop or other electronic device
- Record the tutorial

- Access the internet to locate legal resources relevant to the tutorial
- Access the internet for reasons unconnected with what is happening in the tutorial
- Make contact with others outside of class (via text, email or similar)
- Make contact with others inside class (via text, email or similar)
- Ask questions of your tutor
- Answer questions asked by your tutor
- Participate in tutor-directed group activities
- Participate in tutor-directed individual activities
- Look up the answers to the tutorial question using an electronic device
- Lead the tutorial discussion
- Other, please specify... _____

In what ways have you had contact with your law tutors in 2015?

- In tutorials
- Communication via 'Learn' or other online learning platform
- Recorded tutorials
- Office hours
- Email
- Phone
- Social occasions
- No contact except attending tutorials
- Other, please specify... _____

In a few words, describe your ideal second year law tutorial.

What has your attendance been like at law lectures this year?

What are your main reasons for missing lectures?

What has your attendance been like at law tutorials this year?

What are your main reasons for missing tutorials?

How many hours outside of lectures and tutorials do you typically devote to each of your second year law courses each week?

- 0 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6-8
- 9-10
- More than 10

What are the things that you regularly do when focusing on your law studies outside of lectures and tutorials?

- Read cases
- Read legislation
- Read articles and texts
- Read student guides
- Study with others
- Write up and supplement lecture notes
- Other, please specify... _____

For what purpose(s) do you do the things identified in the previous question?

- To complete assessment tasks
- To gain a better understanding of material covered in lectures and tutorials
- For general interest

Other, please specify... _____

How often have you physically visited the law library in 2015?

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

If you have physically visited the law library, what did you do there?

- Accessed legal resources
- Consulted a librarian
- Studied alone
- Studied with other students
- Other, please explain... _____

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

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

How often do you access the online learning platform (e.g. 'Learn') available at your University?

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

Which of the following skills/knowledge have you gained during your second year law studies?

- An understanding of the structure and operation of the New Zealand legal system
- A working knowledge of legal principles and concepts
- A theoretical understanding of the law and the legal system
- Critical/analytical thinking skills
- Writing skills
- Legal method skills (case analysis and statutory interpretation)
- Oral communication skills
- Time management skills
- Other, please specify... _____

Please respond to the statements below using the slider provided (0-100):

• **Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) benefits my daily life**

• **I am developing confidence in applying bicultural competence in my studies**

What, if any, of the following factors have adversely affected your law studies in 2015?

- Home/family issues
- Relationship issues
- Health issues
- Personal issues
- Work and employment issues

- Accommodation issues
- Financial issues
- Things to do with studying at university
- Other, please explain... _____

What has gone well for you in your law studies in 2015?

What could have gone better for you in your law studies in 2015?

To what extent, on average, have the assessment results you have received in your second year 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

How confident are you of passing all your second law courses?

- Not confident at all
- A bit confident
- Neutral
- Confident
- Very confident

How would you best describe your current mental state?

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

During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel....

	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
...nervous?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...hopeless?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...restless or fidgety?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... so depressed that nothing could cheer you up?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... that everything was an effort?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... worthless?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The last question asked about feelings that might have occurred during the past 30 days. Taking them altogether, did these feelings occur...

- A lot less often than usual
- Somewhat less often than usual
- About the same as usual
- Somewhat more often than usual
- A lot more often than usual
- I have not had any of these feelings

How satisfied are you with your experience at law school in 2015?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

What is the total level of your student debt?

- None
- Up to \$5,000
- \$5,001- \$10,000
- \$10,001 - \$20,000
- More than \$20,000
- Don't know

APPENDIX FIVE

Survey 4 2016

Q1 Welcome back to the third year of the Law School longitudinal study. Remember, the survey is anonymous and confidential. Law staff at the participating universities (the University of Canterbury, the University of Auckland and the University of Waikato) do not have access to any identifying information and cannot identify any student responses, so there is no possibility that your participation can affect how well you do in your degree.

Q2 Are you studying law in 2016?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Are you studying law in 2016 because ...

Q41 What are you studying currently?

Q42 Are you intending to complete a law degree in the future?

- Definitely yes (1)
- Probably yes (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Probably not (4)
- Definitely not (5)
- If Definitely yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of SurveyIf Probably yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of SurveyIf Neutral Is Selected, Then Skip To End of SurveyIf Probably not Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey, If Definitely not Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q3 Are you studying law in 2016 because you successfully repeated first year in 2015?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q5 In 2016, are you studying....?

- Full time (1)
- Part time (2)

Q6 How interested are you at this stage of your studies in pursuing a legal career?

- Not interested (1)
- A bit interested (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Quite interested (4)
- Very interested (5)

Q7 If you are interested, what are your reasons for intending to pursue a legal career? Choose as many responses as you wish

- One or more of my parents/siblings/close relatives are lawyers (1)
- It is a good, steady profession (2)
- I am passionate about justice and the law (3)
- Someone else suggested it (e.g. parent, teacher) (4)
- I want to help people (5)
- I want to make a difference (6)
- It is a well-paid career (7)
- It is a respected profession (8)
- Other, please specify (9) _____

Q8 What type of career appeals to you at this time? Choose as many responses as you wish

- Private practice (working as a lawyer in a firm or by yourself) (1)
- Government position (2)
- Non-governmental or community organisation (3)
- In-house lawyer for a private employer that is not a law firm (4)
- In house lawyer for an international organisation, such as the United Nations (5)
- Legal academic (6)
- Not sure yet (7)
- Other, please explain (8) _____

Q9 What areas of law are you interested in? Choose as many responses as you wish

- Commercial and company (1)
- Community (2)
- Criminal law or criminal justice (3)
- Employment (4)
- Estates and wills (5)
- Family (6)
- Human Rights (7)
- Intellectual Property (8)
- International (9)
- Law and medicine (10)
- Law and sport (11)
- Māori land and indigenous law (12)
- Media law (13)
- Land Law (14)
- Environmental Law (15)
- Public Law (16)
- Other, please specify (17)

Q10 What are the things that you regularly do in typical large and small class law lectures? A large class is one in which more than 50 students are enrolled.

Listen to what the lecturer has to say (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take notes by hand (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take notes on a laptop or other electronic device (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Record the lecture (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access the internet to locate resources relevant to the lecture (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access the internet for reasons unconnected with what is happening in class (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make contact with others outside of class via social media (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make contact with others inside the class via social media (8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask questions of your lecturer (9)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Answer questions asked by your lecturer (10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in lecturer-directed group activities (11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in lecturer-directed individual activities (12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in lecturer-directed online activities (13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify (14)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11 Why do you access the internet or contact others via social media during classes?

Q12 Think of your favourite law lecturer in 2016. In a few words, describe what this lecturer did that you valued the most.

Q13 In what ways have you had contact with your law lecturers in 2016? Choose all that apply

- Ask questions after lectures (1)
- Communication via "Learn", "Moodle" or other online learning platform (2)
- Recorded lectures (3)
- Office hours (4)
- Email (5)
- Phone (6)
- Social occasions (7)
- No contact, except through attending lectures (8)
- Other, please specify (9) _____

Q14 Are you interested in having more contact with your law lecturers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Please select the option that best de...

Q15 What form of extra contact would you like? Please explain in a few words

Q16 Please select the option that best describes your attendance at law lectures in 2016.

- 81% – 100% (1)
- 61% – 80% (2)
- 41% – 60% (3)
- 21% – 40% (4)
- 0% – 20% (5)

Q17 What is your main reason for missing lectures? Choose one response.

- I never miss lectures (1)
- Illness or accident (2)
- Study commitments (3)
- Employment commitments (4)
- Family commitments (5)
- Other commitments (6)
- Personal reasons (7)
- I don't enjoy lectures (8)
- Lectures are recorded (9)
- I can pass without going to lectures (10)
- Other, please specify (11) _____
- If I never miss lectures Is Selected, Then Skip To How many hours outside of lectures an...

Q18 When you miss lectures, rank the methods that you have used to catch up Please 'grab and place' your preferred responses

- _____ Self-study (1)
- _____ Use notes from another class member (2)
- _____ Listen to a university made recording of the lecture (3)
- _____ Listen to recording of the lecture made by another class member (4)
- _____ Buy notes offered for sale (5)
- _____ Other, please explain (6)

Q19 How many hours outside of lectures and tutorials do you typically devote to each of your 2016 year law courses each week?

- 0-2 (1)
- 3-5 (2)
- 6-8 (3)
- 9-10 (4)
- More than 10 (5)

Q20 What are the things that you regularly do when focusing on your law studies outside of class time? Choose all that apply

- Read cases (1)
- Read legislation (2)
- Read articles and texts (3)
- Read student guides (4)
- Study with others (5)
- Write up and supplement lecture notes (6)
- Participate in lecturer-directed online activities (7)
- Other, please specify (8) _____

Q21 For what purpose(s) do you do the things identified in the previous question? Choose all that apply

- To complete assessment tasks (1)
- To gain a better understanding of material covered in lectures and tutorials (2)
- For general interest (3)
- Other, please specify (4) _____

Q22 What other law-related activities are you involved with? Choose all that apply

- I volunteer with a community law centre (1)
- I volunteer with other organisations. Please specify (2) _____
- Other, please specify (3) _____

Q23 How often have you physically visited the law library in 2016?

- Never (1)
- Occasionally (2)
- Monthly (3)
- Fortnightly (4)
- Weekly or more often (5)
- If Never Is Selected, Then Skip To How often have you accessed online le...

Q24 What did you do in the law library?

- Accessed legal resources (1)
- Consulted a librarian (2)
- Studied alone (3)
- Studied with other students (4)
- Other, please explain (5) _____

Q25 How often have you accessed online legal resources available through your University library?

- Never (1)
- Occasionally (2)
- Monthly (3)
- Fortnightly (4)
- Weekly or more often (5)

Q26 How often have you accessed the online learning platform (e.g. Learn or Moodle) available at your University?

- Never (1)
- Occasionally (2)
- Monthly (3)
- Fortnightly (4)
- Weekly or more often (5)

Q27 What are the skills that have you gained from your 2016 law studies?

Q28 My assessment load in 2016 has been:

- Too low (1)
- Low (2)
- Acceptable (3)
- High (4)
- Too high (5)

Q29 Please state your level of agreement with the following statement: "The timing of my assessments in 2016 has been manageable"

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q30 Rank your top three preferred forms of assessment Please 'grab and place' your preferred responses.

- _____ Closed book individual test or examination (1)
- _____ Open book individual test or examination (2)
- _____ Individual take home test (3)
- _____ Group take home test (4)
- _____ Individual essay/assignment (5)
- _____ Group essay/assignment (6)
- _____ Computer based individual assessment (7)
- _____ Computer based group assessment (8)
- _____ Individual oral assessment (9)
- _____ Group oral assessment (10)
- _____ Other, please explain (11)

Q31 In my law assessments in 2016 I have most frequently achieved the following grade(s)

- A grades (1)**
- B grades (2)
- C grades (3)
- Grades below C (4)

Q32 To what extent, on average, have the assessment results you have received in 2016 law courses reflected your expectations?

- They were much lower than I expected (1)
- They were lower than I expected (2)
- They were about what I expected (3)
- They were higher than I expected (4)
- They were much higher than I expected (5)

Q33 How confident are you of passing all your 2016 law courses?

- Not confident at all (1)
- A bit confident (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Confident (4)
- Very confident (5)

Q34 Are you repeating any compulsory law courses that you took in 2015?

- None at all (1)
- One (2)
- Two (3)
- More than two (4)

Q35 What, if any, of the following factors have adversely affected your law studies in 2016?

- Home/family issues (1)
- Relationship issues (2)
- Health issues (3)
- Personal issues (4)
- Work and employment issues (5)
- Accommodation issues (6)
- Financial issues (7)
- Things to do with studying at university (8)
- Other, please explain (9) _____

Q36 How would you best describe your current mental state?

- I feel terrible (1)
- I don't feel too good (2)
- I am OK (3)
- I feel good (4)
- I feel great (5)

Q37 During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel....

...nervous? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...hopeless? (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...restless or fidgety? (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... so depressed that nothing could cheer you up? (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... that everything was an effort? (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... worthless? (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q38 What factors most adversely affect your mental wellbeing on a regular basis?
Please explain in a few words.**

Q39 What, if anything, could your law school do to improve your mental wellbeing?

Q40 How satisfied are you with your experience at law school in 2016?

- Very dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Satisfied (4)
- Very satisfied (5)
-

Q41 What is the total level of your student debt?

- Up to \$5,000 (1)
- \$5,001 to \$10,000 (2)
- \$10,001 - \$20,000 (3)
- \$20,001 - \$30,000 (4)
- More than \$30,000 (5)

Q43 Would you like to enter the draw to win an iTunes voucher?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
-

Q44 Thanks. Please enter your email address and first name. This information will not be used for any other purpose than the prize draw.