
Tanja Cobden

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BACKGROUND

Tanja is a dynamic and hardworking paralegal who takes pride in her problem solving abilities and her capacity to consistently complete work to a high standard.

Tanja is currently in her fifth year of a double degree in Science and Law with the Australian National University. She has a Distinction average in her Law subjects and a High Distinction average in her Science subjects and won the 2015 Australia and New Zealand Association of Psychiatry, Psychology and Law Prize 2015.

Tanja has experience as a paralegal with the Department of Human Services (DHS) Legal Division, working in the Freedom of Information and Litigation Branch, and the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) ACT. In these roles she ensured all tasks were completed to the highest possible standard. She has experience interviewing clients, drafting internal legal advices and Freedom of Information decisions, reading and summarising briefs, writing letters to clients, answering phones and conducting legal research.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Aboriginal Legal Service ACT - 2016

Department of Human Services Legal Division, Freedom of Information and Litigation Branch – 2016

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

Analytical skills

Tanja has strong analytical skills in both law and science and she excels at collating evidence and drawing conclusions and implications from her research, resulting in consistently high marks for all research projects and essays. Tanja brings to her work a capacity for critical analysis and independent thought. For example, as part of a research project on infanticide, she analysed current scientific evidence concerning infanticide and identified that women who commit infanticide are affected by pre-birth and post-birth mental conditions. As a result, she concluded that the scope of the legal defence of infanticide, which focusses only on the mental health issues caused by the birth of the child, is arcane and inconsistent with modern psychological research.

In her role with the DHS Tanja is responsible for preparing Advices for Further Administrative Review (AFARs). This entails reading and evaluating a decision from the Social Services and Child Support Division of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and then writing a recommendation as to whether the decision was correctly made according to law and government policy. She then writes a recommendation as to whether the relevant government department should appeal the decision.

Communication skills

Tanja has experience communicating with clients in a legal setting from her time at the DHS and ALS. In these roles she corresponds with clients, makes follow-up inquires and conducts accompanying research to present to the instructing solicitors. She also uses her excellent written communication skills to summarise legal research, draft letters to clients, and correspond with relevant government services as part of her work.

Tanja's advanced communication skills have been further developed through her work as a horse riding instructor and trail ride leader, which required her to communicate calmly and effectively with people from all walks of life. Tanja had to

teach her groups how to ride safely and simultaneously establish areas of common interest with individual clients. Consequently, she is excellent at talking to both large groups and individuals.

Legal research skills

Through her work and study, Tanja has developed strong legal and scientific research skills. As part of her paralegal roles, Tanja has undertaken legal research and statutory interpretation tasks. Her distinction and high distinction average across her law and science studies also reflect her strong research skills. Furthermore, her strong results in the 2015 Novice and 2016 Senior Mooting Competitions demonstrate her capacity for presenting arguments based on advanced legal research.

Initiative

Tanja shows initiative in all her endeavours, as evidenced by her creation of mooting teams in 2015 and 2016. Additionally, she applied for and completed a field course with the ANU Biology Department in 2015 and 2016. This required her to spend four weeks onsite in Kosciuszko National Park completing ecological field work.

Furthermore, in her previous administrative role with Income Tax Professionals, Tanja sought out tasks and ensured that she was comfortable navigating all relevant areas of the business to best perform her role, including learning how to use learn site specific software.

Ability to work autonomously

Tanja is comfortable working self-sufficiently. In her current role with the DHS Tanja works on assigned matters independently, ensuring they are completed on time. While handling Freedom of Information requests Tanja was simultaneously responsible for many matters, covering a wide range of subject matters, which were all subject to statutory deadlines. Due to this experience Tanja is adept at prioritising tasks, managing work flows and handling large workloads. This has given Tanja the confidence to trust her own judgement and allows her to work well independently.

Team work

Tanja's strong communication and interpersonal skills allow her to be an excellent team player. While working as a paralegal with the ALS she always worked closely with her peers, ensuring tasks were completed to the highest possible standard. Importantly, Tanja works well with others in high stress situations, especially when faced with short deadlines. In her role as a paralegal with the DHS Tanja has consistently worked with solicitors to prepare documents for the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Furthermore, for a period of six months she 'job-shared' with a fellow paralegal at the DHS. This required her to communicate and collaborate extensively with her colleague.

QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Science and Laws (Honours) (The Australian National University)
(In progress)

Year 12 Certificate (Burgmann Anglican School) (ATAR: 98.5)