



**AUSTRALIAN
LAW STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

CLIENT INTERVIEWING CHAMPIONSHIP RULES

ALSA CONFERENCE

1. TEAMS

- 1.1 Each law school in Australia whose Law Student Society is affiliated with ALSA may nominate one team to compete in the Championship.
- 1.2 Any international law school may at ALSA's invitation nominate a team to compete in the Championship.
- 1.3 Any law school in Australia whose Law Student Society is not affiliated with ALSA may at ALSA's invitation nominate a team to compete in the Championship. Law schools include faculties, divisions or departments of law, or admitting authorities, which offer a law degree or equivalent qualification for admission to legal practice.
- 1.4 Each team must consist of 2 members.
- 1.5 Team members must not have completed a law degree or equivalent qualification for legal practice in any jurisdiction.
- 1.6 Teams must register by the registration date as set by the Conference Convenor and ALSA President. Penalties apply for late registration.

2. COMPETITION STRUCTURE

- 2.1 The Championship consists of three preliminary rounds, quarter finals, semi finals and a grand final.
- 2.2 Preliminary Round Procedures
 - 2.2.1 If an even number of teams enter the Championship, all teams compete in all the preliminary rounds.
 - 2.2.2 If an odd number of teams enter the Championship, one bye per round is declared. The bye is allocated randomly. A team with a bye will be awarded the average mark scored by that team in the other rounds for the bye.
 - 2.2.3 No team shall have a bye in more than one round.
 - 2.2.4 The teams' order of presentation shall be determined by random draw.
- 2.3 Progression to the Finals
 - 2.3.1 At the end of the preliminary rounds, each team's score is totalled and their win/loss ratio calculated. The eight teams with the highest win-loss ratios are the quarter-finalists.
 - 2.3.2 In the event that two teams only have tied win-loss ratios, and the two teams have faced each other in the preliminary rounds, then the winner of that round shall proceed to the quarter-finals.
 - 2.3.3 If the two teams referred to in 2.3.1 have not faced each other, or there are more than two teams with tied win-loss ratios, the team or teams will progress on the basis of the highest average winning margin.
 - 2.3.4 If the teams remained tied, the teams will progress based on a coin toss conducted by the Competitions Director.

2.4 Finals Procedures

2.4.1 The teams' order of presentation shall be determined by random draw.

2.4.2 The draw for the quarter finals is as follows (where Team One is the highest placed team and Team Eight is the lowest placed team):

Round	Team	v	Team
A	One		Eight
B	Two		Seven
C	Three		Six
D	Four		Five

2.4.3 The winner of each quarter-final progresses to the semi-finals.

2.4.4 The draw in the semi finals is:

The winner of Round A versus the winner of Round D.

The winner of Round B versus the winner of Round C.

2.4.5 The winner of each semi-final progresses to the grand final.

2.4.6 Semi and Grand finalists are notified on the day that the previous round takes place.

2.5 The winner will be announced at the closing dinner.

3. **THE AUSTRALIAN CLIENT INTERVIEWING AND NEGOTIATION COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE**

3.1 The Australian Client Interviewing and Negotiation Competitions Committee ("The Committee") that organised the Australian Client Interviewing Competition prior to 2006 will assist in the amalgamation of that competition into the Championship.

3.2 The Committee consists of faculty representatives from at least six Australian law schools involved in the Championship.

3.3 The Committee will promote law school awareness and involvement in the Championship.

3.4 The Committee will assist the ALSA organisers in the coordination, scenario formulation and judging of the Championship and in maintaining the quality and continuity of the competition at national and international levels.

4. **RELEASE OF QUESTIONS**

4.1 Release of Preliminary Round Questions

4.1.1 Consultation situations for the preliminary rounds are released on the ALSA or conference website three weeks before the Championship begins.

- 4.1.2 Consultation situations for the preliminary rounds are e-mailed to the nominated LSS Representative under Conference registration procedure on the day they are released on the ALSA or Conference website.
- 4.1.3 Preliminary round consultation situations may be faxed to ALSA Representatives upon prior request to the Conference Convenor.
- 4.1.4 The consultation situation will contain information similar to that which a law office secretary might give to interviewing attorneys when a client has called to make an appointment.

4.2 Release of Final Round Questions

- 4.2.1 Quarter-finalists will be announced following the conclusion of the preliminary rounds.
- 4.2.2 The questions for the final rounds will be released following the conclusion of the preliminary rounds.

5. **FACULTY ADVISERS**

- 5.1 Teams may appoint a Faculty Adviser. A Faculty Adviser is a staff representative who may assist a team prior to the Championship. A Faculty Adviser is not permitted to assist the team during the Championship.

6. **RESEARCH**

- 6.1 Teams must not discuss the contents of the situation with any other person in preparing for the Championship.
- 6.2 Competitors will not be permitted to use mobile phones during the preparation or the judging of the round. Any mobile phone carried by a competitor must be switched off throughout the preparation and judging of the round.
- 6.3 Any infringement of 6.1 or 6.2 will result in automatic disqualification.
- 6.4 The law to be applied in the Championship is the applicable law for the jurisdiction in which the Conference is held.

7. **JUDGING**

- 7.1 No academic shall act as a judge for a team for his/her law school.
- 7.2 Each preliminary round client interview will be judged by one judge, and the quarter finals, semi finals and grand finals will be judged either by a single judge or, preferably, a panel of three judges.
- 7.3 Judges shall be judges, magistrates, legal practitioners, legal academics, professionals with client interviewing experience or others with a demonstrated experience in client interview competitions.

- 7.4 All judges will be supplied with a copy of the consultation situation for the round they will be judging, a copy of the Rules, and a detailed confidential memorandum about the client's background and concern.
- 7.5 At the completion of each round the judge must not tell the competitors the result. Judging sheets must be passed on to the Championship coordinator or their representative.
- 7.6 Feedback
- 7.6.1 At the conclusion of the 45 minute session judges must ask the interviewers to leave the room and the judge must consult with the client for up to 5 minutes. The judges should then provide the team with a critique of the team's handling of the consultation and post consultation periods. The critique should last no more than 10 minutes.
- 7.6.2 Clients should not be present during the post consultation period or the critique.
- 7.7 Determining the winner where multiple judges
- 7.7.1 If there is a panel of judges judging the round, the winning team is the team which was the superior team in the opinion of the majority of judges, irrespective of the result derived from the aggregate of the teams' scores. Note that the scoring method for this competition is such that a lower score is a better score.

Example	Team A score	Team B score	Winner in judge's opinion
Judge 1	20	23	Team A
Judge 2	20	23	Team A
Judge 3	27	20	Team B

Winner determined under this rule

TOTAL	67	66	Team A
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The winner of the example round is Team A.

8. PENALTIES

- 8.1 The following penalties apply:
- 8.1.1 Late registration for the Championship: 2% reduction of total marks for each day late in each round of the Championship.
- 8.1.2 A deduction of 1 mark per minute (or part thereof) will be strictly enforced after the passage of 35 minutes.
- 8.2 Judges do not have the discretion to dispense with these penalties.
- 8.3 Judges shall not be notified of the application of any of these penalties at any time.

- 8.4 Judges should stop students after 45 minutes regardless of where students are in the interview or post consultation process.

9. APPEALS

- 9.1 Appeals will be dealt with accordingly as prescribed in the Appeal Procedure bylaw.

10. CLIENTS

- 10.1 The Conference Team is responsible for selecting persons to play the roles of the clients for each of the sessions.
- 10.2 Each client is supplied with a packet containing the Rules, the consultation situation, and a detailed confidential memorandum concerning the client's background and concerns.
- 10.3 Clients should also give their feedback to judges after each interview, outlining their level of confidence in the team's handling of their situation and any other relevant comments.
- 10.4 Clients must not be from either team's University.

11. THE INTERVIEWS

- 11.1 Sessions will be 45 minutes long.
- 11.2 The first 30 minutes are devoted to a consultation with the client during which students are expected to elicit the relevant information, outline the problem, and propose a solution or other means of resolving the problem.
- 11.3 The teams will have a 15 minute post-consultation period, when students may confer privately and then make a presentation to the judges. During that period, the students may talk to each other loudly enough to be overheard by the judges. The post consultation performance may summarise the interview, indicate the scope of the legal work to be undertaken, and state the legal issues that should be researched. Explanation of the position or attitude taken by the attorneys may be useful.
- 11.4 Team members are free to decide how they will divide their work, but both students must interview the client as a team and their plan is subject to judging. The students may wish during their post consultation explanation to explain to the judges why they worked together in the way that they did.
- 11.5 During the interview and post-consultation, the team may use books, notes, and other materials.
- 11.6 The discussion of fees is an integral part of any first consultation between an attorney and a client. The fee schedule applicable to all teams is that the first consultation is free and any consultations after that will be charged according to the Law Society's Schedule of Fees. For the purposes of the Championship that Schedule provides for a fee of \$200 per hour. The participants may discuss fees at any appropriate point in the consultation but their decision is subject to evaluation by the judges.
- 11.7 Time limits are as follows:

Consultation with client	30 minutes
Post Consultation	15 minutes
Judge Consult with Client	5 minutes
Critique	10 minutes

- 11.8 There will be a warning one minute before the end of the consultation and post consultation, as specified above. Students may continue the interview for another five minutes at the discretion of the judge(s).

12. INTERNATIONAL CLIENT INTERVIEWING COMPETITION

- 12.1 The Championship is used to select a representative Australian team to compete in the International Client Counseling Competition run by the International Client Counseling Committee. Subject to 12.2, the highest placed Australian team in the Competition for any given year will automatically go on to be the Australian representative team in the following year's International Client Counseling Competition.
- 12.2 In the event of the inability of the winning team (constituted by any two of the winning team, being the highest-place Australian team who performed at the Championship) to attend the International Client Counseling Competition, the second placed team may represent Australia. In the event of the inability of that team, the Australian Representative to the International Committee may, in consultation with ALSA, nominate an Australian team from the Competition to attend the International Client Counseling Competition.
- 12.3 The two team members selected to compete at the International Client Counseling Competition may select a reserve team member to their team for the purposes of the International Client Counseling Competition.
- 12.3.1 A reserve team member selected under 12.3 must comply with the rules of that Competition.
- 12.4 Australia is required to appoint a representative to the International Client Counseling Competition.
- 12.4.1 In the event that the team selected to compete at the International Client Counseling Competition has nominated a Faculty Adviser under 5.1, that Faculty Adviser shall be the representative to the International Competition.
- 12.4.2 The representative shall hold office from the ALSA Conference that the team competed in until the next ALSA Conference.
- 12.4.3 In the event that team selected to compete at the International Client Counseling Competition has nominated a Faculty Adviser under 5.1, or that Faculty Adviser is unable to be the Australian Representative to the International Client Counseling Competition, then ALSA and the Australian Client Interviewing and Negotiation Competitions Committee will consult in order to appoint a representative.
- 12.4.4 ALSA is not responsible for funding the position of Australian Representative to the International Client Counseling Committee.

8. *Effective Conclusion*

Effectively concluded the interview

1 2 3

4 5

9. *Teamwork.*

Worked together as a team: balance of participation?

1 2 3

4 5

10. *Post-Interview Reflection*

Learned from their experience?

1 2 3

4 5

Please make any additional comments below:

Note to Judges

Please use the following as a guide for final scores:

Very Good	13 – 17
Good	18 – 22
Above Average	23 – 27
Average	28 – 32
Below Average	33 – 37
Poor	38 – 42
Very Poor	43 – 47

When deciding on the scores, please take the following into account:

- Identification of client's issues;
- Identification of clients goals;
- Speaking ability;
- Teamwork ability;
- Following of time limits;
- Ability to come to a suitable outcome; and
- Any other factors that you consider relevant.