

Students and graduates guide.

2026

Why Buddle Findlay

Join a national firm where talented students thrive. As a summer clerk, you will work on high-impact matters alongside supportive lawyers who are committed to your development, wellbeing and future. You will gain practical experience across diverse practice areas, benefit from structured mentoring and training, and contribute to meaningful community and pro bono initiatives.

We continue to be recognised as a top-tier firm by leading directories including IFLR1000, Chambers Asia-Pacific and Legal 500, reflecting the quality of our people and our work. With offices in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, you will be part of a collaborative, inclusive team that values curiosity, integrity and excellence. Build your career with us and make a real difference.

What is a summer clerk programme?

Our summer clerk programme is your best opportunity as a law student to gain experience working in a law firm over the university summer break. Students typically apply for summer clerk opportunities in their penultimate year of study. Think of it as a legal version of an internship. We've mapped an example of what your journey may look like below. In our Auckland office, you will have the opportunity to rotate through our three teams in three rotations. In our Christchurch and Wellington offices, you will have the opportunity to rotate through our two teams in two rotations.



Band 1 ranking

- Banking and finance
- Data protection and cyber security
- Labour and employment
- Projects and resource management
- Technology, media, telecoms (TMT)
- Transport.



Band 1 ranking

- Banking and finance
- Employment
- Environment and resource management
- Restructuring and insolvency
- Technology, media, telecoms (TMT).

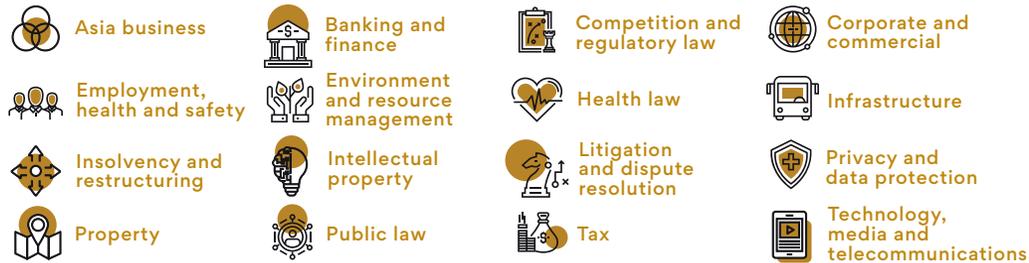


Tier 1 ranking

- Banking and finance
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Project development
- Restructuring and insolvency.

What areas of law could I work in?

As a summer clerk at Buddle Findlay, you'll have the opportunity to rotate through different teams to develop a broad understanding of a commercial law firm. Check out our website for full details of our [areas of expertise](#) and the possibilities available for you.



Check out our latest [insights](#) to see some of the recent work happening around the firm.

When are you recruiting?

This year our applications will open on Tuesday 3 March at 9.00am and close on Tuesday 24 March at 12.00pm.

Where and when will interviews take place?

Our preference is for interviews to be held in person at our offices, to ensure you have the best experience when meeting our team. If you're located outside of the office location you're applying to, we'll contact you to make travel arrangements for your interview.

Interviews will occur in the week commencing 11 May in Auckland and Wellington, and week commencing 20 April in Christchurch.

How do I get to know Buddle Findlay?

Our recruitment process has been designed to give you the opportunity to get to know us, and us to know you, and will allow you to build meaningful connections with our team. We want to interact and connect with you so we will be at your university career expos, hold employer presentations on campus, connect with clubs and associations and host open days to welcome you to our collaborative firm.

Another way to get to know us is by [taking our expression of interest quiz](#). This is a short and fun way to give you an idea of what's important to us. Your answers from this quiz won't be recorded but might help to determine if you'd like to apply to join our team. Make sure you share your details at the end of the quiz if you'd like to stay in touch.

The Buddle Findlay open day

Our open days are your chance to discover what life at a commercial law firm is really like and work out if Buddle Findlay is a good fit for you. At the open day, our team will share stories of their legal journeys and explain how our summer clerk programme works. You'll also hear from a panel of our solicitors who've recently been through the summer clerk and law clerk programme. After the panel discussion, you'll have the opportunity to ask questions and then chat with our wider team over an informal afternoon tea.

Open days will be held at each of our offices in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington on Monday 9 March from 3.30pm to 5.00pm. Please feel free to attend the open day closest to you. Click [here](#) to register or email recruitment@buddlefindlay.com. Places are limited so make sure you get in quick!

How will Buddle Findlay get to know me?

We hope to chat to you at one of the above events and/or get to know you well during the recruitment process. Another way we will achieve this is through our Buddle Findlay talent community portal when you apply for our summer clerk programme. As part of your application, you will be asked to enter relevant

information about you and complete a quiz. This provides us with an opportunity to know how you think, feel and operate, giving us a deeper understanding into who you are and how you could contribute to the success of our firm.

What do you do with my GPA information?

As part of the application process, we'll ask for a copy of your academic transcript and your law GPA. We recognise that grades alone don't define you and they certainly don't tell us everything we need to know. Even if you're concerned that your grades are not as high as you'd like, we encourage you to apply. Remember to share all there is to know about you in your cover letter – your life experience may have given you the skills our team are looking for.

Are you recruiting for graduate roles?

Summer clerks typically re-join the firm as law clerks once they have completed their university studies. This means we do not run a separate round of recruitment for graduates. From time to time, law clerk roles do pop up. If you would like to be considered for a future law clerk role, we encourage you to apply for our summer clerk programme and join the Buddle Findlay talent community. This means we will be able to contact you should an opportunity become available.

What matters to us

Tō Tātou Tiakitanga brings together the key initiatives Buddle Findlay is doing within the areas of diversity and inclusion (D&I), Te Hapori (community) and Te Taiao (environment). By joining Buddle Findlay you'll get to be a part of the meaningful work we do in these areas. View the full report [here](#).





Diversity and inclusion

We are committed to being market leaders in attracting a diverse workforce and creating the best environment for our people to belong, thrive, and grow their careers. Diversity and inclusion are fundamental elements of Buddle Findlay's strategic priorities and are a lens we place over all our decision making. We know that a diverse workforce will increase our creativity, innovation, and profitability, and provide our clients with better experiences.

Te Taiao | Environmental and sustainability initiatives

Environmental action is everyone's business. We have an ambitious goal to become leaders in our approach to reduce our environmental impact. To work towards this goal, we are committed to:

- Maintaining carbon-neutral certification and setting ambitious emissions reduction targets
- Engaging with our people on emissions reduction and broader environmental issues
- Integrating environmental considerations into all aspects of our business.

Te Hapori | Our community

Our community strategy is based on involving our people and we are committed to building a stronger and more sustainable community in

New Zealand by:

- Supporting the Halberg Foundation to help it achieve its goal of sport and recreation for all
- Assisting hospitals in caring for children through our Buddle Findlay Child Health Foundation
- Encouraging our lawyers to dedicate their time and expertise to assisting our pro bono clients
- Developing close relationships with key charities
- Partnering with Community Law to provide free legal advice to members of the public, who otherwise may not be able to afford it or who are vulnerable
- Partnering with Māori Law Review including by supporting the review and as a contributing author on legal developments affecting Māori.

What will you experience at Buddle Findlay?

Our culture and the focus on collaboration is the foundation of who we are as a firm. We prioritise inclusiveness, diversity, safety and wellbeing for all of our people, enabling them to grow and develop their careers. By working at Buddle Findlay, you will feel genuinely respected, valued and supported to be yourself and achieve your personal and professional goals. Join us as we collaborate with each other to help our clients be part of a more successful Aotearoa.

We asked a few of our summer clerks to describe their experience



**Zachariah
Anderson**

**Summer Clerk,
Christchurch**

“Clerking with Buddle Findlay has been an invaluable experience. The team was kind and inclusive, bringing me in on a wonderful variety of challenging and rewarding legal work.

Being in the Christchurch office, I was able to experience the full spectrum of legal work offered by the firm, from private client, contract drafting, property, RMA, employment and civil litigation. As part of these rotations, I was able to attend several mediations, court hearings and gain experience in drafting a variety of legal documents. Beyond this, I was also able to jump into the social aspects of the firm, such as our Friday morning junior coffees and our volunteering projects, such as setting up the Christmas trees for the Waimakariri District Council.

For me, what stood out the most was the support provided by the team. Everyone, from partners to juniors, always took the time to make us feel welcome and ask us how we were. Beyond supporting us through our work, these small outreaches made me feel like I was truly part of the team, which made summer all the more enjoyable and meaningful.”



**Kayla
Strong**

**Summer Clerk,
Auckland**

“Buddle Findlay really is a collaborative law firm like they say they are. I always felt part of a team in the work I was doing because everyone was approachable, wanted the best for you and gave you the chance to contribute. Things like the end of year functions, team coffees, tennis and social touch also gave us the chance to meet people in the firm in a social setting.

I feel very grateful to have joined the summer clerk program for the roll-out of the three-rotation system. This meant we joined a team from each sector of the firm (litigation, financial services and corporate services) giving us valuable exposure to a variety of legal work and team dynamics. Beyond our teams we also had frequent training sessions on fundamental skills such as legal writing, anatomy of M&A transactions, contractual drafting, proof reading, EQ and unconscious bias and client services. The summer clerk academy presentation also gave a purpose to understand and think innovatively about the business of a law firm.

What stood out for me was the time people at the firm invested in you. Despite having their own full plates, everyone in the firm was extremely giving with their time when delegating work, answering our many questions or going for coffee to tell us more about their practice area. “



**Jimmy
Fiso**

**Summer Clerk,
Wellington**

“My summer clerkship at Buddle Findlay was immersive and deeply rewarding. From the very start, I felt welcomed and trusted, which set the tone for a summer where learning happened naturally through being involved, asking questions, and having a go.

The work itself was varied, practical, and engaging. I spent time researching, drafting, sitting in on client meetings, supporting legal advice, and seeing matters progress in real time. Whether it was attending a mediation, contributing to work on a major infrastructure project, or helping shape advice for clients, I always felt like the work I was doing mattered. What made the experience even more valuable was how much time colleagues took to guide me and explain not just what to do, but why it mattered. That approach made the mahi feel purposeful and grounded in real outcomes.

Alongside the legal work, the culture at Buddle Findlay made a huge difference to the overall experience. It’s a place where people genuinely enjoy working together, and that shows in both the big moments and the small, everyday ones. Whether it was firm events, social sport, team catch-ups, or quick conversations over coffee (or in my case, hot chocolate) and biscuits, there was a real sense of generosity and curiosity. People took time to explain things, share their experiences, and make sure you felt supported without ever making it feel forced or like it was a burden.”

Get to know our recruitment team



Keri Johansson, Partner

Keri specialises in technology, media and privacy law. She helps develop and create, protect and commercialise their IP and bring digital and data-driven products and services to market. Keri also advises on significant procurement, as well as white-labelling and commercial partnerships, reseller models and licensing.

“I joined Buddle Findlay in 2006 as a summer clerk, and worked for the firm part-time during my studies before law clerking in 2009. I have stayed at the firm since then, and have been involved in graduate recruitment throughout as a buddy, interviewer, and now on the committee. Our graduate recruitment programme plays such an important role in making our firm the place it is, so it’s a privilege to be involved. The energy, intelligence and polish of the applicants each year is inspirational and gives me such confidence about the future of Buddle Findlay, and our legal profession.”



Luke Sizer, Partner

Luke specialises in commercial litigation and arbitration. He acts on a wide range of matters including major commercial disputes (including class actions), insolvency and credit, complex civil fraud matters, judicial review, regulatory issues and negligence. Luke has experience in a range of tribunals and courts, on both substantive and interlocutory matters, including applications for urgent and interim relief.

“I have been involved in graduate recruitment for the better part of the last 10 years. This year, along with Keri Johansson, I am co-chair of our graduate recruitment team in Auckland. I always enjoy meeting our very impressive candidates and helping them navigate the beginning of their careers in commercial law.”





David Allen, Partner

David specialises in all aspects of resource management, environmental and natural resources law. He is a leading adviser on complex and large scale infrastructure projects and has particular experience in wastewater and freshwater, roading and energy projects (having advised on geothermal, wind, hydro and thermal projects).

“I have been involved in summer clerk recruitment since 2009. I had a wonderful time as a summer clerk in another firm and really enjoy the recruitment process as our yearly influx of summer clerk enthusiasm. While recruitment is a demanding process, and we consider many people with exceptional CVs, the rewards of seeing someone shine through the process make it all worthwhile. To then see that person grow, be themselves and relish in the joys of commercial law is a real treat.”



Brannavan Gnanalingam, Special Counsel

Brannavan specialises in property and construction. Brannavan has been involved in large-scale property acquisitions and infrastructure projects, including negotiating large-scale development agreements and construction contracts (including NZS 3910, 3915 and 3916, and FIDIC Yellow Book).

“I’ve been involved in grad recruitment since 2019 and in the Committee since 2022. It has been great to meet so many outstanding students through being involved in this process. I summer clerked in 2006/7 and distinctly remember finding Buddle Findlay the most relaxed and enjoyable interview process. I want to ensure that I can assist in creating a similar vibe for students applying to be summer clerks – this process is as much about us putting our best foot forward as the students.”





Mark Odlin, Partner

Mark specialises in corporate and commercial law and advises on a range of financial, commercial and corporate law matters, including finance, company law and negotiating and preparing commercial agreements. He acts for a number of council-controlled trading organisations and has particular expertise in giving commercial and corporate advice in a local government context.

“I joined Buddle Findlay on my return from overseas in 2002. I had worked in Christchurch previously and had always thought that Buddle Findlay had a great culture, good clients and profile nationally and locally. 24 years later, I remain very much of the same opinion – I have very much enjoyed my time at Buddle Findlay and the interesting and challenging corporate commercial work that I have been involved in. I am lucky enough to be surrounded by a great team of diligent, thoughtful and decent lawyers and other staff who have grown (and stayed remarkably stable) over the years. I hope that all of these factors are also of interest to you. Our people and our culture are a precious taonga and a big focus of our recruitment process is finding people who will share and contribute to this.”



Anna Wishart, Special Counsel

Anna specialises in trust, private client, commercial and corporate law. Anna has particular expertise in trust law, succession planning and related private client law. Anna also acts on a wide range of transactions including negotiating and documenting corporate and commercial structures, as well as negotiating and preparing commercial agreements.

“I started as a summer clerk with Buddle Findlay quite a number of years ago now. I then came back as a law clerk when I had finished university, and I have been with Buddle Findlay ever since. I have been involved in a different aspect of graduate recruitment for a couple of years now and have really enjoyed the experience. I am constantly impressed at the applications that are submitted and only wish that we could offer more places. I am looking forward to learning about the applicants, as well as showing the applicants all the Buddle Findlay has to offer.”

Our national people and culture team



Lucy Ryan
Director



Fiona Tribe
National Manager



Margot Elworthy
Manager (Projects)



Olivia Gibbons
Manager



Emma Grace
Adviser



Cerys Armstrong
Coordinator



Jill McLisky
Talent Attraction Specialist



Still have questions?

Get in touch with our friendly people and culture team at recruitment@buddlefindlay.com who will be able to answer any queries you may have and guide you through your summer clerk journey.

“Buddle really is a place where people bring their whole selves, and the diversity of personalities I’ve been involved with over my time here has been a real privilege.”

MORGYN JAKOB, SUMMER CLERK

BUDDLE FINDLAY

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