

# LITIGATION, LEGISLATION & LLMS



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JULY 2025 NEWSLETTER

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# Confessions of an Intern: *Life in the Litigation Lane*



Hi everyone, I am Dior, a rising Year 3 LLB student.

If you applied for an internship in the litigation department expecting non-stop excitement and courtroom drama — brace yourself. When people hear “litigation,” they picture fiery objections, dramatic cross-examinations, and lawyers delivering passionate arguments. In reality? As an intern in the litigation department, I have had a front-row seat to the adrenaline-fueled world of contentious work — but it is less *Suits* and more strategy, structure, and (a lot of) screen time.

As an intern with no prior experience in the legal industry, I quickly discovered that a huge part of my time is spent doing legal research – a familiar task from our Legal Research and Writing module back in Year 1. In just three weeks, I have churned out more memorandums than I did over the course of law school.



Thanks to online databases, I can quickly scour judgments, read firm articles, and browse statutes until things start to click. Technology makes the hunt for answers much more streamlined.

Once the content is there, contentious work becomes a game of precision and clarity. I have learned that “brief” does not mean “quick to write” – it means spending hours refining your argument to be persuasive, concise and typo-free.

Sitting in on meetings, tagging along for team lunches, and listening to the lawyers game-plan their next move has shown me that contentious work is just as much about strategy and timing as it is about statutes and case law. I quickly realised that behind every written submission is a carefully considered tactical decision. These discussions are not just about legal principles; they are about reading the room, understanding the judge’s inclinations, and managing client expectations.

The highlight of any litigation internship? A day out of the office and into the courtroom — unless, of course, your session’s been shifted online to Zoom. So much for tech convenience, but you do lose out on that authentic courtroom buzz!

Decked out in crisp black and white, I stride into the State Courts building feeling like the intern version of Harvey Specter. While my mentors — calm, collected, and completely in control — stand to present their case, I am seated nearby, furiously typing, too terrified to take even a sip of water in case I miss something crucial. My job? Be the unofficial court reporter, catching every “Your Honour,” every line of argument, every eyebrow-raising objection.

Over multiple hearings (if you are lucky!), you soon realize that court is less like an episode of *Suits* and more like a delicate chess game — quiet strategy, razor-sharp wording, and the occasional dramatic pause that carries more weight than any shouted objection ever could.

“The key to writing a good memorandum? Answer the *damn* question — or be prepared to be questioned by a partner.”

Whether it is researching obscure points of procedural law or areas of law that I have never encountered in school, the trick is not to panic!

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In the world of litigation, from last-minute urgent filings to sudden breakthroughs, no two days are quite the same. Like any job though, the early days can feel repetitive and mundane — but with curiosity, persistence, and a little caffeine, you will find your footing. Once you do, you just might fall in love with the chaos.



— Dior

## GRWM: *First Tech Internship Update*



Hey Tech and Law enthusiasts, I've got a real treat for y'all this month with an internship role that touches on both aspects: AI governance.

Being a Year 2 Computer Science student in Technology Consulting, I envisioned my Summer Internship to be daily business meetings with clients under the company's credit card, or programming new cutting-edge technology to solve unique business needs.

So, imagine my surprise when I was assigned work from AI governance, setting up controls to ensure compliance with regulations both baseline and international.

These controls were part of a framework for AI solutions we would create for clients. It covers regulations concerning accountability, data integrity, transparency, privacy, security, explainability, fairness, reliability, safety, and even sustainability. It also considers the country where the AI system will be deployed, because areas like Korea have their South Korea AI Basic Act, and Europe has their EU AI Act—all of which need to be addressed before going to market.

While this was not what I expected to do, it certainly taught me new perspectives towards launching an AI solution for a business.

First and foremost, defining controls and policies helps to clearly communicate requirements with other stakeholders,

while also serving as a "source of truth" whenever needing to explain certain policies or procedures.

This is quite like an Extreme Programming (XP) practice of test-driven development, whereby the use-case tests are written first, which the code must then pass. These two share the best practice of establishing requirements and using the intended outcome to justify the initial actions, indirectly aligning communications between different members of the team.

The second perspective I learned was the trade-off between regulatory compliance and usability. In a perfect world, every AI product would meet the strictest legal requirements. But in reality, with regulations that push for Explainable AI (XAI) and transparency, a product's usability may be affected. For instance, the EU AI Act introduces stricter guardrails for AI systems deployed in the region, making developers hesitant to enter the EU market due to potential compliance risks.

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When it comes to user interactions, many regulations mandate informing users whenever AI is involved. That means users may have to continuously accept privacy agreements explaining how their data is being collected and used, that they are interacting with an AI system, and see visible watermarks on all AI-generated content. In some cases, there may even be mandatory education sessions required before accessing the AI product, just to ensure users understand the risks such as inaccuracies in AI-generated output or the limitations of the system.

As you can see, too many safeguards can either limit the product's accessible market or drive users away due to the overwhelming amount of information and friction introduced before they even begin using the product. While compliance is essential to protect users from malicious AI practices, it may sometimes lead to sacrificing usability, especially when regulations haven't yet caught up with the pace of emerging technology. That's why it's important to strike a balance between regulatory adherence and user experience, to ensure we don't rob potential users of the convenience and value AI can offer.

Lastly, coming into this internship and networking with people in the industry taught me the importance of building trust within the organisation. And no, I'm not talking about knowing who to gossip with about office drama, or who's best at keeping secrets or spilling the tea. I'm talking about the trust others place in you when assigning work.

In consulting, which is a client-facing role, managers and associates are constantly building teams of individuals they know they can rely on; people with strong work ethic who contribute to progress rather than hold it back. And the best way to judge that? It's through your work. Not just from what's listed on your portfolio, but from personal accounts of how you've worked with their colleagues before.

So how do you build that trust? Just do more work! Take on unfamiliar tasks with an open mind. For example, even though AI governance wasn't something I was originally excited about, being in SMU LIT inspired me to give it a shot and I've gained deeper insights into how to build compliant AI solutions that actually benefit users. Instead of brushing something off as "not my domain," I encourage you to find value in learning as much as possible. Ask questions, embrace whatever task comes your way, and connect with your colleagues to build real rapport.

“ Make the most out of your internship time. Now go out there and slay kings and queens. ”



— Daniel

## Is it AI? *Or just another human...*

Builder.ai marketed itself as a revolutionary platform that could automate the creation of mobile apps using AI, making development accessible to literally everyone. Backed by high-profile investors like Microsoft and the Qatar Investment Authority, the company raised nearly half a billion dollars in funding. But when the company filed for bankruptcy, revelations followed: despite its claim of using AI to build apps, Builder.ai had actually outsourced the development work to 700 Indian software engineers.

The dramatic fall of Builder.ai, a company once hailed as the future of no-code app development, offers a critical lesson in the importance of AI system governance. As AI solutions become more embedded in everyday business offerings, it is no longer acceptable to rely on vague marketing promises or "black box" claims. Companies must be transparent about where and how AI is actually being used.

<https://www.benzinga.com/news/25/05/45624988/builder-ais-shocking-450m-fall-microsoft-and-qia-backed-no-code-ai-darling-files-for-bankruptcy-after-creditor-seizure>

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# WhatsApp backs Apple in its legal row with the UK



Apple went to the courts after receiving a notice from the UK Home Office demanding access to its global customers' data for national security purposes. Additionally, WhatsApp has publicly supported Apple in its legal fight.

Apple applies end-to-end encryption to files, meaning it currently has no way to provide government authorities with access to this data even if requested. This encryption mechanism not only protects users' privacy but also prevents exploitation by malicious actors. In its defence, the Home Office publicly stated that it has robust safeguards and independent oversight to protect privacy, and that such data would only be accessed in exceptional cases.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgmjrn42wdwo>

# Denmark on tackling deepfakes

Countries are starting to crack down on deepfakes—realistic fake videos and images created with artificial intelligence. In Denmark, lawmakers have proposed giving people copyright over their own faces and voices. This would let individuals demand that platforms remove deepfake content and allow them to claim compensation if their likeness is misused. The proposal still makes room for satire and parody but aims to curb harassment and misinformation. In the United States, the Take It Down Act became law in May. It makes it illegal to share non-consensual deepfake pornography and requires websites to remove such content within 48 hours of a complaint. Supporters see these laws as an important step to protect privacy and dignity online, while critics worry they could limit free expression or prove difficult to enforce.

[https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jun/27/deepfakes-denmark-copyright-law-artificial-intelligence?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jun/27/deepfakes-denmark-copyright-law-artificial-intelligence?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



# Events Bite

On 20th to 22nd June, a team of five from SMU LIT participated in hack\_the\_law 2025 LLM X LAW hackathon organised by Kings College's Kings E-Lab in collaboration with Stanford University CodeX at the University of Cambridge. We are proud to announced that the team and their solution, Lit Legal Mind (LLM), were named Grand Finalists and winner of the Legora problem challenge. Well done and congratulations!



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