



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA
NEW ZEALAND

Victoria University of Wellington obtains Ph.D. in legal automation solutions



Victoria University is well known for its programmes in law, the humanities, and some scientific disciplines, and offers a broad range of other courses. They have three campuses across Wellington city, catering to approximately 23,000 students from New Zealand and around the world.

Client

[Victoria University of Wellington](#), public research university located in Wellington, New Zealand.

Challenge

The University engages in a large number of contracts and agreements. The legal team identified that manual processes can present challenges such as administrative burdens, inefficiencies, and a high volume of contracts requiring legal review. The legal team comprises six members serving a university of approximately 3,000 staff.

Solution

LawHawk has partnered with Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) since 2020 to address these challenges. LawHawk introduced automation solutions for various agreements, including independent contractor agreements, work placement agreements, and confidentiality agreements. These self-service solutions enable relevant individuals within the University to generate agreements via a form in SharePoint, significantly reducing manual effort and expediting the process.

The difficult undergraduate years

Due to the sheer volume and complexity of contracts and agreements requiring their attention, the six people staffing VUW's Legal department were facing an increasing demand for contract review. "We're servicing over 3,000 university staff," explains Legal Operations Manager Neha Goyal. "We have a large volume of contracts that the University engages in. Some of these can be quite complex. Others can be high in volume with stringent deadlines and complex workflows, particularly when there might be tri-party agreements."

About LawHawk

LawHawk's advanced legal automation, with its built-in real-time training and compliance, allows anyone to draft highly customised documents and complete other legal processes in minutes rather than hours and at very low cost.

Document drafts will be better quality, more consistent and compliant with key requirements. With a unique combination of legal and automation expertise, LawHawk is committed to revolutionising how high quality and consistent legal and procurement documents are generated, and setting new standards for what is possible.

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"LawHawk are also proactive. When they're presented with an idea or a pain point, they're able to provide a practical solution, using language that is easily understandable by people who may not be so good with technology"

- Neha Goyal, Legal Operations Manager, Victoria University of Wellington

The team recognised the need for innovative solutions to streamline their operations and enhance efficiency, paving the way for their partnership with LawHawk.

Graduating from analogue to digital

In 2020, LawHawk implemented automation solutions for a teaching contract, memorandum of understanding and confidentiality agreement. These solutions are designed for self-service, allowing individuals within the University to generate their own agreements through a user-friendly form on SharePoint. After inputting the necessary information, users receive their customised contract document via email.

Building upon the initial successes, LawHawk continued to deliver automation solutions for a diverse range of contracts and agreements. From independent contractor agreements to research subcontracts and work placement agreements, LawHawk's solutions addressed specific needs within the University's legal operations, enhancing efficiency and productivity across various departments.

"We've automated workflows that feed into our various systems, whether that's through SharePoint or a spreadsheet," Neha explains. "We've also created an end-to-end automation solution by integrating some of our agreements with digital signing."

By engaging with the University's legal team in test groups, gathering feedback, and providing ongoing support, LawHawk made sure that the solutions were tailored to the University's unique requirements and effectively integrated into existing workflows.

Benefits of automation not purely academic

Collaboration with VUW has yielded tangible results. Some of the benefits they're seeing include:

- **Time savings** - by implementing automation solutions for various high use agreements, including teaching contracts, memorandums of understanding, and confidentiality agreements, LawHawk has significantly reduced the time spent on contract generation and administration. The self-service nature of these solutions allowed users to generate customised agreements swiftly, eliminating the need for manual intervention and expediting the process.
- **Operational efficiency** - users expressed satisfaction with the ease of use and efficiency of the solutions LawHawk has provided, highlighting their positive impact on day-to-day operations. The automation of contract workflows minimised delays and errors, allowing the legal team to focus on strategic initiatives and high-value tasks.
- **Risk mitigation** - by ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements and standardising contract templates, VUW has minimised legal risks and enhanced overall governance.

The tailored solutions have met with approval from Neha's colleagues. Here's some of the feedback she's received:

About Work Placements: "We have processed a lot of agreements over the year. The solution was adapted for us so we could send out many contracts at once, which has cut times by at least half."



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"[LawHawk] have been quite instrumental in creating a legal operations network and introducing people together and allowing various clients to speak to each other."

- Neha Goyal, Legal Operations Manager, Victoria University of Wellington

About Teaching Contracts: "Use of the automated contracting forms has had a huge impact on our operations over the past four years we have been using the LawHawk-designed forms. Using the online contract template has allowed us to gain efficiencies and cost savings in terms of staff time. What previously took hours now takes minutes. While we haven't done any major analysis, I would say we probably save the equivalent of .25 FTE per annum which is significant. It has improved the consistency and quality of our documents as users access a clean form online rather than using previous contracts, which may contain errors that continue to be carried through. Updating templates is easy - as things change, the documents change with the times."

Studying together for better overall outcomes

When asked to describe what it's been like working with the LawHawk team, Neha had only good things to say. "The user experience has been a hundred percent amazing," she says. "They're solution-driven and so good with taking on feedback. Almost everyone has said they've found the solutions really easy to use. LawHawk are also very proactive. When they're presented with an idea or a pain point, they're able to provide a practical solution, using language that is easily understandable by people who may not be so good with technology. They're also really proactive with suggesting ideas and alternatives they may have come across in another area. They have been quite instrumental in creating a legal operations network and introducing people together and allowing various clients to speak to each other."

It must be said that this positive feedback goes both ways – the team at LawHawk has found VUW's Legal Operations team to be very proactive as well. They are focused on how to improve the way that their department delivers

legal services to the University, and they have been great to work with in terms of finding opportunities for improvement and getting things moving.

Courses for future success

The teams at LawHawk and VUW are committed to building upon the success of their collaboration and exploring new opportunities for innovation and improvement, such as:

Refining existing solutions to adapt to VUW's changing needs and the evolving technology landscape.

Exploring additional contracts and agreements that can benefit from automation and leveraging feedback from users of existing automated solutions to turbocharge their design and implementation.

LawHawk and VUW are currently working on several new initiatives. For most of these, LawHawk have been able to knock up proof of concepts very quickly to show what might be possible, and help to design the right solution and get buy-in. "It's an on-going partnership," Neha explains. "Whenever new contracts pop up that we think would be good to automate, we contact LawHawk and scope it out. And we've got quite a few already on the go."

The LawHawk solutions have propelled Victoria University of Wellington forward, enabling the Legal team to navigate contract management with ease and efficiency. As the partnership between LawHawk and Victoria University continues to evolve, the focus remains on delivering impactful solutions that make a real difference to the university's legal operations.

The work LawHawk has done with Victoria University of Wellington is just one of many success stories. There are more that are well worth a read [here](#).



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