

## **What can I do with my degree in International and Business Law, IBL?**

An AUCA student studying in the IBL department often finds himself wondering what his future will look like after graduation, and it is often that he has a minimal understanding of what waits for him after his four years of study. A student that has been studying to be a lawyer could be easily confused by the many choices he is offered once he graduates, and it is necessary to see which choices are best for him, and to have a better understanding of what job opportunities are more beneficial, which branch of legal professions is fitting for his knowledge and experience. In this career exploration guide, the various options for the graduating IBL student will be listed, and presented according to their respective strengths and weaknesses, benefits and future potential. The goal is for the student to better orient himself, and in future, be able to plan out his career advancement.

There are many employment opportunities at the local, regional, and international levels. However, if we were to consider that the AUCA student has no work experience, his options are narrowed down. His first option would be to work as a lawyer in a law firm, such as the TDM LLC law firm and the Legal Clinic Adilet public foundation, or as a legal consultant in a financial credit company, an example being the “Kompanion” microcredit company, or the “Pervaya” financial credit company. These types of jobs only require one or two years of work experience at the most, sometimes they do not require any work experience. The main skills required are the ability to provide a qualified legal opinion on a legal matter or a contract and the ability to draft a legal agreement or contract. When considering the IBL graduate, it is important to understand that the AUCA graduate must have a thorough knowledge of various branches of law at the end of his four-year studies. If we were to take the example of working in a law firm, we will see that often clients will come and make inquiries about legal matters related to civil law or criminal law. The lawyer must understand the main problem concerning the legal matter presented to him, and offer viable solutions. In the case of a financial credit company, we will see the lawyer working with, for example, tax law, commercial law, and finance law cases. What divides the two types of jobs is the nature of the work it entails: a commercial or noncommercial nature.

Concerning the noncommercial work nature, it is possible for the AUCA IBL graduate to find work with the Ministry of Justice, the Constitutional Chamber, or the General Prosecutor's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic. For example, the student could be skilled in drafting and reviewing legal memoranda, a skill that is highly valued in the International Department of the Constitutional Chamber, or he could work as a state notary in the notary publics of the Ministry of Justice. An emphasis is placed on knowledge of local laws and legal documents, such as the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, Codes and etc.

Further on, we can see that banks will start hiring lawyers, and the work experience is a bit heightened, as it constitutes a minimum of two to three years (though it varies greatly in some cases, banks may take on legal interns or legal consultants without work experience). The graduate can become a commercial bank lawyer, either working independently as a lawyer working for the bank (Bakai Bank JSC, KICB CJSC), or working with the legal department of that bank (in the case of Demir Bank CJSC). In either case, a strong focus is placed on the lawyer's ability to adequately review agreements and their requirements/clauses through knowledge of appropriate legal documents. For example, commercial firms often seek to hire contract specialist lawyers for this very purpose, so that they can review legal documents and

provide legal advice to the firm. The commercial sphere also includes conducting negotiations with companies, individuals regarding draft agreements, which lawyers working for banks (commercial bank lawyers) or other commercial organizations are expected to know and be experienced with.

If the graduate will possess at least four years of work experience in the legal sphere, he will find many opportunities to work at the regional or international level. For example, the United Nations Development Programme often hire legal experts and specialists on legal questions, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization hire national legal consultants for different areas related to their work activities, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also seeks legal experts. Their work is unique, as an additional requirement is the lawyer's close cooperation and liaison with state bodies, civil society, and international organizations. Other responsibilities are noted, such as field visits and meeting attendance and organization between members. Instead of meeting clients and reviewing their matters, the graduate will review questions related to the objectives of the organization, and will have to show his own initiative in regards to organizational matters. Other international organizations are the World Bank Mission in the Kyrgyz Republic, International Center for Not-for-profit Law and the International Business Council, which hire legal experts and assistants. Another option for the graduate is to find work as a senior lawyer in a law firm, such as Kalikova & Partners, Joldoshev & Partners, or El Group Consulting Firm. They are more specific when it comes to job candidates, as Kalikova & Partners seeks to hire lawyers, though they evaluate them based on a probation period that lasts two to three months, and Joldoshev & Partners hires lawyers specialized in intellectual property laws related to corporative and banking law. These jobs require that the lawyer work with boards of directors, organize meetings with shareholders (in the case of El Group), and provide legal consultation on higher level.

The AUCA graduate is very unique, and a student graduating from the IBL department should know that he has a lot of options for his future and should choose his path carefully, being aware of the risks and benefits that present themselves to him. However, with his knowledge and experience, he should be able to navigate his way through the career ladder and reach the top. In short, the main traits and qualities that he will need consist of stress management and being calm and collected under pressure. Moreover, a strong sense of responsibility concerning his duties is needed, and the ability to effectively work in a group, good communication skills.