

Sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination in the workplace

Our vision

Queensland Law Society is committed to leading the profession towards healthy, safe and sustainable workplaces.¹

The issue

Bullying, discrimination and sexual harassment of any kind are unacceptable, inexcusable and unethical workplace behaviours. It is recognised that workplace harassment and bullying of any nature exists in many forms.

These issues are exacerbated by business cultures that are not receptive or open to recognising and dealing with these behaviours appropriately as they arise. Any type of behaviour that creates a hostile working environment in the legal profession, or permits such an environment to continue, has negative consequences on the individuals, organisations, the profession and ultimately the community.

Our commitment

QLS is committed to addressing the issue of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination in the legal profession by:

- supporting the profession to foster a culture of respect, integrity and inclusion
- developing better support for victims of inappropriate workplace behaviours in the profession
- combatting the stigma of reporting and any form of retribution or disadvantage for doing so
- providing better education for our profession on achieving respectful and inclusive workplaces
- training leaders to create workplace cultures that are healthy, safe and sustainable.

¹ *Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules 2012*, rr 3, 4.1.3, 42.

Our response

In consultation with both our Wellbeing Working Group and the Equity and Diversity Committee, the Society will undertake the following steps by the end of 2019, to address the issue of workplace bullying and sexual harassment in the legal profession:

Awareness

- Publish QLS CEO *Proctor* article (Completed)
- Publish QLS CEO blog (Completed)
- Publish QLS position statement on workplace sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination (This Position Statement)

Education

- Launch Diversity and inclusion webpage
- Create an information session for the profession on inappropriate workplace behaviours to better understand and deal with these issues (livecast)
- Offer Mental Health First Aid training to members within legal profession
- Incorporate relevant training into the 2019 Practice Management Course

Ongoing Support

- Train designated QLS Senior Counsellors to take calls on these issues
- Launch a Support Line to assist practitioners dealing with inappropriate workplace behaviours

2019 Focus Areas

- Facilitate a Symposium 2019 panel discussion on achieving respectful and inclusive workplaces
- Develop a comprehensive education syllabus on workplace behaviours for the legal profession
- Appoint appropriate members who have specific expertise in workplace and employment law to become QLS Senior Counsellors to assist in providing confidential guidance
- Appoint a QLS organisational culture and support officer
- Develop sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination compliance training for practitioners
- Develop unconscious bias training for practitioners



Rolf Moses
Chief Executive Officer

November 2018



Ken Taylor
President

November 2018

[Further Resources qls.com.au/diversityandinclusion](https://qls.com.au/diversityandinclusion)