

HERE FOR OUR MEMBERS

Consistent with its purpose of supporting members to have more satisfying, balanced and rewarding legal careers and businesses, the Society is committed to understanding and meeting members' needs, wherever they practise in Queensland.

Part of this commitment is offering quality professional development opportunities across a variety of mediums, including webinars, which can be accessed anywhere, anytime. Complementary to this offering is the Society's facilitation and promotion of member opportunities to come together and build supportive networks at Society events throughout Queensland. The Society has conducted numerous visits throughout the state via the Practice Support Consultancy Service which have aligned with regional professional development events 'the Roadshows' in Townsville, Bundaberg and Toowoomba.

We are planning more frequent and targeted localised engagement in 2018 following feedback from a survey of our regional members. The aim is to provide support when and where members need it, to ensure they can thrive in the increasingly complex legal environment. Linked with this are member-only benefits such as access to the Supreme Court online library, the delayed judgements enquiry service, Law Care, the QLS Ethics Centre and the Practice Support Consultancy Service.

In 2018, a major focus will be an education campaign focused on raising awareness of all QLS membership benefits to members and potential members.

Offering value to our members continues to be a key priority and focus. Engagement via the QLS Policy Committees and, internally, via the QLS Ethics Centre and Advocacy teams, has enabled the Society to keep a finger on the pulse in terms of addressing legal developments via member updates and the provision of training options. Further, membership committees (Early Career Lawyers, Government Lawyers and the newly established In-house Counsel) have provided an additional avenue when reaching out to members. We will continue to engage openly with members and to act on their feedback in the coming year.

Membership engagement continues to be strong, demonstrated not only by the growth in full member numbers, but also the motivation of our members to serve on QLS committees, speak at events and act as senior counsellors. Pleasingly, early career lawyers and students are actively engaging with the profession and the Society, the latter group via attendance at the annual QLS Legal Careers Expo.

In 2018, a major focus will be an education campaign focused on raising awareness of all the benefits of membership

Committee chairs

Working group	Chair
Early Career Lawyers	Aron Gibbs, Clayton Utz
Government Lawyers	Andrew Harris, Office of Industrial Relations, Queensland Treasury
In-house Counsel	Philip Ware, Stanwell Corporation

LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PROFESSION

The Learning and Professional Development (L&PD) team’s commitment is to continue to offer high quality continuing professional development (CPD) events to all legal practitioners, with particular benefits for members of the Society, to both update them on emerging legal issues and educate them on the core areas of practice management. The team developed content across a range of practice areas and locations, and engaged with the QLS Ethics and Practice Support Consultancy service, the QLS policy committees and the Advocacy team to ensure emerging legal issues are addressed.

Professional development snapshot

During the 2016-17 financial year QLS delivered 72 professional development events. Highlights included five half-day Essentials workshops, eight half-day Masterclasses, one cybersecurity panel discussion, 26 online webinars, 10 conferences held in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, regional events in Toowoomba and Bundaberg, a half-day BCIPA Intensive and a half-day Insolvency Intensive. Symposium 2017 attracted 485 delegates which was consistent with last year’s figures. Practitioners also had the opportunity to access recordings of webinars and a selection of conference DVDs if unable to attend on the day.

Regional events

In consultation with the local district law associations, our targeted regional initiatives saw the launch of QLS roadshows into the regions. The Bundaberg Roadshow, held in February 2017, was very well received by regional members, as were the other regional one-day events held in Toowoomba and the Gold Coast.

Complimentary CPD events

This year we offered members four complimentary events comprising 6.5 CPD points. These events included the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation lecture, the Leading Wellbeing in the Legal Profession breakfast, a half-day Open Day and a webinar on Capital Gains Tax Withholding Tax.

In 2017-18 we plan to expand the number of complimentary CPD events for members ensuring all members, regardless of physical location, can access content.

Webinars

Our webinars ensure all practitioners have access to quality CPD from the convenience of their desks or mobile devices. We delivered 26 webinars during 2016-17, an increase of six on the 20 offered last year. It is pleasing to see that practitioners from across regional Queensland are accessing CPD via this online channel. There is increasing interest in post-event sales, with close to 400 post-event purchases in the year to 30 June 2017.

Legal career development programs

Practice Management Course

The Practice Management Course (PMC) is mandatory for solicitors seeking to become a law practice principal and the QLS PMC remains the course of choice for the overwhelming majority of aspiring principles. A total of 217 practitioners completed the course during the 2016-17 financial year.

QLS initiated significant improvements to maintain the high standard of legal services the community deserves. Standards for assessment have been made consistent across approved providers to ensure all participants complete the PMC with an assured level of competency in the business of running a legal practice.

There has been a trend towards an increased number of early career lawyers undertaking the PMC and QLS has worked to support them in this career transition. This trend, possibly driven by economic factors, was borne out by a higher demand for the sole to small practice PMC over the past year compared to the medium to large focus PMC.

Committee chairs

Committee	Chair
Continuing Professional Development	Rachael Miller, Quinlan Miller & Treston Lawyers
Practice Management Course	Bill Potts, Potts Lawyers

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our event presenters, chairs, conference planning committee members, PMC committee members and accredited specialist committee members for their time, expertise and commitment to ensuring our PMC courses, CPD events and Specialist Accreditation program continue to be a success.

Specialist Accreditation

More than 60 candidates entered the Family Law, Succession Law and Property Law 2017 programs. Refinement and improvement of the governing rules is ongoing, with committees and the Specialist Accreditation Board continuing to develop the program to meet the needs of an evolving profession. A particular focus for the upcoming year is the promotion of the value of engaging an accredited specialist to the community and major consumers of legal services.

QLS thanks the chairs and members of the three Specialist Accreditation programs that ran in 2017.

Committee chairs

Committee	Chair
Family Law	Bruce Dodd , Jones McCarthy Lawyers
Property Law	Anthony Boge , HWL Ebsworth
Succession Law	Angela Cornford-Scott , Cornford-Scott Lawyers Pty Ltd

Specialist Accreditation Board members

Name	Firm
Peter Jolly (C)	Thynne & Macartney
Katharine Atkins	Jones Mitchell Lawyers
Rick Bigwood	The University of Queensland
Julie Cameron	Corrs Chambers Westgarth
Glen Cranny	Gilshenan & Luton Legal Practice
Neil Henderson	Aust Municipal, Admin, Clerical & Services Union
Jennifer Hetherington	Hetherington Legal
Michael Klatt	Mullins Lawyers
Christine Smyth	Robbins Watson Solicitors

RECOGNISING OUR MEMBERS

Queensland Law Society recognises the work and contributions of solicitors in our community and takes pride each year in honouring members who have made their mark and who serve as role models for others.

Legal Profession Dinner and Awards



The President's Medal

Presented at the Legal Profession Dinner and Awards, our annual President's Medal is awarded in the spirit of Queensland's rich legal tradition, recognising a commitment to justice, leadership and the profession. In 2017 the medal was awarded to Megan Mahon of Mahon Legal, who remains the youngest solicitor ever elected as QLS president. Ms Mahon is a member of the Practitioner Panel of QCAT, a Director of the Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation, an Executive Director (and past Director) of the Law Council of Australia, a member of Griffith University's Innocence Project Advisory Board, a Notary Public, and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law.

Other awards

Rod Hodgson, State Managing Principal of Maurice Blackburn, was awarded the 2017 Outstanding Achievement Award. Two new awards were introduced; the Innovation in Law Award which was presented to Sarah Roach of Helix Legal; and the inaugural Community Legal Centre Member of the Year Award which was presented to Gold Coast solicitor Ross Lee of the Robina Community Legal Centre.

50-year pin recipients in 2016-17

Recipient	Firm
Tony Goodwin	Tony Goodwin & Company
Stuart Bale	A.W. Bale & Son
Edward Kann	ClarkeKann
John Ker	de Groot's Wills & Estate Lawyers
Ronald Lawson	Ron Lawson Lawyer
Michael Meadows	K&L Gates
Gino Milani	Deacon & Milani
John Nagel	John Nagel & Co.
John Gallagher	Gall Standfield & Smith
Brian Ward	Creevey Russel Lawyers
Frank Crawford	Crawford Law
William Delaney	Delaney & Delaney



QLS President **Christine Smyth** with 2017 President's Medal Award recipient **Megan Mahon**



Rod Hodgson 2017 Outstanding Achievement Award recipient with QLS President **Christine Smyth**



Sarah Roach Innovation in Law Award recipient with QLS President **Christine Smyth**



Ross Lee Community Legal Centre Member of the Year Award recipient with QLS President **Christine Smyth**

The Agnes McWhinney Award

Our Agnes McWhinney Award, named for Queensland’s first admitted female solicitor, recognises the contributions of outstanding women in the legal profession. In 2016 the award recognised Margaret McNamara, partner at Thynne + Macartney who leads the firm’s wills and estates team, and has been a QLS Accredited Specialist (succession law) since 2002.

Also recognised were Michelle Lember of Lember and Williams Lawyers and Aimee McVeigh of Disability Law Queensland, who both received 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Outstanding Achievement Awards.



Margaret McNamara 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Award winner with QLS President **Bill Potts**



Michelle Lember 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Outstanding Achievement Award winner with QLS President **Bill Potts**



Aimee McVeigh 2016 QLS Agnes McWhinney Outstanding Achievement Award winner with QLS President **Bill Potts**

Equity and Diversity Awards

Our Equity and Diversity Awards celebrate practices that promote equity in the profession, engage in inclusive and equitable workplace practices, and embrace workplace diversity in a meaningful way. The awards recognise firms in two categories and in 2017 Cooper Grace Ward Lawyers took the gong for the Large Legal Practice Award, with Miller Harris Lawyers again recognised as leaders in the Small Legal Practice category. As the winner in both 2016 and 2017, Cairns-based firm Miller Harris Lawyers continues to strive for an equitable and diverse work environment with benchmark-setting policies, processes and facilities, and a recruitment program that actively promotes diversity.

The 2016-17 financial year saw the introduction of the President’s Equity Advocate Award, which recognises and celebrates efforts to promote and foster diversity within the legal profession, whether in private practice, a government agency or as part of wider community engagement, or volunteer work.

The award was presented to the President of the Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland, Linda Ryle, a tireless advocate for the promotion of Indigenous lawyers in Queensland. Her desire to amplify the voices and perspectives of Indigenous women has been a lifelong commitment, and she has been professionally engaged in the area of Indigenous affairs since the late 1990s.



Left to right: Miller Harris Lawyers Partner **Melissa Nielsen** (Small Legal Practice Award), Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland President **Linda Ryle** (QLS President’s Equity Advocate Award), QLS President **Christine Smyth**, Cooper Grace Ward People and Culture Director **Neil Baker** and CEO **Janet Wilson** (Large Legal Practice Award).

OUR PUBLICATIONS

Queensland Law Society members have ready access to legal news and information with the weekly electronic newsletter, *QLS Update*, and each month the iconic *Proctor* magazine in both hardcopy and digital formats. In 2016-17 these publications were joined by LawTalk, the Society's venture into the blogosphere which offers insightful articles ranging from reasoned opinion pieces to print-out-and-study guides with practical information for members from all practice areas.

Proctor

Proctor made a strong start to 2016-17, with its July 2016 issue featuring a cover story on women in the law and how the numbers leaving the profession impacts the overall gender balance. Significantly, the article utilised new in-house research based on analysis of our historical practising certificate data.

With articles in the same edition covering the law applying to the use of drones and a case note on a court ordering chemotherapy for a child, *Proctor* set the tone for a year in which it maintained its topical and informative blend of key legal news and information. It profiled developments in areas as diverse as migration law, agribusiness, succession law, foreign investment, business law, leasing, employer liability, fraud, taxation, surrogacy and many more.

During the financial year, *Proctor* built on its reputation as the magazine for Queensland's legal profession, a claim borne out by the stats – by 31 March 2017, *Proctor's* audited print circulation had grown to 10,121 while its digital circulation more than doubled over the previous year with 850 readers accessing *Proctor* digitally*.

As the generational shift from hardcopy to digital continues, *Proctor* is examining how best to evolve further from the costly print-and-mail process to its more economical, sustainable and timely online presence.

*Source: Audited Media Association of Australia

LawTalk

In 2016-17, the Society unveiled a completely new online presence – LawTalk – a blog (medium.com/qldlawsociety) which provides an attractive and engaging experience for visitors who can access mid-length articles ranging from opinion pieces to guides featuring practical wisdom.

As a new venture, LawTalk had a 'soft' launch to enable us to learn and understand how the Society can best perform in the blogosphere, with articles restricted mainly to staff writers and a careful vetting process for all material.

Our presence has already grown substantially, with some 23 carefully chosen pieces posted during the year. Readers are invited to visit the blog and watch as it grows.

QLS Update

Our weekly e-zine remains a must-read for many in the legal profession and beyond, with corporate governance executives among those seeking a regular update on legislative changes and legal news.

QLS Update's mix of professional information, Society news and events, ethical guidance and feature articles is delivered to some 12,486 inboxes (as at 30 June), an increase of 338 on the previous year.

Ethical news is always popular, and the weekly QLS President's update which was introduced at the beginning of this calendar year invariably ranks among the most-read items.

The key measurement statistic for digital newsletters, the 'open rate', remained steady at a noteworthy 38.95% for the last quarter of 2016-17, a marginal increase on the previous year. The figure is remarkable, as the average open rate for e-zines in the not-for-profit sector is about 21.18%, having dropped almost 4% from the previous year.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Queensland Law Society actively engages with university students on their pathway to a career in law, including recent graduates undertaking further legal training while working in firms across the state. Student membership helps to smoothly transition students into the legal profession by providing access to professional networks, career and regulatory advice, study resources and training.

Student membership and interaction

Students of law are the future of our profession, and the Society was pleased to welcome 104 new student members in 2016-17. Students have become increasingly involved with QLS, particularly engaging with our conference and seminar offerings. Students from Central Queensland University gained CV development advice and valuable networking opportunities at the 2017 Bundaberg Roadshow while 20 Bond University students benefitted from networking with members at QLS Gold Coast Symposium 2017.

QLS Legal Careers Expo, our flagship student engagement event, is the leading Queensland law graduate recruitment event. Now in its 11th year, the event has gained a national reputation for its quality programming and professional delivery. Keenly anticipated by students and firms alike, more than 900 students registered to be part of the 2017 event which showcased 36 leading employers. The event featured a Resume-Rescue clinic for students to receive one-on-one CV advice, as well as a parallel program of development seminars on topics such as avoiding application disasters and expanding legal career horizons.

During 2017 QLS initiated tailored university presentations on-campus to help demystify the admission process and explore what it means to be a practising solicitor in Queensland. The sessions gave students the opportunity to ask questions and increase their understanding of the profession in a safe and open forum that promoted inclusivity, social mobility and wider participation in the profession.

Links with academe

We continued to work with university law schools and career development counsellors to promote quality legal training. We invited Faculty of Law representatives from University of Queensland, QUT, Griffith University and Bond University to join the HR Advisor Interfirm Group to promote best practice in student and graduate engagement, and foster strong linkages between universities and the profession.

We also continued to support Queensland universities for the wider benefit of the profession. At QUT, Shelley Kolstad was the 2017 recipient of the QLS Prize for her achievement in the undergraduate unit *Ethics and the Legal Profession*, and we continued our in-kind support of the W. A. Lee Equity Lecture. At University of Queensland we supported, through sponsorship, the TC Beirne School of Law's Annual David F. Jackson Mooting Dinner celebrating students who participate in mooting and legal skills competitions. We also supported the school's Justice and the Law Society's Pandora's Box Annual Professional Breakfast.

