

Good law  
Good lawyers  
Public good

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

---

**We acknowledge the First Nations peoples  
as the original inhabitants of Australia.**

**We recognise, respect and celebrate  
the cultural distinctions of First Nations  
peoples and value their rich and positive  
contribution to not only Queensland but  
also to the broader Australian society.**

---

---

## About this report

Queensland Law Society's 2019-20 Annual Report presents our corporate performance information for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

This report records our activities, achievements and challenges for the 2019-20 financial year and evaluates them against our strategic and corporate planning goals and targets. It also provides a summary of our corporate performance, our planning around the next strategic plan, and priorities for initiatives in 2020-21 and beyond.

2019-20 has been a year of significant achievement amid challenging times for QLS. Across our organisation, we have delivered on some of QLS's long-held goals, implemented significant projects and realised bold plans as an effective and cohesive team. We are excited to share our progress here.

QLS is incorporated under the *Legal Profession Act 2007* and is defined as a statutory body under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*. The QLS Council is responsible for overseeing the Society's governance and setting the strategic direction.

QLS's Annual Report complies with Queensland Government reporting requirements. This report aligns with QLS's current operational plan and corporate performance against our strategic focus areas of Advocate, Educate, Connect, Guide, Protect, Culture, Sustain and Improve.

## Our commitment to accessibility

This Annual Report can be accessed at [qls.com.au/annual-reports](https://qls.com.au/annual-reports), via the Queensland Parliament website or in print form by contacting us (see below).

Our website [qls.com.au](https://qls.com.au) also contains the required reporting in relation to the Council of Queensland Law Society as a government body. Recent Annual Reports can be accessed via our website.

Please contact us if you require assistance in understanding the Annual Report or for referral to interpreter services. Our open data reports can be accessed via [data.qld.gov.au](https://data.qld.gov.au).

## Feedback

If you have feedback or questions about content in this Annual report, please contact:

Law Society House,  
179 Ann Street Brisbane Qld 4000

1300 367 757

[info@qls.com.au](mailto:info@qls.com.au)

---

ISSN: 2205-4820

© Queensland Law Society Incorporated

---

7 September 2020

The Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice  
Leader of the House  
1 William Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Attorney

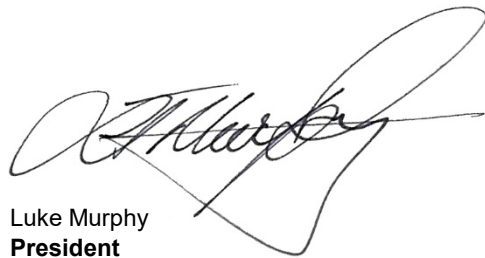
I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Annual Report 2019-20 and financial statements for Queensland Law Society.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*; and
- the detailed requirements set out in the Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found on pages 201-202 of this document.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Murphy', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Luke Murphy  
**President**

Email: [president@qls.com.au](mailto:president@qls.com.au)

---

# Table of contents

<b>About this report</b>	<b>3</b>
Our commitment to accessibility	3
Feedback	3
<b>Table of contents</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>About us</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Year in review</b>	<b>8</b>
2019	8
2020	10
<b>Performance overview</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Strategic and operational performance overview</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>President's review</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CEO's review</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Membership snapshot</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Here for our members</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>ADVOCATE – advocating for our profession, justice and the rule of law</b>	<b>28</b>
Advocating for good law	28
Media	36
Advocating through COVID-19	38
<b>EDUCATE – educating our members to improve expertise</b>	<b>39</b>
Professional development at any stage of a solicitor's career	39
Our publications	41
Educating through COVID-19	42
<b>CONNECT – connecting our profession</b>	<b>43</b>
Recognising and celebrating our members	43
The future of our profession	45
Queensland law students	46
Staying connected during COVID-19	47
<b>GUIDE – guidance to encourage the professional values of fidelity, service and courage</b>	<b>48</b>
Guiding through leadership, education, guidance and professionalism	48
Guiding the profession through COVID-19	51

<b><u>PROTECT – regulation that upholds the good standing of all solicitors</u></b>	<b>53</b>
Protecting through regulation and support	53
Protecting through QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd	55
Protecting through professionalism	57
Lexon Insurance Pte Ltd	59
<b><u>CULTURE – building our corporate culture</u></b>	<b>61</b>
Our people, their skills and commitment contribute to a leading professional society, valued by our members	61
Our working environment	63
Reconciliation and First Nations Culture	64
The public good: Our corporate citizenship	70
Continuing to build our culture through COVID-19	71
<b><u>SUSTAIN – sustain our good corporate performance via the QLS Council, subcommittees, corporate structure and business plans</u></b>	<b>72</b>
Deliver results that balance the value provided to members and the public with our financial viability, risks and challenges	72
Our Council	72
Our leadership team	77
Committees	80
Sustaining through COVID-19	83
<b><u>IMPROVE – improving the QLS member experience</u></b>	<b>84</b>
Continuing our efforts to offer value for our members with a focus on technology, service, connectedness, convenience, accessibility and collegiality	84
Information management strategic objectives	86
The legal landscape and plans for the future	87
Our operating plan 2020-21 at a glance	87
<b><u>FINANCES</u></b>	<b>91</b>
Comprising the results of Queensland Law Society Incorporated (parent entity), the Law Claims Levy Fund (LCLF) and QLS's wholly owned subsidiary, Lexon Insurance Pte Ltd (Lexon) and QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd	91
Our financial performance	91
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS QUEENSLAND LAW SOCIETY	92
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS LAW CLAIMS LEVY FUND	149
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS QLS SOLICITOR SUPPORT PTY LTD	168
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS LEGAL PRACTITIONERS' FIDELITY GUARANTEE FUND	183
<b><u>QLS GENERAL CONTENT</u></b>	<b>201</b>
Compliance checklist	201
Glossary	203
Index	204

---

## About us

Queensland Law Society (QLS) is the peak representative body for the legal profession in Queensland, providing leadership, guidance and support for more than 13,000 members, across all categories.

QLS empowers good lawyers, advocates for good law and serves the public good by providing a clear and passionate voice for solicitors and the legal profession in Queensland. We engage with government, the public and the legal community on issues of importance to the profession.

QLS is a versatile, responsive and collegiate representative body which supports and advocates on behalf of the Queensland legal profession. We represent the profession with courage, fidelity and service in an ethically sound, calm and professional manner.

Across many platforms and in conjunction with our members, QLS provides:

- high-quality, ethical support and guidance to Queensland solicitors, including direct ethical consulting, bespoke educational sessions and published guidance statements
- calm, clear and courageous advocacy on matters of importance to the legal profession and the broader community
- accessible, high-quality, ongoing professional development and specialist accreditations
- practical resources and opportunities for the profession to maintain and develop professional skills
- referrals via our Find a Solicitor web search and promotion of solicitors' role in the community
- support for practitioners' mental health, directly and via our member EAP, LawCare
- support and guidance on trust account issues and trust account compliance
- direct practice support consultancy services to new and developing law firms throughout the State
- regulation of trust account provisions of the *Legal Profession Act 2007*, external administration of law practices and management of the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund
- records administration for the issuing of practising certificates
- professional indemnity insurance to the members of the Queensland legal profession through Lexon Insurance Pte Limited.

---

## Year in review

### 2019

<b>1 July</b>	<i>Proctor</i> July edition special feature: Inside the Office of the Independent Assessor
<b>2 July</b>	QLS calls for immediate ban on children 14 and under being held in watch houses
<b>4 July</b>	QLS welcomes appointment of Queensland Chief Magistrate and new Mt Isa magistrate
<b>10 July</b>	QLS backs review of consent laws by Queensland Law Reform Commission
<b>10 July</b>	Queensland loses the State of Origin series, leaving QLS President Bill Potts to honour an annual bet by wearing a Blues jersey. NSW calls foul and demands “specific performance” when President Potts adds a Maroons scarf.
<b>12 July</b>	QLS joins the NAIDOC Week family fun day in Brisbane’s Musgrave Park with a stall promoting the QLS RAP and services offered by QLS.
<b>17 July</b>	More than 100 leading Queensland lawyers enjoy the QLS Best Lawyers Breakfast at Brisbane’s Blackbird Private Dining and Event.
<b>22 July</b>	QLS extends its NAIDOC celebrations with a First Nations lunch, recognising its journey through the Innovate RAP, beginning its journey towards the Stretch RAP, and kicking off its inaugural First Nations in Conversations.
<b>24 July</b>	Launch of the QLS Aspire Leadership Lecture Series, featuring Isabelle Reinecke of the Grata Fund.
<b>1 August</b>	<i>Proctor</i> August edition special feature: Life after death – Providing hope for shattered lives or creating a lifetime of unintended consequences?
<b>1 August</b>	QLS Conveyancing Conference, at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, offers a practical program, including how to navigate the minefield of retirement village structures.
<b>2 August</b>	The annual QLS Criminal Law Conference, at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.
<b>6 August</b>	First Nations students visit Law Society House for a LawLink event on the role of the in-house solicitor.
<b>8 August</b>	Lecture three of the 2019 Modern Advocate Lecture Series features Judge Felicity Hampel SC of the County Court of Victoria.
<b>10 August</b>	The Brisbane Magistrates Court team takes top place in the 2019 QLS Touch Football Tournament.
<b>16 August</b>	Hervey Bay CPD Intensive
<b>23 August</b>	Kingaroy CPD Intensive
<b>30 August</b>	Solicitor Advocate Course: Building on foundations, a joint offering from the QLS Ethics and Practice Centre and the Australian Advocacy Institute
<b>1 September</b>	<i>Proctor</i> September edition special feature: Innovation in law – preparing for the new normal
<b>3 September</b>	QLS opposes change to 120-year-old sexual consent laws
<b>9 September</b>	Nominations open for the QLS Council election 2019
<b>11-12 September</b>	Property Law Conference, at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, offers varied sessions, including navigating trust structures in property transactions and verification of identity in the digital era
<b>13 September</b>	Government Lawyers Conference at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
<b>19 September</b>	14 members lead the guest list to receive their 25-year membership pins at a Brisbane Celebrate, Recognise and Socialise event held at Blackbird Private Dining and Events



<b>1 October</b>	<i>Proctor</i> October edition special feature: Navigating the complexities of implementing voluntary assisted dying laws in Queensland. In a <i>Proctor</i> first, the magazine is printed with two covers – each symbolising one side of the life and death debate.
<b>1 October</b>	QLS welcomes appointment of two solicitors to the state's magistracy
<b>9 October</b>	Voting opens in the QLS Council election
<b>10 October</b>	QLS teams up with the Bar Association of Queensland to present the Minds Count Lecture at Law Society House, presented by King & Wood Mallesons partner John Canning
<b>10 October</b>	Lecture Four of the 2019 Modern Advocate Lecture Series features Justice Soraya Ryan of the Supreme Court of Queensland
<b>11 October</b>	More than 130 people attend the Personal Injuries Conference at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
<b>23 October</b>	Legal professionals from Pride in Law, The Legal Forecast and members of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand join colleagues for a relaxed evening of networking at this Young Professionals Networking Evening
<b>25 October</b>	The successful candidates for seats on QLS Council are announced
<b>1 November</b>	The cover story in this month's <i>Proctor</i> is an interview with Family Court and Federal Circuit Court Chief Justice Will Alstergren QC
<b>1-2 November</b>	With its dual themes of life and death, the Succession and Elder Law Conference at Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa attracts 150 attendees enjoy sessions from estate litigation basics to complex ethical matters
<b>12 November</b>	Toowoomba CPD Intensive plus a Celebrate, Recognise and Socialise event
<b>13 November</b>	As the bushfire emergency continues throughout much of Queensland and New South Wales, QLS urges practitioners to put safety first
<b>14 November</b>	The 2019 Legal Profession Breakfast, at Brisbane City Hall, attracts a capacity crowd who listen to passionate anti-DV advocate Arman Abrahimzadeh OAM, co-founder of the Zahra Foundation Australia
<b>26 November</b>	QLS welcomes new law to stop insidious practice of claims farming
<b>1 December</b>	This month's <i>Proctor</i> cover story welcomes Queensland's first Human Rights Commissioner, Scott McDougall
<b>4 December</b>	Around 160 people gather at The Grove, Brisbane, for the QLS Appreciation Evening 2019 an event that acknowledges and thanks regular professional development presenters, committee members and other contributors to QLS for their support and participation
<b>5 December</b>	Thirteen past, present and future QLS Presidents come together at the Brisbane Club to share recollections over dinner
<b>5 December</b>	Around 85 early career lawyers attend Brisbane's Bar Pacino for the QLS Early Career Lawyers Christmas Party
<b>11 December</b>	QLS annual general meeting
<b>12 December</b>	The Chief Justice congratulates specialist accreditation graduates at the Brisbane Specialist Accreditation Christmas Breakfast, while other events celebrate the occasion in Cairns and Townsville

---

## 2020

<b>1 January</b>	President Luke Murphy and Deputy President Elizabeth Shearer take up their posts for 2020, along with new QLS Council members
<b>1 February</b>	Proctor begins 2020 with a cover feature on 2020 QLS President Luke Murphy
<b>6 February</b>	President Murphy is officially welcomed at the New Year Profession Drinks in the Banco Court at the Queensland Elizabeth II Courts of Law
<b>26 February</b>	Some 125 young professionals descend on City Winery Brisbane for the first (and possibly last) Young Professionals Networking Evening of 2020
<b>1 March</b>	The special feature in the March <i>Proctor</i> is: The diversity journey – The challenge for the profession and those who navigate it
<b>9 March</b>	QLS celebrates International Women's Day 2020 with an evening function
<b>13-14 March</b>	QLS Symposium 2020 draws more than 650 attendees
<b>13 March</b>	The profession celebrates its shining stars at the QLS Legal Profession Dinner & Awards
<b>27 March</b>	President Luke Murphy and CEO Rolf Moses address the profession via video on measures QLS is taking in response to COVID-19
<b>1 April</b>	The April <i>Proctor</i> special feature is: On parole – Not just a 'get-out-of-jail-free' card
<b>15 April</b>	President Luke Murphy and CEO Rolf Moses announce a \$9 million QLS support package for Queensland's legal profession as it operates through the COVID-19 pandemic
<b>22 April</b>	QLS launches three new COVID-19 support services – the Employment Law Advice Service, QLS General Manager Support Service and the QLS Government Financial Assistance Service
<b>1 May</b>	The May <i>Proctor</i> special feature is: Creating your new normal – Navigating COVID-19 induced practice challenges. To overcome the distribution challenges associated with most of the workforce working from home, <i>Proctor</i> is distributed electronically.
<b>15 May</b>	QLS applauds new laws paving the way for electronic signing of legal documents
<b>22 May</b>	QLS applauds new regulations to allow for virtual document witnessing
<b>28 May</b>	President Luke Murphy and CEO Rolf Moses announces the QLS Phase 2 support package for members, based on a \$750,000 grant from Law Foundation Queensland
<b>1 June</b>	The June <i>Proctor</i> special feature is: COVID-19's legacy for justice – What will be worth keeping? This edition marks an historic milestone, as the last <i>Proctor</i> to be published in standard monthly magazine format.
<b>22 June</b>	QLS welcomes the appointment of new Queensland Director of Public Prosecutions, Carl Heaton QC