



CURRENT LEGAL ISSUES

2025 SEMINAR SERIES



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2025 SEMINAR SERIES

The Bar Association of Queensland, the University of Queensland and the Supreme Court Library Queensland are pleased to announce the **Current Legal Issues Seminar Series for 2025**.

The seminar series seeks to bring together leading scholars, practitioners, members of the judiciary and community stakeholders to discuss key issues of contemporary significance for the advancement of the public good.

SEMINAR 1



Frail Lawyers and their Fearless Logics: What Drives Ethical Error?

Date: Thursday 21 August 2025

Presenter: Professor Richard Moorhead, University of Exeter

Chair: Graham Gibson KC

Commentator: Richard Douglas KC

As Robodebt illustrates, lawyers' ethics are important. This paper will show why it is not just bad apples or overweening clients that mean all lawyers are at risk of ethical blunders. Traditional notions of lawyers' ethics - ideas such as fearlessness, zeal and Cab Rank neutrality - will be examined, as will the human frailties that all humans, even – perhaps especially – lawyers face. We will consider how such ideas can drive lawyers towards disaster. Examples will be taken from the United Kingdom Post Office scandal, but also elsewhere. Professor Moorhead will suggest that traditional notions of ethics are flawed; that rather than protecting the rule of law, they render it vulnerable.

SEMINAR 2



Contemporary Issues in the Australian Legal System

Date: Wednesday 3 September 2025

Presenter: The Honourable Chief Justice Gageler AC, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia

Chair: The Honorable Chief Justice Bowskill, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland

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SEMINAR 3



A Second Chamber for the Queensland Parliament: Four Reasons, Four Features and Four Design Principles

Date: Thursday 30 October 2025

Presenter: Professor Nicholas Aroney, University of Queensland

Chair: The Honourable Justice John Bond, Judge of Appeal, Supreme Court of Queensland

Commentator: Mr Neil Laurie, Clerk of the Parliament (Queensland)

This paper will present four arguments for the restoration of an elected second chamber in Queensland and propose four corresponding qualities that such a chamber should possess. These four arguments and four features concern: (1) better democratic representation, (2) enhanced public deliberation, (3) improved legislative procedures, and (4) increased scrutiny of government. In doing so, the paper will consider four key principles of constitutional design, namely democratic legitimacy, effective governance, the separation of powers, and government accountability.

SEMINAR 4



Sexual Offences – Has the Pendulum Swung Too Far?

Date: Thursday 13 November 2025

Presenter: Mr Terry O’Gorman AM, Senior Consultant, Robertson O’Gorman Solicitors

Chair: Her Honour Judge Deborah Richards, President, Childrens Court of Queensland; Judge, District Court of Queensland

Commentator: Professor Heather Douglas AM, The University of Melbourne

Over time, protections designed to minimise miscarriages of justice in sexual assault cases have been dismantled. Recent changes to the protected counselling regime have significantly denied defendants access to relevant information relating to the credibility of complainants; and in September 2024 additional prosecution powers in sexual assault cases were introduced, commencing on 25th May 2025. In early February 2025, the Australian Law Reform Commission handed its Report on Justice Responses to Sexual Violence to the Federal Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus. This paper addresses the current state of the law regarding the prosecution of sexual assault cases, asking the question whether the pendulum has swung too far in trying to balance the rights of complainants in sex cases with minimising and hopefully preventing miscarriages of justice for accused persons.

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Aims

The Current Legal Issues Series seeks to:

- provide a forum for the critical analysis and discussion of legal issues of current importance;
- bring to bear upon those issues the different perspectives offered by leading academics, judges, members the profession, and public policy-makers; and
- forge stronger links between academic and practising lawyers in Queensland.

Time

Registration 5:00pm - 5:15pm

Seminar 5:15pm - 6:45pm

Drinks 6:45pm - 7:15pm

Venue

The Banco Court, Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law,
415 George Street, Brisbane.

Seminars will be followed by a drinks reception in the foyer.

Registration

Please register your intention to attend the seminars via the following Bar Association of Queensland website link: <https://qldbar.asn.au/cpd-events>

For further information about the Seminar Series, please contact the Legal Education team at the Bar Association of Queensland:

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07 3238 5100

Website

Details of all seminars, papers, and speaker biographies, are available from the CLI series website: <https://law.uq.edu.au/events/current-legal-issues-seminars>

CPD

Attendance at each seminar qualifies barristers to claim 1.5 CPD points. Seminar 1 is classified as Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Seminars 2 – 4 are classified as Substantive Law, Practice and Procedure, Evidence.

Solicitors should confirm their CPD eligibility with the Queensland Law Society or their relevant professional body.



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