

TC BEIRNE SCHOOL OF LAW

UQ PRO BONO CENTRE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 – 2017



OVERVIEW

Established in 2009, the UQ Pro Bono Centre is an initiative of the TC Beirne Law School at the University of Queensland. The Centre oversees and facilitates a diverse range of activities for law students to participate in the delivery of pro bono legal services. These activities include direct casework through our clinical legal education program, legal research, community legal education and law reform.

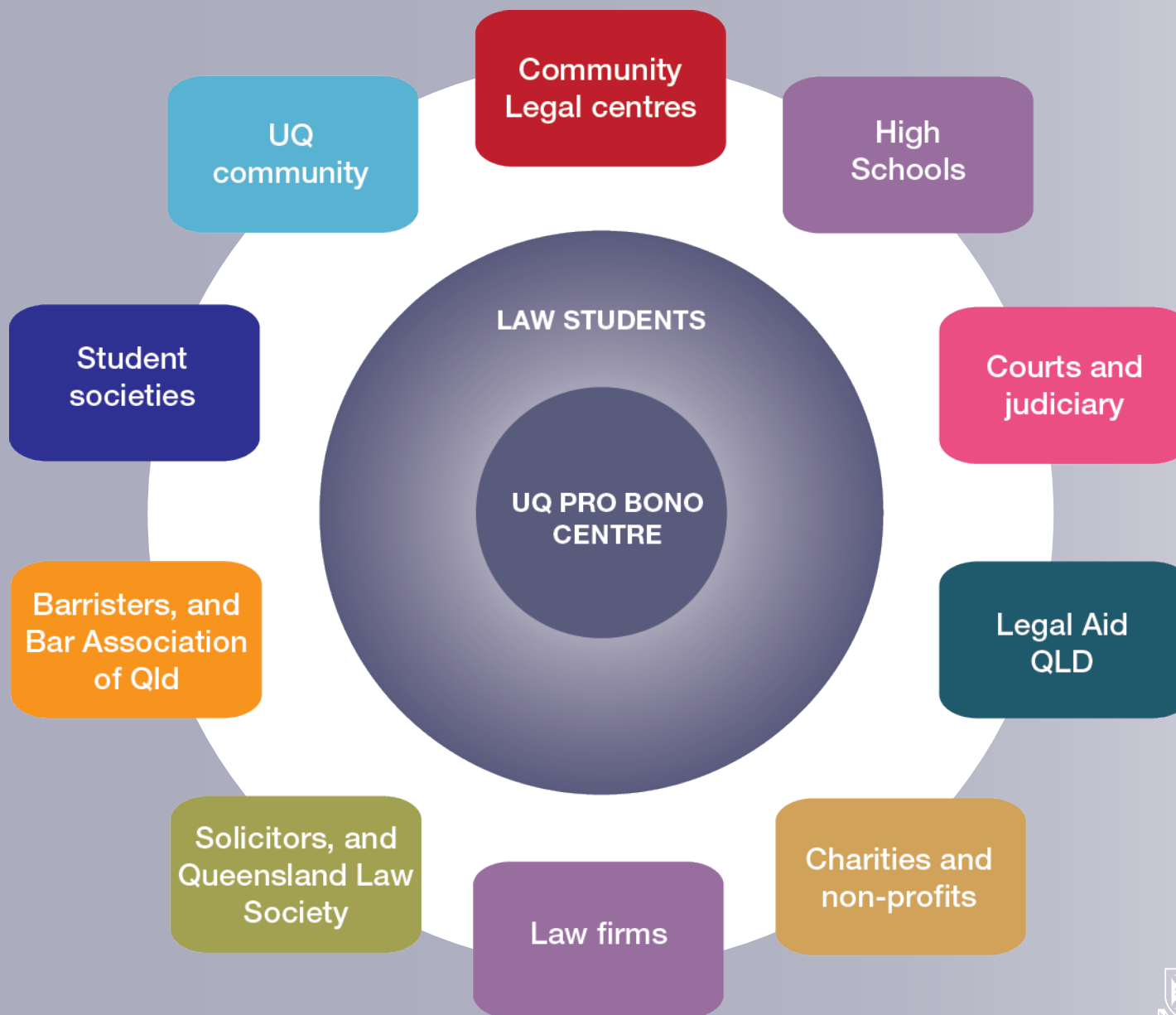
The UQ Pro Bono Centre believes that law students have a genuine role to play in the delivery of pro bono legal services. Our experience is that students who participate in pro bono work develop a keen sense of social responsibility and a commitment to access to justice and ethical legal practice; core professional values that the UQ Law School seeks to instil in its students.

The UQ Pro Bono Centre also believes that the most effective pro bono work occurs in partnership with other agencies, and the development of this strategic plan has prompted us to reflect on the partnerships that we already enjoy, as well as those which we hope to develop in the coming three years.

This Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with students and staff at the Law School who are actively involved in the Centre's work. The Centre's Student Advisory Panel met on a number of occasions with the Centre Director as part of the strategic planning process. Together, the student panellists and the Director conducted a brainstorming session as well as a SWOT analysis. The Centre's Advisory Board has also provided valuable feedback and guidance in relation to the strategic vision of the Centre, and some of the deliverables are set to be achieved with Advisory Board member involvement. Finally, the Head of School and other members of academic staff have also been consulted and have provided valuable input.

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DEFINITION OF PRO BONO WORK

The UQ Pro Bono Centre adopts the definition used by the National Pro Bono Aspirational Target and National Survey for the purposes of its activities:

Pro bono means the provision of legal services which will enhance access to justice for disadvantaged or marginalised persons or organisations and/or promote the public interest.

1. The provision of legal assistance for free or at a substantially reduced fee to:—
 - a. individuals who can demonstrate a need for legal assistance but cannot access the legal system without incurring significant financial hardship; or
 - b. individuals or organisations whose matter raises an issue of public interest which would not otherwise be pursued; or
 - c. charities or other non-profit organisations which work on behalf of low income or disadvantaged members of the community or for the public good;
2. Conducting law reform and policy work on issues affecting low income or disadvantaged members of the community, or on issues of public interest;
3. Participating in the provision of free community legal education on issues affecting low income or disadvantaged members of the community or on issues of public interest; or
4. Providing a lawyer on secondment at a community organisation (including a community legal organisation) or at a referral service provider such as a Public Interest Law Clearing House.

The following is NOT regarded as pro bono work for the purposes of this statement:

1. Giving legal assistance to any person for free or at a reduced fee without reference to whether he/she can afford it or whether it raises an issue of public interest.
2. Free first consultations with clients who are otherwise billed at a firm's normal rates;
3. Contingency fee arrangements or other speculative work which is undertaken with a commercial expectation of a fee;
4. The sponsorship of cultural and sporting events, work undertaken for business development and other marketing opportunities; or
5. Time spent by lawyers sitting on the board of a community organisation (including a community legal organisation) or a charity.



OUR MISSION

The UQ Pro Bono Centre will be a nationally recognised leader in the development, promotion and provision of student pro bono legal services. Through our work we will inspire students to understand the value and importance of access to justice, and to graduate from law school with a lifelong professional commitment to pro bono legal service.

OUR PURPOSE

To create diverse and meaningful opportunities for students to participate in the delivery of pro bono legal services.

STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2014 – 2017

The Centre's strategic goals for 2014 – 2017 are spread across six distinct areas. These are:

- Pro bono legal services
- Teaching and learning
- Research
- Profile & Engagement
- Governance
- Sustainability

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SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC GOALS 2014 - 2017

PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES

- Goal 1.1 Offer a diverse range of Pro Bono Roster activities to students, including national and international opportunities.
- Goal 1.2 Create and implement high quality policy and law reform research opportunities through the Manning St Project and Pro Bono Roster.
- Goal 1.3 Diversify the High Schools Program to include new community legal education opportunities with additional legal content.
- Goal 1.4 Ensure high quality pro bono legal services through every division of the Centre's work.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Goal 2.1 Increase non-UQ Law School sources of income for CLE Program by 20% over three years.
- Goal 2.2 Increase CLE Program offerings with a focus on multidisciplinary and international clinical opportunities in line with legal need.
- Goal 2.3 Ensure high quality teaching and supervision of UQ law students through the CLE Program.
- Goal 2.4 Increase numbers of UQ Law academic staff involved in clinical supervision.

RESEARCH

- Goal 3.1 Resource the legal profession by conducting research into areas relating to access to justice and pro bono work.
- Goal 3.2 Generate both academic and student-authored research that is ERA (Excellence in Research in Australia) relevant.
- Goal 3.3 Maintain high ethical standards for research conducted through the Centre.

PROFILE AND ENGAGEMENT

- Goal 4.1 Achieve a public profile that positions the Centre as the leading provider of student pro bono legal services nationally.
- Goal 4.2 Implement a communication strategy that promotes the Centre's activities to both internal (UQ) and external stakeholders
- Goal 4.3 Engage in public advocacy on matters relating to the Centre's activities
- Goal 4.4 Foster a strong and mutually beneficial working relationship with law school staff and student societies.

GOVERNANCE

- Goal 5.1 Maintain a governance structure that actively supports and promotes the Centre's work.
- Goal 5.2 Ensure sufficient financial and human resources to allow for growth.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Goal 6.1 A Centre that uses its resources responsibly and with minimum impact on the environment.
- Goal 6.2 A Centre committed to environmental sustainability through legal work.

