Queensland Law Society

SPECIALIST PRACTICE CONFERENCE 26

7-9 OCTOBER 2026 • BRISBANE

Program – DFV Sessions

1hr

Deepfakes, cheapfakes and evidence integrity: professional responsibility in a digital world

Whether you use AI in your practice or not, it is inevitable that colleagues, clients, and witnesses will. AI-generated content, deepfakes and AI-assisted witness preparation are creating new challenges for courts and practitioners.

This session examines emerging cases involving manipulated evidence and AI-coached witnesses, the risks of relying on apparently authentic digital material, and the ethical duties that arise.

Through practical examples, participants will explore how to identify risk indicators, respond to authenticity concerns and meet their obligations to the court in an environment where seeing is no longer believing.

Presenter: **David Bowles**, Special Counsel, QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, Queensland Law Society

Chair: **Callan Lloyd**, Managing Director, Gilshenan & Luton

PLE

1hr

The other side of the coin: Representing complainants and aggrieved persons

This session will explore the growing trend of criminal defence lawyers representing aggrieved persons and complainants in the criminal justice system. It will look at the dos and don’ts involved in this work and offer some practical tips for practitioners.

Presenters:

Rachel Tierney, Senior Associate, Gilshenan & Luton Accredited Specialist (Criminal Law) – Qld

Emily O’Hagan, Partner, Wallace O’Hagan Lawyers

Chair: **Deputy Chief Magistrate Stephen Courtney**, Queensland Courts

PS

1hr

Where jurisdictions collide: Navigating Family, DFV and Criminal Law for young people

This scenario-based panel discussion examines the legal issues that can arise when young people are involved in matters across multiple jurisdictions, including family law, domestic and family violence, youth justice and child protection matters. Panellists will explore jurisdictional overlaps, conflicting legal processes and the challenges these create for children, young people and their families. Through these scenario-based discussions attendees will be provided with practical strategies for advising clients, managing risk, navigating cross-jurisdictional issues and promoting safe, child-focused outcomes.

Presenters:

Magistrate Andrew Moloney, Queensland Courts

Maneesha Prakash, Principal Lawyer, Youth Advocacy Centre.

Niki Schomberg, Special Counsel, Lander & Rogers; Accredited Specialist (Family Law) - Qld

Chair: **Dr Zoe Rathus AM**, Associate Professor, Griffith University

SLAPLE

1hr

When visa status meets vulnerability: Domestic and family violence Issues in migration and family law matters

Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) can impact the immigration status, safety, and legal options available to visa holders. Practitioners must navigate competing considerations involving protection of vulnerable clients, visa eligibility of both clients and children, evidentiary requirements, disclosure obligations, character concerns, sponsorship issues and interactions with family law and criminal law systems.

The presentation will provide a practical overview of how DFV may arise across a range of visa pathways, including partner visas, family visas, protection visas and other temporary visa holders whose migration status is dependent on abusive sponsors. It will also explore the operation of the Family Violence Provisions within the Migration Regulations and the evidentiary challenges commonly encountered when establishing claims of violence. Further, this session will discuss the intersections between migration and family law including the impact of DFV on a visa holder's ability to remain in Australia and a discussion as to the status of children born in Australia to visa holders, where there is no automatic right to remain in Australia.

Presenters:

Kathryn Smith, Supervising Solicitor (Migration), Women's Legal Service; Accredited Specialist (Immigration Law) - Qld

Tamara Anand, Lawyer, Women's Legal Service; Accredited Specialist (Family Law) - Qld

Chair: **Dr Rachel Varshney**, Barrister, Queensland Bar

Presenters



Tamara Anand

Tamara was admitted as a solicitor in 2007 and has dedicated her career exclusively to family law. As a QLS Accredited Specialist in Family Law, she combines high-level technical expertise with professional recognition. With over 10 years of experience in private practice, Tamara later joined a specialised family violence litigation team at the Women's Legal Service including working within their Temporary Visa Program which provides migration, family law and domestic violence assistance to women on temporary visas who are experiencing family violence.



David Bowles

David was admitted as a solicitor in 1996 and was in private practice from that time until joining Queensland Law Society's QLS Ethics and Practice Centre in November 2012.

David's experience, initially as an employee and then as a sole practitioner includes crime, property, litigation and estate planning. As an ethics solicitor he is responsible for providing ethical guidance to members, and continuing legal education.

He holds postgraduate certificates in Artificial Intelligence from the Said Business School at Oxford University, in Cybersecurity from Harvard University Extension School, in Project Management from the University of Adelaide EdX program and is a director of the Australasian Computer Law Institute.

Deputy Chief Magistrate Stephen Courtney



Callan Lloyd



Magistrate Andrew Moloney

Andrew was a solicitor for 25 years. He became an accredited specialist in criminal law in 2006, and a QLS Senior Counsellor in 2015. He was appointed as a Magistrate and a Childrens Court Magistrate in October 2017. He was the resident Magistrate in Bundaberg from 2019-2021.



Emily O'Hagan

Emily graduated with Honours in a Bachelors of Laws and Psychology from Griffith University with elective study in Criminal Law and Forensic Mental Health at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. She undertook a clerkship with Hopgood Ganim Lawyers in Litigation and Family Law and was admitted as a solicitor to the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2009 and the High Court of Australia in 2010.

Following her admission, Emily has worked exclusively in criminal law. She worked at a busy criminal law practice for 5 years prior to becoming a founding partner of Wallace O'Hagan Lawyers in 2015. Emily has a wealth of experience successfully representing clients at all levels of the criminal justice system ranging from traffic offences before the Magistrates Court through to murder.



Maneesha Prakash

Maneesha Prakash is the Principal Lawyer at the Youth Advocacy Centre (YAC) and has more than 14 years' experience practising law in Queensland. She is recognised as Queensland's only specialist lawyer dedicated to supporting young people experiencing domestic and family violence and has led the development of innovative legal services to improve young people's access to justice. Maneesha has extensive experience across domestic and family violence, criminal, family, commercial, government and policy law, having worked in private practice, government, and the community legal sector. She also serves as an Adjunct Lecturer in the College of Law's Practical Legal Training Program, is a Griffith University Industry Mentor, and sits on the Queensland Law Society Domestic and Family Violence Law Committee.



Dr Zoe Rathus AM

Dr Zoe Rathus AM is an Associate Professor at the Griffith University Law School in Brisbane. She has published and presented widely on women and the law, particularly the family law system and the impact of domestic and family violence on women and children. Zoe commenced private legal practice in 1981 and became coordinator of the Women's Legal Service in 1989. Zoe has been at Griffith University since 2005 teaching Ethics, Family Law and Domestic Violence. She has been a vocal advocate for legal system reform for over 40 years. She was appointed to the Family Law Council in early 2025 and is a member of the Queensland Law Society Domestic Violence Committee. Zoe has received a number of awards, including an Order of Australia in 2011 for her services to women, the law, Indigenous peoples and education.



Niki Schomberg

Niki Schomberg is an Accredited Specialist in Family Law and a Special Counsel in the Family & Relationship Law team at Lander & Rogers. Niki has been recognised by her peers as a Family Law Rising Star for Queensland in the 2020, 2023, 2024 and 2025 editions of Doyle's Guide and has been listed in Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in 2025 and 2026. She is a member of the Queensland Law Society Family Law Committee and works as a Sessional Academic for the Family Law unit at QUT. Niki has co-authored articles published by the Law Society Journal of New South Wales in relation to the complexities of corporate structures in family law settlements and the interplay between estate claims and binding financial agreements.



Kathryn Smith

Kathryn is and Accredited Specialist in Immigration Law, and Supervising Solicitor for Migration at Women's Legal Service Queensland. Kathryn has practised as an immigration solicitor in Queensland for nearly thirteen years.

She currently works within the Women's Legal Service Queensland's Temporary Visa Program, which provides migration, family law, and domestic violence legal assistance to women on temporary visas who are experiencing family violence.



Rachel Tierney

Rachel is a Senior Associate at Gilshenan and Luton Legal Practice.

Rachel has considerable experience in domestic violence matters, where she is well placed to assist clients in both bringing domestic violence applications for their protection and defending against them, as well as assisting with criminal charges arising from domestic violence-related matters.

In addition to domestic violence law, Rachel has extensive complex trial experience and represents clients in all aspects of criminal law with particular expertise in sexual offences, including historical, institutional sexual abuse matters and misconduct related charges brought against members of the public service.

Aside from her criminal law work, Rachel represents clients in child protection matters, disciplinary matters and coronial inquests. She also regularly assists victims and witnesses to navigate the criminal justice system.

In 2022, Rachel gained Specialist Accreditation in Criminal Law through the Queensland Law Society. Rachel is a member of the Queensland Law Society's (QLS) Domestic Violence Committee and the QLS Criminal Law Specialist Accreditation Committee. She is also an active member of the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland.



Dr Rachel Varshney

Rachel is a barrister practising in commercial, property, discrimination and appellate law. She appears in courts and tribunals in complex disputes, including matters involving contractual rights, real property, corporations, equitable remedies and statutory interpretation. Rachel also acts in appellate matters in all specialties. Prior to coming to the bar, Rachel practised as a solicitor in a generalist firm for a number of years. Before commencing her career in law, Rachel was a lecturer in Applied Linguistics, and gained her PhD from UQ and the Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris, in cotutelle.