

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program



## Program

### Day 1 | Monday

8.45am **Log in**

9am **Welcome**

**Facilitator: Sandra Pepper**, Solicitor, Queensland Law Society

9.15am **Business Planning**

This unit explores the process of business planning and determining a business model and strategy with practice goals and objectives in mind.

Presenter: **Giles Watson**, Legal Practice Management Consultant



10.45am **Break**

11am **Practice finance**

Effective financial management requires planning, monitoring, control and discipline. This unit provides a framework for the development of practice budgets and discussion of Key Performance Indicators and the importance of managing practice cash flow.

Presenter: **Tim Jones**, Director, Business Advisory, Vincents Chartered Accountants



1.05pm **Day 1 concludes**

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program



## Day 2 presented by SCLQ | Tuesday

8.45am **Log in**

9am **Supreme Court Library Queensland presentation**



9.15am **Trust accounting**

This unit provides a framework for the competent management of trust and office account records involving basic bookkeeping procedures and the responsibility of solicitors to account for money received on behalf of others.

Presenter: **Michael Drinkall**, Manager, Trust Account Investigations, Queensland Law Society



11.15am **Break**

11.30am **Anti-Money Laundering**

New Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Amendment Act 2024 (AML/CTF) comes into force for solicitors on 1 July 2026. Principal's will have new responsibilities, and this session will assist practitioners in understanding their upcoming regulatory obligations. This session will also provide the opportunity to ask questions and engage with our presenter on topics such as timeframes, designated services, key obligations, the AML/CTF program and AUSTRAC's Legal Profession Starter Program Kit.

Presenter: **Shane Budden**, Special Counsel, QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, Queensland Law Society

1.05pm **Day 2 concludes**

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program



## Day 3 | Wednesday

8.45am **Log in**

9:00am **Lexon Insurance**

Learn how to implement systems and procedures to ensure critical issues and processes are implemented to protect your legal practice.

Presenter: **Robert Mackay**, Solicitor, Legal Risk, Lexon Insurance



10:00am **Break**

10:15am **Appropriate management systems**

Understand professional risk management concepts and identify risks specific to practice and apply appropriate approaches to minimise and mitigate risks.

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



11:45am **Break**

12:00pm **Ethics**

Solicitors must have the knowledge and skills to act ethically and to display professional responsibility and courtesy in all dealings. Reflect on wider issues facing the legal profession and review the knowledge of the formal rules of conduct.

Presenter: **Shane Budden**, Special Counsel, QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, Queensland Law Society



1:05pm **Day 3 concludes**

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program



## Day 4 presented by CLIO | Thursday

8.45am Log in

9am CLIO presentation



9.15am **Business development and client service**

Legal practice marketing and business development is becoming increasingly more ambitious, competitive and sophisticated. Understand how marketing and business development can support legal practices, and common marketing activities and selling techniques that are used.

Client perceptions of the quality of client service have a dramatic impact on client retention, referrals, justifying fee levels, fee recovery, cash flow and profitability. Learn the skills to deliver excellent client service in terms of personal skills, practice systems and culture.

Presenter: **Katherine Gilbey**, Katherine Gilbey Consulting – Law Firm Marketing and BD Consultant



10.45am Break

11am **Leading yourself: Understanding your leadership strengths and style**

Self-leadership is the cornerstone of all leadership, and self-awareness is a critical link to understanding how your leadership styles can enhance your own leadership potential and also how others perceive your leadership capabilities based on your personality traits. This session will discuss the latest research on emotional intelligence and self-leadership, provide context to the concepts of “leadership” and “management”, and suggest approaches and behaviours that can help you effectively manage a legal practice by understanding the impacts of your own unique results on the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI). The presenter is a Certified Hogan’s Assessor and conducts a group debrief of the seven HPI scales.

Presenter: **Rebecca Niebler**, Mindset and performance coach & owner, Mind Cultivation



12.20pm Day 4 concludes

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program

## Day 5 presented by The SELL Life | Friday

8.45am Log in

9am The SELL Life presentation



9.15am **Leading wellbeing in the legal profession**

Learn about the current state of wellbeing in the legal profession. Identify why the legal profession is particularly susceptible to mental health issues, develop a workplace framework to create a mentally healthy team and be equipped with the skillset to proactively support and assist it.

Presenter: **Stephanie Cowie**, Legal Workplace and Culture Consultant, Queensland Law Society



10.45am Break

11am **Leading others: Essential skills for inspiring leadership**

The presenter is a former Partner in a large national law firm and a currently a leadership coach, providing coaching and leadership expertise to the legal profession. In this session, you will learn more about a leader's mindset, how to manage uncomfortable conversations and deal with performance management issues, and learning about key principles of coaching others to perform at their best and build team resilience – all with a view to ultimately developing critical skills and abilities for effective management in a legal practice

Presenter: **Midja Fisher**, Corporate Facilitator



12.15pm **Assessment recap**

Presenter: **Sandra Pepper**, Solicitor, Queensland Law Society

12.30pm **Day 5 concludes**

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program



## Assessment due dates

2pm Monday following the workshop week.

### Trust Accounting Workbook

Although this workbook is not graded, it is mandatory for you to complete it as part of the Substantial Participation requirement under rule 37(1) of the Queensland Law Society Administration Rule 2005.

Monday following the workshop week.

### Trust Accounting Exam

Available  
7am - 2pm

Multiple choice online exam with 45 questions and a duration 60 minutes, testing your understanding and application of trust accounting and costs disclosure concepts and regulations.

**To be commenced and completed on the LMS at a convenient time for you between 7am – 2pm on Monday following the workshop week**

5pm Friday  
Eight-weeks before the expiry of the PMC course.

### Business Plan

Business Plan assessment to be submitted to the LMS by Friday **\*eight weeks before the expiry of PMC course.**

5pm Friday  
Eight-weeks before the expiry of the PMC course.

### Ethics Scenario

Ethics Scenario assessment to be submitted to the LMS by Friday **\*eight weeks before the expiry of PMC course.**

5pm Friday  
Eight-weeks before the expiry of the PMC course.

### Self-Audit of Business Risk

Risk Self-Audit assessment to be submitted to the LMS by Friday **\*eight weeks before the expiry of PMC course.**

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus

2026 Program

## Presenters

---



### **David Bowles**

Special Counsel, QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, Queensland Law Society

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.



### **Shane Budden**

Special Counsel, QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, Queensland Law Society

As a Special Counsel in the QLS Ethics and Practice Centre/QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd, Shane provides ethical guidance and instruction to practitioners. He contributes significantly to the QLS journal Proctor, both through his regular column and by authoring feature articles.

Shane was admitted in 1992 and worked in general practice with a focus on Criminal Law, before moving to in-housework, initially with the Ipswich City Council internal legal team.

Prior to joining QLS he headed up the internal legal team at the Queensland Building Construction Commission/Queensland Building Services Authority and was Chair of the Society's Government Lawyers Committee.

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus

2026 Program



## Stephanie Cowie

Legal Workplace and Culture Consultant, Queensland Law Society

Stephanie has over ten years' experience working as a lawyer in-house and in private practice in Australia and the UK. She has also worked in education for five years following the completion of a Master of Education (Work and Learning Studies) and a Graduate Diploma of Secondary Teaching.

Stephanie has specifically worked with learners to manage well-being and mental health, and to build cultures of inclusion. She has experience researching, designing curricula, and teaching and engaging with a range of audiences via blended/hybrid learning formats.

Stephanie is an Accredited Mental Health First Aid Instructor and is passionate about wellbeing, developing lawyers, legal education and promoting positive workplace cultures.



## Michael Drinkall

Manager, Trust Account Investigations, Queensland Law Society

Before joining QLS, Michael was a manager at a private accounting firm in the business services and audit sector. Michael has a business degree and is a member of CPA Australia. He regularly provides presentations and training sessions on trust accounting to the profession and universities.

Michael is highly experienced in conducting examinations of solicitors' trust accounts and is recognised as a market leader in providing advice on trust accounting.

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus

2026 Program



## Midja Fisher

Corporate Facilitator, Speaker, Author, Coach; Member of QLS PMC Committee

Midja is a leadership expert who delivers high-energy keynote presentations and corporate workshops that inspire audiences to live and lead with passion and purpose. Through her work with individuals and organisations, Midja creates confident, authentic leaders who love what they do.

What's unique about Midja is her infectious energy, coupled with her extensive business and leadership knowledge, as a former lawyer and partner of a national law firm and learning and development specialist.

Her company specialises in leadership training and coaching for lawyers. Midja is also the author of three books – Unshakeable Confidence, Great Lawyer to Great Leader and Take Off The Cape.

When not working with clients, Midja can be found soaking up the sun on the GC beaches and sipping champagne whilst sharing worst-date stories with her girlfriends.



## Katherine Gilbey

Marketing & Business Development Consultant at KG Consulting CO

Katherine Gilbey is an experienced Marketing & Business Development Consultant who has specialised in law firm marketing for more than a decade.

Working exclusively in law her entire career - Katherine has worked in or with more than 20 different firms – including top tier and global firms in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Before starting her consultancy in 2022, Katherine held the role of Head of Marketing & Business Development at Mullins Lawyers for eight years. A former ALPMA Queensland Committee member, Katherine is well connected within the legal industry and has presented at legal industry specific conferences – including the ALPMA Summit in 2022.

As the Director of KG Consulting Co, Katherine now helps law firms, legal service providers and technical professionals win, grow and retain work with existing and target clients. She does this by first helping firms identify and articulate their unique value proposition, and then helping them to create habits, assets, and processes to efficiently manage those valued relationships.

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus

## 2026 Program



### **Tim Jones**

Director, Business Advisory, Vincents Chartered Accountants

Tim advises legal firms on start-up structuring, restructuring and complying arrangements throughout the many associated stages of Australian Taxation Office (ATO) intervention. Assisting firms to improve their efficiencies and profitability is a particular interest. Tim is often engaged to assist in dispute resolution with a focus on achieving equitable compliant outcomes.

Tim is a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA), Chartered Accountant (CA), holds a Bachelor of Accounting and applies a sharp commercial approach to problem solving.



### **Robert Mackay**

Legal Risk Solicitor, Lexon Insurance

Robert is a Senior Solicitor in the Risk Team at Lexon Insurance and plays an active role in the development of risk management tools. Robert has developed and run the industry first System Testing program in several practice areas since 2014 which have been conducted in hundreds of legal practices across Australia. These are designed to help practitioners identify and manage any system gaps that can result in claims for professional negligence. Robert was admitted as a solicitor in 2005 and regularly presents at the QUT PLT Course and at QLS Conferences.

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus

2026 Program



## Rebecca Niebler

Mindset and leadership coach / Owner, Mind Cultivation

Rebecca is a mindset and performance coach and trainer working with legal professionals, leaders, teams and organisations.

Prior to setting up her own business, Mind Cultivation, Rebecca was the Organisational Culture and Support Officer at the Queensland Law Society where she developed and facilitated QLS resources and materials in the resilience, wellbeing, leadership development and workplace culture space. She was also the Secretary of the QLS Wellbeing Working Group and the Equity and Diversity Committee.

Over the course of her career, Rebecca has worked across a range of industries in Australia and has more than 10 years of diverse experience in organisational learning & development roles as well as facilitating cultural change programs. In addition to her psychology degree, she is accredited in the Hogan assessment tool and holds a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.



## Sandra Pepper

Solicitor, Queensland Law Society

Sandra is a senior lawyer with over 25 years' experience in the legal industry. Sandra practised in property and finance law in private practice in England and Australia before moving into the legal knowledge management and learning and development sectors. Her experience spans all stages of adult learning and development such as needs analysis, strategy development, content creation, course delivery and evaluation.

Sandra is passionate about enabling lawyers, through continued education, to develop strong and profitable business practices while maintaining a positive and inclusive cultural environment.

# Practice Management Course: Sole practitioner to small practice focus 2026 Program



## Giles Watson

Legal Practice Management Consultant

Giles helps law practices realise their potential through coaching, consultancy and tailored professional development. He specialises in client-facing challenges such as positioning, strategy, pricing, marketing, business development, customer experience and client service.

Prior to setting up his own consultancy in 2015, he managed the Practice Management Course at Queensland Law Society, ran a practice management quality mark scheme for the Law Society of England and Wales, and was a business development manager for three London law firms.

Giles has a degree in politics, a Masters in marketing and an MBA. He lectures on costs communication for QUT's Diploma of Legal Practice, and on 'Dynamic strategy and disruptive innovation' for Kaplan Business school's MBA course.