



Research Directions

Office of Research Services

Ethics and Law

Mr Michael Brogan from the School of Law is exploring how legal professionals learn and apply ethical practices through a research collaboration with The Law Society of NSW.



'Ethics in professional practice have traditionally tended to be absorbed as secondary skills, while learning the more technical skills and knowledge of the profession', says Mr Brogan. 'However, with increasing scrutiny from outside the profession, increasing frequency of client complaints, and some high-profile cases of questionable ethical behaviour in the law and business arena, the legal profession is taking stock. Law firms and professional bodies need to know how the profession can improve ethical practices and reduce associated complaints and disciplinary actions.'

Mr Brogan will undertake a comprehensive literature review and document search across domestic and international jurisdictions to explore the strategies and practices employed by different professional bodies (not just legal ones) to reduce complaints against their members and increase the ethics of the profession in general. Representatives from relevant stakeholders such as Law Societies, Bar Associations, Legal Service Commissions, the judiciary and legal academics will also be interviewed to explore current opinions, concerns and practices in legal ethics.

As well as academic outputs and refinement of knowledge in the field, the research will result in a detailed report to The Law Society of NSW that will make evidence-based recommendations for sector-wide changes to the education and professional development of legal practitioners. This is expected to improve ethical practices and give business and individual consumers of legal services greater confidence in the ethics of their legal providers.

Project Title: Professional ethics education and development in the Australian legal profession

Funding has been set at: \$10,000

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