



## Admissions Ceremony 1 16 March 2015

### Chief Justice's observations

Congratulations on your admission into the legal profession of Queensland.

Your dedication, diligence and legal capabilities are properly recognised by your admission today. It is a time to celebrate - but also to reflect on the significant responsibilities of modern legal practice.

Admission marks your entry into an ancient and honourable profession. The values of this profession include service and selflessness, faithfulness and fidelity, and respect and righteousness. Although these central tenets have subsisted throughout the ages, socio-economic and technological advancements raise novel, and often complex, challenges. Your capacity to meet them is central to maintaining public confidence in the legal system, upholding the rule of law, and preserving the reputation of the profession.

In the context of the evolving nature of legal practice, your professional duties can be burdensome. As the most recent entrants into the legal profession, you are expected to discharge these responsibilities to the highest ethical and professional standards. However, your ability to attain and sustain these standards will be a measure of your honour and faithfulness in fulfilling the terms of your oath or affirmation.

Remember that as a member of the legal profession you are an agent for meaningful social change. Your legal education and training are instruments for making a real difference. Use these skills to promote equal justice and jealously defend the rule of law.

Achieving this career milestone is a commendable achievement worthy of public acknowledgement and cause for personal satisfaction and celebration with your family and friends. Their encouragement and support is often a determinant of your success and must be fully recognised and appreciated.

All the very best to you and them.

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# Admissions Ceremony 2

## 16 March 2015

### Chief Justice's observations

Congratulations and a warm welcome to the legal profession.

Admission recognises your demonstrated ability to uphold the law and dutifully serve the courts and the public. For this reason, the requirements for eligibility are rigorous, and the path for admission arduous. These trials and tribulations constitute the crucible through which ethical and diligent legal practitioners are produced, and represent an essential safeguard for the reputation of the legal profession.

The interaction between legal institutions - of which the profession is a critical component - and the community is central to the efficacy of the common law system. Had the common law failed to adapt to the needs of society, it would have fallen into disuse and become a mere intellectual curiosity of a bygone era. However, it is the genius of the common law that it organically evolves with the values and standards of the community.

As members of the legal profession, you are often the most direct link between legal institutions and the community, and thus perform a central role in adapting the common law to social change. However, you must also maintain the ethical and professional codes, cherished traditions and values, and essential ideals and beliefs, inherited from previous generations of legal practitioners. Know the standards, rules and regulations governing your professional conduct – for they are central to daily practice and preserving the reputation of the legal profession to pass on to the next generation in a state of good repair.

As part of your professional duties, I invite each of you to participate as fully as possible in pro bono work. Voluntary legal services are essential to facilitating access to justice for individuals who may otherwise be unable to effectively defend their interests. In this respect, it serves to promote equal justice and reach out to the disadvantaged and marginalised within the broader community. Consequently, pro bono work helps in upholding the rule of law and public confidence within the Queensland judicial system.

The core of your oath and affirmation is service to the public and to the courts. Allow no inducement, threat or temptation to sway you from this path. Serve first, and you will bring honour to this great profession, and it shall reward you for your duties.

All the best as you make your way in your career – wherever it takes you.

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# Admissions Ceremony 3

## 16 March 2015

### Chief Justice's observations

Congratulations to you all on your admission as legal practitioners. This is a commendable achievement of which you are rightly entitled to be proud and celebrate with your families and friends whose contribution is to be acknowledged.

Today is also the first day of your professional future. A career in the law can be as demanding as it is rewarding. There will be many challenges in store for you in coming years. How you rise to meet them will be the true mark of your professionalism.

It is important to strive to achieve career goals but do not waste time – or too much of it at least – dwelling on those not reached. Failure is no bad thing. It humbles us and eventually we learn to laugh at our failures and to learn the lessons of them. The only true failure is in doing nothing.

Another thing – knowledge, hard work and talent justify commensurate financial reward but the true professional does not only work for a fee – commitment to pro bono work will bring other important non-monetary gains and benefits.

Doing something for someone else in need for free helps not only them but ourselves and the community as a whole.

Again, warm congratulations on your significant accomplishment we acknowledge here today in these imposing surroundings. All the very best in however you choose to put your new qualifications to use from now on.

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# Admissions Ceremony 4

## 16 March 2015

### Chief Justice's observations

Congratulations on your entry to the legal profession.

Today is the first day of the rest of your professional life. It may very well be the best day, too. Qualifying for admission to practice law in Queensland is a demanding task and significant achievement worthy of public acknowledgement and celebration.

You are rightly proud of what you have done. It will have been harder and less straightforward for some of you than others. Know that you have overcome whatever barriers were pitted against you and that you are the better and stronger for it.

The legal profession upholds real and challenging ethical standards that you must meet. What you have learned about professional conduct requirements and your character will be put to the test in the coming years. How well you respond under pressure of expectation exerted by clients and others will be measured by the width of the gap between what you actually do, and what you have promised to do. Stay true to fundamental professional values and maintain the highest standards of honesty.

The law and society relies on you to react absolutely appropriately in all situations. The court must have continuing confidence in your ability to discharge your professional functions and obligations consistent with the privilege and power of an officer of the court. This requires that you do the right thing in the right way regardless of the cost. There is no other acceptable option. Failure to strictly adhere to standards of conduct expected of a good and honourable lawyer demeans us all and weakens community confidence in the legal system.

Your paramount duty is to the law and the courts. Everything else – including self-interest – must give way to the extent of conflict. It is important therefore that we learn the lessons from our smaller mistakes so that we avoid making bigger ones next time.

Finally, the joy of this day is for sharing with those who have supported and encouraged you to this point. All the very best for your future.

Adjourn the court.

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