

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

This fifth edition of *Practical Legal Skills* reinforces our conviction that the acquisition of practical skills is as important to law students as their comprehension of substantive law. We also continue in our assertion that the skills discussed are applicable to law students, practical legal training students, and new lawyers alike. If anything, the ‘market’ for integrated legal practitioners—people who are strengthening their own wellbeing, skills, and knowledge in the same ways as they ought to be doing for their clients—has matured and expanded markedly over the years since our fourth edition.

The pandemic has given new meaning to online service delivery and the global nature of advocacy, to the point that the forced intimacy of a live teleconference with colleagues and clients is both pervasive and risky. In this context, it is even more obvious that the fundamental interpersonal skills of ‘lawyering’ are and will remain critical to successful and sustainable legal practice.

In this edition, we have updated the law and introduced new material and exercises designed to alert readers to the client confidentiality issues involved in online security and pervasive social media. We have also expanded our ethical coverage to add a fourth framework of ethical analysis, Confucian teaching, in recognition of this Asian century and the need for a growing dialogue between East and West in the interests of peace and negotiated dispute settlement. We especially thank our research assistant, Rebecca Maher, for her work in insightfully commenting on the text and diligently updating the references.

It has never been more important for well-trained, ethical, and emotionally well-balanced legal practitioners to play a role in advocating for courageous but rational responses to the justice challenges facing democracy, climate, and equitable access to resources. We hope our modest book plays a part in that effort.

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