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## Foreword

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## Foreword

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This volume contains six articles within the General Issue, Volume 21(1), and six articles within the Special Topic Issue on Student Wellbeing, Volume 21(2). We are pleased that Marie Jepson and Keith Mason, on behalf of the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation, have written a foreword for the Special Topic Issue.

The first two articles in our General Issue focus upon the Juris Doctor (JD). Wendy Larcombe and Ian Malkin report on their research into the first year experience of JD students, and Donna Cooper, Sheryl Jackson, Rosalind Mason and Mary Toohey look at the impact that the emergence of the JD has had on academic standards in legal education. In the third article, Jonathan Crowe examines the place of legal theory in legal education and offers concrete pedagogical techniques to embed theoretical perspectives across the core law curriculum. Andrew Mitchell, Bruce Oswald, Tania Voon and Wendy Larcombe demonstrate how experiential learning can be taken to a new level in their article about enhancing the teaching of a course on international institutions by taking students overseas on site visits. (Their efforts were recognised in 2011 when they won the Australasian Law Teachers Association Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Teaching of Law.) Caroline Hart, Sara Hammer, Pauline Collins and Toni Chardon then consider the use of authentic assessment as a vehicle for improving student engagement, in an environment where students are spending less and less time on campus. Finally, Amanda Reilly offers sound pedagogical techniques for the teaching of labour law by incorporating socio-legal material to develop student understanding of the complex policy choices underpinning the law.

This issue of the *Legal Education Review* has involved the efforts of many people, mainly academics, who have volunteered their time and expertise with little thought of reward or recognition. Special thanks need to go to the Faculty of Law at the University of Technology, Sydney, and Professors Rosalind Mason and David Barker for support provided through the ALTA office.

Thanks are due to the members of the 2011 Editorial Committee for their work in putting this Volume together — Nick James, Sonya Willis, Wendy Larcombe, Allan Chay, Donna Buckingham, Anne Hewitt and Patrick Keyzer. Thanks also to our Administrator Alysia Saker, our proofer Jonathan Tyne, and our longstanding typesetter Maureen Platt.

All articles in the *Legal Education Review* are double blind refereed. Our referees spend many hours of their own time reading and providing insightful feedback on the papers. Their efforts are always respected and genuinely appreciated. We also appreciate the support of our Editorial Advisory Board, whose members often serve as referees and which provides overall guidance on the direction of the journal.

The Editorial Committee was pleased to see the disbanding of the journal rankings system referred to in the Foreword to Volume 20. The approach was flawed both in conception and implementation, and it offered cold comfort that the Australian Research Council considered the manifest errors in the initial rankings could be rectified in the second ranking period. We remain concerned that these flawed rankings will continue to be used in a de facto manner and we strongly believe that any alternative approach to assessing research quality must be carefully devised and effectively implemented, respecting the principles of transparency and procedural fairness.

Submissions for inclusion in the 2012 edition (Vol 22) are due by 30 April 2012. Volume 22 will again comprise general research articles on current issues in legal education from all jurisdictions, and a special issue. The topic of the 2012 special issue will be ‘The Teaching–Research Nexus in Law: Opportunities and Challenges’. We welcome articles that address any aspect of the nexus between teaching and research within the discipline of law, including articles addressing the following:

- How can law educators maximise learning outcomes through bringing law and/or education research into the classroom?
- How can law teachers maximise their research outcomes by conducting research into the pedagogy and practice of law teaching?
- How can law educators achieve excellence in supervision of higher degree research students?
- In an environment where few law academics were trained in socio-legal or empirical research methodologies, does the conduct of educational research and the supervision of non-doctrinal legal research pose particular challenges?

The *Review* follows the *Australian Guide to Legal Citation* (Melbourne University Law Review Association 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 2010). Please refer to the LER website for details: [www.ler.edu.au](http://www.ler.edu.au).

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Editor-in-Chief