What is Smart Casual?
Smart Casual is a national project designed to create time-efficient, research-informed online professional development for Australian sessional teachers in law.
The Smart Casual online professional development modules are designed by law teachers, for law teachers. They include videos of sessional law teachers talking about their high quality teaching practices.
Each module has been peer reviewed, trialed by sessional law teachers and modified to respond to their feedback. The modules are free and readily accessible on the web.
The Smart Casual modules incorporate **four themes** critical to legal education:

- diversity
- internationalisation
- digital literacy
- gender

This presentation provides an overview of the significance of the themes for law students and law teachers.
Themes in the Smart Casual Project

Diversity

Internationalisation

Digital literacy

Gender
Diversity is a reality embodied in university classes, whether we consider Indigeneity, gender, socio-economic status, linguistic and/or cultural heritage, ability, faith, sexuality or learning style.
Recognising the diverse life experiences and identities of our students is one thing. Meeting their diverse needs is more challenging.

Responding effectively to uninformed, offensive and/or discriminatory attitudes and behaviour can be even more complex.
Universities are obliged to accommodate the special needs of students with disabilities. We also have legal obligations not to discriminate on the basis of sex, gender identity, race, nationality, cultural or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, relationship status or pregnancy.
However, student success and wellbeing require more than the absence of discrimination. Effective teaching means teaching in ways that embrace, celebrate and accommodate the rich variety of students' lives.

Teaching with diversity in mind can help prepare students to respond appropriately to the diversity of their future clients and communities.
You will find references to *diversity* embedded in the Smart Casual modules to help develop your capacity to recognise, respond to and embrace student diversity in a variety of teaching contexts.
Internationalisation
Internationalisation includes:

- international mobility of and collaboration between legal educators
- international mobility of, and collaboration between, students
- internationalisation of the legal curriculum and of teaching methods.
Internationalisation is a key feature of contemporary legal education and legal practice. Global citizenship is a sought-after graduate attribute.
Future lawyers will practice in a global, multi-jurisdictional context in an internationalised profession.

How can we effectively prepare them?
Many sessional teachers do not have control of the curriculum. Yet every teacher can promote an international curriculum by using international content and examples, and building students' cultural awareness.

We can all support students to deepen their understanding of the broader international contexts of the law, and to become international in approach.
Embedded throughout the Smart Casual modules, you will find ways to foster intercultural competency and support student learning of international, multi-jurisdictional, and comparative perspectives and research skills.
Legal practice involves the use of digital technologies:

- database research
- e-discovery
- practice management systems
- legal informatics
- other emerging technologies.

Digital literacy is crucial to every aspect of professional life.
Law graduates need to be digitally literate: competent in professional, social, cultural, and personal communication practices utilising a variety of digital media.
They need the capacity to select the appropriate medium and adapt it to new contexts in the face of continuous change. They must be equipped to think critically about how the law can adapt to meet the challenge of rapid technological change.
Students need to build awareness of communication technologies, online research tools, ethical issues and professional responsibility in digital contexts, information management, and the broader (digital) contexts within which the law operates.
This theme supports law teachers in building awareness of, and capacity in, using digital technology to facilitate student learning.

It also supports sessional academics to teach law students skills and approaches for using and thinking about technology in professional contexts.

You will find *digital literacy* referred to throughout the Smart Casual modules.
Despite 20 years of equality rhetoric, data shows gender discrimination in the Australian legal profession remains pervasive.

'We still do not take sufficient account of the ways that women's experience is different from that of men whether as practitioners or as people forced to use the law.'

(Baroness Helena Kennedy)
Facilitating students' understanding of gender issues in law and the legal profession requires creating opportunities for critical thinking about the ways stereotypical understandings of gender and gender roles are embedded in the law.
The Australian Law Reform Commission has recognised that achieving equality requires change on all levels, beginning with legal education.

Integrating gender perspectives and creating a gender inclusive learning environment assist in embedding a culture of gender equality that may stay with law students beyond graduation.
You will find references to the *gender* theme throughout the Smart Casual modules, together with strategies for embedding gender awareness in your own teaching.
Smart Casual provides free staff development especially designed for Australian sessional law teachers by Australian law teachers.
Visit <http://smartlawteacher.org/modules> to access self-paced, free professional development modules designed to support your teaching in the following areas:

- Communication and collaboration in law
- Critical legal thinking
- Engagement
- Ethics and professionalism
- Feedback
- Indigenous peoples and the law
- Problem solving in law
- Reading law
- Wellbeing in law
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