Reducing staff and student workload: Redevelopment of an online law unit

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Law of the Internet was the first entirely online postgraduate unit offered by the Faculty of Law at Monash University. It was first offered in 1999 and has been offered at least twice a year since that time. The unit was designed around a website presenting ten modules of content and four discussion forums. Online tasks were submitted via the discussion forum or via email, with student-teacher interaction facilitated via the discussion forums. The constantly changing nature of the unit content, the volume of tasks completed by the students and associated assessment, and the heavy administrative load have created a unit that is very labour intensive for both students and staff.

As the Faculty moves to the provision of increasing numbers of online postgraduate units, it was decided to revisit the design of Law of the Internet with a view to reducing the workload commitment of the teacher and support staff. This poster outlines the process of that review, the selection and implementation of alternative technologies, including wikis and an in-house collaborative learning environment, LEX. Preliminary results as to the impact of the redesign on staff and student workloads will be presented.

Keywords: online unit, collaborative learning, wiki, online assessment, LEX

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