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Law of Evidence

To improve student engagement in the learning process in Law of Evidence, I decided to introduce a managed case based learning program into the course. The approach adopted was of selecting an exemplar case for each week and producing a case study based on it with questions to assist the students to build their knowledge, analyse the legal issues in the case and also reflect on what they learnt. To provide variety in the learning program, the case studies were used to introduce topics as well as to consolidate learning. They were also employed as the basis for group exercises in addition to their use as independent learning tasks.

While students may learn law in a variety of ways, such as lectures, reading texts or answering questions, a proven and effective learning strategy is for students to read and analyse selected cases. As well as providing discussions of the relevant law, cases provide a legal context that helps students to better understand the effect of a rule in the area of law they are studying. The cases also provide an opportunity for the students to observe how different rules may interrelate or overlap in their application to an issue or dispute.

Due to time constraints in the learning program, the case based aspect of the learning process in Law of Evidence had been reduced in previous semesters to enable more content to be covered. Introducing the case based learning activities in place of some of the lecture time in classes gave the students more control in the learning process and also required the students to become more independent learners.

The case studies were effective in increasing the students’ active participation in the learning process. Most of the students took part in the group exercises and completed the individual case studies. There was also an improvement in student satisfaction with the learning program and assessment which was evident in the results of the Course Experience Survey.