

# Reducing Risk with Reliable Research (in the Age of AI)

Laurie Atkinson

Renée Naylor

Dr Fabian Horton



## Acknowledgement of traditional owners and country

This session is being held on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and on behalf of LPLC and Law Library Victoria I wish to acknowledge them as the traditional owners of the land.

I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands which all of those joining us online today are living, learning and working on.

I would also like to pay my respects to their Elders past and present, and any Elders of other communities who may be present today.

# Speakers

## **Laurie Atkinson FALIA**

Director Law Library Victoria, and Victorian Supreme Court Librarian, Laurie sits on many Boards and Committees. Laurie has completed formal studies in history, psychology, linguistics, communication, management and information.

## **Renée Naylor**

Library Education and Communications Coordinator. She has been a librarian at Law Library Victoria for more than 10 years, supporting the courts and practitioners with their legal research.

## **Dr Fabian Horton**

LPLC risk manager with over 20 years of experience spanning both litigious and transactional practice areas. He is a recognised expert in cybersecurity and technology law. He was awarded his PhD in law and technology in 2021.

# Today's Agenda

- Legal Research as a Risk Control
- Technology & Digital Literacy
- Verification
- Access to Trusted Resources
- When You Don't Have All the Answers
- Q&A



# Poll Time!

**How often do you use AI assisted legal research?**

- a) All the time. It's great!
- b) At least once a week.
- c) Once a month.
- d) Never. It's dangerous stuff.



**Put your answer in the poll. Responses are anonymous!**



# Legal Research as a Risk Control

Effective research is a risk control:

- Mastering legal research basics reduces the likelihood of errors that may lead to claims.

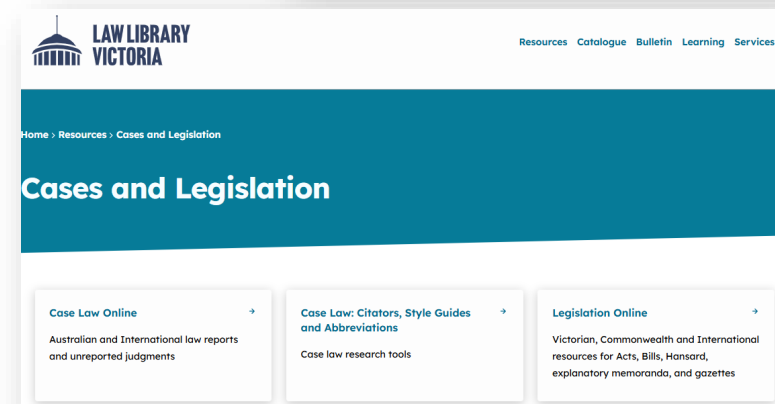
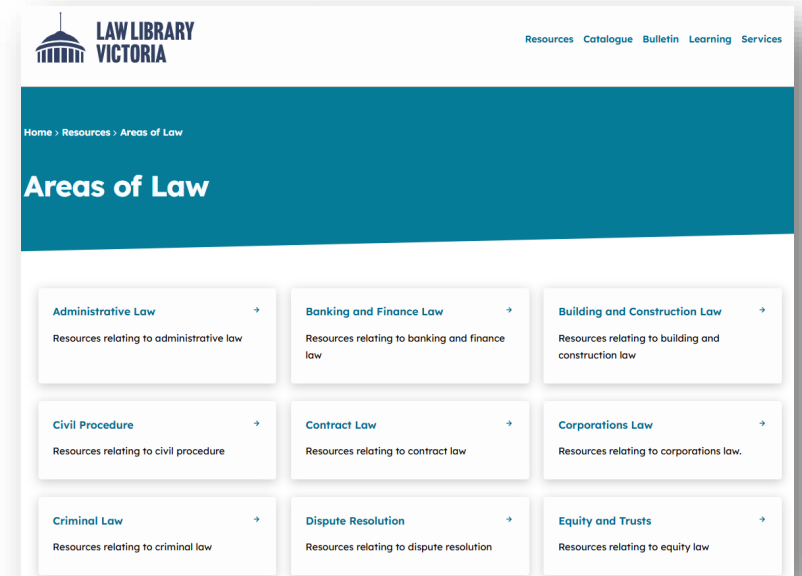
## Start

Identify and select the most relevant and authoritative sources for your needs.

Law Library Victoria website:

→ Areas of Law

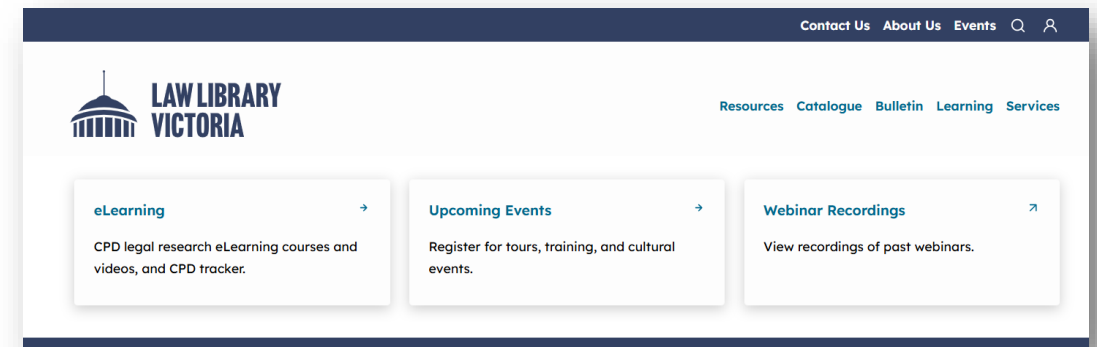
→ Cases and Legislation



# Maintain Legal Research Skills

## Key research principles include:

- Evaluating resources
- Building verification processes into your workflow
- Cross-referencing using trusted resources
- Locating and reading the full text of source material
- Identifying red flags
- Incorporating AI as an assistant, not an authority



# Maintain Legal Research Skills

The limitations of AI tools:

- All products using AI can produce hallucinations. The rate of hallucination is lower in the products accessible through the Library, but it is still possible.
- Search results may include irrelevant cases, and neglect to include relevant cases.
- Summaries generated on the fly are produced by the computer and are not reviewed by a human.





# Authoritative Sources Matter

Authorised law reports  
eg, Victorian Reports (VR),  
Commonwealth Law Reports (CLR)

Government and court websites

The screenshot shows the Law Library Victoria website. At the top is the logo and navigation links: Resources, Catalogue, Bulletin, Learning, Services. Below this is a blue banner with the text "Trusted Resources Expert Support". Underneath is a search bar with the placeholder text "Search the Law Library website". The main section is titled "Key Resources" and contains a grid of nine resource cards, each with a title, a small icon, and an "Add to My List" button.

Resource	Action
eBooks (LexisNexis)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
AustLII	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
AGIS Plus Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
HeinOnline	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
Jade (Public)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
Lawlex (Public)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
The Laws of Australia (Westlaw Australia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
Lawyers practice manual (Victoria) (Westlaw Australia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List
Unreported judgments (Westlaw Australia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add to My List

Commentary written by  
legal experts

Established case citators

# Technology & Digital Literacy

Characteristic	Traditional Tools (Pre-2000s)	Digital Tools (2000–2020)	AI-Powered Tools (2020s–Present)
Sources	Print journals, law reports, textbooks, citators	Online databases (AustLII, LexisNexis, Westlaw), eBooks, eJournals	New and existing legal publishers, AI-curated content and summaries, predictive analytics, document upload
Accessibility	Limited to physical libraries and office collections	Anywhere with internet access	Mobile-friendly, voice-enabled
Search Functionality	Manual indexing and cross-referencing	Keyword and Boolean searching	Natural language queries, AI chatbots, predictive suggestions
Updates	Periodic supplements and new editions	Real-time updates and automated alerts	Continuous, personalised, automated updates
Storage	Large physical space required	Cloud-based, minimal physical space	Fully cloud-integrated with multi-factor security
Collaboration	Minimal, mostly individual research	Email sharing, basic annotation tools	Real-time co-editing, smart annotation, integrated workflow tools

**Understanding  
emerging  
technology will  
help in  
managing the  
risks  
associated  
with the digital  
environment**

# AI in the Profession



Verification cost  
often outweighs  
efficiency gains



Training data  
may be skewed  
toward certain  
jurisdictions



Biases in data  
and algorithms  
can distort legal  
reasoning



Misuse can lead  
to disciplinary  
action,  
sanctions, or  
contempt  
proceedings



AI operates as a  
“black box”



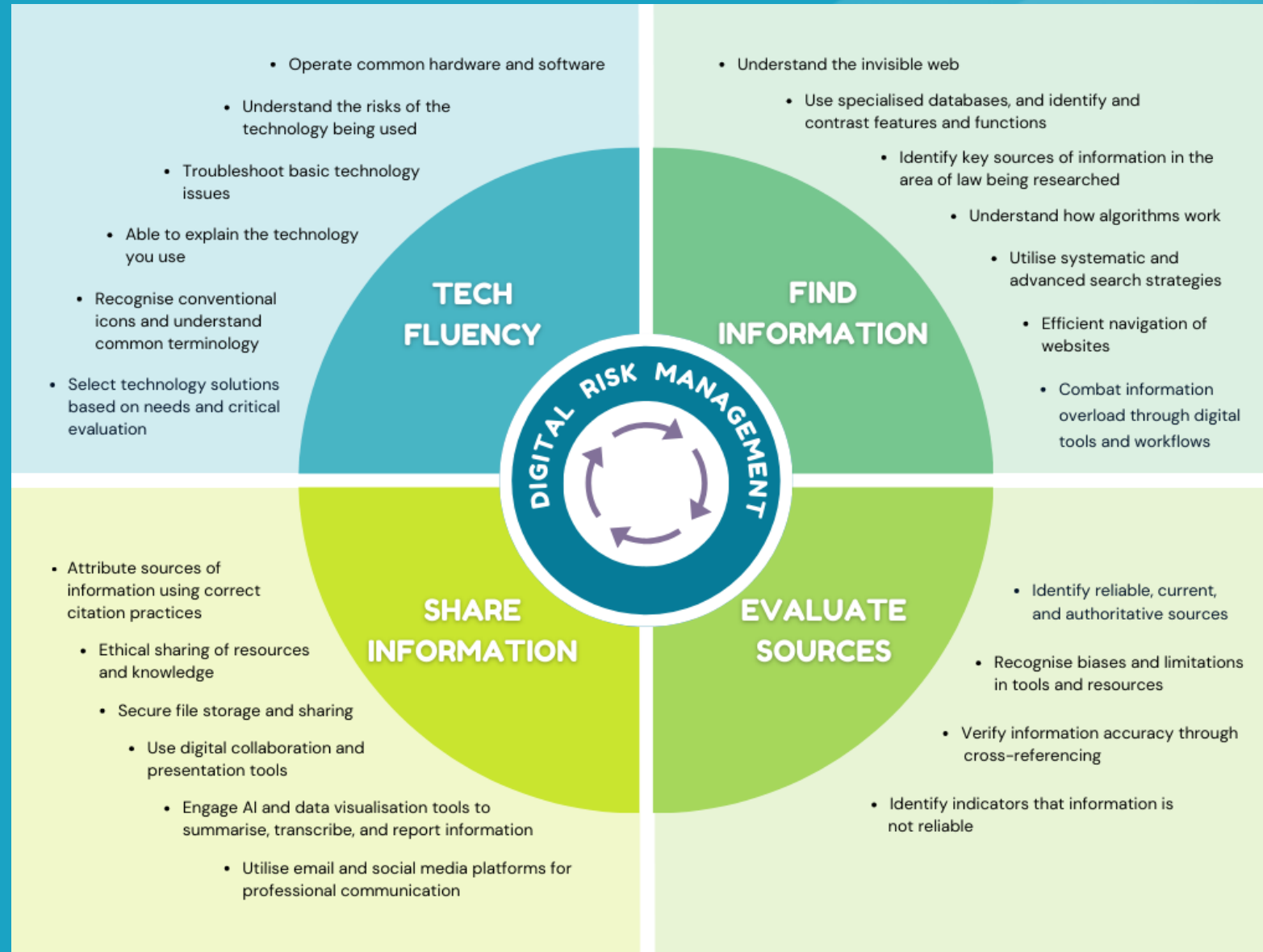
AI outputs are  
probabilistic,  
not  
authoritative



AI servers not  
always located  
in Australia

*It read well so I included it....I did not realise AI could be unreliable...It wasn't me it was my paralegal....*

# Legal Digital Literacy Framework



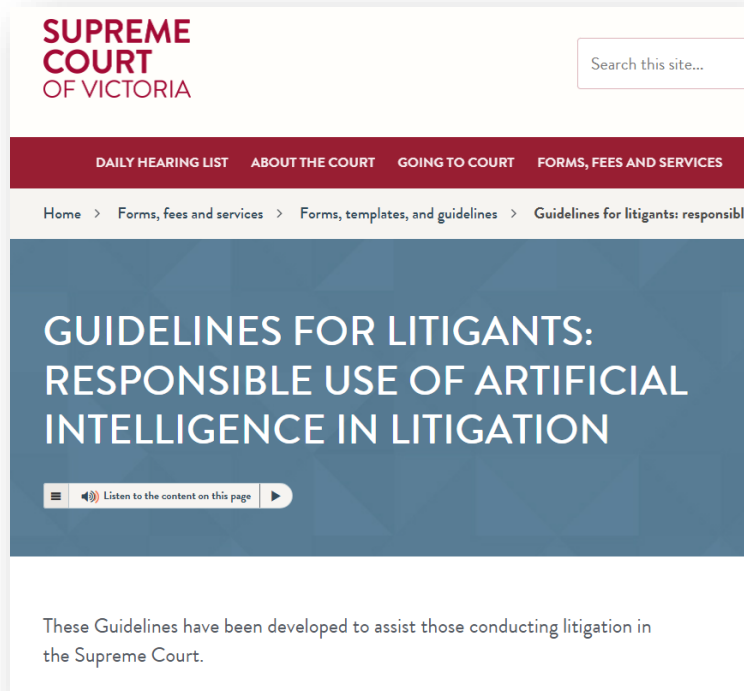
## Digital Risk Management

- Adopt sound cyber security habits
- Understand how technology uses the information provided by users
- Practice client confidentiality when using technology
- Maintain digital hygiene
- Engage in ongoing professional development to stay up to date on technology, trends, and digital risks

# AI in the Profession

“It is not acceptable for artificial intelligence to be used by solicitors or barristers in the production of court documents, unless the product of that use is independently and thoroughly verified.”

Justice Elliott, [2025] VSC 714



# Verification

## The risks of unchecked AI:

- Fabricated citations
- Incorrect citations
- Correct law, invented authority
- Real case, misstated facts
- Failure to note negative treatment
- Inaccurate or misleading summaries
- Outdated authority, superseded legislation
- Wrong jurisdiction
- Unreliable sources, AI citing AI





# Verification: the process

1

Integrate verification into workflows, and document search activity as you go.

2

Verify output using authoritative sources – don't use AI to check AI.

3

Cross-check quotes, citations, and summaries using multiple sources.

4

Check the currency. Read the source material in full.

5

If verification fails, do not rely on the AI output. Document the result, and switch to traditional research methods.

6

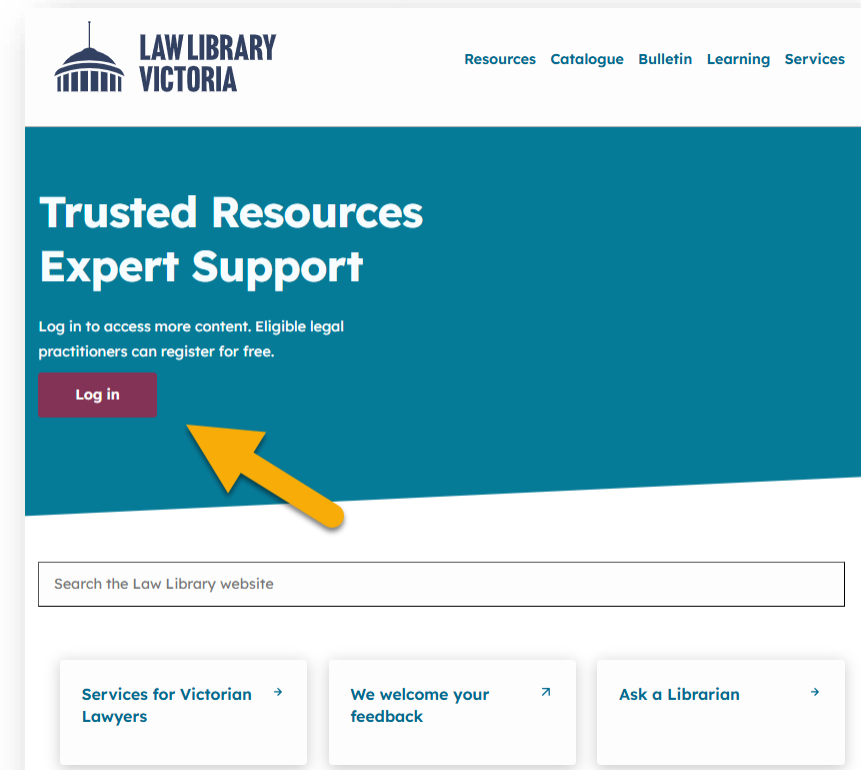
Understand when and how to disclose AI usage in your work.

# AI-Assisted Legal Research Tools

<b>AustLII</b>	AustLII Explorer with AI-enhanced search capabilities – currently in beta testing.
<b>LexisNexis (Lexis+ AI)</b>	Generative AI assistant (Protégé) for conversational research; drafting; summarisation; document analysis.
<b>Westlaw (Precision, CoCounsel)</b>	AI-Assisted research for conversational answers using Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) for accuracy; citation verification (flags fabricated/missing cites); Litigation Document Analyser, drafting, summarisation.
<b>vLex Vincent</b>	Generative AI for research/drafting; documents analysis; workflow automation; transcription; local hosting in Australia.
<b>Lawlex</b>	Lawlex AI Assistant to query legislation, generate summaries, and provide context.
<b>CCH (Wolters Kluwer)</b>	iKnowConnect Expert AI: source-linked Q&A, AI chat, AI summaries grounded in curated content.
<b>ICLR (UK)</b>	ICLR.4 Case Genie offers AI analysis of uploaded legal documents, case suggestions, and similar paragraph function to connect related case paragraphs.
<b>In-house/proprietary software</b>	Software used by law firms, such as Harvey and LEAP, offer generative AI for document analysis, research, summarisation, drafting, and can be integrated with other practice software.

# Access to Trusted Resources

<b>Timeliness</b>	When was the information published or last updated? Has it been superseded or overruled? Are you looking for current or historical information?
<b>Relevance</b>	How relevant is the source to your research purpose or area of law? Is it appropriate for the jurisdiction/country you are working in?
<b>Authority</b>	Who is the author or publisher, and what are their qualifications?
<b>Accuracy</b>	Is the information accurate, supported by evidence, and free from errors and biases? Have you read the full text?
<b>Purpose</b>	What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, persuade, entertain, or sell something?



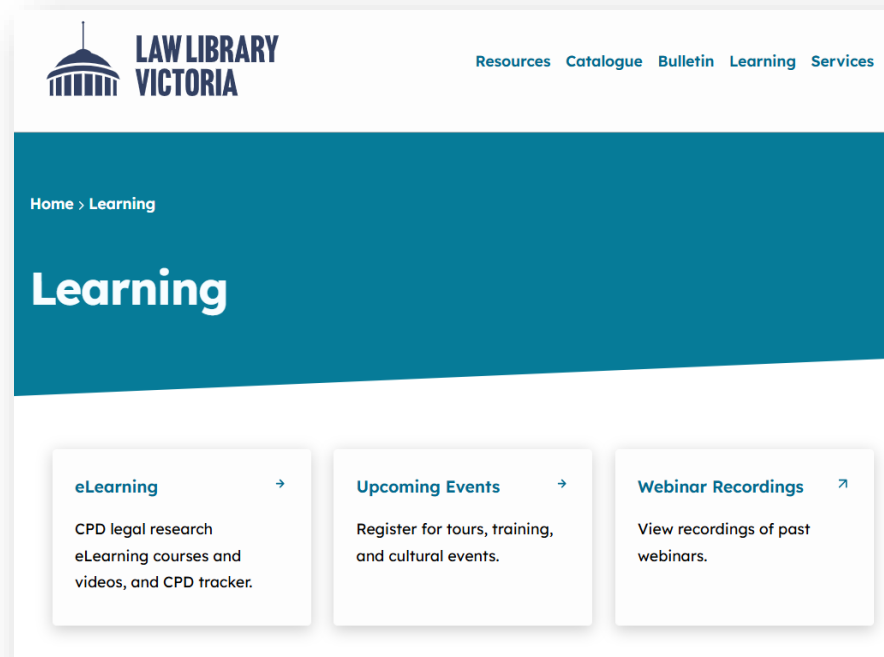
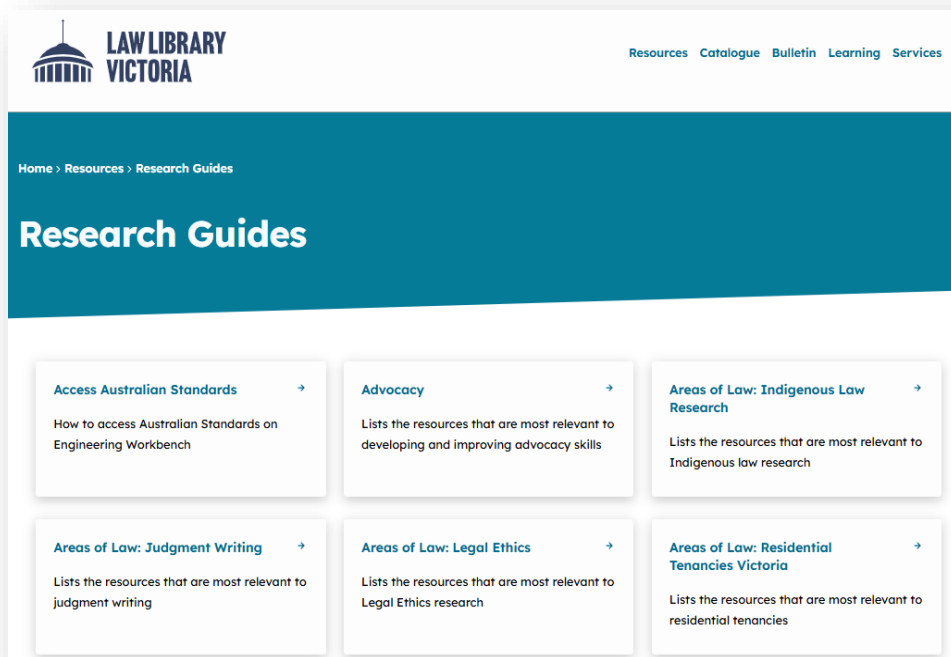
Don't risk using **bad information**.

Lawyers can access trusted resources with their Law Library account.



# When You Don't Have All the Answers

Mitigate research-related risk by proactively developing your research skills when you have the time and seeking expert help when you don't.



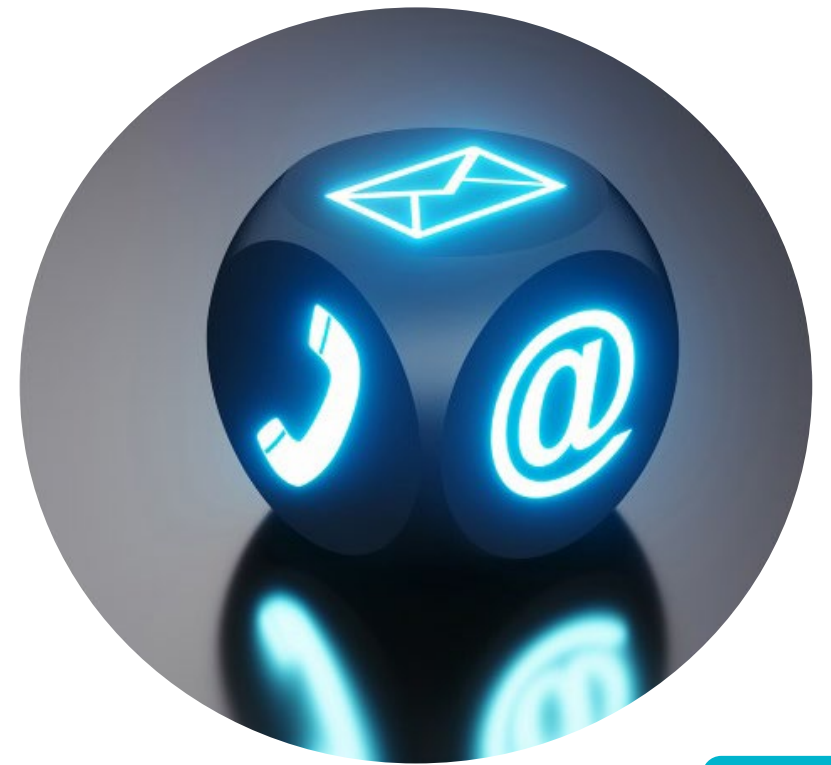
# Q&A



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# Thank you