

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Parliamentary training at UTAS

The University of Tasmania has been selected to educate clerks of the 11 parliaments of Australia, New Zealand and Norfolk Island.

The Australian and New Zealand Association of Clerks at the Table (ANZACATT) awarded the national tender to a team of legal and political academics at UTAS.

Clerks are the most senior non-elected members of the houses of Parliament. Their role is to facilitate the effective and lawful running of Parliament and to provide advice on all the rules and conventions of Parliament to elected members.

UTAS School of Government honorary research associate and one of the course directors Professor Richard Herr said clerks play a central role in maintaining the Parliamentary system.

“Their knowledge of the law and parliamentary practice is vital to the successful operation of our democratic system. This is therefore an extremely important training program that will impact on the parliamentary systems of all jurisdictions in Australasia,” he said.

About 20 students will take the Parliamentary Law, Practice and Procedure course each year. It involves one week of intensive classes at UTAS followed by six months of distance learning.

Prof Herr said it will expand the clerks’ knowledge of the foundations and principles of parliamentary systems and parliamentary procedure as well as the administrative practices essential to the smooth operation of Parliament.

UTAS Vice Chancellor Professor Daryl Le Grew said the tendering process for the course had been extremely competitive.

“The success of the University demonstrates the professional esteem and recognition that the UTAS Law Faculty and the School of Government has achieved nationally and internationally in the areas vital to the teaching of this course,” he said.

Once operational, the teaching program will run from the Law Faculty and be directed by former Tasmanian Attorney General Dr Peter Patmore and Prof Herr.

With support from the Tasmanian Parliament, this course also may be available to non-clerks over the summer.

Speaker of the House of Assembly Michael Polley MP said the close cooperation between the Tasmanian Parliament and the University in areas such as the parliamentary internship had borne more fruit with the ANZACATT decision.

President of the Legislative Council Sue Smith and Mr Polley also expressed their appreciation for the contribution that the University will now make for the professional development of parliamentary clerks across Australia and New Zealand.

For more comment, please call Professor Richard Herr on 6229 3432 or the Media Office.

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