

## Meet the Researcher

# Applying Statistical Methods to Improve Research Assessment in Law

### The challenge

Assessing legal research is complex. Common metrics such as citation counts, journal rankings, and “top quartile” publications do not always capture the full value of research, particularly work that informs policy or addresses national issues.

### The solution

A collaborative study between Western Sydney University and UNSW Sydney examined how legal research is assessed in Australia. The project combined the first nationwide survey of legal researchers with a review of international practices.

### Why it matters

#### Fair assessment

The study explored whether current evaluation approaches are transparent and appropriate.

#### Recognising diverse outputs

Findings highlight that metrics may undervalue books, policy reports, and interdisciplinary work.

#### Better approaches

The research supports more balanced and meaningful evaluation methods.

### Research contribution

Dr Nishanthi Raveendran led the analysis, transforming survey data into evidence-based insights. Her work identified key concerns about the limitations of commonly used metrics.

### The impact

The study recommends a more balanced approach, combining peer review with broader recognition of diverse research outputs and real-world impact.

It demonstrates how statistical analysis can improve research assessment and support better decision-making in academia.



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