

**‘Faculty of Law Refurbishment’**  
**Law Awards Evening Welcome Address**  
19 February 2018

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Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Bond Faculty of Law Awards Night. My name is Professor Nick James, and I am the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Law here at Bond University.

I would first like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we are gathered, the Yugambah - Kombumerri peoples. I pay my respects to elders past and present.

I would next like to extend a warm welcome to some very special guests we have here this evening: Elise Feld from Sambrook Grant Lawyers, Yvette Mason from Minter Ellison, Tanya Diessel from the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre & Advice Bureau, and Justine Cirocco and George Pharmacis from the Robina Community Legal Centre. And of course, I would like to welcome my colleagues from the Faculty of Law and across the University, the students of the Faculty, and their family, friends and supporters. Welcome all.

We have come together this evening to celebrate the achievements of the Faculty’s best and brightest: those who have excelled academically, those who have participated in our law clinics, and those who have proudly represented our Faculty in mooting and other competitions. Tonight is a celebration of excellence. If you are here tonight to receive an award for academic performance, participation, or representation, you are one of the best this Faculty has to offer. Well done.

Bond University’s Faculty of Law is rightly recognised as one of the best law schools in the country in terms of the quality of teaching and the quality of the student experience.

The level of commitment by the members of this Faculty to providing students with the highest quality legal education is extraordinary.

As a professional law school, our focus is upon not only teaching each student the law, but also developing their practical legal skills, developing their character, and helping them to become successful and well-adjusted legal professionals committed to serving their community.

Our dedication to providing the highest quality learning experience was there when the Faculty opened its doors in 1989, and it has not changed in the 29 years that have passed since then.

Until recently the other thing that had changed very little since 1989 was the main law building. Students and staff and Deans and Vice Chancellors came and went, Bond University grew and flourished, and the Law Faculty even expanded into a whole new addition to the building ten years ago. But the main entrance to the Faculty, the Law Library and the spaces available to students for independent study all remained largely unchanged.

What may have been modern and fresh 29 years ago hadn't really kept up with the changing expectations of students, staff and visitors. It was okay, it was functional and acceptable, but when the rest of the University looks this amazing, and when the teaching and scholarship taking place in the Faculty is world class, a 'functional and acceptable' physical space doesn't quite cut it.

Fortunately, the leaders of our University, including our Vice Chancellor, accepted the challenge to make our Faculty even better. They committed the money, time, and resources needed to ensure the quality of the physical space matches the quality of the teaching that takes place here.

We now have a brand new main entrance and reception area, where our students can easily access assistance and support from Faculty staff. We have made the Bond Law Clinic more accessible by members of the public, better able to serve the Gold Coast community, and better able to teach our law students the importance of public service. We have a new law student hub where our students can easily access the various student associations. We have new skills rooms and new classrooms and new corporate training rooms and a magnificent student lounge where our students can study and collaborate and socialise. We have relocated the Kearney Moot Court to the centre of this refurbishment, showcasing our superb training facilities and demonstrating to the world the importance we place upon teaching our law students how to be confident and successful lawyers. And we finally have a modern, spacious, spectacular law library providing our students with the opportunity to do legal research, collaborate with peers and access assistance from our amazing law librarians.

The refurbished Faculty building is evidence of Bond's commitment to its law students. It ensures that the student learning that takes place outside of the classroom is as valued and supported as the learning that takes place in the classroom. Our law students have now been provided with the law building they deserve, and I for one couldn't be happier.

I will now hand the podium back to your MC for the evening, Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching and Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Service Quality, Director of the Bond Dispute Resolution Centre, solver of problems, mediator of disputes, and champion of distressed students everywhere, the amazing Libby Taylor. Thank you.