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### **Back to the future : reflections on legal research courses**

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*“People may tell you that legal research is a waste of time, but I can assure you that it isn't. I spent my summer interning in a Malaysian law firm. Prior to this, I had no knowledge of the Malaysian legal system or its laws. I was expected to find relevant cases or principles within short time frames. Law399 equipped me with the skills, and more importantly, the confidence to use different kinds of print and online resources.”  
(Student feedback 2011)*

The Davis Law Librarians teach curriculum credit courses to law students on two legal research programmes embedded into the law degree programme at the University of Auckland. LAW299 and LAW399 provide scaffolded learning layers through the curriculum to focus on the practical skills of legal



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research, with a focus on students increased confidence, problem solving and familiarity in using legal resources.

This paper will highlight the courses' development, innovations that have been trialled, the importance of a healthy respect for print tools and alternative research methods, such as the use of historic materials. Assessment activities designed to build problem solving and information literacy skills, including a legislative history and an evaluative and reflective research trail, will be shared with the audience.

In conclusion the paper will assess the sustainability of running an intensive legal research programme and the requirements needed to keep the programme up to date and relevant.

