



## School of Law and Social Justice

### International Visitor Seminar

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014, Rendall Building, LT2 2.30pm

**“I don’t particularly want everyone to know I’m a fool”: The impact of victim blaming for online fraud victims**

*Dr Cassandra Cross, School of Justice, Queensland University of Technology*

For those who experience online fraud, it can have a devastating impact across several facets of their lives. Not only do victims have to deal with the financial loss, but many also struggle with physical, emotional and relational effects of victimisation. If this wasn’t enough to cope with, there is also a very strong victim blaming discourse that is attributed to online fraud victims, which exacerbates the detrimental effect on individuals. The existence of a victim blaming discourse is significant. This presentation demonstrates how the victim blaming discourse is evident with online fraud, through the use of interview excerpts from 85 seniors in Queensland, Australia, who received a fraudulent email request. It explores how humour plays a role in both coping with and reinforcing these victim blaming attitudes. Lastly, it outlines the consequences of this discourse on victims through their inability to disclose their victimisation to others and seek the help and support needed for their recovery.

Dr Cassandra Cross is a Lecturer in the School of Justice, Queensland University of Technology. Prior to this, Cassandra worked as a research and senior policy officer for the Queensland Police Service. During this time, Cassandra commenced a research project examining seniors’ experiences of online fraud. She was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2011 to further examine the prevention and support of online fraud victims across the UK, USA and Canada. Since taking up her position at QUT, she has published in this area and has continued research into several facets of online fraud, including a comparison of victim support services in Australian and Canada, policing approaches and discourses surrounding victimisation. With colleagues from QUT and the Australian Institute of Criminology, she was awarded a Criminology Research grant in 2013 to conduct the first national study of online fraud victimisation in Australia, with a focus on reporting and support.