

## SEMINARS ON LAW AND TECHNOLOGY (SLATE)

TRAIL is proud to present a series of Seminars on Law and Technology (SLATE). Each SLATE session explores a theme in the current debates surrounding the interactions between law and technology, by way of presented papers and discussions. SLATE will be of interest to academics, practitioners, and entrepreneurs who desire a more nuanced exploration of the legal issues involved in the creation and adoption of new technologies.



# SLATE VIII PRESUMPTION VS. REALITY: UNPACKING LEGAL TRUST IN AI SYSTEMS

TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2025 || 4:00PM TO 5:15PM || LEE SHERIDAN CONFERENCE ROOM, NUS LAW

**PROFESSOR STEPHEN MASON**

BARRISTER & VISITING PROFESSOR  
FACULTY OF LAW, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

This seminar will consider the common law presumption reintroduced in 1997 by the Law Commission in England and Wales that 'In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the courts will presume that mechanical instruments were in order at the material time'. This presumption explicitly applies to evidence from computers.

The presumption is discussed in contemporary context, followed by a brief overview of the practical issues that have arisen since its introduction.

Comparison will be made with how the presumption has worked in England and Wales and the presumption in relation to electronic records under s116A of the Singapore Evidence Act. *Gil v PP* [2025] SGCA 21 will be considered.

This seminar is based on a written submission to the UK Ministry of Justice Use of evidence generated by software in criminal proceedings: Call for Evidence



**Stephen Mason** was called to the Bar by the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple in 1988. He is no longer in practice.

He is the joint editor, with Professor Daniel Seng, of the practitioner textbook *Electronic Evidence and Electronic Signatures* (5th edition, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies for the SAS Humanities Digital Library, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2021), and general editor of *International Electronic Evidence* (British Institute of International and Comparative Law, 2008).

He founded the open-source international journal *Digital Evidence and Electronic Signature Law Review*, which he assigned in October 2024 as a gift to the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, together with the annual royalties.

Stephen has acted as the academic external marker in postgraduate degrees dealing with electronic evidence: LLM, University of Oslo (2006); PhD, College of Social Sciences and International Studies, University of Exeter (2013); PhD, Law School, Queensland University of Technology (2015); PhD School of Law, University of Aberdeen (2018).

He is interested in understanding why people trust their daily lives to computer systems yet remain careless about how they use them and rarely show curiosity as to how they work, and what and with whom their data is being shared. It follows that it is perplexing that the legal system seems to have failed to recognise the imbalance that has occurred.



**Daniel Seng** teaches and researches on information technology law and infocommunications law. He is Senior Advisor, Centre for Technology, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence and the Law (TRAIL) at NUS Law where he is also the Director of LLM (Intellectual Property & Technology Law).

Between 2001 and 2003, he was concurrently the Director of Research, Technology Law Development Group at the Singapore Academy of Law. He graduated with firsts from NUS and Oxford, where he received the Rupert Cross Prize in 1994. He received his doctoral degree from Stanford Law School, where he used machine learning, natural language processing and big data techniques to conduct research on copyright takedown notices. While he was at Stanford, he was a non-residential fellow with the Center for Legal Informatics (CodeX).

**Programme**

- 3:30PM** Registration
- 4:00PM** Presentation by Prof. Stephen Mason
- 5:00PM** Q&A session moderated by Assoc. Prof. Daniel Seng
- 5:15PM** End of Seminar

**Registration Fee:** S\$98.10 (inclusive of GST)

Complimentary for full-time NUS Staff and Students

**Register at:** <https://bit.ly/4lqbKSA>  
or scan the QR Code

**Closing Date:** 12 September 2025

**Contact:** [trail@nus.edu.sg](mailto:trail@nus.edu.sg)

