Employment, Education and Training Minister Syd Stirling today congratulated Charles Darwin University’s Faculty of Law for pioneering Australia’s first-ever fully on-line external law degree.

Mr Stirling, who will launch the program at the university today, said it would significantly increase remote residents’ ability to gain a law degree.

"The degree program offers the kind of innovative approach needed to shore up CDU’s reputation throughout Australia and internationally," Mr Stirling said.

"By using new technology, the Faculty of Law has removed much of the disadvantage that remote, external students face with their studies by breaking down the barriers of distance.

"External students will be able to speak in ‘real time’ with their tutors and other students around Australia; listen to lectures via the Internet within 24 hours of their delivery; and access a wide range of legal research resources.

"The program began as a pilot this year and will begin in earnest from Semester 1 next year. The Faculty aims to attract students from all over Australia, especially regional Northern Territory, the Kimberley and remote South Australia."

Mr Stirling said the flexible and innovative approach taken by the Faculty of Law in developing the program was part of a new era for higher education in the Territory following the creation of Charles Darwin University.

"To succeed, CDU needs to increase enrolments and provide our young people with a real alternative to studying interstate and staying there once they complete their studies," he said.

"The new on-line external law degree strives to achieve both of these things.

"Congratulations to everyone at CDU involved in developing this program."

Mr Stirling will speak on-line with remote students at today’s launch, which will be held at 11am in the Chinese Gardens at Charles Darwin University.