

The Value of Legal Education

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Background:

- Read Law at NLS;
- Sandwich Placement at Saunders Law;
- Defence Intern at The Hague;
- Bar Vocational Course;
- Called to the Bar, in 2010;
- Member of Middle Temple;
- Jules Thorn Scholar;
- Pegasus Scholar

Pause for Thought

Supply vs Demand
The indicator of Value?



- o There were 3,099 applications in 2009/10 to study for the BPTC commencing in 2010/11, an increase of 16.6% (442) on applications the previous year, 2008/9;
- o Total enrolled students were 1,422;
- o 446 First Six pupillages were registered in 2010/11;
- o A shortfall of almost 1,000 pupillages;
- o In reality a shortfall of 5,000 pupillages;

Why do people study law?

- A recognised academic degree.
- Genuine interest in the subject matter.
 - Pre-requisite for a career at the Bar.
 - Pre-requisite for a career as a solicitor.
 - A potential route to other careers.

Five hypothetical students. Five hypothetical needs. Five very different interpretations of value.

Why did I study law and how did I select my university

The Path I walked...

- o Two Years of an LLB A
- o Placement Year V
- o Final Year of an LLB A
- o Bar Finals (BVC) A/V
- o Pupillage V
- o CPD A



The Path I walked.....through the Inns of Court

Dinings (a true story)

Advocacy Training

Goldilocks and the three bears (a true story)

Lectures

.....leading to Pupillage. Eventually.



Pupillage (First Six, Second Six and Third Six)

Learning whilst Earning

- The first six months consist of shadowing one or more Pupil Supervisors and other members of Chambers and usually involves undertaking legal research, drafting opinions and observing in court.
- During the second six months, pupil, will continue to shadow a Pupil Supervisor but will also be allowed to accept professional instructions. On satisfactory completion of the second six, pupils will receive a Full Qualification Certificate.
- Third Six / Tenancy.

How do you create the perfect lawyer?

- o a good grasp of substantive law;
- o good analytical, research and other technical skills;
- o interpersonal skills;
- o An ability to apply law to facts;
- o The BTPC: “sole function and purpose.....is to introduce prospective barristers to the practical knowledge and skills they will need to provide a high quality professional service to their future clients” (Wood Report)

Extra Curricular, is this where the real value lies?

- Mooting
- Debating
- Charity Work
- Internships
- Mini-Pupillages
- Vacation Schemes
- Placements

Should these be formal part of the Degree Programme?
Application Forms: “Academia” vs “Real Life Experience”

More than just advocacy

Where are the required qualities?

- Good communication and interpersonal skills;
- Confidence;
- Excellent literacy skills;
- The ability to describe complex matters of law in a simple manner;
- Good research skills;
- Excellent advocacy skills;
- Problem-solving skills;
- Attention to detail;
- The ability to remain calm whilst under pressure;
- (a true story)

You can achieve these qualities with a vocational focus

- o Essay based questions vs problem based questions;
- o Academia– is there a shelf-life (don't shoot me);
- o Simulated Learning vs Real Life;
- o What you can never learn (another true story);
- o Benefits of a Sandwich Degree:
 - o Money.
 - o Drive.
 - o Employability.

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