

The second meeting of the Nottingham Law School Legal Education Group was held on Tuesday 7th October 2008. The LEG, led by Becky Huxley-Binns and Jane Ching, engages in research in legal education and as a result aims to raise the profile, internally and externally, of the teaching quality within Nottingham Law School.

The group discussed a number of issues arising from the previous meeting, together with suggestions for an internal legal education conference and future themed meetings of this group.

The aims of the Legal Education Group

1. Raising the profile of legal education at NLS *This includes attendance at conferences, internal dissemination of teaching methods (which work and which don't) and publication of research papers.*

2. Publications strategy *We are keen for the members of the group to generate publications on learning and teaching law, and Tom Lewis has agreed to dedicate an edition of the Nottingham Law Journal to legal education.*

3. Collaborations *The LEG is keen to develop more extensive internal links (through the LTC network, inviting lawyers teaching in other schools to share their thoughts on teaching and learning, CASQ etc.) and also externally (e.g. UKCLE, ALT, SLS, SLSA, LILAC).*

4. Income generation

A guide to acronyms (and other terms) [2]:

WBL: *Work-Based Learning (here specifically the scheme being tested by the SRA as a replacement for the training contract)*

John Dewey (1859-1952): *US philosopher and proponent of problem-solving (as opposed to rote-learning) approaches.*

ERASMUS: *an EU-sponsored scheme allowing students at EU HE institutions to participate in exchanges (apparently not a lot of NLS participation)*

Would you like to join us? *The LEG is open to all academics in all 3 divisions of the Law School, and you do not have to be interested in publishing in legal education. If you are interested in what we teach, why we teach it and how, you are more than welcome to join us, either for a single session or at every meeting. We plan to meet 3 times a year and you will be kept informed by email. We have a standing item on the agenda of what we are up to in terms of legal educational practice and research. From now on, we will also have 'themes' at each meeting, and we welcome suggestions on what might be discussed in future.*

THEMES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The group discussed ideas for future themed meetings:

- Meeting 3: issues surrounding values, socialisation into the profession, is there an "ethic" broader than "legal ethics" or "professional conduct"?
- Meeting 4: levels (up to and including D level) and assessment of levels: where does recognising the student's context shade into changing the level being assessed?
- Meeting 5: different legal cultures inside and outside the academy and the profession(s)
- Meeting 6: broadening the curriculum, existing and possible usages of multidisciplinary aspects at all levels

NOTTINGHAM LAW JOURNAL

A special "legal education" issue is planned as the first edition of 2010 (copy deadline therefore end 2009). Contributions may include articles, short pieces and commentary, book reviews of education books, case notes on educational issues and so on. Root out that essay you did for your PGCE and have another look at it with a view to publication. Advice, support, mentoring and general friendliness available for those who perhaps haven't thought about academic publication before. Contact Tom Lewis (editor) or Jane Ching (assistant editor). NB: every issue of the journal carries a "Nottingham Matters" section which can be used to report items of innovation and interest, reports of attendance or presentation at conferences and so on.

THE TRAINING CONTRACT

NLS was successful in obtaining the contract to provide "external assessment organisation" services for those participants in the SRA's two year pilot of the period of work-based learning intended to replace the training contract for intending solicitors (with outcomes to be assessed rather than simply a checklist of experiences to be had). Other participants in the pilot are firms and similar organisations doing it in-house but the group of 40 people signed up with NLS include those working for solicitors, local government, in-house in industry and in a number of different organisations. Purposes of the proposed change include setting a common standard to be achieved by all new solicitors and increasing access to and diversity within the profession. Many solicitor colleagues in PRD and GD have been recruited as reviewers for candidates for the two year period, which is likely to be challenging in many ways.

TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE

John Tingle continues to work on setting up a one-day, drop-in/drop-out conference for all academic staff across the law school and is involved in a series of conversations with representatives of the divisions to identify useful themes and topics that are school-wide. The structure of the conference is likely to involve a series of chaired workshop/discussion sessions to which colleagues can bring their experiences and problems.

LTC PROJECTS

There is some completion on the LTC projects, leading into papers for LILAC and other output.

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

A cross-school professional doctorate (education, social sciences, law) programme is being established (with a re-run of module 1 in November for late starters). Contrasted with a PhD programme the activity is broken up in to discrete chunks so that study is designed to be more amenable to the needs of working, professional students. Course leaders are Kevin Flint (education) and Adam Barnard (Social Sciences). At present there is only one student from law but there may be requests to assist with supervision in the future and work in this programme may tend to be more practice-based than in PhD study.

OTHER ACTIVITIES REPORTED

Graham has been attending conferences on curriculum design with ideas based on a Deweyian approach and is looking to develop this further through participation in a proposed book of "affect" in legal education.

Dates for your diaries. 1. The LILAC Conference is **23 and 24 January 2009** in Warwick. See www.ukcle.ac.uk/newsevents/diary. 2. The date being investigated for the NLS learning and teaching internal conference is **19th May 2009** but please stand by for further details. 3. Researchers into the legal profession at Lancaster "will shortly be launching an ESRC seminar series entitled 'conceptualizing the professions in the 21st century'. The first event is on January 6th at Lancaster followed by legs at Nottingham University (**April 24th 2009**), Leeds (summer 2009) and City University London (Jan 2010)".