

**City of London Law Society Training Committee Thursday 9 January 2020 Meeting
Linklaters, 1 Silk Street, London EC2Y SHQ**

Attendees:

Ben Perry (BP)
Edward Brown (EB)
Frances Moore (FM)
Hannah Kozlova Lindsay (HKL)
Louisa Mendes Da Costa (LMdC)
Patrick McCann (PM)
Peter Carrick (PC)

Apologies:

Caroline Janes (CJ)
Catherine Moss (CM)
Greg Lascelles (GL)
Lindsay Gerrand (LG)
Stephanie Tidball (ST)

Agenda Items

1. SQE latest from SRA/our colleagues etc including the SQE2 pilot

The timing still looks tight. Only 167 of a desired 300 took SQE2 pilot even though it was announced as over-subscribed. Still waiting to hear for SQE2 pilot results. Difficult to get feedback because those taking the pilot have signed NDAs.

2. SRA Conference on 17 December - any observations?

PM took the view that this has turned into a provider conference - universities and law schools. Not many private law firms represented. Themes from universities are that they are not preparing SQE compliant courses and were generally not envisaging entering into the SQE service lines. Most universities have put SQE in the "too hard" box. Not enough suitably qualified tutors, not enough detail, want to keep academic rigor to their courses, many of their students do not want to become solicitors.

3. How City firms are responding/where their thinking is re pre-join training programmes and training contacts

- what, if any advice should we be providing to City firms?
- should we be running a knowledge -sharing event?

Law firm 1: City consortium to run GDL and SQE. Stull planning on 4 seat rotation but may want to flex things more.

Law firm 2: all on the to do list for the new year. No real decisions yet. Problem with only one start date in September with scheduling SQE

Law firm 3: Beginning to think about start dates. May start delaying start dates slightly to get ready for SQE. Non-law students to start new process from in 2021 and law graduates in 2022. Targetting 2023 intake for first switch over to SQE

Law firm 4: Training contract not really considered yet. Do we want to keep things the same or shake things up a bit.

Law firm 5: In middle of firm-wide consultation. Due to finish in mid-January. Will probably stay the same. GDL will remain the same. Will try to front load as much as possible. Will want to cover some City topics.

Law firm 6: apprentices do a two year paralegal apprentice and if good enough will graduate to a solicitor apprenticeship similar to a training contract. Only in Manchester. Will try to front load as much as possible. SQE1 + 2 plus skills elements.

Further discussion: There is still uncertainty about the issue of whether you can employ qualified solicitors in a paralegal role. It may be worth organising a workshop to look at the issues of qualifying paralegals, QLTS etc. Would allow a broader consideration and avoid competition problems.

ACTION POINTS:

1. PM to circulate Barbri graphic which describes different strategies for the transitional period to SQE
2. PM to think about incorporating different scenarios in a workshop to raise discussion about how firms would deal with SQE and handling paralegal qualification issues. Invite some graduate recruitment and Trainee partners to come along

4. Messaging out re SQE to potential City trainee solicitors

- **we have had a couple of queries on this recently**

Impress on SRA to get good communications to university students. There is probably a gap at universities on career advice in the area of SQE. It would be problematic for CLLS training committee to get involved in this.

ACTION POINT: Include as agenda item at SRA meeting in February

5. Commercial understanding of incoming trainees - are universities doing enough?

BP - initial reaction to the approach by Denis Viskovich was that this is an interesting topic but not really part of the Training Committee remit. Perhaps more relevant to City Horizons scheme backed by CLLS. We might need to make the connection for him.

ACTION POINT: BP to respond.

6. How might training contracts need to change under the SQE

- **are any of us on top of that yet?**

Most firms are not on top of this. We will need to look through the Statement of Competence and the type of things which trainees might need to comply with in training. Firms will need to certify that they have had the opportunity to develop some of the competencies. PSC will disappear into SQE 1 and 2. Do we need to share ideas on what training period should look like - skills, competencies, what is needed to be a City solicitor? What are the benefits of the standardised approach to City periods of training?

7. QLTS being replaced by SQE - should we be getting more education into the City re this, I'm not sure many of us are across this yet

ACTION POINT:

1. Include as discussion topic in CLLS workshop (to be organized)
2. See action point 3 above

8. Continuing competence

No-one is sensing a real difference in the amount of training lawyers are doing since CPD requirement has changed. Much less training in smaller firms. Still concern about whether there is enough reflection on learning to comply with the spirit of the CPD change.

9. CLLS and engagement with the City generally

- **what should we be doing strategically this year (eg speaking slots, running events, thought leadership pieces, other articles, outreach etc) - start of discussion. Aim to identify <5 things? Need to consider resourcing**

Focus has been on regulatory side (SQE) in the last couple of years. Now time to broaden thinking into other issues, O-shaped lawyers, business development,

April/May - session on SQE implementation. We can then put that slightly to bed.
Meet in late Summer with SRA about results of SQE2 pilot. Then the Committee should look at some other areas:

- Partner development. What options are there. Business Schools are often very generic. Is there an appetite for doing something more broadly for the City
- Alternative ways of working and alternative career paths. Sideways moves for Senior Associates eg LPM roles. Future of the legal careers.
- Diversity and better work-life balance.
- What does the training contract look like if it is not the traditional arrangement of the supervisor sitting near a trainee.
- Developing supervisory skills .

Perhaps also place some Thought Leadership pieces or articles over the next year.

ACTION POINT: PM to put together a proposed year-planner for the committee's comments – looking for volunteers to help on implementation.

10. CLLS Committee member dinner - Tuesday 4 February 2020 - Cutlers Hall, Warwick Lane, London EC3M 7BR

- invitation to join, see attached
- also an occasion to mark the retirement of exiting chairs
- details on CLLS website - let me know if you want the original email

ACTION POINT: PM and HKL to attend. Others to confirm if they were keen to attend.

11. The Law Society Training Committee - request for City representatives to join

- from former CLLS Training Committee member, Allan Murray -Jones

All to ask people from L&D teams to suggest people the CLLS training committee could put forward.

12. AOB

CLLS website still has wrong list of members for the Training Committee. **ACTION POINT:** PM to check and arrange for amendment

Agree to meet 2 to 3 times a year.

Next meeting on Wednesday 12 February at 4.30 for the meeting with SRA.