

I am a barrister who worked in the legal departments of various banks, including Deutsche Bank London branch and Royal Bank of Canada and a regulatory authority. Subsequently I worked as a lecturer, teaching on the LPC at the College of Law, Bloomsbury Branch for over ten years.

My responses to the "what ifs" summarised in para 98 of this Discussion Paper are as follows:

The foundation subjects are a crucial knowledge base and should be prescribed. The senior partners of the top 100 law firms and leading chambers should be asked if further subjects should be prescribed. At some point in their lives lawyers have to learn the law and without a sound understanding of contract, EU, land law and other core subjects, law students lack the tools to develop more specialised knowledge.

The GDL or equivalent - any revised qualification for entry into the legal profession must be of degree standard and based on a firm grasp of the foundation subjects, as well as the ability to write logically and grammatically, and to conduct legal research and to summarise that research succinctly.

The LPC/BPTC. It is a matter for the senior partners of the top 100 law firms and leading practitioners at the self employed and employed bar to decide whether the current LPC and BPTC provide sufficient training for those beginning training contracts and pupillage, as they are in the best position to judge this, and to propose improvements.

The training contract / pupillage. These may be insufficiently regulated to assure the quality of training. The concept of fair access to the profession is rather abstract and nebulous. Not everyone who wishes to be a lawyer has the competence to become one - are you concerned with fair access for persons who have the necessary intellectual and interpersonal skills or fair access for anyone who decides they want to be a lawyer, however unrealistic their chances of employment?

The 3 year rule - this is crucial. If anything, because of ever increasing commercial pressures, there is too little supervision of many newly qualified lawyers.

CPD requires reform and must be extended to paralegal staff. Mobility within the legal profession is becoming more and more important, as long term career opportunities shrink. A common

professional training would promote career mobility, so simplification would be a useful step forward.

I would be pleased to discuss any of these issues or go into more detail if that would be helpful.

Regards  
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