



legal education &  
training group

## LETG News

### Law Society latest



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### LETG Newsletter September/October 2006

**"New trainees, new NOs, summer holidays officially over – welcome to the autumn life of a law firm training department! We have lots in store for you to keep your spirits up over the next few busy months – so read on!" (ed.)**

#### **New Framework for work based learning**

Many thanks to the members who will make up the Focus Group representing the LETG at the meeting with Dr Jonathan Spencer (Chair of the ETC) and Hilary Lloyd (Acting Director of Regulation Standards) on 21 September 2006. They will discuss the proposed new framework for work-based learning and we are hoping to put a short position paper to Dr Spencer and Ms Lloyd before the meeting for their consideration.

Law firm members taking part in the Focus Group are: Herbert Smith, Eversheds, Burges Salnan, Leboeuf Lamb Greene MacRae, Hammonds and Lawrence Graham.

We strongly encourage you to put your comments or concerns directly to the Law Society so that the views of those who provide trainee solicitors with the opportunities to qualify are adequately represented.

The deadline for the consultation is **Friday, 29 September**. This is your opportunity to influence how the Law Society crystallises this part of the new training regime leading to qualification. Have your say!

#### **Reconstruction of Education and Training Committee**

Paula McMullan, LETG Chair, updated the LETG committee at its meeting on 21 August that there are currently plans to "reconstruct" the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Dr Jonathan Spencer (Chair of the ETC) will no longer be accepting recommendations to sit on the Committee, but instead interested parties will be invited to apply for selection. A panel from the Law Society Regulation Board will then make the selection to ensure that there is

an appropriate spread of knowledge and expertise amongst the members of the ETC.

It is currently not clear how many places there will be on the new Committee - more details are expected at the ETC meeting on 27 September. Paula is in the process of lobbying to maintain the LETG's place on the committee and will keep you informed on our progress on this.

### **Training vacancies on the LETG website**

Following feedback from a number of members, we have put up a new section of the website which allows member firms to post any training vacancies they have. If you have a vacancy and would like to make use of this page, please send [Peter Carrick](#) your advert with details of how long this is to be advertised.

### **It's membership renewal time!**

Jane Cochrane's email on your membership renewal should already be in your inbox. Please ensure you renew promptly to benefit from the discounted rates on our events.

In response to feedback from law firm members, the Committee has been reviewing the Commercial Friends category of membership and whether this is the most appropriate way to involve training providers in the LETG.

We have received comments from law firm members over the past year that that you find it easier and more beneficial to network when Commercial Friends are not present. For this reason, we have decided to put the renewal of Commercial Friends membership on hold while we explore other avenues for their involvement. Paula will be writing to the Commercial Friends individually to explain the decision.

We will of course keep you posted on the opportunities being made available to Commercial Friends and, as always, we welcome your comments on this proposal.

## **LETG Member sharing**

### **Good trainers used recently by LETG members**

**Scott Keyser from Communicaid** recently ran a Report Writing workshop for the Business Development team at Wragge & Co and has gone down very well.

Are there any trainers **YOU'VE** used lately that have really impressed you? Let [Karen](#) know and we'll give them the praise deserved in this newsletter.

### **Tips for trainers - my favourite icebreaker**

**Name that tune!** Paula recommends this icebreaker to make sure that your delegates have switched off their mobile phone before a training session. Ask each person to play their ring tone and explain what it says about them or why they chose it. There is always a lot of button pushing while they work out how to play it and is a fun way to create the learning state, as well as making sure they switch their phones off - or ensuring you know exactly whose phone has gone off if they don't!

Don't be shy - share any tips you have for successful training events. Email your favourite icebreakers, energisers, temperature checks or other ideas to [Karen](#).

## **Event dates for your diary**

### **LETG Midlands regional meeting**

**Thursday 14 September at Eversheds, 115 Colmore Row, Birmingham 12 – 2pm**

The first meeting of Midlands-based LETG firms will be taking place in Birmingham, with Sharon Bancroft of Eversheds hosting. Those attending include Wragge & Co, Howe & Percival, CLT and Buckles. If there are any

other Midlands-based member firms who'd like to attend, could they let Sharon know – the more, the merrier! You can either telephone Sharon on 0845 497 1748 or email her at [sharonbancroft@eversheds.com](mailto:sharonbancroft@eversheds.com).

## **Leading Legal Learning Workshop: SOLD OUT!**

**Wednesday 27 September: College of Law, Moorgate**

The response has been overwhelming, as anticipated!

Well done to those of you who have secured your places, and we look forward to seeing you there.

For those who didn't manage to get a place, we do have the following exciting events, which are also coming up. Act now to secure your place!



## **E-learning Forum– Places still available, book now and stay for the AGM!**

**Monday 23 October: Simmons & Simmons, 1 Ropemaker St, London: 12.30 – 17.00 (followed immediately by LETG AGM and networking drinks)**

Again, it's great to see we're hitting the nail on the head with lots of interest from you on this e-learning forum. Speakers will include representatives from leading e-learning providers and law firms with a wealth of experience in this area - make sure you join us for an afternoon when we address some of the key issues in obtaining the best use/mix of e-learning in our firms, including:

- What e-learning has to offer law firms
- The future of compliance training through e-learning
- LMS pitfalls and best practice
- How to develop e-learning authors

Don't forget that if you would like to play around with the Vinciworks Learning Management System for free, every LETG member has been allocated a login and password. This was either given to you at the Annual Dinner or sent to you by post. If you have not received your login and would like to try the Vinciworks LMS, please contact Jane Cochrane.

Places are going fast – here's a link to the [full programme](#). Contact Jane Cochrane to book.



## **The Annual Conference 2006 “Delivering Development...with Distinction”**

**15 and 16 November, Aston Business School, Birmingham**

Well, the cat is now out of the bag – the programme is finalised and you should all have received an email link to the details.

Please book quickly, as the fun-filled programme includes external speakers such as Adrian Moorhouse, Alan Hodgart, The College of Law, KSB, Mission Excellence, The Training Shop, and the University of Strathclyde. We have sessions that explore “out there” innovative learning methods including humour and magic, and over 15 law firm session leaders, enabling you to benchmark your training practice with other leading firms.

Don't miss out; these two days in Birmingham, the heart of England, promise to offer plenty of new ideas and inspiration for you to take back to your law firm training function.

Click [here](#) to go to the website for more programme details.

## Your input needed

### PLC (practicallaw.com subscriptions services) – your views please!

Paula McMullan would like members' views on whether there would be any benefit from seeking to negotiate preferential rates with PLC, who many of you will use to provide legal updating services to your law firms' departments. The subscription services they offer are of a high quality, but expensive, as many of you will know. We understand that BIALL (British and Irish Association of Law Librarians) have negotiated a preferential rate with PLC.

Do you subscribe to PLC? If so, do you already take advantage of the BIALL discounted rate?

Please contact [Paula](#) with your views, so that we can decide whether to take this any further.

### Your nominations for the 2006 Paralegal awards



James O'Connell of the Institute of Paralegals has asked us to remind you of the 2006 Paralegal awards, and to encourage you to nominate paralegals in your firms whose contribution should be celebrated.

Please see [www.paralegalawards.org/nominations.html](http://www.paralegalawards.org/nominations.html) for more details of how to send your nominations to IoP – the submission deadline is **29 September**.

### Your best training anecdotes?

We are extremely keen to make this newsletter not only informative, but a fun way in which to exchange training and development ideas and anecdotes. We all have stories to tell, and similar frustrations to

share. What's your best anecdote? What's the best excuse for missing a training session that you've received?

Answers on a postcard – or more likely an email – to [Karen Aubrey](#).

## This issue's member profile:



### Raphael King of McCann FitzGerald, Dublin

**Current role:** Director of Training

**How long been in role?** Ten years, since rejoining McCann FitzGerald. My previous tenure here was as a trainee followed by a couple of years' POE – all of this aeons ago. I look after the legal and skills training of all fee earners in the firm (from elder statesman partners to fresh-faced trainees). I also have the role of HR Director for our trainees (who number between 50 to 60 at any given time).

**Typical day?** My day can vary hugely. I might have twenty new trainees attending the first day of their orientation programme; or, I could be co-ordinating and chairing a careers presentation for one hundred aspiring trainees. Another day might see me in the conference centre of Croke Park (our main football stadium) organising a full day conference for members of our Corporate Department. The only constant is that there is a huge amount of variety each day, and never enough time!

**What's your office like?** I do not share an office but, as mentor to all of our trainees and confidante both to them and their supervising partners, there is a fairly constant queue of visitors at my door - I certainly never feel lonely! We will shortly be moving to new state-of-the-art offices in a new part of Dublin's financial services sector on the river

Liffey at the end of September. Some artwork of my children at their various ages adorns my wall, from peaceful rural scenes to ferocious gladiators brandishing knives in a rather fearsome amphitheatre. I also have a beautiful silk painting of tropical fish weaving their way amongst the corals in a Caribbean sea. A friend painted this for me and it offers me moments of solace and serenity when things get overly busy all around.

**How many in your team?** Five. My colleague Hannah Carney, also an LETG member, is Director of Professional Development and we liaise closely. There are three others in the department involved in HR, trainee and lateral recruitment, among other related areas, as well as in organisation, administration and the HR processes relating to our trainees.

**Biggest challenges?** The delicate balancing act between meeting the legal and skills training needs of all the professionals in the firm and the ever-expanding trainee brief. Not to be outdone by Belinda Scott's achievements on the Tour de France, I too will include a challenge on the personal side – also involving physical prowess! I have successfully climbed the highest mountain in two of Ireland's four provinces. This leaves two more to be overcome, which I am hoping to climb sometime within the next year or so. The highest of these, which is also the highest mountain in Ireland, includes a rather terrifying ascent called "The Devil's Ladder". If I manage to survive this and reach the peak, I might just put it on a par with Belinda's achievements on her bike?

**Greatest triumph?** I still derive great satisfaction from watching trainees develop from their rookie status in the first few months to very accomplished young lawyers in their first year or two PQE. It gives me quite a kick to sit down with young partners to discuss how best they can manage and mentor their new trainees (when I can remember helping that young trainee in their first weeks in the firm!) I enjoy small but regular mini triumphs like these on a fairly regular basis.

**If you had a magic wand, what would you make happen?** Once again I agree with Belinda - it would be a dream come true if everybody who was booked on a training course came and came on time. Another

dream: watching a procession of partners queuing at my door, all clamouring to contribute to workshops for solicitors and trainees. I would also smile as they raced to be first with their completed trainee appraisal forms at the end of each trainee rotation. There would be no more chasing and harassing in this "magical wonder world".

**If you could be anywhere in the world, where would you be?** Watching the sun set over Clew Bay just outside Westport in County Mayo. If it had to be outside Ireland, it would be St. Peter's Basilica in Rome marvelling at the extraordinary works of art under this magnificent dome.

**Person you'd call in an emergency?** A dear friend whose name is Joanne. Nothing, no matter how challenging or difficult, is ever a problem for her. Her maxim in life is "it couldn't be better". She would bring immediate calm and balance to any situation.

**Favourite training provider?** I am ruthlessly choosey about bringing any external providers into the firm. As a result, I have high regard for those with whom I deal. It would not be fair to prefer any one trainer over another.

**One word of advice to new members?** Literally in one word "enjoy".

**Any help you'd like from providers?** To follow through on their promise of tailoring their courses to suit our particular requirements. Delegates can spot a mile away if any provider has the nerve to just deliver an "off-the-shelf" module to them and won't forgive them easily. I certainly won't either!

**If the LETG could do one thing for you, what would it be?** To continue doing the great job of providing an excellent forum for those involved in the training world in legal firms. Finally, but most importantly, special thanks to our very hard working committee member colleagues.

Want more from **this**  
**newsletter?**

Contact [Karen Aubrey](#).

## Your LETG committee

[Paula McMullan](#), Chair, Annual Dinner, Law Society ETC

[Patrick McCann](#), Vice-Chair, Annual conference

[Katharine Greenfield](#), Membership

[Peter Carrick](#), Website development

[Pauline Holland](#), Gastronosh/Training Fair

[Sandy Boyle](#), Treasurer

[Karen Aubrey](#), Newsletter

[Susan Way](#), Regions

[Robin Henry](#), E learning forum

[Jenny Pugh](#), Website development

[Tracy Clegg](#)

[Shannon Campbell](#)

[Jane Cochrane](#), LETG Administrator

[www.letg.org.uk](http://www.letg.org.uk)