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Team of experts to prepare report into possible changes to Hong Kong's legal education system



Nottingham Law School experts are looking at legal education in Hong Kong

Legal education experts including staff from Nottingham Law School are to investigate how solicitors qualify to practise in Hong Kong. Professor Jane Ching of Nottingham Law School's Centre for Legal Education and a team of legal education experts will be working with the Hong Kong Law Society to undertake consultation with the market and stakeholders. They will also advise on the possibility of a common entrance examination for intending Hong Kong solicitors.

The team includes Professor Paul Maharg from the Australian National University, who is also a member of staff at Nottingham Law School, part of Nottingham Trent University; and Professor Avrom Sherr, director on sabbatical from the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies at the University of London.

All three were members of the team that worked on the research phase of the Legal Education and Training Review for England and Wales. They will be working with Pamela Henderson and Jane Jarman from Nottingham Law School.

"We have been asked to help launch a consultation process, prepare a consultation paper, interview interested parties, consider all options, prepare a final report and make recommendations," said Professor Ching.

"Members of the multi-institution team will, we hope, be able to speak to or obtain information from academic institutions, lawyers and lawyer groups, consumer groups and students about how the system should change, if at all."

As it stands, postgraduates in Hong Kong must be awarded a PCLL (Postgraduate

Certificate in Laws) before securing a training contract as a solicitor. It is a one-year full-time, or two-year part-time, professional legal qualification programme which is intended to focus on vocational issues.

The PCLL is taught, assessed and awarded by three law schools in Hong Kong – The Hong Kong University, City University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

It is comparable to Legal Practice Courses and Bar Professional Training Courses in England and Wales, although the single course combines training for both solicitors and barristers.

The Hong Kong Law Society wishes to explore the feasibility of adopting a common entrance examination, for which the society would be responsible, as a uniform quality filter for entry to the solicitors' profession.

The research project will explore whether this is appropriate or viable and consider all possible approaches and solutions.

Notes to editors:

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