

The Legal Profession

1



by Dr. Peter Jepson

Prior to this lecture you should have
read and prévised ...
Part C of ILEX 'The Legal Environment'

No chatting in this Lecture

2

- ⇒ Switch off any mobile telephones
- ⇒ Take notes
- ⇒ Raise your hand if you wish to ask a question
- ⇒ **Do not eat food in this classroom or leave any litter. When you leave the classroom please put your chair neatly underneath the desk.**

Solicitors

3

- ⇒ Over 90,000 practising in England & Wales
- ⇒ Controlled by the Law Society.

Solicitors...

4

Seen as 'General Practitioners'.

Prior to the Courts and Legal Services Act
they were the **only way of approaching**
barristers.

Now other professionals, such as accountants,
may approach barristers directly.

Solicitors Training...

5

They can specialise in one area of law. But
they still need a Law Degree or CPE
–provides general subject knowledge.

Then must also do the Legal Practice Course
(at the College of Law or authorised
University) – then a period of apprenticeship
as a Trainee Solicitor (who is paid).

Enrol with the Law Society (Master of the Rolls).

Barristers ...

Senior Branch of the Profession

6

14000 in practice in independent
practice in England & Wales.

Provide advocacy and written advice.
Controlled by 'General Council of the
Bar' - can you name the four Inns?

Barristers Training...

7

Academic Stage...

Law Degree or any other subject plus CPE or PDL.

Vocational Training...

One year bar course.

Barristers training ...

8

**Membership of one of 4 Inns
– 12 dinners –
Call to the Bar.**

Practical Training...

Pupillage of 2 x 6mths.

Barristers ...

9

Once qualified – become self-employed.

Can wait for up to 18 months to be paid.

Cannot sue for fees.

Criticism...

10

This leads to the assumption that Barristers need to come from wealthy middle-class backgrounds.

The Bar has developed an aloofness from the general population.

Funding of Training

11

⇒ **Charter 88** argue that students should be funded throughout their legal training – so as to open up the profession to the most able candidates from a variety of backgrounds and regardless of means.

Who Deals With What (a Solicitor or Barrister)?

12

- **A conveyance of land?**
- **Dealing with a person accused of a summary offence?**
- **Dealing with a breach of contract?**
- **Dealing with a Divorce?**
- **Taking an appeal to the House of Lords?**

Legal Executives... 13

Professionals – educated via the Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX)

Need just 5 GCSE's – practical experience and 5 year training.

Must be supervised by a Solicitor – but they can convert their qualification through a Law Society Legal Practice Course.

Para-Legals (Strode's College)... 14

USA term - often refers to a partly qualified legal secretary.

In England and Wales Para-Legal Association set up in the late 1980's – aimed at those who lack the educational qualifications to take the ILEX course.

Can only work with legally qualified personnel – often doing office work (Local Govt, Commerce etc) ...

Women and ethnic minorities 15

- Legal profession has an image of being white and male dominated.
- However, over half of the entrants to the profession are now women.
- Though, only 12% of Q.C.'s (What is a QC?) are women? Also, only 19% of solicitors partners are women! **Why is this?**