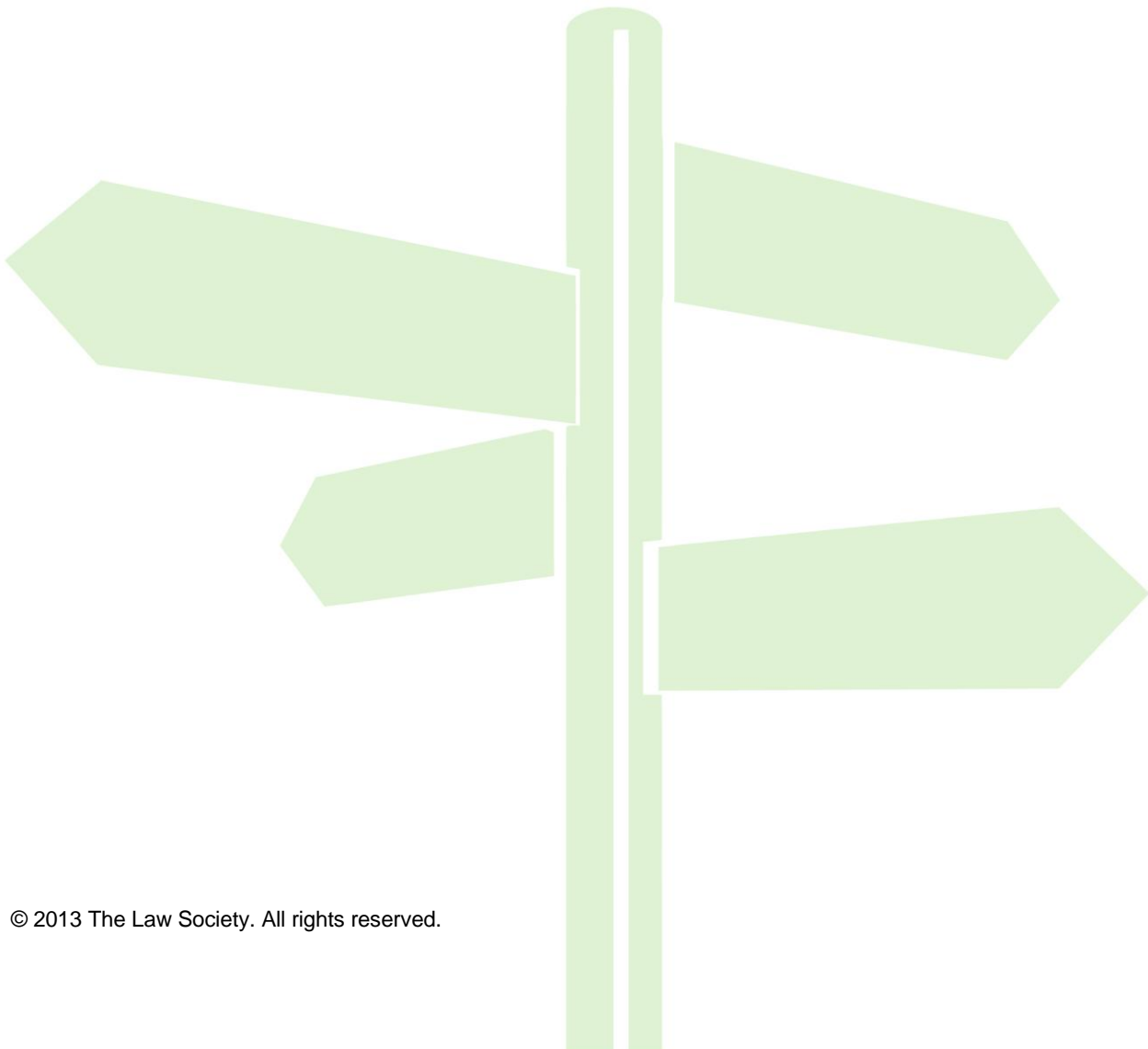




The Law Society

**JLD Annual Report 2015-16**  
**The Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society**  
December 2016



# Junior Lawyers Division

## Annual Report

### 2015 - 2016

The [Junior Lawyers Division \(JLD\)](#) is part of the Law Society of England and Wales. With approximately 70,000 members, it is one of the largest communities within the Law Society. The JLD, which has a committee with an independent voice, offers free and automatic membership to Legal Practice Course (LPC) students, LPC graduates, trainee solicitors and solicitors who have been qualified for up to five years. The JLD represents, campaigns on behalf of, and provides services for its members.

Members will have opportunities to network and connect with other junior lawyers, discuss issues that concern them and benefit from training and advice provided at conferences, meetings and events.

In order to engage with and be accountable to JLD members, the 2015 - 2016 JLD executive committee has provided an overview of the work carried out on behalf of the members over the year. We thank you for your support, without which we would not have had such a successful year.

#### The JLD executive committee 2015 - 16



**Leanne Maund**  
Chair



**Bryan Scant**  
Vice Chair



**Jonathan Smith**  
Committee  
Member



**Adele Edwin-Lamerton**  
Committee  
Member



**Ben Fraser**  
Committee  
Member



**Nikhil Bowry**  
Student  
Representative



**Brogan Solomon**  
Committee  
Member



**Charlotte Parkinson**  
Committee  
Member



**Amy Clowrey**  
Committee  
Member



**Matthew Allan**  
JLD Council  
Member



**Kayleigh Leonie**  
JLD Council  
Member



**Beth Forrester**  
JLD Council  
Member

## 2015 - 2016 JLD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR'S SUMMARY

With a number of huge changes proposed by our regulator and the Government which are set to dramatically impact upon our profession in the short and long term, the key focus of the JLD executive committee has been to ensure that the junior lawyer perspective is represented at discussions with key decision makers. Many of the plans directly affect our members and it is clear that some proposed changes to our practice risk having a disproportionate effect on the junior end of the profession. As such, it is important that the voice of junior lawyers is distinct, credible and influential.

In order to preserve, protect and promote our members and their futures, we set out to ensure that the impact of any proposed change to regulation or policy which affects junior lawyers was heard by the decision makers, building on the work of earlier JLD executive committee members who established our reputation as a key spokesperson within the profession.

We sought opportunities to have junior lawyer representation on a number of committees or as part of discussion groups which focused on specific issues. Notably, we have made the most of our network of junior lawyers across our jurisdiction; there was a strong presence at many of the SRA's roadshows on the proposed Solicitors Qualifying Examination and the proposed changes to the SRA Handbook, both of which arguably affect junior lawyers the most.

Internally, we have built stronger relationships with the various boards and committees within the Law Society, encouraging junior lawyers to apply for positions and to stand for election on the Law Society's Council. There are a number of changes to Government policy relating to the regulation of our profession. Suggestions of huge upheaval by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) means that the role of our Law Society in representing, promoting and supporting solicitors will become more important than ever. Given that junior lawyers are one of the largest groups within the profession, and that we are often disproportionately affected by changes to policy and regulation, we welcomed invitations from various parts of the Law Society for us to provide the junior lawyer perspective.

You can read more about our successful policy and consultation work in the report below.

In addition to the above:

- we considered the specific challenges faced by certain sections of our membership (e.g. LPC students, trainees, and qualified solicitors) and sought to ensure that we find focused ways of providing support
- we increased our engagement with the international community, building on our existing links with the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division and the European Young Bar Association
- we increased our engagement with the local JLD groups across England and Wales
- we worked closely with our counterparts in the barrister's profession, the Young Barristers' Committee, sharing ideas on events and the issues faced by our respective members, and also on policy matters and the effect on our members

- during National Pro Bono Week, we released a series of blogs written by our members highlighting the pro bono work that junior lawyers are doing across the country
- we worked extensively with the Law Society this year and its other communities and divisions. The JLD was consulted multiple times in the development of the Law Society's strategy to ensure our members are represented.

The JLD exists to represent and support its members. As you will see from the above summary, and the more detailed report that follows, the 2015 - 2016 JLD executive committee worked tirelessly to ensure that we deliver an unparalleled level of service for our members. I would like to thank the talented and dedicated JLD executive committee for their work throughout the year.

I would also like to thank everyone who helped us achieve our goals. In particular, the 2015 - 16 and 2016 - 17 Presidents of the Law Society, Jonathan Smithers and Robert Bourns (respectively) who both listened to our views carefully and advocated for our work within the Law Society and beyond. In addition, the hard work and support of the staff at the Law Society, and particularly, the JLD's dedicated product manager, Yvonne Treacy, has been invaluable.

Finally, many of these fantastic outcomes could not have been achieved without our members. So, on behalf of the 2015 - 2016 JLD executive committee. I would like to thank all our junior lawyer members for their engagement and support over the year. In particular, those who have spoken at our events to share their experiences with their peers, and those who have written blogs for our website.

I wish the 2016 - 2017 JLD executive committee the best of luck in the coming year, which will no doubt see more changes to the legal profession.

**Leanne Maund**  
 Chair, Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society  
 2015 – 2016

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## **JLD PROJECTS**

The 2015 - 2016 JLD executive committee carried out the following projects on behalf of the division.

### **Policy**

- **Upcoming SRA proposals to reform the solicitor qualification route**

#### ***Pre-consultation***

In 2015, the SRA began pre-consultation discussions with the JLD and others relating to a proposed reform of the process to qualify as a solicitor; all aspiring solicitors would need to pass a common professional exam (the Solicitors' Qualifying Examination (SQE)) in order to qualify. It is true that there are many inconsistencies in education and training, and therefore in the quality of newly qualified solicitors, and as such the JLD supports the principle

of a communal standard. We suggested that the LPC exams be set centrally so that candidates and firms could draw better comparisons as to the quality of the LPC course providers and value for money of the LPC.

However, the JLD had many concerns and, after engaging with our members through consultation with our national committee, we wrote an open letter to the SRA outlining our concerns. In particular, we stressed the importance of the training contract in the process of qualification, and said that substantial work experience (similar to a training contract) should continue to be required before an individual can practise. We were also concerned about ensuring that our profession continue to be a "graduate" profession (that everyone should be educated to at least graduate level or equivalent i.e. Cilex) in order to maintain quality and a stringent process that engenders consumer confidence.

### ***First consultation***

The SRA released their consultation in December 2015 and the JLD continued to raise awareness of its concerns through a media campaign and by speaking at a number of events. In addition, our chair, Leanne Maund, was invited to speak alongside the SRA to the Law Society's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The JLD was openly sceptical about the claims by the SRA that the SQE will reduce barriers to social mobility, as we consider it unlikely that law firms will cease to require that candidates undergo some sort of post graduate course (such as the LPC) in addition to the SQE. As such, our view was that the SQE would be a cost *on top* of the current process (rather than instead of it).

In addition, our chair was invited to sit on the Qualification Working Group, which is a committee of thought leaders set up specifically to share perspectives and liaise with the SRA on the SQE proposals. It included representatives from the academic community, including both undergraduate and post-graduate course providers, law firms, the City of London and the JLD.

During the course of the first consultation, and several times since, we asked the SRA to explore the funding options for the SQE. At present, the SQE would not qualify for the Government's Postgraduate Loan, or the Career and Professional Development Loan which are currently used to fund the LPC, as such loans are available for taught courses but not examinations. The SRA has not provided a suggestion other than telling us that it would have to be paid for by the individual saving the money. We stressed that for most students it would be almost impossible to find the money required.

The JLD responded to the consultation and you can view our response [here](#).

### ***"Pause and rethink"***

The SRA received more responses to the consultation on the SQE than any other, the majority of which were either negative, or requesting that more information be provided. As such, the SRA announced they would have a "pause and rethink" about the proposals, and push back the proposed implementation date from 2018 to 2019.

The JLD welcomed this opportunity to engage further on the detail, and persisted with its work to engage with our members and other stakeholders

in the hope that the next consultation would answer our many questions, and include some key changes.

We have also been approached by a number of our members, particularly those who have not yet qualified, concerned about their future and have endeavoured to equip them with as much information as possible. Several law firms have also been in touch with the JLD, seeking our views on the proposal, and asking how they could (or should) influence, improve or hinder their training programmes in the future.

### ***Second consultation***

In October 2016, the SRA released its second consultation. It contained much more detail as to the SQE and included a number of changes. The SRA has now confirmed that entrants must be educated to graduate level or equivalent, and it is the SRA's intention that an extended period of training will still be required. Candidates can complete this training across more than one provider, so the SRA hopes that the "training contract bottleneck" will be removed. There were also proposals to remove the requirement to do contentious and non-contentious work, and to gain experience in three areas of law. The SRA also provided some example "pathways" for education and training which individuals may pursue in order to qualify.

The JLD's concerns about social mobility remain, as we believe it is likely that most businesses, particularly large law firms, are likely to continue to want candidates to have an LPC (or similar course) and indeed, to have undergone training in a formal training contract at one firm, rather than through several paralegal roles. As such, it is likely that those who can afford to undertake the LPC will still have an advantage, as they will be more "marketable" individuals. The SQE may become an additional hurdle, rather than the cheaper, fairer replacement the SRA is hoping it will be.

The JLD's reponse to the second consultation will be submitted shortly, so keep an eye on our [website](#).

Our members have taken a keen interest in the SQE. Thank you to all those members who have, and continue to engage with us on this important issue for the future of our profession.

- **Newly qualified retention: notice period**

The JLD has been contacted by our members on a number of occasions seeking advice on their rights when their employer has either not informed them of their prospects on qualification or only informed them that they will not be retained as a newly qualified solicitor at extremely short notice (in some cases, as late as the day before they are about to qualify), and on occasion, even after previously being advised there was an opening for them. As a result, we consulted with our national committee members about what the JLD should do.

It was agreed that the JLD would explore the possibility of developing some best practice guidance for trainees and firms, outlining what each party's legal obligations are, and setting a timeframe which is fair on both trainees and employers for talking to trainees about their retention prospects. As such, the JLD executive committee wrote to the Law Society's Education and Training

Committee (ETC) setting out our plan, and asking for its views. The ETC invited us to provide some further information, which we did.

The ETC agreed that clarity was needed as to the rights and obligations of trainees and firms when the training contract comes to an end, and as such, worked with the JLD to update the Law Society's website guidance on how to become a solicitor.

This is just a first step. The JLD recently wrote to the ETC again setting out a more thorough proposal for a specific guidance note on this issue, which included a suggestion of a best practice notice period prior to the end of the training contract, at which time a firm should inform the trainee of whether or not they will be kept on.

We look forward to updating you further on this over the coming year.

- **Work experience and internships**

In February, the Law Society published its work experience guidance setting out best practice for firms offering experience to aspiring trainees. This was a project which came about as a result of JLD's Work Experience survey, the results of which were published in December 2014. 23 per cent of respondents had undertaken at least six months' unpaid work experience in the hope it would advance their career in law (with three per cent in excess of two years).

To address the results of the Work Experience survey, after consultation with our national committee, we asked the Law Society to draft a work experience and internship guidance note and the Law Society agreed.

We are aware of at least one firm who has already begun to pay its work experience students as a direct result of the JLD campaign, and we hope that this trend will continue. We have also increased the work we do on social mobility, working closely with the Law Society's CREDI (Corporate Responsibility, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) team.

## **Membership support**

- **Conferences and forums**

Every year, the JLD holds an annual conference and ball, and four smaller conferences (forums).

We held two junior lawyer forums, aimed to equip delegates (targeted at trainees and solicitors up to five years PQE) with skills that are relevant for day-to-day practice. One took place in Nottingham and the other in London. The other two were LPC forums, aimed to equip delegates (targeted at LPC students and paralegals) with application and interview skills that are relevant to obtaining a training position. We held one in Newcastle and the other in London. The forums held outside of London were organised with the help of the local JLD groups, and so we thank Nottinghamshire JLD and the Newcastle & Northeast JLD for their respective contributions. Collectively, over 450 people registered for the Forums, approximately 130 people were in attendance at the JLD annual conference, and over 200 were at the annual ball. Delegates at each of these events were able to benefit from one-to-one CV clinics.

We also hosted, in partnership with the UK Law Students Association, a diversity conference, which was held at the Law Society and which had 100 attendees. Thank you to the UKLSA for inviting the JLD to work with them on this event.

- **Resilience and wellbeing**

Unfortunately, we found that a key concern for many junior lawyers is stress at work. This year, we were invited to sit on a newly established legal professions wellbeing taskforce which has already helped to raise awareness of stress and mental health issues in our profession, during mental health awareness week in particular. We worked closely with LawCare, who exhibited at all of our events, and would encourage members who are facing stress, workplace bullying, or disputes with colleagues to call the [LawCare helpline on 0800 279 6888](tel:08002796888).

- **3 - 5 year PQE working group**

The JLD executive committee analysed its membership and identified that junior lawyers face different challenges during the course of their careers. In addition to our work on the SQE (mainly affecting LPC students and graduates) and newly qualified (NQ) retention (mainly affecting trainees), we sought to ensure that qualified solicitors at the top end of our membership bracket are also supported. Some of our work already provides a particular benefit to this section of our membership. For example, our international work is of particular benefit to qualified solicitors growing in seniority who need to establish their network for referrals of work to or from other jurisdictions. We also provided seminars on moving in-house, which we know many 3 - 5 year solicitors now aspire to as an alternative to pursuing partnership in private practice.

We also established a small working group of 3 - 5 year PQE solicitors to discuss the issues directly affecting them and the ideas they had to improve our training events. One suggestion was to make specific sessions more easily available to those not able to attend a full day conference. In light of this feedback, we recently trialled recording some sessions at our London forums for release as a podcast. Next year, we will build on this in the hopes of making our sessions more accessible to individuals with specific interests, or who are outside London or have other commitments on the day.

- **JLD website**

With the help of Law Society staff, the JLD ensured our [website](#) is regularly updated with new content of interest to junior lawyers. In particular, there is now a "have your say" page where our members can provide input to our consultation responses and an "Employers" page where information on issues affecting junior lawyers' employment has been consolidated. We have also made use of the poll facility, seeking to obtain information about the success of the Law Society's recommended minimum salary.



- **Social media**

We have an active presence on social media which is constantly growing, with nearly 24,000 followers on [Twitter](#), 11,500 followers on [LinkedIn](#) and nearly 3,500 followers on [Facebook](#).

- **Newsletters**

We have continued sending out regular newsletters to ensure that our members are kept up to date on our work, and know how to contact us if they have any queries. We sent out six newsletters this year, in addition to the final newsletter in which this annual report will be presented. Our mailing list has approximately 66,000 members. You can review our past newsletters [here](#).

- **Members' queries**

Members are able to engage with us directly at any point by sending an email to [juniorlawyers@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:juniorlawyers@lawsociety.org.uk). We received a number of queries in our mailbox this year. This enabled us to engage directly with our members on issues affecting them. A number of emails were about protections for trainee solicitors, with a particular reference to the SRA refusing to get involved in disputes between principals and trainees. Further, a number of members have gotten in touch with individuals on the JLD executive committee directly with regards to our policy work on the proposed SQE, and how they might get involved in the debate.

- **National Pro Bono Week project**

National Pro Bono Week (NPBW) celebrates the pro bono work undertaken by the legal profession and is a major event in the legal year. Not only does it showcase the work being done by the profession and the impact it is having on the community, it also gives those who have not yet been involved in pro bono work the chance to learn about the various schemes and how they too can get involved in providing pro bono services.

As in 2015, the JLD used the opportunity created by NPBW to promote the value of pro bono work to junior lawyers and to showcase examples of the current pro bono projects being undertaken by junior lawyers across the country. The JLD would like to thank Oliver Haddock, Samantha Hirst, Louise Taylor and the junior lawyers at DLA Piper in Liverpool for their contributions. You can read their blogs [here](#).

- **Engaging with local JLD groups**

We increased our engagement with local JLD groups across England and Wales. There are approximately 50 local JLD groups, all of which are independent of the national JLD. They do fantastic work in their localities, both in engaging and representing junior lawyers. We have continued to build our relationship and support for these local groups by making relevant introductions, responding to queries and promoting their work via our website and social media.

We had three national committee meetings, during which local group input was incredibly helpful. For example, the local group representatives assisted with our work on the SQE consultation, including liaising directly with Julie

Brannan, director of education and training at the SRA, at our meeting, and many of the local groups wrote supporting statements for us to annex to the JLD's consultation response, which enabled us to demonstrate that our views were shared by junior lawyers across our jurisdiction.

Local groups are invaluable in providing feedback from their members but also in terms of contributing to JLD consultation responses and steering policy direction, providing content for the website regarding blogs and reviews of JLD events, reaching out to undergraduate law students by attending university law fairs and delivering presentations on becoming a solicitor. Some also attend careers events at schools and colleges. They also circulated information to their members on behalf of the JLD and, in some cases, the Law Society.

Being part of the JLD national committee and building relationships with other local groups has never been more important, and a number of local groups have been pursuing JLD policy on a local basis, to ensure that the views of junior lawyers in their area are heard both locally and nationally. Notably, the South London JLD organised a public debate for their members at which Julie Brannan and Leanne Maund (JLD Chair) discussed key issues, moderated by Council member Sara Chandler QC. This event was attended by several members of the legal press who reported on the key issues of the debate.

- **Engaging with LLB students**

Although LLB students are not JLD members, it is only right that we provide our future members with information before they start their LPC. The JLD has a template set of slides which members can use when they go into universities and deliver workshops on a career in law. In light of equivalent means and future proposals e.g. SQE, the JLD career in law presentation was updated, retitled *Becoming a Solicitor*, and recirculated. It is also available on our [website](#).

- **Online Mentor**

The JLD started working with Online Mentor at the beginning of 2014 to provide trainees with free access to its online training record portal. We were pleased to continue working with Online Mentor this year for the benefit of our members.

- **T.M. Lewin**

We have been pleased to continue our working relationship with T.M.Lewin. T.M.Lewin is a key partner for us - not only do they sponsor the JLD's annual conference, but they also provide special discounts for junior lawyers. The discounts vary from month-to-month, but the current offers are available to view on the JLD website.

## **Consultations**

- **SRA and LSB consultations**

We continued to respond to virtually every SRA consultation to ensure that a junior lawyer perspective was always considered when changes were made to our profession. In addition, we responded to consultations published by the

Legal Services Board (LSB) where relevant. All of our consultation responses can be viewed [here](#).

The JLD responded to the following LSB and SRA consultations this year:

**LSB:** Encouraging a diverse profession (November 2016)

**SRA:** Looking to the future – flexibility and public protections (the SRA Handbook) - (October 2016)

**SRA:** Looking to the future - Accounts Rules review (October 2016)

**SRA:** Removing barriers to switching regulators (July 2016)

**SRA:** The Insurance Act 2015 (April 2016)

**SRA:** Training for Tomorrow – assessing competence, including supporting statements from local JLD groups (Solicitors Qualifying Exam) (March 2016)

**SRA:** A question of trust (March 2016)

- **Government consultations**

- **Post-graduate loans – funding for the LPC**

In last year's annual report, we told you that in March 2015, the Department of Business Innovation & Skills (as it was called at the time) (BIS) published a consultation on postgraduate student loans and other support. In particular, it was seeking views on its proposal to introduce a new Government loan for postgraduate taught master's degrees. The JLD responded to this consultation.

The JLD fully supported the opportunity for Government assistance for those who wished to undertake a master's degree in law (LLM). We provided our feedback on the criteria to be set in order to qualify for this funding and further suggested that, although the Government had already made clear the funding would not be available for purely vocational courses (e.g. the LPC), if combined, LLM/LPC courses could comply with funding criteria. This would mean some individuals could access Government funding to help them pay for the LPC, so long as it was combined with the LLM.

Following the consultation responses, the Government has now implemented its Postgraduate Loan of up to £10,000 and some LPC providers have developed combined LLM/LPC courses which qualify for the Postgraduate Loan. Several of them consulted with the JLD in the course of doing so, and the JLD has written about this in the legal press to raise awareness of the new opportunity for aspiring solicitors.

- **Non-compete clauses in employment contracts**

In May this year BIS published a consultation on non-compete clauses. This call for evidence sought views on whether non-compete clauses (restraint of trade) stifle entrepreneurship and innovation by preventing people from changing employers, developing innovative ideas, creating a start-up, or growing a business. The Government wanted to hear views, experiences, and

evidence of non-compete clauses so that it could understand when and why they are used, their prevalence, and the benefits or disadvantages associated with them.

The practice of including non-compete clauses in solicitors' employment contracts as standard is yet another example of where junior lawyers are disproportionately affected. Even some trainees have non-compete clauses in their contracts. The JLD is of the view that junior lawyers have been unfairly affected by the imposition of non-compete clauses in their employment contracts and as a result have suffered both professionally and financially. We made this clear in our response.

### **Legal Market Study Interim Report**

In August, the Competition and Markets Authority published its interim report on its study into competition across the legal profession, including the work of solicitors, barristers, legal executives out of regulated firms, chambers and ABSs and also the growing number of unregulated providers of legal services.

This was a huge undertaking during which the CMA looked at a number of areas, including the possibility of compelling legal providers to publish their fee structures and even asking whether a price comparison website for legal services would work. The report also considered how marketing, insurance, and the dealing of complaints should work across regulated and unregulated providers.

The JLD raised its concerns in relation to consumer protection in responding to the report. We argued that consumers do not understand the nature of reserved activities, and therefore were likely to be confused about businesses calling themselves "lawyers" but who were not qualified to practice as a solicitor, barrister or chartered legal executive. We argued that the term "lawyer" should be protected to avoid this. In particular, we were concerned that consumers who use unregulated legal providers do not have recourse to the Legal Ombudsman (their only avenue is Trading Standards) in the same way, and were unlikely to be aware of this until it was too late.

Finally, the JLD did not support the idea of a price-comparison site. Whilst we supported transparency on fees at the start of a matter and throughout, we explained to the CMA that discrete tasks which can be priced on a basis which could be usefully compared across providers are extremely rare. Moreover, we explained that clients often come to their advisor with a set of circumstances or a problem to be solved, rather than a request for a specific service or document to be drafted. As such, it was, unfortunately, unrealistic to consider that introducing the publishing of pricing structures in this way would lead to less confusion to consumers.

### **International relations**

International outreach has always been an important part of the JLD's work. Our international strategy involves promoting our profession abroad (including explaining routes to qualification and cross-qualification), promoting England and Wales as the jurisdiction of choice, and building relationships with lawyers in all the different areas of law globally, including making introductions between international junior lawyers. Further, we, and our young/junior lawyer counterpart organisations support one another's activities by sharing information on various matters in our respective jurisdictions.

We've also supported the Law Society's international efforts on a number of occasions, including providing input into a session hosted by our President, Robert Bourns, at the International Bar Association Conference in Washington this year on how bar associations can help their young lawyers.

Given the current political climate, it has been more important than ever to contribute to the promotion of our jurisdiction and profession internationally to our junior lawyer colleagues. Together, we are the future of a global legal profession, and it is important to maintain the credibility of England and Wales as a global hub for excellence in legal practice.

Some of our activities included:

- **European Young Bar Association**

The JLD has a long history of partnership with the European Young Bar Association (EYBA), with many members of the JLD having served on the board of the EYBA, and indeed we currently have two previous JLD Executive Committee members on the board of the EYBA. The JLD had a presence at all three of the EYBA Conferences - in Belfast (spring conference), Dusseldorf (summer conference), and London (International Weekend, which is jointly organised by the JLD, Young Barristers Committee of the Bar Council, and the London Young Lawyers Group).

- **International Weekend**

Every year, the JLD organises International Weekend in partnership with the Young Barristers Committee of the Bar Council, the London Young Lawyers Group and the European Young Bar Association. This year, Bryan Scant (JLD vice chair) chaired the organising committee. We had a phenomenal turnout, and the event culminated in a gala dinner at the Radisson Blu Edwardian Hotel in Bloomsbury, where lawyers from the UK were able to network with our international guests.

- **Opening of the Legal Year**

We were delighted to be invited to the Opening of the Legal Year, which was attended by global bar leaders. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to talk about the JLD's work and understand how international bar associations structure their junior bar divisions.

- **UK**

The JLD represents junior lawyers in England and Wales. Our counterparts in Scotland are the Scottish Young Lawyers Association; and in Northern Ireland, the Northern Irish Young Solicitors Association and the Northern Ireland Young Barristers Association. It is important that we maintain strong links with these groups - as a unit, we represent young lawyers in the UK. This year we have been in contact and strengthened our relationship with each of these groups, having met representatives personally multiple times throughout the year. Our friends at the Northern Ireland Young Solicitors Association hosted the 2016 EYBA spring conference in Belfast, which several JLD members attended.

- **USA**

It has become a JLD tradition that the chair and the vice chair attend the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division (ABA YLD) spring conference, which this year was held in St Louis. Leanne Maund (JLD chair) and Bryan Scant (JLD vice chair) attended as representatives of the English and Welsh legal profession. It is always a great opportunity to meet other international young bar leaders, and discuss similarities and differences (and find inspiration for initiatives that the JLD can run). Leanne and Bryan were also given the opportunity to address the ABA YLD committee, which includes representatives from all 50 US states and to take part in discussions on junior lawyer issues. The ABA YLD chair (Anna Romanskya) attended International Weekend and the UK Opening of the Legal Year. We are delighted to have maintained a strong relationship with the ABA YLD, and look forward to attending their next spring conference in Montreal.

### **Awards and competitions**

- **JLD essay competition**

The JLD holds an annual essay competition for LPC students and trainee solicitors. This year, the title of the JLD Annual Essay Competition was: "How do you think Brexit will affect junior lawyers?" The judging panel included members of the JLD executive committee plus Helena Raulus, Law Society EU policy adviser and Alexandria Carr, counsel at Mayer Browne. The winner's essay, along with any awarded "highly commended" will be published on the JLD website.

- **Law Society Excellence Awards**

The JLD has its own category at the Law Society Excellence Awards. Congratulations to Elissa Thursfield of Gamlins Law Ltd who was awarded Junior Lawyer of the Year at the ceremony on 20 October. Congratulations also to Keiley Ann Broadhead of ACCA and Rhiannon Jones of Lester Morrill who were highly commended. Well done Elissa, Keiley Ann and Rhiannon and all those who were shortlisted.

- **External awards**

The JLD is privileged to have its own category at the LawWorks Pro Bono Awards. The awards recognise and celebrate excellence in legal pro bono undertaken by organisations and individuals, and the dedication and commitment of the legal sector to positively impact individuals and communities. This year, the awards ceremony was held in December. The JLD would like to congratulate the winner of the LawWorks JLD award, Frankie Boon of Ashurst. Congratulations also to those who were shortlisted in this category - Gemma O'Boyle, Hannah Taylor and Helen Vickers of DLA Piper UK LLP

Max Harris, the JLD's immediate past chair was invited to judge the "Rising Star" category in the first ever Solicitors' Journal awards this year.

## The Law Society

- **Council**

The JLD has three representatives on the Law Society's Council (two representing qualified solicitors up to five years PQE and one who represents LPC students and trainees), who are elected by their respective constituents - Beth Forrester, Kayleigh Leonie and Matthew Allan. Their role is to speak on behalf of junior lawyers at Law Society Council meetings and also to assist with furthering JLD initiatives within the various committees and boards. They have done some fantastic work this year in promoting our cause and expanding our reach within the profession.

- **Law Society's strategy and governance**

Last year, the Law Society began a consultation with its members on its future strategy in an ever-changing legal market, its "2020 Strategy". The Law Society was keen to ensure that the views of junior lawyers were taken into account, as was the JLD. The JLD wrote a letter to Catherine Dixon (Law Society CEO) to provide views obtained from the JLD national committee, and the three JLD Council members spoke at the Law Society's Council meeting to advance these views. We were delighted to see that the Law Society strategy paper incorporated a number of our views and, specifically, included a promise to "evaluate the benefits of offering associate [Law Society] membership for students and overseas lawyers". Since then, we have continued our discussions with the Law Society on what the next steps should be.

In addition to the 2020 Strategy, this year the Law Society engaged in a governance review of its internal organisation. This involved looking at the make up of the Law Society Council and its various boards and committees. As part of this, a governance working group was set up within the Law Society which our JLD Council members participated in and Nicola Nichols, appointed by the Law Society as an independent supporter of the review attended a JLD national committee member to talk to our local groups about what they think the make up of the Law Society should be in the future. This work is ongoing and the JLD continues to be involved.

- **JLD representation on Law Society committees and boards**

As already explained above, the JLD executive committee has made a tremendous amount of progress with ensuring that junior lawyers are represented on the Law Society committees making the important decisions which affect us. In addition to the governance working group, this year, JLD representatives have been appointed to:

- The Membership Board
- The Regulatory Affairs Board
- Education and Training Committee
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- The Employment Law Committee
- The Council Membership Committee.

- **Promoting qualification as a solicitor and the solicitor brand**

With the rise of legal service providers outside the traditional titles of solicitors and barristers, it is important to understand the brand of "solicitor": what it means, and how we can best promote it. The JLD works to encourage new members to the solicitors' profession both in England and Wales and internationally, in the hope that junior lawyers qualified in other jurisdictions who may aspire to practice here choose to do so as a qualified solicitor of England and Wales.

The JLD was also invited to attend a brand workshop at the Law Society, to give our views on how best to communicate to consumers the benefits of using a solicitor, and on the tools which the Law Society could provide to our members to help them market our profession, and their business, locally.

- **Working with other Law Society divisions**

The Law Society has a great network of divisions, including the Women Lawyers Division, the Ethnic Minority Lawyers Division, the Lawyers with Disabilities Division, the In-House Division and the Small Firms Division. This year saw the launch of the Law Society's LGBT divisions, which has junior lawyers on its committee, and which we look forward to seeing prosper. We have maintained close links with these divisions..

#### **Other community work**

- **JLD's Charity of the Year**

The JLD's charity of the year for 2015 - 16 was Help for Heroes, a charity founded in 2007, which aims to provide support for wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women and veterans, and their loved ones.

We ran a charity raffle at our annual conference to raise funds for the Help for Heroes and were pleased to raise £957.00. Thank you to all of our kind sponsors who donated prizes. We also thank the Suffolk and North Essex JLD for choosing to raise money for Help for Heroes in one of their events this year too,

- **Pride**

In June 2016, members of the Law Society, Bar Council, Chartered Institution of Legal Executives (CILEx), Interlaw Diversity Forum for LGBT Networks (InterLaw Diversity Forum), Bar Lesbian and Gay Group (BLAGG) and the JLD paraded through the streets of London, celebrating lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) diversity in the legal profession under the banner 'Equality under the law' and promoting the message 'Legal heroes fighting for LGBT justice'. We were delighted to have a JLD executive committee member on the organising committee, and attending the Pride march.

#### **Other representative work**

- **General membership issues**

The JLD has been approached by several members of the press this year to provide a junior lawyer perspective on various legal issues. It is always a



great privilege to speak on behalf of our members, and always one that is taken with the utmost thought and consideration to the wide range of our members. We have spoken on issues including stress in the legal profession, market conditions and a host of other areas that affect our membership.

The Law Society Gazette hosts regular "legal roundtable" discussion group events focusing on issues affecting different sectors of the profession. This year the Gazette held a roundtable specifically aimed at bringing to light issues affecting junior lawyers, which the JLD and some of our members, were invited to be part of.

- **Speaking up for junior lawyers in the media**

The JLD is often asked to give the junior lawyer perspective on hot topics in the legal press. Examples of the articles in which we have been quoted or referenced this year include:

- [Going into legal aid work is now career suicide](#)
- [Education and training passing muster](#)
- [Junior lawyers open up about stress](#)
- [The legal system may soon be overhauled](#)
- [Round table discussion: junior lawyers](#)
- [Pay aspiring lawyers for experience, says Law Society](#)
- [How to: progress in-house](#)
- [The SRA should cut out the middle man of legal training](#)
- [Law groups unify to create mental health taskforces](#)
- [Battle continues in the fight to reinstate the minimum salary for trainees](#)  
[Interview: Robert Bourns](#)
- [Education: will the SRA learn its lesson on SQE?](#)
- [England and Wales still attractive post-Brexit Society](#)
- [City giants compete on junior lawyer pay as US firms follow suit](#)
- [How to: progress your career](#)
- [SRA 'jumping the gun'?](#)
- [City savages SRA over handbook changes](#)
- [How can bar associations help young lawyers?](#)
- [SRA claims still 'strong case' for controversial 'super exam'](#)
- [Junior lawyers welcome proposed unpaid placement curbs](#)
- [Unpaid work placements hinder diversity efforts in the profession, says junior lawyers](#)
- [How to: change specialism](#)
- [Society recommends higher trainee salary](#)

- **Solicitors Journal**

As in the previous year, this year, the JLD executive committee has written a monthly column in Solicitors Journal, outlining a variety of issues facing our members. The articles have been written by different executive committee members each month:

Month	Title and author
November 2016	<a href="#"><u>Become your firm's pro bono pioneer:</u></a> Brogan Solomon
October 2016	<a href="#"><u>EU law: Irrelevant or a commercial advantage?:</u></a> Matthew Allan
September 2016	<a href="#"><u>A new dawn for politics and the legal profession:</u></a> Adele Edwin-Lamerton

<b>August 2016</b>	<u>Make a difference in the profession and beyond:</u> Leanne Maund
<b>July 2016</b>	<u>The latest 'must have' for junior lawyers is sector experience:</u> Ben Fraser
<b>June 2016</b>	<u>Jumping ship as a young lawyer:</u> Amy Clowrey
<b>May 2016</b>	<u>Student loans for the LPC – a success story:</u> Charlotte Parkinson
<b>April 2016</b>	<u>The real cost of the SQE:</u> Bryan Scant
<b>March 2016</b>	<u>Paralegals: Your business acumen could set you apart from the crowd:</u> Charlotte Parkinson
<b>February 2016</b>	<u>Legal apprenticeships: What you need to know:</u> Kayleigh Leonie
<b>January 2016</b>	<u>Help: I'm not being retained by my firm:</u> Jonathan Smith
<b>December 2015</b>	<u>Waiting another 50 years for equality is not the answer:</u> Adele Edwin-Lamerton
<b>November 2015</b>	<u>Firms know lawyers want flexible working hours:</u> Kayleigh Leonie

- **AGCAS**

The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) is the professional body for careers and employability professionals working with higher education students and graduates and prospective entrants to higher education. The JLD sit on their Legal Profession Task Group to ensure that the voice of aspiring solicitors is considered, and have participated in meetings since.

- **Meeting with the Lord Chief Justice**

Leanne Maund (JLD chair) and Max Harris (immediate past JLD chair) were honoured to be invited to meet with the Lord Chief Justice, The Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, in February 2016. This was the second consecutive year in which the Lord Chief Justice has met with the JLD to discuss issues affecting our membership. The Lord Chief Justice had a clear understanding of the matters affecting junior solicitors. It was an interesting and insightful discussion into the future of the legal profession.

### **How to get involved**

The JLD is always looking for active participation. If you are a junior lawyer and have ideas and the drive to see them turned into action, why not get involved with the JLD at a local or national level? The JLD committee has seats open for elections each year. By joining the committee or attending our events you could help shape the future of the profession.

The JLD is all about its members and their needs, to enable the JLD committee to better represent you, we want to hear from you. Please get in touch at [juniorsolicitors@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:juniorsolicitors@lawsociety.org.uk) to give us your thoughts, to seek our support or just to connect.

Junior Lawyers Division  
December 2016