



Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen. On behalf of law students from the University of Hong Kong, I would like to raise the following two concerns we have over the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) proposed by The Law Society of Hong Kong as well as the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services.

First of all, we understand that under subsection (a)(i) or (a)(ii) of the Trainee Solicitors Rules (Cap 159J) (*\*Cap 159 Legal Practitioners Ordinance*), it is legally acceptable for The Law Society of Hong Kong to require any person to pass a qualification examination before entering into a trainee solicitor contract. The Law Society of Hong Kong originally proposed that a CEE would be a prerequisite of becoming a trainee solicitor. Later, the Society announced that it will incorporate its CEE questions into the core subject papers of Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL).

There are two concerns that I would like to raise regarding the centralised assessment. First of all, I would like to enquire about the necessity of such measure. As mentioned, under the Legal Practitioners Ordinance, the Law Society is entitled to organise the CEE. However, the Society should also consider the adverse result that will be brought about, in other words, the necessity in doing so rather than just because it is entitled to. The Society explained that its purpose is to maintain the standards of the profession. We do agree that the standard needs to be maintained, yet the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training has proven to already be an effective platform for maintaining the standard of the legal profession, where representatives from both The Law Society of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Bar Association are present. In fact, the Committee had commissioned a panel of independent consultants to conduct a comprehensive review of legal education in Hong Kong, including the introduction of the CEE. We would like to enquire about the reasons why the Society found the Standing Committee inadequate to maintain the standard of the legal profession.

The second concern we have is over the time of implementation of CEE. The CEE would be implemented in 2022. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that all present year 1 double-degree students will be affected. We believe that students should be informed of the examination before entering into law school, as the implementation of CEE would not be retrospective.

Hopefully, the above has brought home the main concerns from HKU law students about the CEE. Whilst the concerns are yet to be answered, the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services has commissioned a panel of international consultants to conduct a comprehensive review of legal education in Hong Kong, including the introduction of a CEE. The Law Association, HKUSU strongly suggests The Law Society of Hong Kong to wait until the release of the report, and also to discuss with the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training on the curriculum of the PCLL program. We believe that it would be a more effective way to maintain the profession's standard. Thank you.