

Annual Report



*for the period from 1 January 2012
to 31 December 2012*



HONG KONG
ACADEMY of LAW
香港法律專業學會

AIMS

Hong Kong Academy of Law Limited (“Academy”) was incorporated on 2 September 2008 as a company limited by guarantee and its charitable status was confirmed by the Inland Revenue Department shortly after its incorporation.

The Academy is promoted by The Law Society of Hong Kong (“Society”) and is dedicated to reaching out and promoting law through education and training to the Society Members and to the local and international communities.

The main aims of the Academy are:

- (a) to raise public awareness of the rule of law and other core values of the legal profession;
- (b) to enhance public interest in the learning of law and to promote law as a “public profession”;
- (c) to nurture social awareness of the connection between law and other community development; and
- (d) to provide pathway guidance to law students and quality development programmes for the profession.

COURSES CONDUCTED

The Academy conducted 470 courses including Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) and Risk Management Education (“RME”) courses during the year. Of the 470 courses, three courses were conducted in Putunghua and/or Cantonese and the remainder in English. The courses attracted the attendance of 15,471 participants.

Some of the highlights of these courses are:

Civil Justice Reform (“CJR”)

CJR has been implemented since April 2009. The Academy and Hong Kong Bar Association (“Bar”) jointly organised a session on an update on CJR, as part of the CJR Training Programme, in December. About 700 practitioners attended the session.



The Academy also organised two series of free specialised training sessions on CJR each consisting of five modules covering topics like case management, originating process and pleadings, offers to settle, evidence, trials, appeals and costs. About 1600 participants attended the specialised training sessions.

Mediation

With the introduction of *Practice Direction 31*, mediation has increasingly been used as a means of alternative dispute resolution. The Academy offered three general mediation training courses, four family (two basic and two advanced) mediation training courses and a training course on mediation advocacy representation during the year.



The Academy and the Mediation Committee of the Law Society also conducted nine free sharing sessions on mediation. 12 speakers were invited to share their experiences with the participants on topics including mediation representation, using mediation to resolve financial disputes, commencing practice as a general mediator and family mediator, and the Mediation Bill. The sharing sessions were attended by a total of 378 participants.



Seminars on Personal Data Privacy

The Academy invited Mr. Roderick B. Woo, J.P., former Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data and Past President of The Law Society to conduct 2 seminars, on personal data privacy in November and December respectively. The topics discussed included data protection principles and their applications to data users, exemptions and offences under the *Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance*, transfer and use of personal data in due diligence exercises in business transactions, use of personal data for promotion of goods and services, changes introduced by the *Personal Data Privacy (Amendment) Ordinance 2012* and points for solicitors to ponder when advising clients. The seminars attracted a total of 199 attendees.



Reverse Mortgage

The *Reverse Mortgage Programme* (“*Programme*”) was launched by The Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (“HKMC”) in July 2011. Under the Programme, elderly homeowners must receive counselling by solicitors to ensure they fully appreciate the salient features and legal implications of a reverse mortgage before they can apply for a loan. The Academy and HKMC co-hosted two courses entitled “*Role of Solicitors under the Reverse Mortgage Programme of HKMC*” in March and November respectively for solicitors who would like to become a counsellor. The session in November updated attendees with the enhancements to the Programme introduced by HKMC. About 550 participants attended the courses.



Seminar on Risk Management and the Professional Indemnity Scheme (“PIS”)

The Academy organised a three hour seminar in September on risk management issues for solicitors and PIS. The seminar alerted attendees to conveyancing and litigation pitfalls, risks which are not covered by PIS and claims involving top-up insurance. The seminar attracted 130 participants.



Talk on Solicitor Advocates and Solicitor Judges

The *Higher Rights of Audience Rules* came into operation on 22 June. The Academy organised a talk by Lord Collins of Mapesbury, Justice of the U.K. Supreme Court in July. Lord Collins shared his experience as a former solicitor advocate and as a solicitor judge with about 150 attendees.



Seminars on Family Law

Pursuant to Practice Direction 15.13, the *Children’s Dispute Resolution (“CDR”) Pilot Scheme*, a new procedure to resolve children’s issues, was implemented with effect from 3 October for 3 years. The Academy offered a seminar in September briefing members on the new practice and procedure dealing with children in the Family Court.

The Academy organised two seminars in September and October respectively to examine the concept of parental responsibilities and rights suggested in the Report of Law Reform Commission of Hong Kong.

Joint Courses with other professions

The *Mediation Bill* (“Bill”) was gazetted on 18 November 2011 and the *Mediation Ordinance*, Cap. 620, came into force on 1 January 2013.

The Academy and the Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators (“HKI Arb”) jointly organised a seminar entitled “Mediation Bill: A Legal Framework for Mediation in Hong Kong” in January. The seminar provided attendees with an overview of the Bill and covered topics such as the recommendations made by the Working Group on Mediation chaired by the Secretary for Justice and the progress of the enactment of the Bill through the legislative process.



The Academy organised another seminar jointly with HKI Arb on international arbitration in May. The seminar covered topics including the latest developments at the ICC International Court of Arbitration and the ICC International Centre for ADR, the 2012 ICC Rules of Arbitration, the legal framework and recent trends in Med-Arb, interim measures, jurisdiction and res judicata and costs in international arbitration, and enforcement and setting aside arbitral awards. The seminar attracted over 290 attendees.



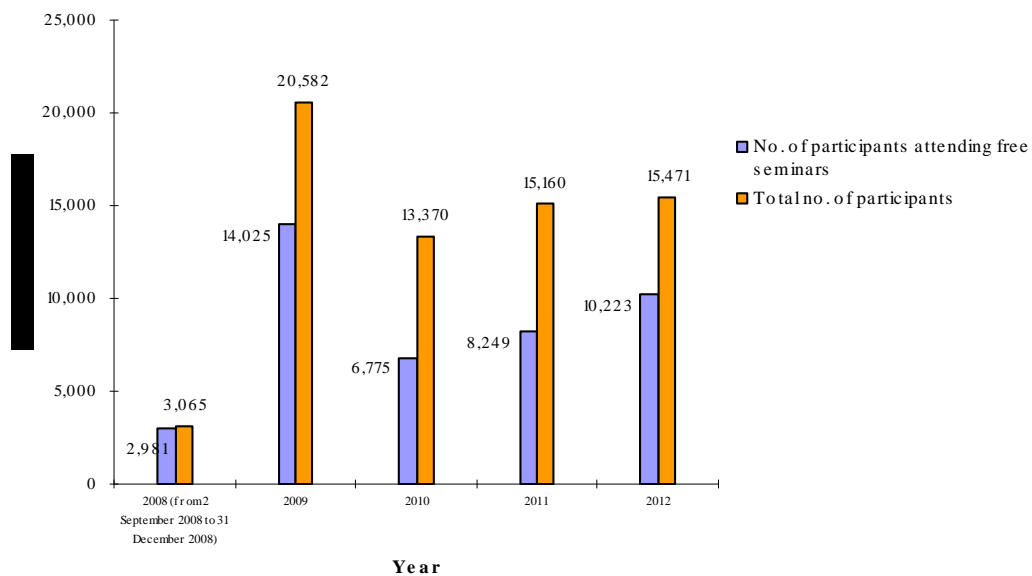
Pathway guidance

In July, the Academy held a sharing session with law students working as interns in law firms in Hong Kong. Mr. Stephen Hung, Vice-President of the Law Society of Hong Kong led a panel of experienced practitioners to share their insights in the many career options open to law students. Each Panel guest has a successful career in a different law-related field – Mr. Stephen Hung in private practice; Master Simon Kwang as Master of the High Court, Ms. Susie Cheung as General Counsel and Company Secretary of HKMC; and Mr. Peter Wong as Deputy Solicitor General of the Legal Policy Division of the Department of Justice.

About 68 interns and trainee solicitors from 32 law firms participated in the sharing session.



No. of participants in the seminars organised by the Academy in 2008-2012



The Academy is grateful to the 123 presenters who are experienced solicitors, barristers, foreign lawyers, judges and prominent members of society for sharing their valuable knowledge and expertise at the Academy's training programmes. For a full list of the presenters, please click [here](#).

SPONSORSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND DONATIONS

The Academy considered various applications for the Peter Alan Lee Vine Memorial Scholarship and approved one application to enable a student to complete the Juris Doctor degree at one of the universities in Hong Kong.

The Academy also provided sponsorships to applicants to attend the International Association of Young Lawyers 50th Annual Congress, a mediation training course in Hong Kong, and a mooting competition organized by a university in Hong Kong.