

# *Annual Report*

*for the period from 1 January 2013  
to 31 December 2013*



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 508 courses including Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) and Risk Management Education (“RME”) courses during the year. Of the 508 courses, seven courses were conducted in Putunghua and/or Cantonese and the remainder in English. The courses attracted the attendance of 16,829 participants.

Some of the highlights of these courses are:

### ***Civil Justice Reform (“CJR”)***

CJR has been implemented since April 2009. The Academy organised two series of free specialised training sessions on CJR each consisting of five modules covering topics such as case management, originating process and pleadings, offers to settle, evidence, trials, appeals and costs. About 2,210 participants attended the specialised training sessions.

### ***Joint Courses with other professions***

To facilitate interaction with other professions and government departments, the Society and the Academy jointly organised courses of common interest with the Bar and the Companies Registry. Two such courses were held over the year and over 460 attendees attended the courses.

## ***Seminars on the New Companies Ordinance***

The new *Companies Ordinance* Cap. 622 came into effect on 3 March 2014. The Academy organised 6 seminars on the new *Companies Ordinance* from September to December. Over 420 participants attended the seminars. More seminars on the new *Companies Ordinance* will be conducted in 2014.



## ***Seminar on the third edition of the Hong Kong Solicitors' Guide to Professional Conduct ("Guide")***

The third edition of the *Guide* came into effect on 1 January 2014. The Academy organized a seminar in October to brief members on the important changes to the *Guide*. A panel of speakers comprising members of the Guide Working Party of The Law Society was invited to speak at the seminar. Over 250 participants attended the seminar.



## ***Mediation***

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

In addition, the Academy and the Mediation Committee of the Society conducted nine free sharing sessions on mediation. 11 speakers were invited to share their experiences

with the participants on topics including practical tips in handling mediation cases, choosing the best mediation process model for clients' disputes, the roles and functions of the major government and quasi-statutory mediation organizations in Hong Kong and medical experts and expert reports in medical and personal injuries cases. The sharing sessions were attended by a total of 453 participants.



### ***Higher Rights of Audience (“HRA”)***

The Academy organised training courses on advocacy in October to facilitate solicitors who wish to take the assessments for HRA organized by the Higher Rights Assessment Board. The Academy conducted one course on criminal written advocacy, one course on criminal practical advocacy, two courses on civil written advocacy, and three courses on civil practical advocacy. 31 solicitors attended the courses which were conducted by trainers from the University of Law, London.



### ***Training Programme on the Convention Against Torture Claims and Refugee Law (“CAT”)***

The Academy organised its 3<sup>rd</sup> CAT training programme on 25-26 and 28-29 January to assist practitioners in handling CAT claims made under Article 3 of the *United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*. Over 160 participants attended the programme.



### ***Seminars on Personal Data Privacy***

The Academy organised two seminars by Mr. Roderick B. Woo, former Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data and Past President of the Society, on personal data privacy in October. 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. A total of 223 participants attended the seminars.



### ***Seminar on Defamation Law and Reforms in the U.K.***

The *Defamation Act 2013* was enacted in the U.K. on 25 April. The Academy organised a talk entitled “Free Speech, Reputation and Media Intrusion: British Law Reforms” by Lord Lester of Herne Hill Q.C. of Blackstone Chambers, London in October. Over 170 participants attended the talk.



### ***Seminar on Islamic Finance***

Mr. Amirali B. Nasir, Partner, Nasirs, conducted a seminar entitled “Islamic Finance – the Legislative Proposals to amend the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112) and the Stamp Duty Ordinance (Cap. 117)” on 10 August. The seminar provided an overview of the common types of Islamic Bond “*Sukuk*” and the provisions of the Inland Revenue and Stamp Duty Legislation (Alternative Bond Schemes) (Amendment) Bill 2012, which was gazetted on 28 December 2012.



### ***LAWASIA Risk Management Strategies Conference***

The Law Association for Asia and the Pacific (“LAWASIA”) organised a two-day Conference entitled “LAWASIA Risk Management Strategies Conference” (the “Conference”) on 5 & 6 July. The Academy is a supporting organisation of the Conference, which drew over 100 participants. Secretary for Justice Mr. Rimsky Yuen officiated the opening of the Conference, while President of LAWASIA Ms. Malathi Das and Immediate Past President of the Society Mr. Dieter Yih delivered the closing remarks. Speakers from Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, US and the UK shared their knowledge and experience on professional indemnity insurance and risk management.



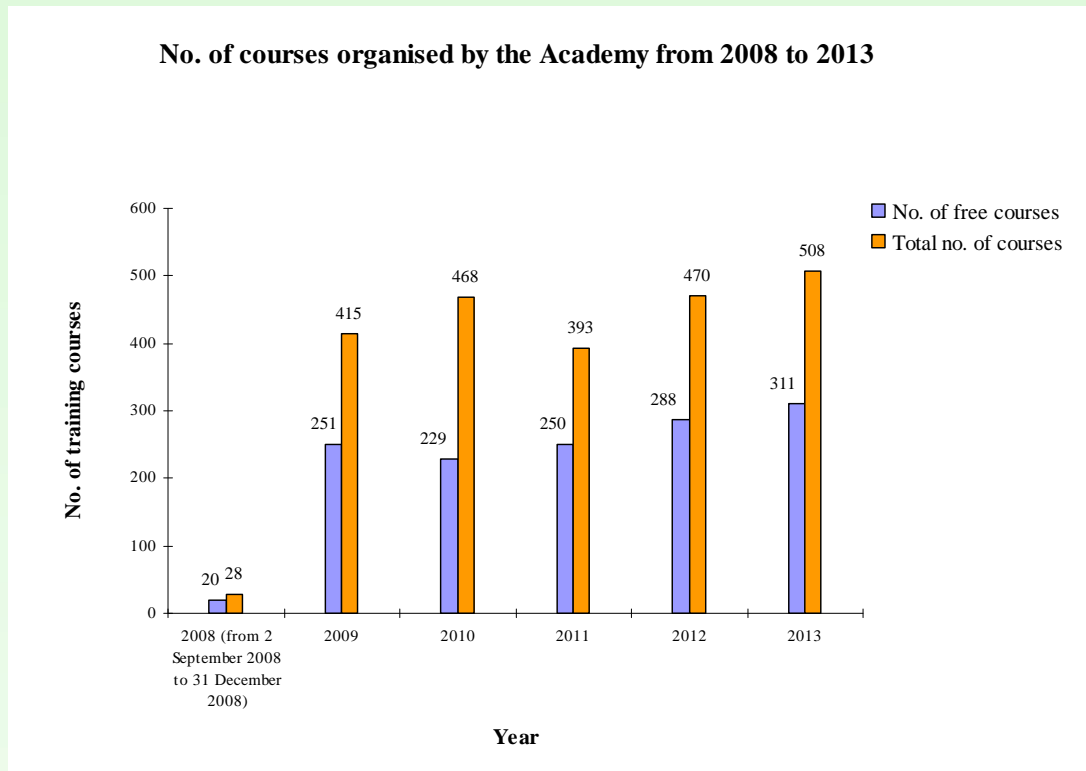
### ***Pathway Guidance***

In August, the Academy held a sharing session with law students working as interns in law firms in Hong Kong. Mr. Ambrose Lam, President of the Society led a panel of experienced practitioners to share their insight in the many career options open to law students. Each speaker has a successful career in a different law-related field; Mr. Ambrose Lam in private practice; Ms. Susan Wong, Magistrate of the Labour Tribunal, Mr. Chan Chak Ming, Head of Counsel at Sir Elly Kadoorie & Sons Ltd.; and Mr. Charles Chiu, Chairman of the Guardianship Board.

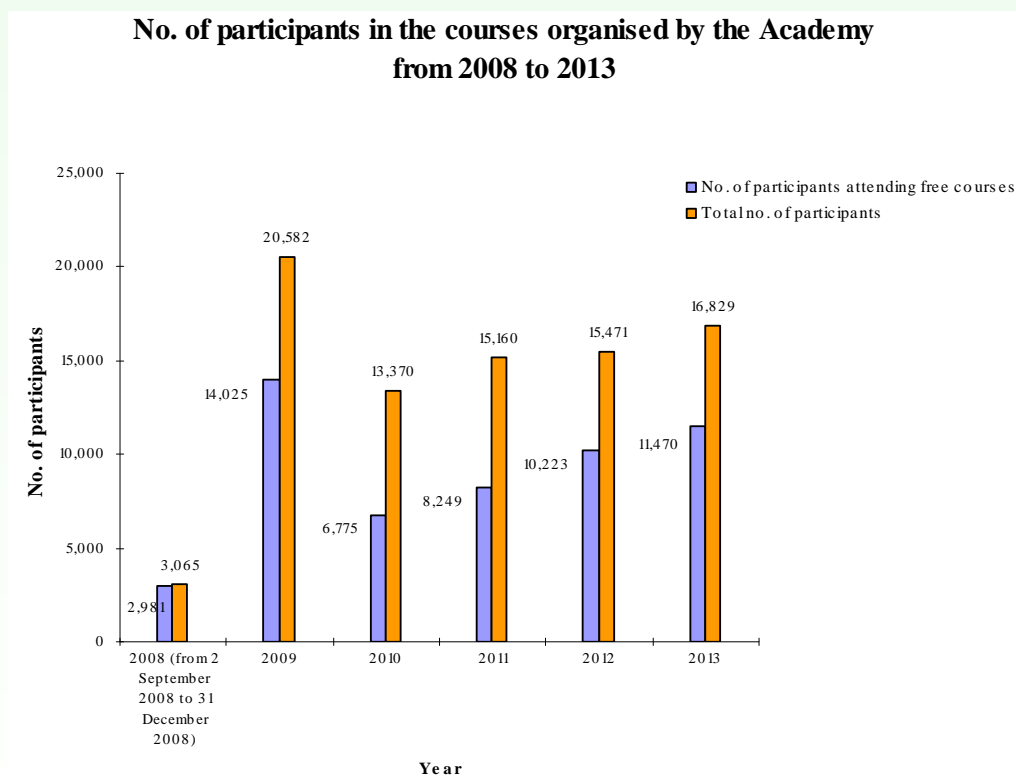
About 87 interns and trainee solicitors from 25 law firms participated in the sharing session.



The total number of courses and free courses in each of the six years from 2008 to 2013 are as follows:



The total number of participants and the number of participants attending free courses organized by the Academy in each of the six years from 2008 to 2013 are as follow:





The Academy is grateful to the 112 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 applications for bursary. The Academy approved one application for bursary to enable a student to study a legal executive course.

The Academy also approved applications for sponsorships to enable applicants to attend the Inter-Pacific Bar Association 2013 Annual Conference, the LAWASIA Risk Management Strategies Conference, and the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Annual Meeting 2013.

## **QIANHAI INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS TRAINING CENTRE**

The Academy entered into a Framework Cooperative Agreement (“Agreement”) for the establishment of the Qianhai International Lawyers Training Centre with the Shenzhen Lawyers Association, the School of Law of Tsinghua University, and the Shenzhen Graduate School of Tsinghua University.

Pursuant to the Agreement, the Academy will provide trainers with relevant experience to conduct training courses for practising lawyers from Shenzhen and Hong Kong in the Training Centre which will be situated in Shenzhen initially and later to be established in Qianhai.

## **REVIEW OF THE RME PROGRAMME**

The Academy has commissioned Nottingham Law School to review and update the core courses and electives in the RME Programme and to develop new electives. It is estimated that new courses on risk management in areas such as commercial practice, mediation, financial planning for law firms may be introduced in due course. The Academy appointed additional part-time tutors during the year who are experienced legal practitioners to collaborate with the RME Course Tutor to deliver quality and diverse interactive courses under the Programme.