



College of Law Academic Awards Ceremony

Banco Court

Tuesday 13 November 2012

The Hon Paul de Jersey AC Chief Justice

I congratulate those of you, ladies and gentlemen, who will receive awards this evening. You have reached an exciting point in your professional progression. The next, I imagine, is when you appear before the Supreme Court in this courtroom seeking admission. I preside when available, so I look forward to seeing you on those occasions.

The requirement that applicants for admission to the profession must have completed a course of so-called 'practical legal training' reflects the impracticability of practising effectively if equipped only with technical appreciation of the law. I recall following my own admission to the bar, feeling somewhat insecure when advising on matters of land title, partly because – unlike the articled clerks who went on to become solicitors – I had never visited the Titles Office.

Courses like that offered by the College of Law marked a development from earlier ventures into instilling appreciation of the more practical aspects of professional life, such as moot courts and mock interviews, and while appropriately demanding, the courses have, I believe, been much appreciated.

In congratulating you this evening, I acknowledge also your families and friends who no doubt will have contributed to your professional gestation.

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It is uplifting that you receive your awards this evening in such splendid surroundings. This is the centrepiece of the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law, described by the senior construction manager, Allan Robertson, as “a double cantilever structural box with white concrete colouring which sets it aside from all other elements of the building”.

The courtroom is notable for the wooden floor, the boxed concrete wall finish, the probably unique feature of the Sally Gabori wash behind the bench, the glass wall onto the grassed plaza, the sense of scale and space: the list goes on.

Above all, I suggest, we sense we are in a grand and significant public space where important things are accomplished.

Marking professional progression is one of those things. And so I am very pleased, ladies and gentlemen, to welcome you on this important occasion into the heart of your new metropolitan courthouse.