

March 2008

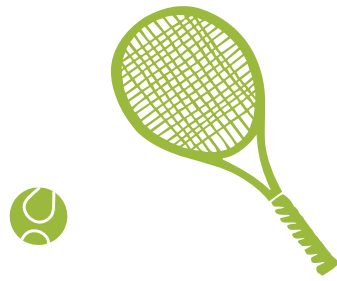


inter se online



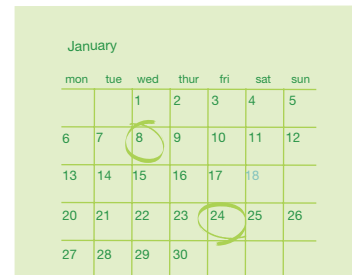
at work

Law and practice-related updates.



at play

Membership news and event reports.



calendar

Trainings and workshops calendar from March 2008.





▶ Visiting Fellows Programme

- **Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide**
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

▶ The Power of a Good CV

▶ What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide

By Professor Adrian Briggs, University of Oxford, 3–4 April 2008

Introduction

The aim of this first part is to cover the whole of the commercial and procedural side of the conflict of laws for the benefit of those who have not made a full study of it (or who did, but fear they may not have downloaded the most recent update). Accordingly we will examine:

1. *Jurisdiction and choice of law*

- The basic structure of private international law (the conflict of laws and the conflict of jurisdictions)
- Foreign law in Singapore courts: why and how is it applied?
- The techniques which underpin the whole of private international law
- A real problem: statutes and how to fit them in
- The ways in which private international law can be used to gain an edge

2. *Jurisdiction: the conflict of jurisdictions*

- Jurisdiction: when a Singapore court does have, may have, and does not have, jurisdiction
- Jurisdiction: dealing (interfering) with proceedings in a foreign court
- Making agreements about choice of court or arbitration (introductory)
- Procedure in the conflict of jurisdictions
- The way in which foreign judgments work in Singapore (and Singapore judgments overseas)

3. *Choice of law: the conflict of laws*

- Choice of law: the law which will be applied if the case is heard in Singapore
- The way to decide whether (and to what) foreign law applies
- The judge: receiving instructions from the legislator; applying the conflict of laws



inter se^{online}

at work

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- **Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide**
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

- In contract cases: (a) choosing the law in advance; (b) not choosing the law in advance
- In tort cases: (a) not choosing the law in advance; (b) choosing the law in advance
- In cases which are about contract and tort at the same time
- In cases concerned with equitable principles
- In cases concerned with unjust enrichment
- Making agreements about choice of law (introductory)



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues

By Professor Adrian Briggs, University of Oxford, 10–11 April 2008

Introduction

The aim of this second part is to look at the drafting, enforcement and effectiveness of agreements on jurisdiction, arbitration and choice of law. For this part of the course, it will be assumed that those attending have been to the first course, or have otherwise acquired a decent level of prior understanding of the subject. As it will be conducted at a more advanced level, this part of the course seeks to deal with the practical applications of this area of the law.

We will look at the details of drafting and of interpretation of jurisdiction agreements, arbitration agreements, choice of law agreements, and terms which combine these. We will aim to pay close attention to the wording and to the significance of differences. It will be necessary to look at the laws of England and Australia, in

particular, to see what light they shine on the question. We will examine the particular problem of contractual terms which provide for dispute resolution which are part of a contract which one party has rescinded or claims to have rescinded, or which has been discharged. We will ask whether the approaches taken to jurisdiction and arbitration clauses are bound to be the same or bound to be different. We will also look at secondary enforcement (by refusing to recognise judgments, by allowing claims for damages) of agreements for the resolution of disputes.

The following are some of the points which we will consider:

1. *Jurisdiction and arbitration agreements*
 - The relationship between the jurisdiction or arbitration agreement and the validity of the substantive contract



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

- The material scope of the agreement: what (or which disputes) it covers
 - The personal scope of the agreement: to whom does it extend?
 - The exclusivity or non-exclusivity of the agreement: rights conferred and obligations assumed
 - Remedies for breach of exclusive jurisdiction agreements: specific and procedural
 - Remedies for breach of exclusive jurisdiction agreements: general pecuniary and pre-agreed; judgments to reverse the result of a trial overseas
 - Remedies for breach of exclusive jurisdiction agreements: non-recognition of offending judgments
 - Remedies for breach of non-exclusive jurisdiction agreements?
2. *Agreements on choice of law*
- The relationship between the agreement on choice of law and the validity of the substantive contract
- The material scope of the agreement: what (or which disputes) it covers
 - The exclusivity or non-exclusivity of the agreement on choice of law: rights conferred and obligations assumed
 - Remedies for breach of choice of law agreements: specific and procedural?
 - Remedies for breach of choice of law agreements: general pecuniary and pre-agreed
 - Remedies for breach of choice of law agreements: non-recognition of offending judgments
- The intention is to deal with actual clauses found in commercial documents or in firms' precedent banks, to seek to show what is good about them, what is not good about them, what might once have been good about them but which is now in need of updating, and so forth.
- A representative collection of clauses in common and recent use has been compiled



inter se^{online}

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

with the particular assistance of Mr Rajan Menon and his colleagues at Messrs Khattar Wong. We will be able to use these to learn practical lessons. We will also consider whether it is sensible to draft in great detail (as many of these do) or by using very broad strokes of the brush. For greater impact and interaction with and among the participants, part of the session will be conducted in workshop form.



About the speaker

Professor Adrian Briggs read law at Hertford College, Oxford (BA 1978, BCL 1979). He has been Fellow and Tutor in Law at St Edmund Hall

Oxford since 1980, and CUF Lecturer in Law at Oxford University since the same date. In 2004, he became Professor of Private International Law at Oxford University. He has had (and hopes to continue to enjoy) spells as an academic visitor in Singapore, and has given various lectures and seminars to the Academy. He counts a number of members of the academic staff of NUS and SMU law schools among his former students.

He is a barrister in private practice, with chambers in the Temple. Almost all of his practice is concerned with private international law. Though most of the work is advisory, he has appeared in courts at all levels, and has given evidence on English law to courts in various countries outside England. He is one of the editors of Dicey, Morris & Collins, *The Conflict of Laws* (14th edn, 2006, under the General Editorship of Sir Lawrence Collins). He is the author



inter se^{online} at work

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

of *Agreements on Jurisdiction and Choice of Law* (Oxford, March 2008); *The Conflict of Laws* (Clarendon, Oxford, 2002; second edn 2008); *Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments* (Informa, 4th edn 2005), and of numerous papers in academic journals in England and (occasionally) in Singapore.

For enquiries about this seminar, please contact LES at 6332 4149/5364 or e-mail us at les@sal.org.sg.

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer



inter se^{online}

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

The Power of a Good CV

Here's what the experts at Law Alliance have to say about writing that CV.

Do not underestimate the power of your CV – a good CV can get an average candidate through the door while one which is lacking may mean even the best candidate is overlooked!

At all times, you must remember that your CV will “meet” your prospective employer before you do so it is essential that it creates the right impression! Your ultimate goal is to secure the position and your CV is the first step to achieving that goal.

In some cases, the law firm, company or financial institution that you are applying to will receive hundreds or more applications from interested candidates. You must, therefore, make sure that your CV allows you to stand out from the rest and gives the potential employer a good impression of

you. Your CV must read easily and focus on issues relevant to the role at hand. A more general CV might sometimes be most appropriate for your recruiter but even this should be coherent and focus on relevant information.

Presentation

What you should do:

- Make sure that (if you are forwarding your CV by e-mail) the attachment you send is presentable on-screen as well as in printed form. How documents look/print will always vary from computer to computer so “getting it perfect” is sometimes difficult. Keep formatting simple and enlist the assistance of someone who is a capable typist.
- Print hard copies of your CV on good quality plain white paper.



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

- Keep the length to not more than three to four pages long. If you have a deal list which requires your CV to be longer, this should be set out in an attachment to your CV.
- Attach your university academic transcript.
- Keep paragraphs short and concise – bullet point or summary form is best.
- Keep your headings clear, consistent and easily discernible from the text.
- Make sure all events are dated including qualifications and employment, and especially your place and date of admission – refer to months and years. Make sure there are no gaps in the dates – if there are, give an explanation. Although candidates are sometimes tempted to gloss over gaps in their CV, this generally has precisely the opposite effect and frequently leads employers to question gaps in more detail than if they were immediately apparent.

- Date your CV. This is important to ensure that if an employer (or recruiter) is considering your CV at some time in the future, they will immediately realise that your CV needs updating.

What you should not do:

- Begin your CV with a lengthy statement about your personal attributes.
- List irrelevant personal details.
- Write in the first person.
- Enclose photocopies of references or school certificates (you will be asked for these should they be required).

Content

Do divide your CV into sections.

While there are no hard and fast rules about what the actual sections should be, the most commonly used by lawyers are: Personal Information, Education, Professional Qualifications, Language Capability, Interests and Employment History.



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

Personal information

Relevant personal information only should be included. For example:

- Full name
- Date of birth (if you are comfortable disclosing this information)
- Marital status (again, only if you are comfortable disclosing this)
- Nationality
- Full address
- Telephone numbers (day/evening/mobile)
- E-mail address
- If relevant, state whether you are eligible to work or need a work permit

Education

List this in chronological order. Include the year in which you started and completed each course/degree together with your secondary grades, university grades and any awards/prizes received and scholarships

granted. If you can very briefly describe the reasons for awards/prizes/scholarships being granted, then this should be done.

Bedrock High School, 1991–1997

10 'O' Levels - 8 Grade A's, 2 Grade B's
4 'A' Levels - 3 Grade A's, 1 Grade B

University of Bedrock, Teeveeland, 1997–2000

LL.B (Hons) 2:1

- Subjects studied: Contract, Tort, Constitutional Law, International Law, Land Law, Company Laws, Commercial Law, Criminal Law, Equity, Intellectual Property Law
- Recipient of numerous academics scholarships and placed on Dean's List in 1998, 1999 and 2000

Professional qualifications

Note both the month and date each professional qualification was received,



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

University of Bedrock Law School, 2000–2001

Postgraduate Certificate in Laws

- Subjects studied: Commercial Law & Practice, Civil & Criminal Procedure, Revenue Law, Conveyancing & Probate Practice, Advocacy, Professional Practice, Accounts & Financial Management

Solicitor (Hong Kong): September 2003

Solicitor (England & Wales): November 2004

Language capabilities

The main thing to bear in mind is to be specific. Don't say anything in this area which can lead to a third party having to ask you to clarify what your capability is. Always state the level of your fluency in the particular language.

- Do not state: "Cantonese, English, Mandarin, German."
- Do state: "Fluent spoken Cantonese and English. Conversational Mandarin. Basic

German. Able to read and write/draft in Chinese (both complex and simplified characters)."

Interests

Keep this very brief and avoid references to pastimes which a potential employer might find extremely strange or unorthodox.

Interests

Rugby, waterskiing, current affairs and reading novels.

Employment history

Unlike your education details, your employment history should appear in reverse chronological order with your current/most recent position being listed first.

In this section, include names of employers, dates (again, always include months and years), position held and details of the work you have undertaken.



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

If you have undertaken any studies while being employed, you should mention that, eg "Corporate Associate (full-time while studying part-time)".

Do not:

- Leave out any period of employment for whatever reason. It is important to ensure that your time is accounted for.
- Give reasons for leaving any of the jobs on your CV. This is something which is generally much better left explained in person at an interview.
- Embellish your CV or be economical with the truth (ie overstating your experience, accomplishments or, if you chose to include it, current salary level).

AUGUST 2001 TO PRESENT: STONE & HAMMER, BEDROCK

September 2003 to present: Associate Solicitor, Litigation Department

August 2001 to August 2003: Trainee Solicitor

September 2003 to present

Litigation Department

- Currently acting for a multinational car manufacturing company in an ICC arbitration (governed by Dutch Law) relating to defective brake discs.
- Currently acting for a multinational company in a dispute relating to attempts to exclude the company from certain markets.
- Currently acting for an international contractor in a dispute against a Singaporean government authority relating to the construction of a large sewage system.
- Acted for a multinational telecommunications company in arbitration proceedings (governed by German Law) arising out of a service contract dispute.
- Acted for a Russian multinational company in arbitration proceedings brought against a Thai company for the wrongful rejection of engineering works.
- Acted for a British company in arbitration proceedings brought against a Belgium company arising from a software system dispute.



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

August 2001 to August 2003

Litigation Department (fourth seat - 6 months)

- Involved in various civil disputes, including insolvency and arbitration cases; assisted with bankruptcy and winding-up cases; conducted substantive research on a wide variety of legal issues; drafted a wide array of pleadings and witness statements; attended numerous short interlocutory applications at court.

Finance Department (third seat - 6 months)

- Involved in a large project financing and assisted with a high value financial restructuring; drafted documents for loan transactions; drafted various documents for the restructuring project; completed numerous Companies Registry security registration forms.

Corporate Services and Financial Markets Department (second seat - 6 months)

- Assisted with due diligence and prepared due diligence reports for various acquisition transactions, worked on the IPO due diligence exercise for a large bank; assisted in drafting numerous joint venture agreements; conducted research on various regulatory issues.

Capital Markets Department (first seat - 6 months)

- Involved in a number of stand-alone Regulation S bonds issue transactions; assisted in the closing of various bonds issues and securitisation transaction

Publications

Include details of any contributions that you may have made to any articles published in the legal press.

This article is published with the kind permission of Law Alliance, a legal recruitment specialist. For more updates on the legal recruitment scene here and elsewhere, visit www.law-alliance.com.



inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► **What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer**

What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

By Fabian Tan, Intern, Academy Publishing, with additional reporting by Rebecca Sit, Senior Executive, Membership Affairs

The Singapore Academy of Law held its “meet the profession” session on Wednesday, 13 February 2008 at the National University of Singapore (“NUS”) Faculty of Law, Bukit Timah campus. The session, entitled “What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer” was organised by the Membership and Social Committee. The aim was to allow law students to meet and interact with members of the profession, to understand more about their choices after university and clarify what it really means to practise law.

Forty-five students attended the talk at the NUS seminar room, eager to hear from the seven panellists. Each panellist represented a different aspect of law practice, with Mr Lee Terk Yang, a legal assistant at Messrs Tan Rajah & Cheah, as the moderator for the evening.

Ms Tan Wen Hsien, an Assistant Registrar at

the Supreme Court, kicked off the evening by recounting her experience as a pupil in a large, well-known law firm. She shared how she decided to continue her studies and her eventual decision to join the legal service. Ms Joy Tan, a partner at Wong Partnership, spoke briefly about her firm's status as a JLV and at length about striking a good work-life balance, stressing to the audience that “you can make it work”. When Mr Lee Eng Beng, SC took over the microphone, he





inter se online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

immediately said, "Maybe everyone should stop looking for the perfect job, maybe there's no such thing." He emphasised the importance of finding out about the options that were available but said that more importantly, self-awareness and understanding would help the students in finding a sense of fulfilment in their work.

Ms Tang Yock Min of Fuji Xerox Asia Pacific shared with the students the life of an in-house counsel by comparing it with her former job as a litigator. Ms Cerintha Chia, a corporate lawyer from Rodyk & Davidson, felt that continuous learning was key, and explained how important a firm grasp of the fundamentals would be to working life.

Mr Anand Nalachandran, a partner in Messrs Hary Elias shared about his criminal practice and strongly urged the students to "give the profession a fair chance", remarking, "You spend four years studying how to be



a lawyer, at least put in a few years in the profession." He noted that too many lawyers quit after three months or six months, and never explored all the possibilities that the profession offers.

The event was a tremendous success and it certainly gave the students a quick snapshot of the possible options available to them after graduation and throughout their legal career. It was clear that there were demands in practice like long working hours, difficult clients and challenging work,



inter se at work online

► Visiting Fellows Programme

- *Part 1 – Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide*
- *Part 2 – Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues*

► The Power of a Good CV

► What They Don't Tell You at Law School – A Glimpse at the Work and Life of a Lawyer

but the key message was that striking a good work-life balance was possible in the legal profession, and that students should give all possible options a fair chance. In general, students gave feedback that the panel provided valuable insights into the legal profession.

The Committee would like to thank NUS Faculty of Law for their kind sponsorship of the venue, and also the following panellists:

Mr Lee Eng Beng, SC, Partner, Messrs Rajah & Tann
 Ms Cerintha Chia, Partner, Rodyk & Davidson
 Ms Joy Tan, Partner, Messrs Wong Partnership
 Ms Tang Yock Min, In-house counsel, Fuji Xerox Asia Pacific
 Mr Anand Nalachandran, Partner, Messrs Harry Elias Partnership
 Ms Tan Wen Hsien, Supreme Court Assistant Registrar
 Mr Lee Terk Yang, Legal Assistant, Messrs Tan Rajah & Cheah



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- [La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo](#)

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- [Were You There?](#)

► Healthy Living

- [Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind](#)

La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo

By Denis Low, Group Legal Advisor – Technology
Standard Chartered Bank



This new-ish Italian restaurant (opened in the last six months) is located at the Singapore Art Museum. It offers a broad range of Italian fare – from pasta (both dry and fresh) to pizzas, salads and risottos to second-course meats and fish dishes – accompanied by a respectable dessert and wine list. For the carnivorous, the menu

carries a salivary gland opening, 900g–1kg bistecca alla fiorentina (a thick cut steak on the bone popular in Florence) that serves two. The only thing it doesn't have is ravioli. That, however, would be nitpicking.

Drinkers should note that Lafiandra serves its vino della casa (house wine) in bottles, by carafes (a small glass flask which serves about 2.5–3 glasses) and by the glass – and it has two varieties in both the reds and whites so it is not some unidentified fermented grape juice. Credit to the owners for doing this – it is ideal for visitors to the museum who fancy a quick tipple afterwards. Another nice touch is the complementary bruschetta as an appetiser.

My companion had the three-course set lunch for \$25.90. Choices of a soup, salad or roasted vegetables for starters, and a



inter se at play online

► At Play Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*



pasta, risotto or a pork fillet with mushrooms and mashed potatoes for mains. The

dessert was a

tiramisu. The portions were generous but my companion felt that it was a bit too much for lunch on a workday. A cheaper two-course menu (starter and mains or mains and dessert with coffee) would have been more value for money. She had the roasted aubergines baked with parmesan and set on a bed of lettuce, and the pork fillet. The parmigiana was rustic and scrumptious as a Mediterranean dish should be. The meat was tender and came in a cream sauce, again set unusually on a bed of lettuce, which although aesthetic added nothing to

challenge the taste buds. I had a pea soup followed by a squid ink linguine. Again, the portions were generous. The soup was better than most in Singapore – creamy with a good texture and not too salty. The linguine was beautiful; it had the right whiff of sea flavours and the sauce was a near perfect viscosity. Two little niggles, though – little pieces of red tomatoes in a sea of black sauce just doesn't quite gel and the noodles were a tad too al dente. However, a repeat visit is definitely warranted to try out some



of their numerous pasta dishes or when I am depressed, the steak.



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*



Italian food should be delicious, quick and affordable. Lafiandra scores well on the first

two criteria but for the price points it offers, it would not be a regular lunch venue, except for the most well-heeled amongst us. However, the place has a cozy ambience which matches its name (there's nothing more confusing than trattorias with post-modern eclectic furniture) and the service is cheerful and prompt. Aziz, the maitre-d, was always at hand to make sure everything is okay. A place to keep in mind for lunch in the Bras Basah Road area and probably a perfect venue for a large dinner party.

Type of Food: Italian

Good for: Business lunches and informal dinners

Ambience: Classically trattoria, relaxed

Address : 171 Bras Basah Road

Tel : 6884 4035



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

Write a witty caption for this photo!

Entries will be judged based on creativity, humour and originality, and the best of them all will receive a \$100 shopping voucher.



To participate, e-mail your entry for the photograph above together with your name, contact number and SAL membership number to inter_se@sal.org.sg by 15 March 2008.



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

Were You There?

As SAL celebrates its 20th birthday, Singaporean lawyers remember their admission to the Bar.

It was not too long ago that the Academy published its quarterly newsletters that have slowly transformed into the current *Inter Se* (Online and Print) that we are now familiar with. An integral part of the newsletters – especially in its earlier years – was focused on the joyous occasion of the Mass Call.

On 22 March 1989, before 165 newly-called members of the Bar, then Chief Justice Wee Chong Jin spoke on the role of the newly formed Singapore Academy of Law and stressed “high quality work, integrity and high standards of conduct” was “the only road to professional recognition and success”. You may have been among the 165 then, listening to the CJ speak.

Or perhaps you were a starry-eyed lawyer who wanted to start your own practice and whose heart dropped as CJ Wee advised your class (the class of 1991) to avoid sole proprietorships and “to try to form partnerships of at least half a dozen”.

Maybe you were the person admitted to the Bar by your father. Or maybe you were sitting next to the person admitted to the Bar by his father. Throughout the years, the Mass Calls have all been situated in unique local and historical contexts.

A good example would be to contrast the Mass Calls of 1994 and 2001. In 1994, facing the potential problem of having too many lawyers, CJ Wee had announced new and more stringent standards which law students would have to meet before being allowed to practise in Singapore. You may have been sitting there, thanking the heavens for having graduated already.

On the other hand, it might have been 2001, where you were part of the 173 listening to former CJ Yong Pung How addressing the “current shortage of lawyers in Singapore today”.



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*



Mr Vinodh Coomaraswamy SC, who had the privilege of being admitted to the Bar by his father, the late Punch Coomaraswamy remembers that day as "one of the most significant days of my life, both personally and professionally".

"My wife and I were admitted on the same day," recalls Mr Coomaraswamy SC, a partner at Shook, Lin & Bok. "My father opened proceedings that day by declaring his interest as the father of one candidate and the father-in-law of another and asked if anyone had any objections."

"Nobody did," he said.

Mr Coomaraswamy SC then elaborated further on the familial joy, noting that "my father never tried to steer me into a career at the law, but I knew that he was deep down pleased as Punch, forgive the pun, to learn that I had a passion for the law, to see me decide to take it up as a career, and to be allowed to preside over that particular mass call. And the icing on the cake for him would have been that I had married one who shared a passion for the law."





inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

The circumstances of his era were also not lost on Mr Coomaraswamy SC.

“When we were called in 1992, the profession was entirely different. As newly-called lawyers, we were blissfully unaware of our options. To us, the future meant working hard during pupillage, getting retained and working towards partnership.”

Mr Coomaraswamy SC's experience is but one of many unique mass call recollections. As the economy grew over the years and the times changed, the attitudes and expectations of new lawyers have shifted, and this point is highlighted by Mr Coomaraswamy SC.

He noted that “young lawyers today are all too aware of their options – pupillage/retention/partnership is no longer the goal. They are much more ready to pursue their true passion – and if it is not

the law, to leave the profession altogether. If they do stay in the law, they are again far more aware than we were that legal practice is not just Singapore but includes Hong Kong, Shanghai, New York or London.”

This increasing globalisation of the legal profession is also mentioned by Mr Nathaniel Khng of the class of 2007, albeit in terms of competition. He highlighted that “with globalisation and the expansion of the legal market in Singapore, we can expect greater contribution (and competition) from foreign elements”. He also quipped that the recent graduates were a “motivated and competent” bunch, who “will aspire to do the best they can to contribute to Singapore's legal system”.

As a recently appointed Legal Service Officer, Mr Khng will only be called to the Bar in 2010. Nonetheless, it is still an event that he looks forward to, saying that “the



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

legitimacy given by being called to the Bar, and the corresponding responsibility, are but two of the many thoughts which would cross the mind of each candidate as the date of calling approaches.”

Whether you were called in 1992 or are waiting to be called in 2010, the day itself remains an undeniably significant one.

Visit www.sal.org.sg for more stories and photographs in our 20th Anniversary album.



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind

Our state of mind is shaped by how we think and feel. This in turn affects how we respond to situations we encounter daily, whether at work or at play.

Having a healthy state of mind is not just about being in a good mood. It means you value yourself for who you are and you are able to cope positively with changes or challenges in your life.

In life, we will encounter stressful situations, crises or even setbacks. However, if our state of mind is in good shape, we are better able to handle such situations.

Here are some tips that can help you get into or maintain a healthy state of mind.

Take a mental "time out"

Why it helps:

When you feel anxious or stressed about a situation, it is easy to be "trapped" in it for a long time. Instead of dwelling on it, take a mental "time out" from the situation.

What you can do:

Get away from your desk for a while. A short break can help you relax and improve your mood. It will make it easier for you to assess your problem from a different light, or at least be in a better frame of mind to tackle the problem again.

Clear the clutter

Why it helps:

Whether it's your desk in the office or your study room at home, it is difficult to de-stress if you have unfiled papers, bills and magazines lying all over the place. A cluttered workspace also means you waste time looking for items.



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

What you can do:

Set up a system to manage your papers at work. Use a file rack or a filing box to hold folders for active projects. Completed projects and reference materials can be stored in a filing cabinet. Clear the clutter regularly.

Make time for family and friends

Why it helps:

Forming strong relationships with family and friends is one of the best ways to maintain a healthy state of mind.

What you can do:

Make time for loved ones and good friends where possible.

- Try to have a meal with your family regularly.
- Respond to e-mails or text messages that friends send you. A simple reply can go a long way in maintaining these friendships.

Focus on what's positive

Why it helps:

When you recognise the positive qualities you have and the achievements you have

made, it helps to reinforce your sense of self-worth.

What you can do:

Keep a notepad by your bedside. Before retiring for the night, write down at least one good thing that happened to you that day. This is an effective way of reminding yourself to pay attention to the positive things in your life.

Visit a quiet place

Why it helps:

Amid the noisy bustle of daily life, places like public parks and gardens, museums and places of worship are an oasis of peace and tranquility for our stressed minds.

What you can do:

Find a quiet place near your home or workplace. Make it your personal getaway whenever you feel overwhelmed.

Be able to laugh about it

Why it helps:

When you are under pressure, you may feel worried and frustrated. If left unchecked, it



inter se at play online

► At Play

Dining Out

- *La Trattoria Lafiandra al Museo*

► SAL's 20th Anniversary Photo Caption Contest

► Reflections

- *Were You There?*

► Healthy Living

- *Tips on How to Get into a Healthy State of Mind*

can lead to feelings of anxiety. However, if you are able to see the humour in the situation, it makes it seem more manageable.

What you can do:

Get into the habit of looking out for the funny or positive side of situations. You will not only see things in a different light, but you will also be able to laugh about it. This can significantly reduce your feelings of stress and anxiety.

Equip yourself with more than one coping skill

Why it helps:

It is important to equip yourself with more than one coping method. If the usual means of coping with stress cannot be employed, an alternative method can be used.

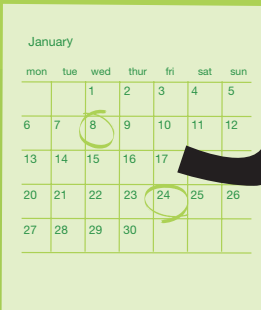
However, do not resort to excessive drinking, drugs-taking and self-harm, as these are harmful to our physical and emotional health.

What you can do:

You may wish to try the following:

- Deep breathing
- Relaxation exercises
- Fighting negative thoughts with positive self-talk
- Exercise regularly
- Talking it through with a friend or family member

This article is published with the kind permission of the Health Promotion Board (www.hpb.gov.sg). Call HealthLine at 1800 223 1313 for more tips on how to get into a healthy state of mind.



calendar inter se online

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS CALENDAR FROM MARCH 2008

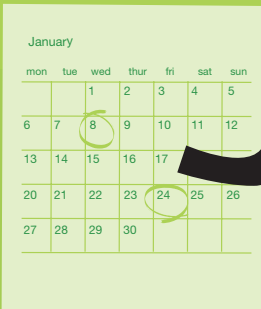
DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER(S)/TRAINER(S)	ORGANISER(S)
7 Mar (Fri) 9.00am–5.00pm	EFS ROC Phase 1 & 2	Mr Clifford Leslie Nonis, Crimson Logic	LTC
7, 14 Mar (Fri) 9.30am–5.30pm	Preparation of Financial Statements using FS Manager	Mr David MacKenzie	SAL/CL
12, 13 Mar (Wed, Thu) 9.30am–12.30pm	LawNet Portal Administrator	Mr Clifford Leslie Nonis, Crimson Logic	LTC
12, 13 Mar (Wed, Thu) 2.30pm–5.30pm	LawNet2 Portal User	Mr Clifford Leslie Nonis, Crimson Logic	LTC
14 Mar (Fri) 7.00pm–9.30pm	SAL Law Debate 2008 "Litigation: A Man's Domain?"	Proposing the motion will be representatives from the Men's team lead by Mr Chelva Rajah SC Opposing this motion will be the Women's team, spearheaded by Ms Deborah Barker, SC	MBD
19 Mar (Wed) 9.00am–12.00pm	EFS Phase 4B	Mr Clifford Leslie Nonis, Crimson Logic	LTC

at work

at play

calendar

March 2008

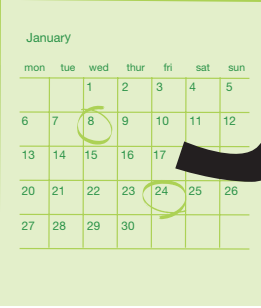


calendar inter se online

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER(S)/TRAINER(S)	ORGANISER(S)
20 Mar (Thu) 9.00am–5.00pm	LawNet Conveyancing: Intereq and STARS e-Lodgement	Ms Serena Lim, BiziBody	LTC
26 Mar (Wed) 9.30pm–5.30pm	LawNet Services at a Glance	Mr Clifford Leslie Nonis, Crimson Logic	LTC
Session 1: 28 Mar (Fri) Session 2: 4 Apr (Fri) 6.15pm–9.15pm	Free for SAL Members! Style for Success: Image, Styling and Hair Workshop, presented by Mahogany	Associate speaker Ms Joanne Lim, Image coach-consultant, and Mahogany's team	MBD
3–4 Apr (Thu–Fri) 8.30am–5.00pm	Visiting Fellows Programme: Private International (Commercial) Law: A Schematic Guide	Professor Adrian Briggs, University of Oxford	LES
10–11 Apr (Thu–Fri) 8.30am–5.00pm	Visiting Fellows Programme: Private International Law: Practical Applications and Drafting Issues	Professor Adrian Briggs, University of Oxford	LES
6 May (Tue)	Arbitration Professor Rob Merkin, School of Law, 2.30pm–5.30pm	University of Southampton	SMU and LES



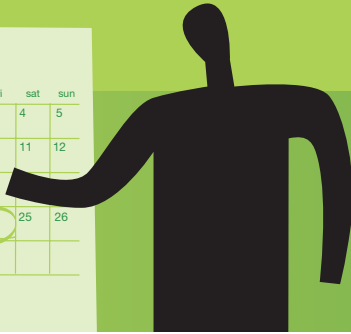
◀ previous | next ▶



calendar inter se online

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER(S)/TRAINER(S)	ORGANISER(S)
8, 9 May (Thu, Fri) 9.00am–5.00pm	Mediation: Strategic Conflict Management for Professionals	Mr Loong Seng Onn and Ms Carol Liew	SMC
23–25 Jul (Wed–Fri) 8.30am–5.15pm	Obligations IV Conference – Current Issues in Contract, Tort, Equity and Restitution	Keynote Speakers: The Right Hoffmann, Lord of Appeal in Ordinary; Professor Hanoch Dagan, University of Tel Aviv and Professor Stephen Perry, University of Pennsylvania	Faculty of Law, NUS; Melbourne Law School, University of Melbourne and LES

January						
mon	tue	wed	thur	fri	sat	sun
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



calendar inter se online

Please note that all information is correct at the time of publication. While every effort is made to retain the original arrangements, changes may sometimes be necessary. Details on select events may be found on the Academy's website at www.sal.org.sg.

For enquiries and more information, please contact the respective organisers:

Professional Affairs Committee (PAC):

Rebecca Sit at tel: (65) 6332 0078 or pac_events@sal.org.sg

LawNet Training Centre (LTC):

Seri Adilia at tel: (65) 6332 4256 or Aida Bte Abdul Rahman
at tel: (65) 6332 4382 or lrc@sal.org.sg

Legal Education and Studies (LES):

Alexis Ong at tel: (65) 6332 4149 or les@sal.org.sg

Singapore Mediation Centre (SMC):

Survinder Kaur at tel: (65) 6332 4213 or survinder_kaur@sal.org.sg

Membership Affairs (MBD)

Rebecca Sit at tel: (65) 6332 0078 or mship_events@sal.org.sg

For more information on the SMC courses above, please visit www.mediation.com.sg/training.htm.