An Interdisciplinary Approach to Advocacy Teaching

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May 2014
What is it?

• Using students and professionals of other appropriate disciplines, acting as witnesses, to aid in the development of advocacy skills.

• Providing exposure to students and professionals of other appropriate disciplines to court proceedings.
A Simple Idea

• How to enhance the student experience?

• Approaches from others!

• Initiatives from within the Bar Teaching Team
Enhancing the Student Experience

Institutional obsession with the ‘student experience’ taken as a given!

- Giving students the opportunity to practice advocacy outside the formal teaching and assessment structure of the Bar Course.

- Expanding student experience of professional and expert witnesses
Positives

• *Enthusiasm and engagement levels are high throughout the process.*

• *The quality of the advocacy has been good to outstanding.*

• *Positive reporting from students involved.*
Positives

• *Students do report feeling more confident about advocacy following such exercises.*

• *Allows a degree of freedom for students to develop their own style of advocacy.*

• *Students’ self-analysis of their advocacy appears to be more detailed and incisive than during more formal teaching.*
Positives

• *Students gain an insight into an area of practice which they may not cover through their formal studies.*

• *The feedback from the academics and students from the other disciplines is very positive*
Concerns

• Are students more inclined to pick up/perpetuate bad habits in a non-formalised/non-assessed advocacy exercise?

• Is reflection on good and poor advocacy more limited than in more formal teaching?

• Limited ability to correct mistakes during the process.
Concerns

• Compatibility with other more formalised teaching methods, Hampel for example?

• Are those who volunteer the ones who would be good in any event?
Case Studies

• *Forensic Science Students.*

• *Social Work Students and newly qualified social workers.*
Future Plans

• Evaluation.

• Continuing with what we have started.

• Adding to and varying the types of ‘experts.

• Formally contributing to the undergraduate/post graduate social worker training programmes within Northumbria.