



Law Society
of Ireland

LAW SCHOOL NEWS



PPC TRAINEES SHINE AT BLACKHALL STRICTLY 2026

The Blackhall Strictly Come Dancing 2026 brought glamour, energy and excitement to The Helix on Thursday, February 19, 2026. Hosted at Dublin City University's renowned performance venue, the event featured 10 couples made up of Law Society PPC trainees who took to the dancefloor in a vibrant celebration of music, movement and community spirit.

Produced and choreographed entirely by trainee solicitors, the showcase highlighted the creativity and teamwork of the participants both on and off the stage. From elegant ballroom routines to high-energy Latin performances, the evening entertained a packed audience while also supporting charitable causes through fundraising efforts.

The event combined the glamour of a professional dance production with the enthusiasm and dedication of Blackhall's trainee community, making it one of the standout social and charitable events of the year.

The Glitterball winners were Ciaran Traynor and Lorraine Kelly.





BLACKHALL CHARITY FIGHT NIGHT 2026 BRINGS DUBLIN'S LEGAL COMMUNITY TOGETHER FOR A WORTHY CAUSE



The Blackhall Charity Fight Night 2026 took place on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at Twenty Two on South Anne Street in Dublin 2, drawing together members of Ireland's legal community for an evening of sport, fundraising, and solidarity.

The annual event featured a series of boxing matches involving PPC trainee solicitors, who stepped into the ring in support of important mental health and community initiatives. Combining athletic competition with charitable purpose, the night highlighted the commitment of Ireland's future legal professionals to causes beyond the courtroom.

Held in the vibrant surroundings of Twenty Two, the event attracted colleagues, friends, family members, and supporters from across the legal sector. Attendees gathered to cheer on participants who had spent weeks training and preparing for the challenge, demonstrating both discipline and determination in the ring.

More than just a sporting spectacle, the Blackhall Charity Fight Night aimed to raise awareness and funding for mental health supports and community-based organisations. The event reflected a growing recognition within the legal profession of the importance of wellbeing, resilience, and social responsibility.

By the end of the evening, an incredible €19,353 had been raised, which is to be split evenly between three charities: Jigsaw, the NSPCA, and the Charlotte Savill Foundation. All three do hugely important work, and being able to contribute to them in a meaningful way is something everyone involved in the event can be proud of.

Throughout the evening, participants displayed courage and camaraderie and as the final bell rang on another successful edition of the Blackhall Charity Fight Night, the event once again demonstrated how sport and charity can come together to create a positive impact — both within the profession and across the wider community.



MORE THAN BOOKS: HOW THE LAW SOCIETY LIBRARY SUPPORTS SOLICITORS NATIONWIDE



For many, the idea of a library still conjures images of silent reading rooms, towering bookshelves, and borrowed textbooks. But Mairéad O’Sullivan, head of library and information services, says the modern Law Society Library is far more than a traditional legal archive.

Today, the library operates as a sophisticated national research hub, supporting solicitors across Ireland with resources, expertise, and services designed to function as “an extra team member” for firms of every size.

While Blackhall Place remains its physical home, the library’s reach extends far beyond Dublin. Through an efficient DX courier service, solicitors can have up to five books delivered directly to their office for a nominal €5 fee, ensuring practitioners nationwide can access essential legal materials with ease.

At the same time, the library’s digital services continue to expand. Members now have access to 328 e-books alongside leading legal databases such as LexisNexis, enabling practitioners to carry out high-level legal research regardless of location. These resources also allow the library team to assist solicitors with complex legal queries that could otherwise consume significant time and resources, particularly for sole practitioners and smaller firms.

The range of supports available reflects the increasingly varied needs of the profession. The library team provides assistance with everything from quick legal look-ups to in-depth research on evolving areas such as cyber-security, artificial intelligence regulation, and company law.

One of the library’s most valued offerings remains its precedents service. In 2025 alone, the team supplied 463 precedents to solicitors, ranging from partnership agreements to will templates, helping practitioners work more efficiently and consistently.

The library has also developed 12 subject guides designed to support solicitors entering unfamiliar practice areas or refreshing their knowledge in rapidly changing fields such as GDPR and environmental law. Meanwhile, its fortnightly newsletter, LawWatch, has become an important update tool for many practitioners, summarising recent legislation, case law, and new library acquisitions.

The demand for the service continues to grow. In 2025, the library handled 6,033 queries, with 5,258 coming directly from solicitors. Its webpage received more than 55,000 visits, while over 4,400 people visited the library in Blackhall Place in person.

Looking ahead, the library is preparing to launch a new “Trending legal queries” feature, aimed at providing immediate guidance on the issues most frequently raised by practitioners. Topics such as assisted decision-making and enduring powers of attorney are expected to feature prominently.

Behind the service is a dedicated six-person team led by Mairéad O’Sullivan, alongside deputy librarian Clare Tarpey, executive librarians Eddie Mackey and Anthony Lambe, and library assistants Millie Brennan and Shannon Hiday.

Their work also extends beyond day-to-day legal research. The library manages an archive collection frequently used for genealogical research and assists families tracing ancestors listed on the Roll of Solicitors.

BLACKHALL GAA TEAM REACHES CORN COMHAIRLE ARDOIDEACHAS SEMI-FINAL

The men's GAA team from Law Society of Ireland did the Law School proud with an impressive run to the semi-finals of the Corn Comhairle Ardoideachas competition on 18 February. Although a place in the final ultimately proved out of reach, the team delivered a spirited performance before falling to ATU Connemara in Mayo on a scoreline of 1-12 to 2-03.

The campaign represented a memorable achievement for the squad, whose performances throughout the competition reflected both determination and strong camaraderie. The semi-final appearance highlighted the continued strength of sporting life within Blackhall and the important role that extracurricular activities play in bringing students together.

Team captain Tom Foley reflected positively on the experience, emphasising the sense of pride shared by the players in representing

the Law Society.

"We all took great enjoyment and pride from being able to represent the Law Society at this event," he said. "It was a great opportunity to make new friends and, personally, it has been my favourite part of being in Blackhall."

The panel comprised Glenn Prendergast, Patrick Lewis, Seán Keegan, Seán Power, Vincent Doherty, Tom Foley, Mark Hoolahan, Algirdas Mockus, Cathal Moloney, Stephen Murphy, Robert O'Sullivan, Ben Crowley, Seán Kennedy, Padraic McKenna, Robert Hardiman, Shane Black, Callum Ashton, Niall Barrett, John Taaffe, Luke Cunningham, Evan Savage, and Seán Fahey, who acted as bainisteoir.

While the result may not have gone their way on the day, the team's achievement in reaching the last four of the competition was a significant accomplishment and one that reflected great credit on all involved.





FUTURE SOLICITORS GAIN FIRST-HAND INSIGHT INTO LEGAL PROFESSION

Forty transition-year students from schools across Ireland recently participated in the Law Society’s ‘Solicitors of the Future’ programme, an immersive initiative designed to inspire and educate the next generation of legal professionals.

Held from 17–20 February, the programme offered students a unique opportunity to explore the realities of working in the legal sector. Over the course of the week, participants engaged with practising and trainee solicitors, visited leading law firms, and toured the Criminal

Courts of Justice to gain a deeper understanding of the Irish legal system.

One of the standout moments of the programme was a session led by Aisling Grace, a trainee solicitor with the Chief State Solicitor’s Office. Widely regarded as a student favourite, the interactive discussion encouraged participants to consider how the law operates in everyday life and its impact on society.

‘Solicitors of the Future’ forms part of the Law Society’s wider public legal education initiatives, which aim to broaden access to the solicitors’ profession and encourage students from diverse backgrounds to consider a future career in law.



LAW SOCIETY CELEBRATES YOUNG LEGAL MINDS

On Wednesday 6 May, the Law Society hosted a celebratory event to announce the winners of the National Gráinne O'Neill Memorial Legal Essay Competition, with Transition Year student Rhea Schreiber of Sacred Heart Secondary School, Tullamore taking the top prize.

This essay competition honours the life and legacy of the late Judge Gráinne O'Neill. In 2014, Gráinne became the youngest judge in Ireland to be appointed. Gráinne died in 2018 following a period of illness but, during her life and especially during her years as a judge, Gráinne worked diligently to apply the law in a fair, rigorous and compassionate manner. It is in her memory that the Gráinne O'Neill Memorial Legal Essay Competition was established.

Thirty-six finalists attended the event. Aishling Heavey, Holy Rosary College, Mountbellew, Galway was awarded second place, while Niamh Doyle, Our Lady's Bower, Athlone, Westmeath took home third place.

Seven merit certificates were awarded to: Euan Stewart, Merville Community College, Donegal; Nathan Keane, St. Gerald's DLS College, Mayo; Louise Tynan, St. Paul's Secondary School, Greenhill's, Dublin; Matias Ó Conaill, Christian Brothers College, Cork; Róiri Gately, Mercy College, Roscommon; Muhammad Ibrahim Tariq, Marist College, Athlone, Westmeath; and Primrose Scully, Árdcoil Na Tríonóide, Athy, Kildare.

President of the Law Society, Rosemarie Loftus, said:

"The Gráinne O'Neill Legal Essay Competition is a highlight in the Law Society's public legal education events calendar each year. It is an opportunity to engage with students from

every corner of Ireland, to encourage them to consider law and legal concepts, and to provide them with an opportunity to reflect on how these might relate to their daily lives.

This year's topic, Protecting Voices, Preventing Harm: Legal Challenges in Online Freedom of Speech, is particularly relevant in our modern world.

The judges were impressed the breadth of ideas and structured arguments put forward. Hundreds of students rose to the challenge, and it was heartening to read so many considered essay's, identify individual thinking and to be enlightened by a younger person's perspective and understanding of the legal challenges that online freedom of speech can bring."

Rhea's essay was selected as the top entry and won a €1000 prize and a cup for her school.

Commenting on her win, Rhea said:

"I'm delighted to win the Gráinne O'Neill Memorial Legal Essay Competition this year. Researching and writing the essay topic gave me a chance to learn more about Irish law and consider the different legal rights that are relevant when we share views online and on social media.

One of the most valuable things I learned during this process was about Judge Gráinne O'Neill; it was fascinating to learn about her life, her experiences, how she was the youngest judge. I found her passion for the law inspiring."





The Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition took place in Washington, D.C. from late March to early April 2026. It is widely regarded as one of the world's largest and most prestigious international law moot court competitions, with more than 800 teams from almost 100 jurisdictions participating this year. Ireland was represented by trainee solicitors Isabelle Bradley, Yuanhe Wan, Simon Sun, Laoise Murray and Caoimhe Molloy with their coaches Ellis Witcher, Thamil Ananthavinayagan and Ruth Tracey.

Congratulations to Kate Madden (McCann Fitzgerald) and Anna Geraghty (Arthur Cox) who represented Ireland and reached the semi-finals (seeded in the top 3) in the Brown Mosten International Client Consultation Competition in Zagreb, Croatia. Team coach is Dr Rachael Hession (Law Society).



Congratulations to the Law Society team of Siofra Walsh (Matheson), Cian Curley (Arthur Cox), Domenique Broasca (Arthur Cox) and Eve Cooney (A&L Goodbody) who advanced to the quarter finals of the Monroe E Price Media Law Moot Court Competition in Paris. The team represented Ireland in the global finals in Oxford in April. Coached by Rebecca McKittrick (Matheson).

STETSON INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOOT COURT COMPETITION

Representing Ireland at the international finals of the Stetson Environmental Moot Court Competition in Florida were Leon Carroll (Matheson), Sneha Thomas (K & L Gates), Hira Khan (A&L Goodbody) and T P Kennedy (Law Society).



The Law Society of Ireland team of Sneha Thomas (K & L Gates), Leon Carroll (Matheson), and Hira Khan (A&L Goodbody) recently represented Ireland at the final rounds of the Stetson International Environmental Moot Court Competition, one of the world's leading competitions in international environmental law.

After securing victory in the All-Ireland national rounds, where their written memorials achieved the highest overall marks and Sneha Thomas was awarded Best Oralist, the team travelled to Florida in late April to compete against leading law schools from across the globe. The moot problem addressed cutting-edge issues including de-extinction, rewilding, and biotechnology, raising innovative legal questions in a rapidly developing field of law.

During the international rounds, the team delivered strong and consistent performances, securing two wins, with each member

receiving individual recognition for an outstanding performance.

In addition to their courtroom success, the team participated in the opening cultural showcase, where they delivered a memorable and engaging introduction to the Irish language that was warmly received by fellow competitors, with occasional murmurs of Irish heard throughout the competition.

Hosted by Stetson University College of Law in St Petersburg, Florida, the competition provided a valuable opportunity to engage with diverse legal perspectives and test advocacy skills in a highly competitive international environment. It also underscored the complexity of contemporary environmental challenges, as well as the importance of collaboration, adaptability, and clear advocacy in addressing them globally.

Participation in the competition marks a significant achievement for the team and reflects the continued strength of Irish advocacy on the international stage

NATIONAL NEGOTIATION COMPETITION 2026

Law school teams from across the country gathered at Blackhall Place for the National Negotiation Competition 2026. The competition challenges teams of two students to negotiate either a commercial transaction or the resolution of a dispute, with judges assessing both the negotiations themselves and the teams' post-consultation discussions.

Two Law Society teams competed in this year's event, with the final ultimately contested between UCD — represented by Mark McDwyer

and Ruth Morris — and Maynooth University, represented by Izaak Reidy-Gilroy and Kellie O'Riordan. The finalists were tasked with renegotiating a commercial contract in a closely fought and highly competitive round.

Following an impressive performance, UCD emerged victorious and were presented with the competition cup by Ms Justice Nuala Jackson at a ceremony in Blackhall Place.

As national champions, the UCD team, coached by Kevin Barrett of McCann FitzGerald, will now go on to represent Ireland at the International Negotiation Competition in Canada later this summer.



Winning UCD team with Ms Justice Nuala Jackson and John Lunny (Law Society).



Law Society Team Aoife Kavanagh & Hugh Kelly with coach Ruth Tracey (Law Society).

LAW SOCIETY TEAM IMPRESSES AT INTERNATIONAL MEDIATION COMPETITION IN CHICAGO



The Law Society of Ireland team delivered an outstanding performance at the INADR International Academy of Dispute Resolution mediation competition, hosted by Loyola University Chicago.

Competing against 30 teams from around the world, the trainees secured an impressive third-place finish overall, reflecting the team's skill, preparation and advocacy throughout the competition. The team also achieved notable individual successes. Odhran Stynes and Celine Dakik were awarded second place in the Client/Advocate pairing category, recognising their strong collaborative performance and effective representation skills. Molly Taylor also earned second place in the Mediator category for her exceptional mediation and dispute resolution abilities.

The competition provided participants with the opportunity to showcase and develop practical advocacy, negotiation and mediation skills in an international setting alongside some of the world's leading student teams in dispute resolution.

Congratulations to the talented trainees on their success, and to team coach Claire O'Mahony (Law Society).



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (ICC) COMMERCIAL MEDIATION COMPETITION

Law Society team of Emma Murphy (Branigan Feddis), Mollie Downes (William Fry) and Laura McSweeney (RDJ) represented Ireland at the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Commercial Mediation Competition in Paris.

This globally-renowned competition includes 60 teams of students from across the world are selected to compete alongside more than 160+ professional mediators and trainers who will share their dispute resolution expertise. Team coach is John Lunney (Law Society).



MICHAEL PEART CROSS BORDER MEDIATION COMPETITION



The Michael Peart Cross Border Mediation Competition recently took place at the Law Society, bringing together trainees from across the island to showcase and develop their mediation skills.

Kate Madden (McCann FitzGerald) was awarded Best Party to the Mediation in recognition of her outstanding performance during the competition. Sponsored by A&L Goodbody, the competition is a collaborative initiative between the Law Society of Ireland and the Institute of Professional Legal Studies. Ten teams took part in two mediation rounds designed to test advocacy, negotiation and dispute resolution skills in a practical setting.

The competition promotes the value of resolving disputes through mediation while providing trainees from both institutions with the opportunity to refine their skills and receive constructive feedback from experienced practitioners.

Congratulations to Larisa Mirt (Matheson LLP), Rebecca Kelly (Arthur Cox LLP), and Áine Doyle (Arthur Cox LLP) of the Law Society team, who recently secured second place nationally in the Irish Red Cross Corn Adomnáin International Humanitarian Law Competition. The team also won the award for best performance in the competition's cultural property scenario exercise. Team coach is Paul Breslin (Law Society).



AI IN LEGAL PRACTICE SUMMIT



Elaine Morrissey (Director Rock Consultancy), T P Kennedy (Director of Education), Ann Henry (Partner, Bird & Bird), David Kerrigan (author, consultant on emerging technologies), President Rosemarie Loftus, Donna O'Leary (DOL Consultancy), David Lane (McGroddy Brennan Solicitors), Claire O'Mahony (Head of Lifelong Learning), Dr. Barry Scannell (Partner, William Fry) and Nora Ward (Course Executive). Kevin Lavin (Senior Lead Counsel, Citi) and Kate McKanne (Head of Legal Frontline Ventures) not pictured

The AI in Legal Practice Summit recently took place at Blackhall Place. It brought together key experts in the field of AI and legal tech and exploring real-world challenges and solutions for the profession.

It focused on how AI and GenAI is shaping legal practice now and for the future. The event was opened by Law Society President

Rosemarie Loftus and keynote speaker David Kerrigan, author, tech founder, and consultant on emerging technologies. Other distinguished panellists represented smaller firms, the in-house sector and larger firms [pictured below].

PPC trainees were invited to the conference on a complimentary basis and well done to all trainees who chose to attend to get the latest update on the fast-moving area of AI!



Congratulations to all the recent graduates of the Professional Doctorate in Law, LLM Advanced Legal Practice and LLM Employment Law in Practice. Pictured are Demilade Adeniran (Matheson) graduate of the LLM Advanced Legal Practice and Joseph Walshe (William Fry) graduate of the LLM Employment Law in Practice.



Winning team from Stanhope Street Primary School with trainees Sean Desmond (Arthur Cox) and Chloe Reck (Matheson).

SCHOOL TASKING PROGRAMME CONTINUES TO GROW IN ITS THIRD YEAR

Law Society team of Emma Murphy (Branigan Feddis), Mollie Downes (William Fry) and Laura McSweeney (RDJ) represented Ireland at the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Commercial Mediation Competition in Paris.

School Tasking is a Public Legal Education initiative in which trainee solicitors deliver a series of interactive workshops to fourth-year classes in local schools. The programme is designed to introduce young students to key legal concepts in an engaging and accessible way, while also giving trainees the opportunity to develop their communication and presentation skills.

Throughout the programme, pupils explored a range of topics including human rights, tort law, advocacy and statutory interpretation. Each workshop combined explanations, workbook exercises and practical activities, allowing students to learn through participation and hands-on experience.

A huge thank you and congratulations to the trainee solicitors who facilitated workshops during the 2025–2026 programme: Áine Brady (Mason Hayes & Curran), Aoife Mitchell (William Fry), Aishling Taite (William Fry), Ben Gannon (McCann FitzGerald), Caitlin Buckley (A&L Goodbody), Chloe Reck (Matheson), Daniel Hannon (Matheson), Eva McCarthy (A&L Goodbody), Helen Arundel (William

Fry), Isabelle O'Connor (Maples Group), Rachael Daniels (Nolan Farrell & Goff), Saira Khan (A&L Goodbody), Seán Desmond (Arthur Cox) and Vincent Doherty (Fieldfisher Ireland).

Regional Final

There was a fantastic atmosphere at the Law Society on Friday, 20 March, as the 2026 School Tasking Regional Final took place. This year marked the largest final to date, with 11 teams competing and more than 50 fourth-class pupils participating.

The event welcomed students from the Trinity Access Programme and three of its partner schools, as well as participation from The Open University, which travelled from Belfast with a team from its partner school, St Mary's.

Throughout the day, finalists explored landmark legal cases through a series of creative and interactive challenges, including creating stop-motion animation videos, solving legal puzzles and taking part in problem-solving activities.

The competition was judged by Rebecca Barnes and Melissa Doyle of Addleshaw Goddard, who faced the difficult task of selecting a winner in an extremely close contest. In the end, Stanhope Street Primary emerged victorious and will now travel to University of Warwick this summer to compete in the Champion of Champions event.

PPC HYBRID TRAINEES BUILD CONNECTIONS THROUGH SOCIAL AND WELLNESS EVENTS

The PPC Hybrid trainees have enjoyed a busy and engaging year so far, with a range of social and wellbeing events designed to bring trainees together and foster a strong sense of connection across the cohort.

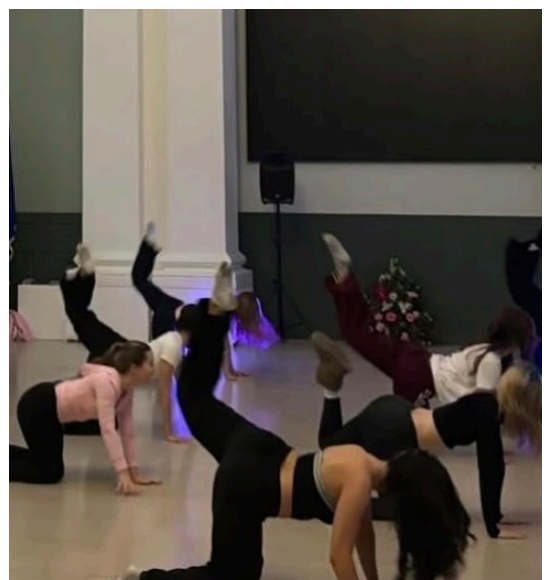
The year's first social event took place following a full day of tutorials, giving trainees the opportunity to unwind and socialise in an informal setting. The evening proved to be a great success, with trainees enjoying the chance to reconnect and get to know one another outside the classroom environment. It was a positive start to the onsite weekend and helped set the tone for the days ahead.

Continuing the focus on wellbeing, a Pilates class was organised the following morning. The session was extremely well attended and offered trainees a welcome opportunity to recharge before another day of lectures and study. Given the enthusiastic response, there are plans to continue similar wellbeing sessions throughout the year.

Trainees also came together for a Board Game Night in Vanilla Café, which provided another relaxed and enjoyable opportunity to socialise and strengthen connections across the group. The following morning, a tea and coffee gathering offered a more low-key setting for trainees to catch up before the day's activities began.

A regional event was also held in Cork, bringing together trainees from across the area for an enjoyable evening away from the usual professional setting. The event provided an excellent opportunity for trainees to meet local colleagues, share experiences and build relationships that will support them throughout their careers.

Looking ahead, preparations are already underway for the next onsite weekend. While upcoming exams may be on the horizon, trainees are also looking forward to the social events planned alongside the academic programme, including a group outing to Bingo Loco. With such strong engagement across both social and wellbeing initiatives, the PPC Hybrid cohort is looking forward to maintaining the momentum throughout the rest of the year.



THE FUTURE OF LEGAL PRACTICE: KEY THEMES FROM THE SUMMIT

The Law Society’s Future of Legal Practice Summit brought together legal professionals, industry leaders, and technology experts to explore how innovation is reshaping the legal sector. The event focused on the rapid evolution of legal practice in response to advances in technology, artificial intelligence, regulatory change, and shifting client expectations.

Throughout the summit, speakers highlighted the growing impact of AI and digital transformation on the profession. Discussions examined how artificial intelligence is already influencing legal research, document review, drafting, compliance, and case management. While

technology is creating new efficiencies, speakers stressed that the role of solicitors remains central, particularly in areas requiring judgment, advocacy, ethics, and client trust.

Data protection and regulation emerged as another major theme. As firms increasingly adopt AI-powered tools and digital systems, legal professionals are facing greater responsibility in ensuring compliance with privacy laws, cybersecurity standards, and evolving regulatory frameworks. Speakers emphasised the importance of balancing innovation with accountability and governance.

The summit also explored the expanding role of legal technology and automation in modern practice. From workflow management platforms to automated client onboarding systems, firms are increasingly



Niamh Counihan, Pro Bono Partner and Director of Legal Affairs, Matheson, Mr. Justice John MacMenamin, Retired Supreme Court Judge



Sarah McNulty, Cantillons Solicitors, Law Society Younger Members Committee, Mark Garrett, Director General, Law Society



Paul Breslin, Course Manager, Law Society Margaret Maguire, General Counsel, Fexco Seán Groeger, Senior Legal Counsel, BNP Paribas



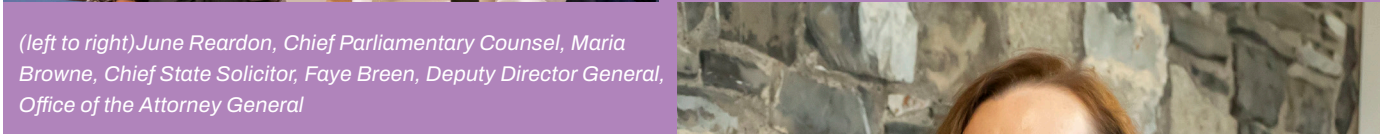
Ronnie Neville, Partner, Mason Hayes & Curran

adopting digital tools to improve efficiency and streamline operations. These technologies are helping firms reduce administrative burdens while enabling lawyers to focus more on strategic and advisory work. Another key topic was the future business model of law firms. Speakers discussed how client expectations are changing, with businesses and individuals now seeking faster communication, greater transparency, and more flexible service delivery. As a result, firms are rethinking traditional structures and embracing more agile, technology-driven approaches to legal services.

Client experience and digital service delivery were also central to the conversation. Many firms are investing in online portals, digital communication systems, and more user-friendly services to meet the expectations of increasingly tech-savvy clients. The ability to provide

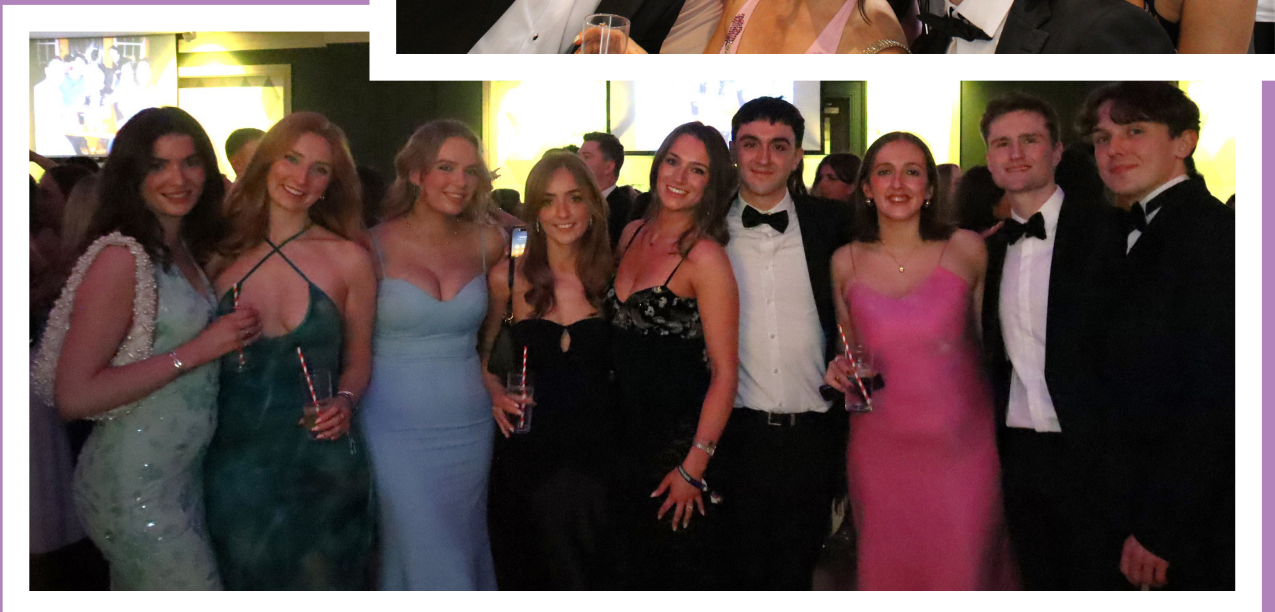
efficient, accessible, and responsive legal support is becoming a significant competitive advantage across the sector. The evolving role of solicitors and trainees was another important area of discussion. Speakers noted that future legal professionals will require not only strong legal expertise but also digital literacy, adaptability, and an understanding of emerging technologies. Training and education pathways are therefore evolving to prepare solicitors for a profession that is becoming more technology-enabled and interdisciplinary.

Overall, the Summit reinforced the message that the legal profession is entering a period of significant transformation. Technology and innovation are changing how legal services are delivered, but the core values of the profession — expertise, ethics, and client service — remain as important as ever.



END OF YEAR BALL 2026







Professional Practice Course Prize-winner

Congratulations to Emma Kennedy who was presented with three awards by the President of the Law Society, Rosemarie Loftus, at the Parchment Ceremony held on Thursday 28 May 2026. Emma was awarded the Overall Prize for the Professional Practice Course based on her combined performance across all subjects; first place for Business Law; and first place (joint) for Dispute Resolution.



2025 Overend Scholarship Prize-winner

Congratulations to Bailey Lane who was presented with the Overend Scholarship Prize by the President of the Law Society, Rosemarie Loftus, at the Parchment ceremony held on Thursday 28 May 2026. The Overend Scholarship Prize is a historical scholarship prize, established by Trevor T. L. Overend, former president of the Law Society (1894-95) and was first introduced in 1914. Bailey received the Overend Scholarship Prize after achieving the highest combined marks across all eight FE-1 subjects in 2025.



FE-1 Prize-winner

Congratulations to Emily McCarthy, McCann Fitzgerald LLP, who was presented with the Constitutional Law Prize (joint winner), for her performance in the 2024 FE-1, by the President of the Law Society, Rosemarie Loftus, at the Parchment Ceremony held on Thursday 28 May 2026.

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TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Trauma-informed practice is an approach that recognises how trauma can shape the way people think, feel, and engage with services.

Traditionally associated with professions such as social work, nursing, and medicine, it is now gaining traction in legal contexts, often referred to as trauma-informed lawyering.

This shift reflects the reality of modern legal practice. Much of a solicitor's work sits alongside complex human experiences: clients navigating distress, conflict, or significant life disruption, as well as exposure to challenging material within casework itself. Increasingly, there is recognition that responding effectively in these contexts is not separate from legal skill, but part of it.

From September 2025, trauma-informed practice has been embedded as a core component of The Complete Lawyer module on the Professional Practice Course (PPC). This signals a clear direction: these are not "soft" skills, but core professional capabilities.

Module 4, An Introduction to Trauma-Informed Lawyering, provides a practical foundation. It explores how trauma can influence client behaviour and communication, while also acknowledging the impact of this work on the practitioner.

The focus is on building awareness and introducing core ideas in an accessible way. Principles such as safety, trust, choice, empowerment, and cultural humility are explored in the context of legal practice, offering a lens through which to better understand client interactions and professional role.

There is also an emphasis on recognising the demands of legal work itself. The module creates space to consider how exposure to challenging material and situations can affect practitioners and highlights the importance of developing a sustainable approach to practice over time.

For those interested in learning more, the Law Society's Microcredential in the Foundations of Trauma-Informed Practice offers more in-depth learning and an opportunity to connect with other professionals working in this space. Applications for the next course will open later this year ahead of an autumn intake.

Embedding trauma-informed practice within the PPC reflects a broader shift in legal education - one that recognises that effective lawyering is not only about what solicitors know, but how they work.

If you would like more information on the upcoming micro-credential,

2026 MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE (MOOC): IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA, AI AND THE LAW

The MOOC is free and open to all. This year's course will provide participants with an insight into the rapidly developing impact and intersection of Social Media, AI and the Law. The course will offer an overview of recent advancements, delving into issues surrounding liability, regulation, privacy and data protection, social media bans, cybercrime and ecommerce. It will also explore the considerable impact on our work environment and daily lives including digital manipulation and surveillance.

Expert speakers, lawyers, public figures and academics will review the current state of play, demystify concerns, discuss the potential impact in the coming years, and much more.

Register to join the 2026 MOOC: mooc2026.lawsociety.ie client interactions and professional role.

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IN-OFFICE EXPERIENCE IN ANOTHER EEA MEMBER STATE

Arising out of the decision of the ECJ in Plavec v Rechtsanwaltskammer Wien, there have been some changes to the requirements for the in-office aspect of training as a solicitor. It is now possible to apply for consent to register a training contract with a training solicitor practising law outside of Ireland in another EEA member state.

In such circumstances, the requirement that the training solicitor must hold a practising certificate from the Law Society of Ireland is waived. However, the following conditions must be met:

- The training solicitor must be on the Irish Roll of Solicitors and have at least four years' continuous post qualification practice experience in Ireland and/or another EEA member state.
- The training solicitor must be authorised to practice law in the relevant EEA member state and must be currently practising law.
- If the training solicitor is working in private practice they must be either a sole practitioner or a partner.
- The training solicitor must be able to offer you legal experience in three distinct areas of Irish law or the law of the EEA member state to include working on contentious and non-contentious matters.



CONTACT US

Articles for inclusion in the next edition should be sent to:
Rebecca Raftery, Editor,
The Law School News,
Blackhall Place, Dublin 7.
E-mail: r.raftery@lawsociety.ie