

Report of the Standing Committee on Young Barristers 2021

Introduction

1. The Standing Committee on Young Barristers (“YBC”) was established in 1993.
2. Its primary objectives are as follows:-
 - (1) To represent Young Barristers (i.e. barristers within 7 years of call) and pupils (collectively, the “YBs”).
 - (2) To convey the views of YBs to other parties, in particular, other members of the Bar, the Hong Kong Bar Association (“HKBA”) (in particular, its Council), the Judiciary, the local faculties of law, law students, other (young) professionals and other professional associations, and to convey the views of other parties, in particular the aforementioned, to YBs.
 - (3) To promote the interests and wellbeing of YBs, including but not limited to their fraternity with other YBs and other members of the Bar, their involvement in the Bar, the HKBA and the wider community, their continuing education, their network with other (young) professionals, public awareness of YBs and their roles, and, more generally, their development as barristers.
 - (4) To assist YBs with their queries and concerns regarding their profession.
 - (5) To contribute to furthering the objectives of the Bar and the HKBA as defined in the Rules and Regulations of the HKBA.
 - (6) To organize, make arrangements regarding, and participate in events that further the objectives above and/or with the objectives above in mind.
3. The YBC currently consists of 21 YBs. This Report summarizes the main work of the YBC from 5 January 2021 to 23 December 2021.
4. Despite COVID-19 restrictions remaining in place throughout the year, the YBC has had a fruitful year and has been able to resume or restart some of its previously suspended events.

“Street Law” Outreach

5. “Street law” programs, which have their roots in a Georgetown University legal clinic in the 1970s and are now an internationally recognized method of public legal and civic education, aim to teach both practical aspects of the law and techniques of legal reasoning to the general public via interactive and experiential activities and games.
6. In 2019, the YBC started its “street law” outreach efforts with a pilot program in partnership with the Human Rights Clinic at the University of Hong Kong. The YBC recruited a number of YBs who attended a training session on “street law” methods and assisted in delivering one

“street law” session. Unfortunately, the program was not completed due to various reasons, including pandemic-related suspension of in-person teaching on the HKU campus.

7. Fortunately, the YBC has been able to restart its “street law” outreach initiative this year in partnership with a local non-governmental organization (NGO), Street Law Hong Kong.
8. In November and December 2021, the YBC assisted Street Law Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups in delivering “street law” sessions to students of Elegantia College, a secondary school in Sheung Shui.
9. The YBC recruited 6 barristers, who have either had previous street law experience or attended the street law training in the 2019 pilot program, for this program. Together with trainers from Street Law Hong Kong, they delivered “street law” sessions to a total of 134 students over five sessions at the HKFYG Leadership Institute housed at the Former Fanling Magistracy. Each session consisted of a series of activities and games designed to educate students on concepts about the rule of law and fundamental rights, followed by a guided tour of the Former Fanling Magistracy building aimed at facilitating students’ understanding of criminal justice.
10. In relation to the YBC’s participation in these sessions, we have received positive feedback from the co-organizers as well as the teachers of Elegantia College. The teachers commented that the sessions helped students acquire some common legal knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of the rule of law and the courts in Hong Kong.
11. The YBC is now in the process of kickstarting another “street law” program, in partnership again with Street Law Hong Kong and also with the Human Rights Hub of the University of Hong Kong. The program is organized by Street Law Hong Kong and sponsored by the Equal Opportunities Commission and will take place over several months in 2022. It is envisaged that the YBC will recruit barristers to undergo “street law” training and supervise students of the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong in curating and delivering street law lessons to secondary school students, ethnic minorities and working-class women on issues related to gender and race discrimination law.
12. These “street law” initiatives are a meaningful way for members to contribute to rule of law education in Hong Kong. The YBC is grateful to its partners in providing the opportunities for members to do so. The YBC is also thankful to Kevin Lau for leading the effort in organizing its street law outreach initiatives, as well as members who participated in the street law sessions.

Volunteer Service

13. This year, the YBC organized the following volunteering opportunities:-

Date	Event	Description
12 June 2021	YBC and Hong Kong Salvation Army Volunteering Opportunity to Visit the Elderly	Visiting elderly residents living in Yau Tsim Mong District and delivering food and festive items in light of the Dragon Boat Festival
18 September 2021	YBC and Hong Kong Salvation Army Volunteering Opportunity to Visit the Elderly	Visiting elderly residents living in Yau Tsim Mong District and delivering

		food and festive items in light of the Mid-Autumn Festival
16 December 2021	YBC and Hong Kong Salvation Army Volunteering Opportunity to Visit the Elderly	Visiting elderly residents living in Yau Tsim Mong District and delivering food and festive items in light of Christmas

14. Around 10-15 members of the Bar joined each of the volunteer events above along with their friends and family members. Members who participated in the above volunteering events found them meaningful and moving. It is envisioned that the YBC will be able to cooperate with more charitable bodies in the future to organize more volunteering opportunities for members.

Social Events

15. The YBC has a longstanding tradition of hosting social events (which are open to all members of the Bar) aimed at enabling YBs to meet with each other, other members of the Bar and with members of the Judiciary in an informal setting.
16. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the YBC continues to find it difficult to organize social events. Consequently, the YBC has not organized any such events this year. However, it is hoped that the YBC can resume organizing social events in 2022.

Educational Tours

17. Over the years, the YBC has organized various educational tours for members (especially YBs and pupils) to visit places of interest such as the Police College and the Stanley Prison.
18. On 11 September 2021, the YBC organized an educational visit to the ICAC Headquarters in North Point for the first time. The event sought to allow YBs and pupils to have a better understanding of how the ICAC operates and the challenges they face. It started with a tour of the facilities in the ICAC Headquarters (such as the Video Interview Room, the Identification Parade Room and the Detention Cells), followed by a sharing and discussion session by the Head of Operations of the ICAC, Mr. Ricky Yau. A total of 24 YBs and pupils attended this event, which was well-received.
19. The YBC thanks the ICAC for their time and effort in the guided tour and the sharing and discussion session.

HKBA Debating Competition 2021

20. The YBC has organized the annual HKBA Debating Competition for secondary school students since 2004. The competition usually focuses on debate motions related to the rule of law, and is a great opportunity for students to explore such issues and to hone their advocacy skills. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the competition could not be held in 2020. It was therefore a great pleasure to the YBC that the competition could be resumed this year.
21. Despite the pandemic, the YBC was able to hold the competition this year in a physical rather than online format. Nonetheless, the format of the competition was changed. All rounds of the competition, beginning with the preliminary rounds and culminating in the Grand Finals, were

held over one weekend during summer at the University of Hong Kong. While in previous years members of the Bar would be invited to attend the Grand Finals, the YBC also decided not to do so this year in order to reduce pandemic-related risks.

22. The competition was successfully held and was well-received. A total of 13 schools participated in the English division and 10 schools participated in the Chinese division.
23. The Grand Finals of both the English and Chinese divisions were conducted in the Large Moot Court of the University of Hong Kong on 1 August 2021 (Sunday). The motion was “Remote court hearings by electronic means in criminal cases do more good than harm”.
24. The English Grand Finals were adjudicated by the Hon. Mr. Justice Johnson Lam, PJ, the Hon. Mr. Justice Anthony Chan, and Mr. Paul Harris, S.C. The finalists in the English Grand Finals were German Swiss International School and Diocesan Boys’ School. German Swiss International School emerged as the winner in the English division.
25. The Chinese Grand Finals were adjudicated by the Chief District Judge Mr. Ko King-sau Justin, the Chief Magistrate Mr. So Wai-tak, and Ms. Anita Yip, S.C. The finalists in the Chinese Grand Finals were Heep Yunn School and St. Paul’s Convent School. Heep Yunn School won in the Chinese division.
26. The YBC sincerely thanks the adjudicators for their valuable time during the weekend, and their generosity in sharing their comments with the debaters. In addition to the adjudicators of the Grand Finals, the YBC also thanks the following adjudicators in the previous rounds of the competition for their time and generosity:

Preliminary round	English: Stephanie Hung, Keith Tam, Bryan Lee Chinese: Marco Li, Frederick Fong, Patrick Siu, Billy Yau, Brian Chan
Quarter-finals	English: Isaac Chan, Isabel Tam, Benjamin Lam, Vickie Lui Chinese: Katy Chung, Billy Yau, Tessa Chan, Lawrence Pang
Semi-finals	English: Jonathan Chang, S.C., Adrian Wong, Kevin Lau, Geoffrey Yeung Chinese: Martin Hui, S.C., Erik Shum, Tony Ko, Tina Mok

27. The YBC also thanks the Law Association of the University of Hong Kong, student volunteers from the university, and all participating schools and students for their time and effort.
28. Last but not least, the YBC is grateful to Tina Mok for leading the effort to organize this event despite the many logistical challenges presented by the pandemic, and the other members of the Debate Sub-committee for their efforts as well.

Career Talks

29. The following career talks were given by the YBC this year:-

Date	Event
3 September 2021	Career Talk for Overseas University Students (online)
9 September 2021	Career Talk for University of Hong Kong Students
30 September 2021	Career Talk for City University of Hong Kong Students

30. The above talks were well attended by LLB, PCLL and LLM students. For each talk, YBC members started by giving a brief Powerpoint presentation on the nature of the Bar in Hong Kong and the routes to becoming a barrister in Hong Kong. Students were then divided into small groups, where they were given the opportunity to speak and ask questions freely with YBC members in each group. Each talk lasted about 2 hours, and students were invited to contact YBC members afterwards should they have any further questions.
31. Students have repeatedly indicated that they appreciated the honest and comprehensive sharing by YBC members at such talks. The YBC thanks the speakers and the co-organizers of these talks at the various universities for their time and effort.

YBC Talks

32. In 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no physical talks were organized by the YBC.
33. Nonetheless, on 15 December 2021, the YBC organized a webinar entitled “Navigating the Features and Functionalities of Thomson Reuters Westlaw”. The webinar was delivered by Ms. Tracy Tsoi, a training specialist at Thomson Reuters. It sought to assist YBs and pupils in refining their skills and helping them conduct legal research more effectively and efficiently.
34. In addition, the YBC also co-organized two webinars with LexisNexis Hong Kong this year. The webinars were conducted in a hybrid format (virtual by Zoom or on-site at LexisNexis Hong Kong). The YBC assisted in promoting the events to YBs.

Date	Event	Description
2 June 2021	“Estate Administrative Actions Regime under Order 85 of the Rules of the High Court” Speakers: Mr. Richard Leung, Mr. Ronald Pang and Mr. Wong Tak Shing	This webinar provided an overview of common applications made in an administrative action, and addressed the procedure and substantive law in this regard.
23 July 2021	“The Post-Covid-19 Take on the Future of Dispute Resolution” Speakers: Mr. Rimsky Yuen, S.C. and Ms. Winnie Tam, S.C.	This webinar highlighted the key pragmatic steps for conducting remote or virtual hearings, and how this may reshape the practice in the future.

35. The YBC is grateful to all speakers and partners in delivering and co-organizing these talks. It is hoped that the YBC would be able to organize more talks and seminars of diverse topics and invite a greater variety of speakers in the upcoming year.

YBC Mentorship Program

36. Following its success in previous years, the YBC Pupil Mentorship Programme was run again in 2021. The Mentorship Programme aims to provide a helping hand to pupils as they cope with the challenges and uncertainties of pupillage. Mentors, who are all YBC members with relatively recent experiences of going through pupillage, would provide advice to current pupils on issues related to tenancy, substantive practice and professional development. Further, it is hoped that long term fraternity between mentors and mentees could be fostered.

37. This year, 12 current pupils signed up for the Mentorship Programme. Mentors are required to reach out to mentees and to meet with them at least twice during their year of pupillage. Regular communication is also encouraged.

Members of the YBC 2020-2021

38. The YBC currently consists of the following members:-

Name	Chambers (Year of Call)
Geoffrey Yeung (Chairman)	Denis Chang's Chambers (2018)
Angel Wong (Vice Chairman)	Equity Chambers (2018)
Sam Chow (Vice Chairman)	Albert Luk's Chambers (2018)
Francis Chung (Treasurer)	Sir Oswald Cheung's Chambers (2018)
Peggy Pao (Secretary)	Pegasus Chambers (2019)
Fiona Chong	Bernacchi Chambers (2015)
Sean Li	Employed by the Competition Commission (2015)
Billy Yau	Wellington Chambers (2015)
Kevin Lau	Des Voeux Chambers (2017)
Rachel Lau	Unity Chambers (2017)
Tina Mok	QED Chambers (2017)
Lawrence Pang	Liberty Chambers (2017)
Sheena Wong	Temple Chambers (2017)
Jason Law	Wong Man Kit SC's Chambers (2018)
Nicole Li	Erik Shum's Chambers (2018)
Alvin Cheng	Fortune Chambers (2019)
Candice Lau	Alan Leong, S.C.'s Chambers (2019)
Felix T.L. Tang	Courtyard Chambers (2019)
Raymond Tsang	Alan Leong, S.C.'s Chambers (2019)
Ferrida Chan	Plowman Chambers (2020)
Schweitzer Wong	Chambers of Lawrence Lok S.C. (2020)

39. It is important for the YBC to be made up of YBs of different chambers, seniorities, practice areas and ages. This ensures balanced participation in the YBC and that the YBC receives diverse views and ideas from its committee members.
40. The YBC encourages all interested YBs and pupils to apply to become a committee member of the YBC in the coming year.

Note of Thanks

41. Due to the pandemic and related restrictions, some regular YBC activities (especially social activities and the annual Christmas Drinks) still could not be held this year. Nonetheless, the YBC has resumed some previously suspended activities, including the debating competition, and has been able to restart its "street law" outreach initiative. Overall, the YBC has had a fruitful year and it is hoped that regular YBC activities could further resume in 2022.
42. The YBC is immensely grateful to the Bar Council, members of the Judiciary and members of the Bar for their unwavering support and guidance in the work and events of the YBC.

43. The YBC sincerely thanks the Bar Secretariat for their kind assistance throughout this year.
44. The YBC also expresses its deepest gratitude the dedicated YBC committee members, who have all devoted much personal time and effort in organizing and running YBC activities, despite the pandemic-related challenges presented for some of the activities.
45. Members of the Bar and pupils who have comments on the work of the YBC or ideas for the YBC are highly encouraged to contact us by email at abc@hkba.org or to approach any committee member of the YBC in person. The YBC hopes to see all members of the Bar and pupils at its events in the future.

Geoffrey Yeung
Chairman
Standing Committee on Young Barristers

23 December 2021