



PRESS RELEASE

London, UK
Friday May 31st, 2019
The Federation of International Employers (FedEE) writes

A new profession is born

The first graduates of a programme designed to develop Human Resource (HR) managers into international legal practitioners will soon receive their credentials.

The twelve-month programme was launched in June 2018. It was initially intended to be a pilot exercise, but places were rapidly filled and it was clear from the outset that interest was genuinely global - with participants from across Europe, Asia and the USA. Moreover, although intended for University graduates with a few years' experience in a multinational HR environment, it attracted participants from right up to HR Director level.

The programme has consisted of a mix of Seminars in London and 25 distance learning modules. The range of subjects has been wide, and seven modules have focussed on purely legal training, including legal concepts, hard and soft law, civil and criminal law, ADR and the operation of the courts. Modules have concentrated on ten core jurisdictions - China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, UAE, UK and the USA. However, students have been able to choose other jurisdictions for many of their course assessments.

The qualification that graduates of the programme will gain is an Advanced Diploma in Multijurisdictional Employment Law (AdvDip MELL). They will also have the right to practice as an "HR Counsel", a title protected by a registered trademark.

New participants have joined the programme during the last year and it is planned to introduce part of the course as an intensive one-week session of seminars and tutorials to help cut down on the extended workload that completing modules places on a busy HR professional.

The role of "HR Counsel" already exists in many large companies, but it has not had a professional title or been formally recognised until now. The Federation had been under pressure from its membership for many years to introduce such a programme, but it was not able to secure an appropriate academic partner. Universities wished to receive half the proceeds for use of their name but had little up-to-date expertise or employment law data to



bring to the table. The Federation, however, has the largest employment law database in the world, has staff with teaching credentials and expertise that is updated daily.

Throughout the world the legal profession is organised on a purely national basis. Within countries, however, Bar Associations have influenced governments to establish a monopoly in respect to many legal-related activities such as drafting contracts, giving legal advice and representing clients in court. Multinationals do employ "Legal Counsel" as in-house legal experts, and these do carry out tasks that cut across jurisdictions, but they are not allowed to practice as lawyers, are still restrained by bar rules and few have any specialist knowledge in employment law.

According to The Federation's Secretary-General, Robin Chater, *"HR Counsel fills the huge gap within HR departments, acting as a first and essential reference point when employment law risks or problems arise. They do not remove the need for utilising external lawyers, but the vast sums companies spend on legal advice will be better spent because many tasks can be taken in-house, and external lawyers briefed in a far more effective way. We are generating fresh legal concepts to remove the stranglehold of conventional lawyers on organisations that cut across their narrow, parochial domains. Towards this end the HR Counsel will operate within a Code of Practice that clearly defines their role."*

For further information please contact FedEE Press Office on press@fedee.com and 0044 203 608 4412.

What is FedEE?

The Federation of International Employers (FedEE) is the leading organisation for multinational companies. It was founded in 1988 with financial assistance from the European Commission. Today it is an independent body with corporate members all around the globe.