Thoroughly, the study is depth of an academic discipline.  

Indeed, education is the foundation of providing students with the benefits of a broad and liberal education. In this context, the role of South Wales legal profession is not for its specialised technical competence rather for its contribution to the development of the law or for its constructive capacity to mould the law to the needs of society in association with other disciplines. Mind you, technical and professional competence is but the expectation you place on the lawyer. It is not for us to criticise the profession. Unfortunately, with the present status of many legal lawyers, Professional practice is demanding and can become all consuming.

The emergence of the national megafirms of solicitors has strengthened this trend. The emphasis on billable hours and the setting of individual targets in terms of billable hours is scarcely calculated to encourage meditation on issues not chargeable to a client. Indeed, it is an approach that threatens to transform what a profession into something that more closely resembles a business. The law schools must resist the temptation to become business schools, deferring to the demands of large corporate clients at the expense of the professional identity and the status of lawyers. It played a part in banishing from the legal stage such unique eccentric personalities as Serjeant Buckhurst and the attorneys who inhabited Blooms House.

For many years—as long as I can remember—debate has waxed and waned about the purpose and point of compulsory legal education. Generally it has been considered that a university should aim to equip its law graduates with a broad and liberal education rather than with the technical competence so necessary in the practice of the law. With this in mind, combined degree courses have been encouraged, on the footing that other degree courses will provide an element of both liberal and legal education. How modern economics courses achieve this object I do not know. But I do believe, certainly, that the mixed course means of providing both the broad and liberal components of a tertiary education seems a very sensible approach. In any case, it is an unsatisfactory and growing perception in the broader community that lawyers do not produce tangible benefits for society. This perception flows partly from the law being seen as a business and without a context is misconceived its dynamic and ubiquitous nature and, more importantly, to undervalue or even overvalue the manner in which it contributes to the fabric of modern society.

In conclusion, desirable for university graduates to take their place in their tertiary education a range of interests not confined to their specific area of study and a related breadth of vision. But such a broad and liberal education is not to the exclusion of a chosen discipline, in the case of this Faculty, the Law. What we want is a law course that offers a broad and liberal education. So, I am glad to see that the Faculty of Law at the University of Wollongong aims to provide at undergraduate level, first, a broad general education; secondly, the foundation for a broad career in legal work; and, thirdly, the study is depth of an academic discipline.

In this context, education is the foundation of providing law students with the benefits of a broad and liberal education. It has been said from time to time that in Australia, in contrast to the United States, in the field of judge-made law, it is the judges rather than the professional lawyers who have the initiative in constructive development of the law or for its constructive capacity to mould the law to the needs of society in association with other disciplines. Mind you, technical and professional competence is but the expectation you place on the lawyer. It is not for us to criticise the profession. Unfortunately, with the present status of many legal lawyers, Professional practice is demanding and can become all consuming.

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