**Lawyers and Legal Professions**

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The legal profession is undergoing radical changes. The Legal Services Act 2007 is bringing in "alternative business structures" in early 2012 and has already created a new regulator for the legal profession, the Legal Services Board. In the UK both barristers and solicitors are affected and there are questions whether they will remain the dominant group within the legal services market. While these changes are domestic in origin their reverberations are being felt around the world. In Australia law firms have incorporated and listed themselves on the stock exchange and are considering investing in UK law firms. Globally, there is resistance to these developments but at the level of GATS and other transnational trade talks the arguments favour the reduction of barriers to entry. The financial crisis is blowing a storm through law firms as they make associates and partners redundant, defer new entrants, and slash their fees to compete for work. Some firms have even imploded. In addition to which we don't know how culpable law firms are in the causes of the crisis. There is growth in temporary legal placement services (eg. Axiom and Acculaw) and legal process outsourcing.

The legal profession of the 21st century is a different creature from that of only 20 years ago and will continue to change.

We invite papers on any aspect of the legal profession: law firms, organization, practice, ethics of practice, training, globalization and more.