



**Legal Advice Centre**  
Annual Report  
2019-2020

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# Welcome to the Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre

As another academic year ends, we are delighted to send out this round up of the news and stories from our Legal Advice Centre (LAC). The Centre is an integral part of the Law School at Queen Mary University of London and we proudly serve our local community here in Tower Hamlets and further afield.



We were delighted to welcome new supervisors to our clinic this year, and to launch our much-needed new Social Welfare Benefits Clinic. Thank you to Tower Hamlets Law Centre for their assistance and support. We also launched our Prisoners Property Project with thanks to Leigh Day and Tuckers Solicitors.

This year has provided the highs of giving our 3,000th pro bono advice letter and winning a national award for our teaching collaboration, coupled with the low of COVID-19 forcing our clinic to shut and many of our students to leave campus. In this year of transition and change, we look forward to seeing how we can adapt our delivery of services, learn and move forward to the new academic year, introducing a new blended approach to our clinical work.

As ever, we are enormously indebted to our clients, volunteer lawyers, and our students. Without any one of these groups, our Centre would not be able to run – thank you. As we prepare for the upcoming academic year, we look forward to welcoming them back, including of course a new wave of students to the QMLAC.

## Staff

We were delighted that Kelli Ryan (our Client Services Coordinator) returned from maternity leave, but we sadly had to say goodbye to Madeline Field who joined us as an Administrator in Kelli's



absence. Madeline was an amazing asset to the QMLAC team and we wish her every success in her new career as a primary school teacher.

This year we established an external Advisory Board for the LAC. The Advisory Board aims to advise the LAC on its overall strategy and direction, ensuring we continue to be at the cutting edge of clinical legal education, that we continue to support and complement the work and objectives of the School of Law, and that our work is championed within the Department of Law and externally.

The Advisory Board members represent a number of different stakeholders, from current and former supervisors through to LAC alumni. Thank you to all the Board for their support, assistance and ideas.

Welcome to the team:

- Professor Nigel Spencer
- Nerys Evans
- James Alao
- Yvonne Kromo
- Jeremy Tobias-Tarsh
- Kamal Ali
- Alexandra Whiston-Dew



“

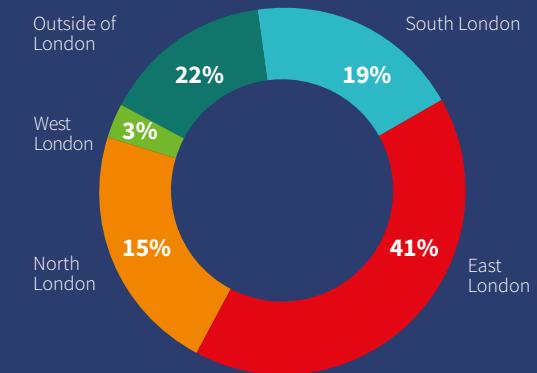
I loved working with the LAC. It challenged me but gave me a real insight into what a law career might entail. I felt very lucky to work as part of an organisation that does such brilliant work for the community.”

**Student**

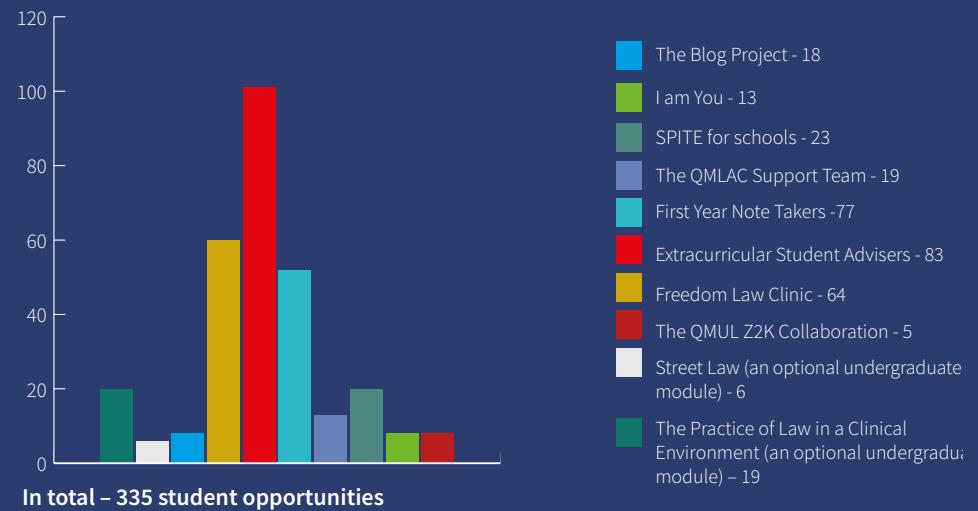
## Statistics

Total Number of Client Appointments this year	292
Total number of client appointments at the Legal Advice Centre since 2006	3,175
Social Welfare Benefits Secured (for the year 2019-2020)	£65,474.90

### Client Postcodes:



### Student Opportunities:



# Events

## The Trinidad and Tobago Student Exchange

We were delighted that this year marked the first Clinical Legal Education Student Exchange with the Legal Aid Clinic at the Hugh Wooding Law School, Trinidad and Tobago. This unique opportunity is designed to give students first-hand experience of working in a law clinic in a Caribbean jurisdiction; experience of local courts; and the opportunity to attend classes at the Law School. The exchange programme gives students a sound understanding of laws, legal rules and processes as well as the impact of the legal system on the people of Trinidad and Tobago. This year, two Queen Mary law students travelled to Trinidad as part of the student exchange and this autumn we look forward to reciprocating and hosting Hugh Wooding students.



## Ministerial Visit

During national Justice Week, we welcomed the newly appointed Minister of State for Universities, Michelle Donelan MP to the QMLAC. She met with our students and heard about their work giving free legal advice to members of the public and working on community projects. Students explained the impact of the QMLAC on their choice to study at Queen Mary and how proud they feel to be at a university with such a strong commitment to public service.



The clinical legal education exchange programme has been a life-changing experience especially due to the incredible people we met along the way. We are especially thankful to our new friends in Trinidad and Tobago, the members of staff who accompanied us on the exchange, and also to the LAC for organising such an enriching trip.”

**LAC Students Alexandra Tanase and Idhil Jama**



## The Great Legal Bake 2020

Our students demonstrated their commitment to the wider pro bono community through participation in the national Great Legal Bake. This year our students raised £266 for the London Legal Support Trust, who support free legal services in London. We were delighted that out of the 163 organisations that signed up, we made the Top 10! Thanks to the many members of staff and students who took time out to bake, eat and donate.



## Awards

The Legal Advice Centre were thrilled to be awarded a prestigious Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in Summer 2020.



The National award given by Advance HE, recognises collaborative work that has a demonstrable impact on teaching and learning.



The Legal Advice Centre is a true example of collaboration. If any one of the collaborators (students, volunteer lawyers, clients or staff) were not involved, the Centre would not run. We are so delighted that the teaching collaboration aspect of the QMLACs work has been recognised at national level with this prestigious award. Thank you to everyone involved in the Legal Advice Centre, but especially our brilliant and hardworking undergraduate law students who embrace clinical legal education and use it as a tool for positive change within society.”

**Frances Ridout,  
Legal Advice Centre Director  
(clinical legal education)**

# News

## Clinic News

In 2019-20 the LAC launched two new projects:



### No recourse to public funds

With the assistance of Deighton Pierce Glynn, students worked in pairs to assist asylum seekers with no recourse to public funding and who are at high risk of homelessness and destitution because they cannot access mainstream housing, welfare benefits and employment. The students undertook e-learning training and (under supervision) drafted Pre-Action Protocol letters (letters before claim) for clients who might need to commence judicial review proceedings.

### Social welfare benefits clinic

We launched a drop-in clinic to assist clients completing forms to apply for social welfare benefits. Students assisted with the completion of Employment Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment forms. If the application was unsuccessful, they also held appointments and helped with requests for Mandatory Reconsideration. Next year we are expanding this project to assist with Universal Credit applications.

The QMLAC is very grateful to all the new student volunteers who have worked on these projects over the last year. We continue to run a diverse range of clinics offering pre-booked appointments to members of the public in the following areas:

- family law
- immigration law
- landlord and tenant
- employment
- wills and probate
- SPITE – image-based sexual abuse
- special educational needs and exclusions
- power of attorney
- contract and consumer
- intellectual property
- family and immigration law for the LGBT community
- criminal justice
- company law.

# News

## Community Project News

### The Prisoner Property Project

This year saw the first time that QMLAC students have worked with a different community group – those detained in prison. Students worked with Peer Advisers at HMP Huntercombe, where they led workshops and provided letters of advice to prisoners who were experiencing problems with retrieving their property. This might be property that was still with the police or had been lost or damaged after being transferred from another prison. The students also produced an information sheet on the area, which is now being used by the NGO Prisoners Advice Service to inform prisoners about their rights.



This year our project went into St Paul's Way Trust Foundation School in Bow to deliver four-part workshops to Year 5 students. The I Am You team found creative and inventive ways to communicate and highlight the principles of the Equality Act 2010 to the children. Workshops covered issues such as stereotyping and discrimination.

<http://www.lac.qmul.ac.uk/community-projects/i-am-u-/>

If you are a local primary school who would like to discuss being a part of this project, do get in touch at [lac@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:lac@qmul.ac.uk).

### Our legal blog

In January 2019, we launched our new legal blog with student authors. Our student authors work together on current affairs topics of their choice, drawing out and articulating associated legal issues.

[Football supporters recognising the dangers of facial recognition.](#)

2 June 2019



[Post-Brexit Concerns on the Other Side of the Channel.](#)

13 March 2020



### The Blog Project

After a successful first year, 22 first-year students took part in the second year of our Legal Blog. It gives students the opportunity to work with the Department of Law team and produce accessible blogs on current legal news issues. Do take a look on our website: <http://www.lac.qmul.ac.uk/community-projects/our-legal-blog/>.

Keep up to date with all our news on Twitter @QMLAC

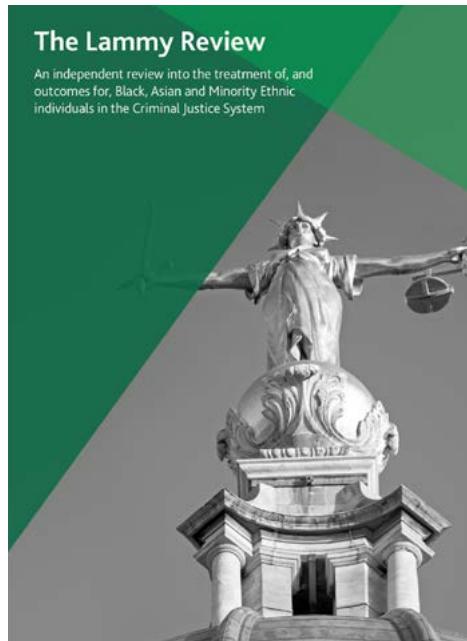
# News

## The Freedom Law Clinic – Civil Liberties in Lockdown

During the current pandemic, six students have been working with the Freedom Law Clinic to research, analyse and evaluate the powers, changes and implications of the Coronavirus Act 2020. Queen Mary is one of many universities across the country contributing to the report, which is likely to be published in the next few months.

## Freedom Law Clinic – Race Relations Project

During the summer 2020, 11 QMLAC students have taken part in Race and Policing, Home and Abroad: A FLC Forum along side students from 3 other universities. Topics studied by the students include; The Lammy Review, stop and search policies, deaths in police custody and defunding the police. The project will result in the publication of a collection of essays written by students. Watch this space!



## Advocacy

Mercedes Bromwich won this year's Queen Mary Plea in Mitigation Competition, kindly judged by HHJ Freeland QC and HHJ Baucher. Mercedes received a marshalling opportunity in the Central London County Court and a book voucher as her prize. After battling through the early knockout rounds, she impressed the judges with her submissions in the final, seeking leniency in respect of a fictional client who had been found guilty of an offence of robbery. Mercedes said:



The Plea in Mitigation Competition offers students a unique opportunity to tackle a different style of advocacy. What I loved most about the competition is that although you had to follow sentencing guidelines, it was mainly about the art of persuasion. We were incredibly fortunate to gain quality feedback from legal practitioners who have a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field which will no doubt prove useful in the future. The competition is important for anyone wishing to pursue a career in which advocacy is integral. As this style is often used in pupillage interviews, gaining experience with this type of advocacy is helpful for all aspiring barristers, even if you aren't interested in Criminal Law."

# News

## Clinics Day of Action – Air Pollution

The LAC proudly signed the Law Clinics Pledge on Climate Change at a conference in summer 2019 (<http://www.lac.qmul.ac.uk/community-projects/climate-change/>). We were one of over 30 law clinics globally to do so. As part of the pledge, law clinics around the globe also marked the Law Clinics Day of Action on Climate Change in November 2019, which this year focused on air pollution.



Inspired by the 'Baltic Way' protests across Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1989 and most recently the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, we asked Queen Mary students to be part of a human chain to highlight and raise awareness of an issue which has a huge impact on public health in London and globally.



## The 2019 UK and Ireland Street Law Conference

We were pleased to host the fourth annual UK and Ireland Street Law Conference on 9 and 10 September 2019. Over 70 participants attended, and the conference explored issues such as public legal education, the logistics of running a street law project, and how street law can be embedded into undergraduate and postgraduate Law curriculums. It was wonderful to have so much collaboration and sharing between colleagues both within the UK and internationally. Thank you to everyone who came to this event, especially our student contributors and international delegates.

## Joint Workshops with Kingsley Napley: PACE Yourself and Joint Enterprise

Co-hosting two practical evening workshops with Kingsley Napley provided a great opportunity to teach students about the difficult and often controversial areas of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, and the principles of Joint Enterprise. In spring 2020, our students got to delve into the realities of working with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act and on the doctrine of joint enterprise through simulated, multi-handed client cases and practical roleplay. Students also learnt about the problems that police conduct and joint enterprise raise as regards diversity, bias, and discrimination issues within the criminal justice system.



“

The best thing about my LAC experience is the professional community I have been part of from the beginning of the year. I would not have been able to develop so harmoniously, work towards my goals in the module, and deliver quality work if it had not been for the continuous support of the staff members”.

**Student**

# Thank You

Adam Sutcliffe	Ashley Ellison	Chloe O'Brien	Elsa Glauert	Hannah Wallet	Jessica Bridgett	Kezia Kernighan	Lucy Grant
Alan Watts	Aura Rancovaitė	Chris Dykes	Emily Bueno	Harkiran Hothi	Jessica Good	Kim Etherington	Lucy Isaac
Alex Beresford	Aurimas Kanisauskas	Chris Parrott	Emily Greig	Harriet Mitchell	Jessica Middleby-Clements	Kim Roberts	Luke Gittos
Alex Bromley Martin	Behyad Hozuri	Chris Parsons	Emily Huns	Harry Eccles-Williams	Jessica Trevellick	Kim Robson	Luke Norton
Alex Laing	Benjamin Burrowes	Chris Tang	Emily Issitt	Heidi Paget-Brown	Jocelyn Contato	Kirstie Imber	Maeve Keenan
Alex Stechmann	Benjamin Burrowes	Connor Shevlin	Emily Lockey	Helen Dawson	Johanna Hess	Krishma Sangani	Magda Zima
Alexandra Agnew	Benjamin Burrowes	Danny Merry	Emily Wright	Helen Lambert	Jonathan Kohler	Kristian Whitaker	Margado Diogo
Alexandra Whiston-Dew	Carlene Nicol	Daryl Cue	Emma Varty	Helena De souse	Jonothan Andrews	Kwesi Mills-Bampoe	Maria Dixon
Alfie Cranmer	Carly Clarke	Dave Reid	Faye Woppard	HHJ Heather Baucher	Joshua Edwards	Kyri Lefteri	Maria Patsalos
Alice McCarthy	Carly Clarke	David Josiah Lake	Felicity Kirk	HHJ Simon Freeland QC	Julian Onylekere	Laura Cunningham	Marissa Beatty
Alice Pewell	Caroline Croft	Diane Sechi	Fiona Waples	Hoda Fahiya	Kamal Ali	Laura Kruczynska	Mark Pring
Amanda Bewley	Caroline Ellard	Dirghayu Patel	Frankie Clark	Hunter Thomson	Kate Clark	Laura Penman	Martha Averley
Amelia Evans	Caroline Elliot-Janvier	Doran Hassan	Gabriella Simon	Iffah Al-Haddad	Kate Hughes	Laura Phillips	Matthew Burman
Amy Palmer	Caroline Sykes	Ed Aderse	Gautham Lamba	James Roberts	Kate Salter	Laura Riddeck	Matthew Shaw
Anatol Poyer Sleeman	Caspian Heeler	Edmund Chambers	Gemma Bryson	James Stammers	Katherine Goatly	Lauren Dickinson	Matthew Sinclair-Tompson
Andrew Jones	Cathy Nicholes	Edward Imrie	George Viopoulos	James Stockman	Katherine Pymont	Lewis Powers	Michael Skrein
Andrew Sperling	Charishua Nanwani	Edward Machin	Georgina Tilyard	Jas Sembé	Katie Mehew	Leyla Linton	Mike Gale
Anna Metadjer	Charity Kirby	Edward Machin	Graham Westlake	Jayed Mayes	Katie White	Linda Sjöblom	Minhaal Datoo
Anna Ratcliffe	Charlie Roe	Elissa Da Costa-Waldman	Gregg Burrough	Jean-Luc Esposito	Katja Hirnischrodt	Linzi McDonald	Mira Dandan
Anthony Kydoniefs	Charlotte Sanderson	Elizabeth Mason	Gulshanara Khatun	Jemimah Hendrick	Katy Rensten	Louis Muncey	Miryam Boston
		Elizabeth Watson	Hannah Barton	Jenny Hindley	Kerri Bridges	Louise Golding-Hann	Moishe Kritzler
			Hannah Bignell				

# Thank You

Molly Javangwe	Olivia Ross	Sam Prout	Thomas Watling
Morgan Reardon	Ollie Millichap	Sammi Lan	Tito Newell
Nancy Heath	Patrick Meacher	Sarah Heath	Tobias Hawksley
Nasima Ahmed	Paul Maalo	Sarah Kingsley Fried	Beesley
Natalie Flynn	Philippa Jenkins	Sarah Tyler	Tom McEvilly
Natalie Loader	Polly Glynn	Sean O'Brien	Vanessa Sharman
Natalie Taylor	Rachel Bowley	Sebastian Georgescu	Victoria Channing
Nataly Papadopoulou	Rachel Cooper	Georgescu	Victoria Gainey
Natasha Brown	Rachel Coyle	Serena Fasso	Victoria Haberfield
Natasha Grande	Raisa Saley	Shah Quereshi	Victoria Roberts
Natasha Grandt	Ravani Pattani	Shiva Ancliffe	Vikki Letch
Nath Gbikpi	Rebecca Naylor	Sian Harding	Virginia Tournon
Neil Ross	Rebeka Mrzlikar	Simon Lim	Vitoria Nabas
Niamh Daly	Rob Tester	Sion Davies	Vivien Cochrane
Nicola Coles	Rosa Alexander	Sophie Davis	Will Stanford
Nicola Sands	Rosalind Cresswell	Stacey De Souza	Wing Chan
Nigel Spencer	Rosie Gibson	Suzi Sendama	Yinyee Ng
Niloufar Yekta	Russell Maddison	Taylor Miccaw	Yvonne Kramo
Oliver Rawkins	Saffie Jallow	Tessa Waite	Our Student Support Team
Olivia Rogers	Salma Butt	Thinn Nynut	Our Student Mentors
	Sam Brickwood	Thomas Mcevilly	

“

A great local, friendly and more importantly professional legal advice service offered by student who show great care under the supervision of very well qualified legal professionals.”

“

Extremely grateful to my 2 Student Advisers and the qualified lawyer who sat in during our interview. I was in dire straits and could not possibly have afforded legal advice of such depth and quality without the help of the QMLAC.”

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[designandbranding@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:designandbranding@qmul.ac.uk)