

# UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE LAW CLINIC

## *Annual Report 2021/22*

The University of Strathclyde Law Clinic is a non-profit organisation which provides access to justice in Glasgow and the surrounding areas. Since our launch in 2003, we have continuously strived to fulfil our aims of improving access to justice, addressing the local community's need for legal services, and putting our clients' interests first.



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# Directors Report

BY KATE LAVERTY

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Despite the difficulties of COVID-19, which continued to affect all our lives this year, we have managed to continue to improve access to justice in our community, thanks to the incredible resilience of our staff, students, and volunteer solicitors. We have not only continued our service, but improved and developed it, which is testament to their drive and enthusiasm. We would like to say a very big thank you to all who contributed to our work over the past year.

I am pleased to say that over the past few months of our academic year we have been inching back to the office and it now feels like we are slowly but surely getting back to normal. The clinic is lighting up with both familiar and new faces, the buzzy sounds of student filled rooms lift our spirits and it is such a pleasure just to see people and exchange news and stories face to face. We have really missed this.

Our in person service is regaining momentum with more clients coming in to our offices which is a relief to those without the technology, ability, or desire to operate remotely. At the same time we can now offer a hybrid service and reap the benefits of new ways of working, gained through being forced to operate remotely during the Pandemic.

We are looking forward to the year ahead, with a full in person experience awaiting our existing and new intake of students for the first time in two years. Some of our students entering their third year in the Clinic have never yet been in our offices and we are eager to welcome them.

This year saw us create a new role of Diversity and Inclusion officer in our Executive Committee with Arun Smith, a student volunteer, being appointed to this role. He has been working hard to achieve the first step by creating training for our Executive Committee and he has many other ideas on how we can improve what we do in our attempts to ensure the Clinic is an inclusive and diverse organisation. He has a wealth of experience and we are very fortunate to benefit from this.

Our collaborations with a number of local organisations have all seen positive developments and have continued to grow and develop with our students continuing to contribute to the work of Scottish Women's Rights Centre, our work with Refugee Survival Trust has developed within The Asylum Project, and our students continue to volunteer with the Miscarriages of Justice Organisation (MOJO) who have worked very hard to continue their vital service throughout the pandemic.

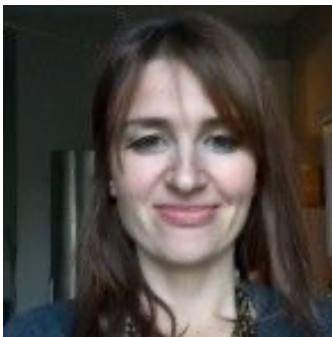
Many people are facing increasing crisis in their lives with the pressures of a mounting energy crisis and extreme financial burdens which inevitably spills out into the legal system. For those with no access to legal advice or help we will continue to provide the best service we can and support and encourage our students to rise to the impending challenges.

# Our People

## SESSION 2021/22



Kate Laverty  
Director



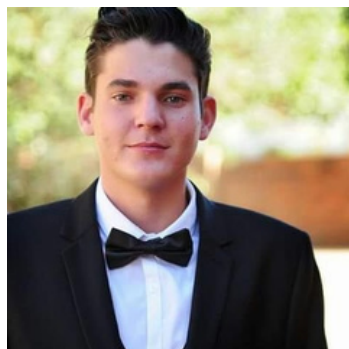
Gillian Melville  
Supervisor



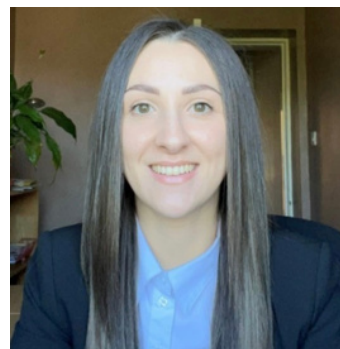
Diane Inglis  
Administrator



Kathleen Bolt  
Supervisor



Jordan Hamlett  
Student Director



Rebecca Dyer  
Student Director

# Our Roots

EST. 2003



## HISTORY

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The University of Strathclyde Law Clinic was established in 2003 by Professor Donald Nicolson OBE. Strathclyde Law Clinic was the first of the current Scottish law clinics. We are a student-led organisation providing free legal advice and representation to people in Glasgow and the surrounding areas who cannot access this through other means.

We build upon the tradition of clinics in the US, the rest of the UK, and the Commonwealth, where clinics are recognised for their value to the community and to each new generation of lawyers. In creating the Clinic, Donald built upon his experience in Clinics in South Africa and Bristol. Alongside providing access to justice, the Clinic aims to complement services such as Citizens Advice Bureau, by working in partnership with various other organisations to assist vulnerable groups within society and tackle the societal issue of access to justice.

## ETHOS

The Law Clinic's aims are to improve access to justice, to address the local community's need for legal services, and to put our clients' interests first.

Our students gain valuable experience through their involvement in clinic work, through developing legal skills, seeing law being applied in practice, while reflecting on the ethics and justice of legal practice. Students find their clinic experience challenging, rewarding and useful as an insight into law in practice.

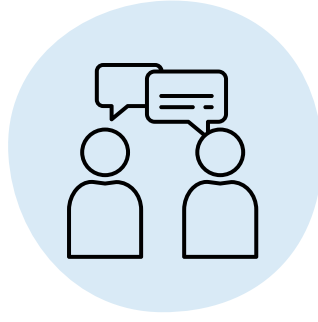
The Clinic offers students a better understanding of both the legal and other needs of their local community and the impact that good quality advice and representation can have on the outcomes of disputes. It also encourages young lawyers to be more empathetic and altruistic in their future careers and to be aware of the barriers that exist for those struggling to access justice.

# 2021/22

## AT A GLANCE



ENQUIRIES:  
568



ADVICE AND  
ASSISTANT  
CASES:  
119



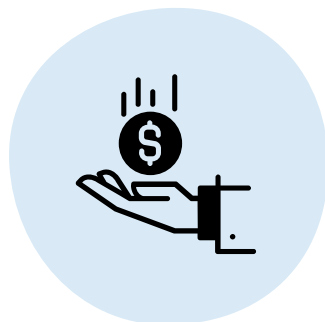
IAC USERS:  
218



ONLINE  
ENQUIRIES  
ANSWERED:  
47



TAP CASES:  
22



MONEY  
WON/SAVED FOR  
OUR CLIENTS:  
£160,295.31



MONEY  
WON/SAVED FOR  
OUR CLIENTS  
SINCE INCEPTION:  
£1,914,288.19





# Mode of OPERATION

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After two years of working entirely remotely, we were delighted to be welcomed back into the Clinic offices at the end of the 2021-2022 session.

Although working remotely initially, and still, has its challenges; the work of the Clinic never stops, and advisors have taken every new learning opportunity in their stride. It has been an unexpected but wonderful opportunity to embrace technology and more efficient ways of working. Many Clinic members who joined amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic, between 2020 and 2021, have not had the chance to meet fellow students in-person, despite numerous hours working together virtually. The same can be said for the clients we help, with many only meeting advisors online throughout their case.

As we return to the offices, we have adopted a hybrid working format. Previously, Clinic work was carried out exclusively within the Clinic offices and advisors were not able to work from remote locations. This caused some issues, as finding time to complete casework during the Clinic's opening hours could prove difficult for students when working around their busy schedules and other commitments. Since moving to allow students to work from home, we have received excellent feedback about the barriers it has broken down in allowing students to become more involved with Clinic work, at no detriment to their academic schedules or other responsibilities/commitments. This has also been beneficial to our clients, as tasks are generally completed quicker, as they are able to be carried out from anywhere, at any time.

Face-to-face meetings with clients have resumed although Zoom remains an option. This opens accessibility to more clients than ever before. Not only can students join from up and down the country, but we have also seen clients from all corners of the UK and beyond over the past two years.

Representation at hearings has now included in-person appearances for several of our students over the past year, which has been an invaluable experience. As remote hearings are still being utilised where possible, students have collaborated and shared a remote hearings toolkit. Now that students can work together in-person within the Law Clinic offices, we have seen many opting to participate in remote hearings together instead of being separated by distance. This has allowed our advisors to work effectively as a team and build positive working relationships as we progress forward into a hybrid working format.

Having recognised the benefits of home-working, students continue to embrace the opportunity to work where and when it suits them. Training and additional resources have been provided to ensure our high standards of confidentiality are upheld and GDPR is adhered to and we will continue to roll this out to future Clinic members.

As all cases opened over the 2021-22 session have been completed electronically, the Clinic is also able to fulfil its commitment to environmental justice. The default position remains that client case files are created for each client and paper files are only to be used when necessary. Client information is therefore stored securely through our electronic systems and can be accessed by students when working remotely or within the Office.

Looking onwards to the 2022-2023 session, it is expected that this hybrid format will continue. As our Student Advisors return to predominately on-campus teaching, opening the offices provides an opportunity not only for working collaboratively but also socialising with other clinic members.



*Our*



# MEMBERS

## STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

The Law Clinic operated with a total of 141 student volunteer members over the reporting period. The statistics below represent the number of students across each stage of their degree. These statistics were recorded prior to the recruitment of new student volunteers for each reporting period.

1st Year

25

2nd Year

18

3rd Year

29

Honours Year

21



Diploma

26

1st Year Grad Entry

11

2nd Year Grad Entry

11





*Our*



# MEMBERS

*contd...*

## STAFF

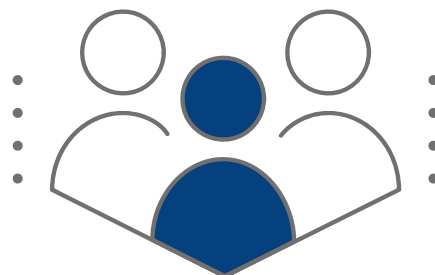
The Law Clinic could not operate without our team of dedicated staff members who collaborate with our students to ensure the provision of a high quality service and allow the Law Clinic to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

All work carried out by our student volunteers is first checked by one of our three Supervisors and Administrator prior to distribution. This ensures that the Law Clinic provides our clients with a consistent, high-quality service. Our team of staff is made up of: Kathleen Laverty (Director and Supervisor); Gillian Melville (Supervisor), Kathleen Bolt, (Supervisor) and Diane Inglis (Administrator).

## SUMMER WORK

We employ Student Advisors on a part-time basis over summer to ensure that our casework can continue, to provide administrative support and to develop new projects. Without these students, we would have significantly lower capacity over summer, and would struggle to take on cases and continue to provide access to justice or develop our activities and projects effectively. This year our summer students returned to the office, after working remotely during the Covid-19 Pandemic, which has contributed to building a positive ethos within the Clinic and encouraged engagement amongst student advisors.

In summer 2021, we employed 9 summer students on a 15-hour per week basis for a period of 12 weeks. We were able to maintain this crucial resource with thanks to Thompsons, Scottish Women's Rights Centre and The Asylum Project who agreed to fund our summer students this year.





# Our Clients



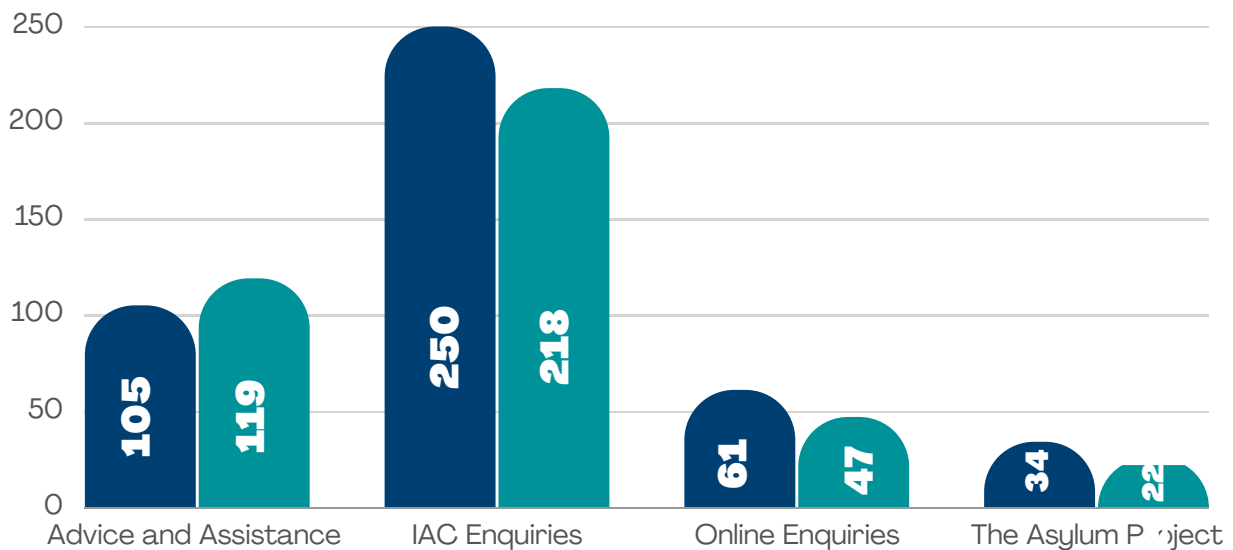
## TYPES OF ENQUIRY

The Clinic has developed an innovative approach to offering our clients the services they need. The Clinic divides its enquiries into three separate casework 'streams', to cater to all clients' needs. We resolve urgent and simple enquiries through our award-winning Online Advice service. We also provide our clients with the opportunity to seek immediate and more detailed advice from volunteer solicitors, at our bi-weekly Initial Advice Clinics. Finally, our traditional Advice and Assistance service continues to offer the most complete service, over a longer time period than that of the Online Advice service and Initial Advice Clinics.

### 2021/22

## CASE STREAM STATISTICS

● 2020/21  
● 2021/22



Over the reporting period, there has been an increase in the number of Advice and Assistance cases. The decrease in the number of Initial Advice enquiries is believed to be due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and as a result of more cases being taken on as Advice and Assistance cases. This is also likely to be the cause of the decrease in online enquiries.

The number of Asylum Project enquiries have decreased. As the funding for The Asylum Project came to an end in November 2021 we have been able to help fewer asylum seekers. Fortunately, we are engaged in a new collaboration with Refugee Survival Trust under their Breathing space project which allow us to continue to help asylum seekers explore fresh asylum claims

# Our Clients

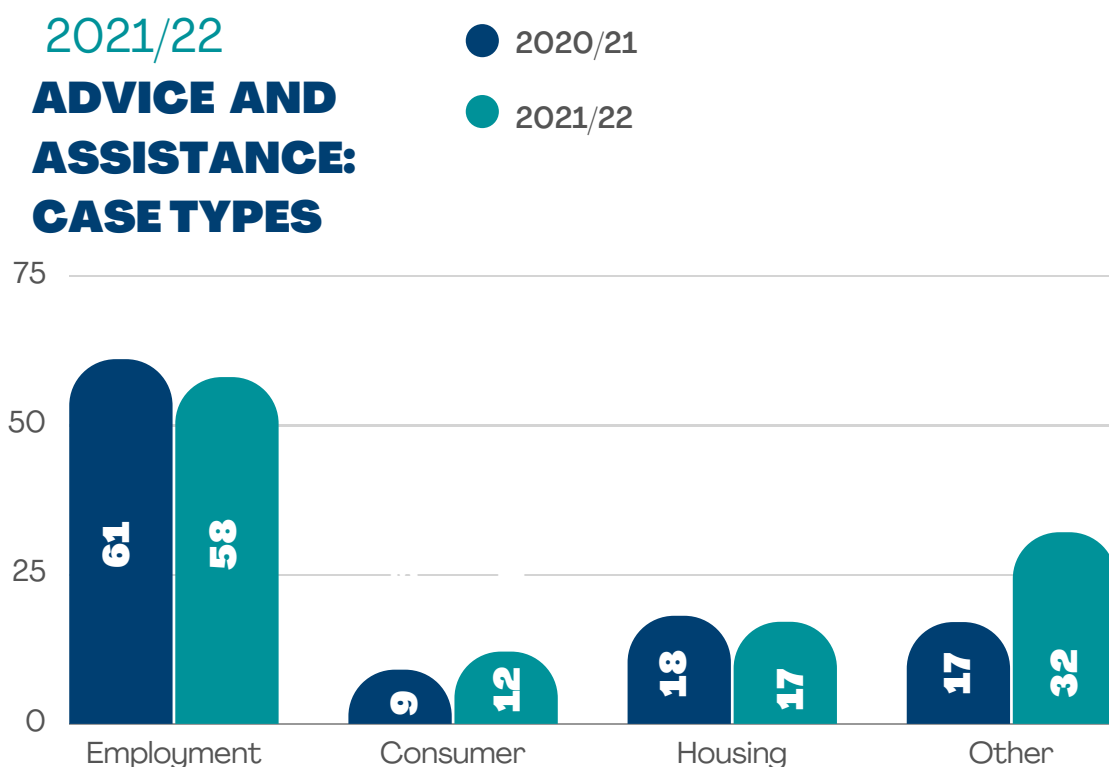
## ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE: CASE TYPES

Over the reporting period, we took on a slightly lower number of employment cases. Employment cases are very complex and often involve tight deadlines. Time limits are strict and short. There are generally more procedural requirements involved in this type of case. Employment cases require a substantially greater number of hours per case, meaning students are required to dedicate significant time to employment cases. We are seeing an increasing number of unfair dismissal cases following the Covid-19 pandemic. Disability discrimination cases carry additional complexities and are demanding of both students and staff. Many of our clients facing discrimination are vulnerable and need additional support in managing their cases through the tribunal process.

Despite receiving proportionally, the same amount of Housing cases, we have seen an increase in the number of cases before the First-tier Tribunal (Housing and Property Chamber). However, this remains low in comparison to Employment Tribunal claims. Our students are representing less often in Simple Procedure cases and perhaps that is reflected in the shift to the Housing and Property Chamber.

There has been a steady increase in the number of SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council) cases, which illustrates the demand for our service for cases of this nature. However, this remains low in comparison to Employment Tribunal claims.

More of our clients' consumer issues seem to be resolved more readily through our IAC service and Online service leaving us more time to dedicate to more complex cases.





# Our Clients

## MEASURING SUCCESS



The outcomes of the cases, upon which we advised and assisted, varied. For most Clinic cases, the measure of success is subjective. For some of our clients, success takes the form of an acknowledgement of unfair treatment/ acceptance of liability from the Respondent, a good character reference, or payment of money owed to the client. For others, success takes the form of a well negotiated financial settlement or a legal judgment, in their favour, following a successful hearing.

The Clinic exists to provide access to justice to those who need it most. Many of our clients are vulnerable and find themselves in particularly difficult situations. Consequently, many of our clients were satisfied with simply being able to have someone to advise and support them through their dispute. Even clients whose hearing did not go in their favour, felt a measure of success as our assistance and representation allowed their narrative to be heard.

In terms of financial success alone, our cases resulted in a total of £160,295.31 being won/saved for our clients over the reporting period.



*Case*

## HIGHLIGHTS



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### Landmark ET Case

Student Advisors: Melissa McKillen, Angela Walker and Haarisa Akram

Supervisor: Gillian Melville

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This year, two of our student advisers, Melissa McKillen and Angela Walker, were successful in advocating a landmark case which determined that long COVID was in fact a disability. Student advisor Haarisa Akram was also involved in the case preparation in the initial stages.

The case was the first decision in a UK tribunal to establish that long COVID was a disability. Because of this, the case garnered a great deal of press attention and was widely reported in national newspapers including the Times, the Daily Mirror, the Daily Mail, the Telegraph, and the Daily Record. The case is listed as a landmark decision on West Law and Practical Law and generated much commentary on solicitors' firms and HR websites.

The case involved an employee who had worked for his employer for over 20 years. In November 2020, he contracted Covid-19. At first, his symptoms were mild, but he went on to develop severe headaches and fatigue and was signed off sick. The employer sought advice from Occupational Health (OH) regarding the employee's condition on two occasions. Both reports produced by OH concluded that it was unlikely that he was a disabled person for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. In August 2021, eight and a half months after contracting Covid-19, he was dismissed from employment.

Our client went on to bring several claims against his former employer at the Employment Tribunal, including disability discrimination and unfair dismissal. The employer sought to have the disability discrimination claim struck out on the basis that the condition of long covid did not constitute a disability under the Equality Act and a preliminary hearing on this point was scheduled.

At the preliminary hearing, the Scottish Employment Tribunal concluded that the Claimant was disabled and could continue with his discrimination claim.

*Case*

## HIGHLIGHTS



*cont..*

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This was owing to the hard work of our student advisors who worked diligently on the case and presented their arguments effectively and comprehensively. This was both advisors' first employment case and first employment tribunal appearance, which makes the result even more impressive. Mellissa reflected upon her experience:

“It has been particularly exciting to work on a case that concerns such a live issue and to know that this was the first proven case of long covid as a disability in a UK tribunal. It is heartening to see the amount of attention that our case has received from solicitors and law firms, given that we as student advisors are at such an early stage in our careers! The outcome of the preliminary hearing in this case underlines how helpful the Clinic can be to those in need of advice and assistance, as claimants at the Employment Tribunal may not be aware of how best to establish preliminary issues.”

The case is ongoing, and a full hearing is scheduled for October 2022.



Mellissa McKillen



*Case*

# HIGHLIGHTS



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SSSC Case

Student Advisors: Fiona Rennie & Mhairi Strachan

Supervisor: Kate Laverty

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The Clinic was approached by a carer for assistance with his Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) proceedings. He had been issued a Temporary Suspension Order for 7 months and was facing a further 9 month suspension. This would have meant that for a total of 16 months he would not have been able to work in the care sector, a job that he had been doing for many years and enjoyed. The client was suffering from mental health issues as a result of losing his job and no longer having an income.

We assisted him in requesting an adjournment of the hearing on the issue of a further suspension and our student advisors agreed to represent him at the Temporary Order Hearing. An additional advisor with experience of working on SSSC cases was then brought onto the case. The team of advisors worked closely together to draft written and oral submissions for the hearing.

For one of our advisors this was her first experience of representing a client at a hearing. Both advisors who represented our client did an excellent job. The outcome was to vary the Temporary Suspension Order to a Temporary Conditions Order. This had a significant impact on our client as he could then explore a return to work. The client was extremely grateful for the assistance he received from the Law Clinic.



*Case*

# HIGHLIGHTS



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## Discrimination Case

Student Advisors: Michael Green and Arun Smith

Supervisor: Kathleen Bolt

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This case involved a client who was concerned and upset due to their belief that a major retailer had failed to make reasonable adjustments for them in store. This was denied by the retailer. We need to acknowledge that this was never established as the case was unable to proceed for reasons that are set out below.

Where a breach of the Equality Act 2010 is alleged in respect of the provision of goods and services a claim needs to be raised by way of a Sheriff Court action. Very few cases proceed on these grounds because of the complexities of taking a claim through the Sheriff court.

The client in this case had raised an action by way of the simple procedure. The remedy sought was compensation for injury to feelings which was likely to be assessed at a sum less than £5000, meaning that the claim fell within the jurisdiction of this procedure. Unfortunately, the initial claim was rejected by the Sheriff Clerk. The client had to submit the claim for a second time. By this stage the case was being submitted out with the time limit of 6 months less a day that applies to such cases. It was at this stage that we stepped in as representatives.

A number of objections were raised by the Respondent's representatives with regard to jurisdiction; that the case was time-barred, that the case was in fact a claim for personal injury which could not be heard within simple procedure, and that a claim for failure to make reasonable adjustments in terms of Section 20 of the Equality Act could not also not be dealt with under simple procedure.

With regard to the issue of time-bar we submitted, and it was accepted that the Sheriff had a discretion under Section 123 of the Equality Act to allow the case to proceed although late if it was just and equitable to do so. We argued that the appropriate way forward was to hold a preliminary hearing on these issues of jurisdiction. Thus, the case proceeded to a substantive preliminary hearing on this and the other objections on jurisdiction.

*Case*

## HIGHLIGHTS

*cont.*

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We had to provide written submissions in advance of the preliminary hearing and it was conceded in advance as a result of these that it is of course possible to bring a claim under Section 20 of the Equality Act for failure to make reasonable adjustments in the Sheriff Court by way of the simple procedure. Further it was accepted that a claim under the Equality Act for which the remedy is injury to feelings is not in fact a ‘personal injury’ case per se and that such a claim is competent within simple procedure.

Unfortunately, after leading evidence, we did not persuade the Sheriff to exercise his discretion to allow the case to proceed although late, and the case was dismissed.

This case highlights the need to be aware of the very short time limits that apply in the Sheriff Court in discrimination complaints and the need to have proceedings submitted and accepted in good time. It also highlights the complexities for lay people in submitting a claim in the simple procedure. A claim can be rejected for many reasons by the Sheriff Clerk although the process is designed to be accessible. This will be particularly important when the time limit is imminent.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly it confirms, as we knew, that an individual can raise legitimate complaints for an alleged breach of the Equality Act in the Sheriff Court for non-employment related matters using simple procedure as often the only loss will be injury to feelings that will properly be assessed at less than £5000.

This enables us to assist clients to seek access to justice where they believe that they have been discriminated against in the provision of goods and services.

# Case

## HIGHLIGHTS



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### Employment Case

**Student Advisors: Ronan Leslie, Carly Morrison, Paige Alexander and Christopher Barr**  
**Supervisor: Kathleen Bolt**

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This case began in 2018 and was significantly delayed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The client contacted the Clinic as they believed they had been unfairly dismissed as a result of whistleblowing. Their dismissal had a significant detrimental impact on the client's mental health, as they had been involved in the day-to-day operation of the Respondent's service for many years. Additionally, the client had close ties with their former colleagues and their personal relationships with these individuals had been negatively impacted by their dismissal. The Client wished to raise an ET claim and needed guidance, representation, and support moving forward.

As the case took place over a prolonged period of time, there were some changes to the advisors working on the case. However, despite this, the client expressed how each and every one of the advisors worked diligently and provided great support, each building a positive relationship with the client. All advisors worked excellent as a team, working closely together to achieve a positive outcome for the client.

The case was particularly complex in nature. The students were required to overcome a number of challenges, such as establishing the client's employment status, proving unfair dismissal and dealing with significant publicity from newspapers and reporters throughout the process.

Ronan Leslie volunteered to represent the client at Tribunal. This was his first time representing a client at an ET hearing, however, his passion to assist the client led to his success in proving that the client was unfairly dismissed and obtaining a financial award for the client.

Ronan reflected on his experience:

“Stepping in to represent a client last minute was daunting. I felt ready for the challenge considering my previous experience advocating in SSSC tribunals and knew I could provide the client with a good level of representation. The team that surrounded the case were incredibly supportive and the whole outcome was a collaborative effort. Carly, Paige, and Chris were excellent throughout and the support our supervisor Kathleen Bolt provided was tantamount to our result. I would strongly encourage anyone in the clinic to jump at any challenge that comes your way. Your colleagues will always support you and ensure the client receives the best level of representation.

*Case*

## HIGHLIGHTS



*cont..*

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The client was extremely grateful to the Clinic for our help in what was an arduous and lengthy legal process. The case had been running for a number of years and the client had made her way through several advisors. A special thanks should be paid to all those past advisors. The outcome for the client was positive and the gratitude they expressed was humbling. For me, it encapsulated how important access to justice is for everyone in society and how the clinic serves to provide this.”



Ronan Leslie

The above highlights are only a small insight into the numerous cases our Student Advisors and Supervisors work on every year. Each individual we assist is extremely grateful for our help and support. As a student-led organisation, we would not be able to provide these individuals with access to justice without our team of hard-working student advisors and staff.



# Initial Advice

## CLINICS

Initial Advice Clinics fill a gap in what we can provide as a Law Clinic, between full client representation and our freely available online resources. Over the past year, our IAC service has featured in Scottish Legal News and information has been circulated in the Royal Faculty of Procurators. The IACs have continued to take place remotely via Zoom over the academic year 2021/22, but will move to an in-person format once again during the academic year 2022/23. While the Zoom sessions have been successful and have allowed us to see a more diverse client base than otherwise, we feel it is valuable to reconnect in-person. We intend to run a parallel online session for those unable to make the journey into the Law Clinic or any other venue where the in-person IAC is held.

Over the past year, we have managed to advise 218 clients via Zoom, a figure around 13 percent depleted compared with the 2020/21 semester. This drop could be due to the return to “normality” post-Coronavirus restrictions and greater demand for in-person services versus during the initial lockdowns where Zoom was the only option. IACs have continued to take place every other Wednesday. This schedule works well, and we intend to maintain this structure moving forward. The appointment system that has run since the IACs moved online, whereby the clients have a specific timeslot during the evening, has worked well, and we would also wish to retain that structure when they move back to in-person.

Being able to benefit so many clients has only been possible through volunteers, both students and solicitors, who give up their time to assist in running our IAC sessions. Without their contribution, the people who attend IACs would not have had access to tailored, one-to-one legal advice. Students can learn a great deal from the experienced professionals who volunteer and gain greater awareness of societal problems by interviewing a hugely diverse array of clients.

As university teaching moves back to campus this coming semester we will return the IACs, for the most part, to their pre-pandemic format. We will, however, not forget what we have learned over this challenging period and incorporate a partly hybrid set-up to enable solicitors and clients from further afield to avail themselves of this invaluable service. The return of in-person IACs will mean we can begin again to foster what was a laudable aspect of the Law Clinic pre-pandemic – its sense of being an organisation that works in and of the Community at large.

Our clients have continued to recognise the value of the work we do at IACs. A recent client said:

“Thank you very much for your helpful Zoom clinic on 1st June. I think it was very well chaired and coordinated [...] good tone throughout [...] I felt very much listened to and, crucially, understood by both the student and professional. And in context [...] that was all the more impressive.”



# Clinical LLB

## AN OVERVIEW

For over ten years, it has been possible for law students at the University of Strathclyde involved with the Law Clinic, to study and then graduate with a dedicated “clinical” degree tailored to their activities at the Law Clinic. No other Scottish university offers this opportunity and it provides a fantastic synergy between clinic activity and academic study.

This in no way changes the volunteer ethos of the Law Clinic; it is not compulsory for those involved with the Law Clinic to enrol in such a “Clinical” programme, and students can and do still make an important contribution to the Law Clinic. For those who do participate in a Clinical LLB, they are required to undertake various compulsory tasks and training activities, in addition to their regular work in the Law School and the Law Clinic.

In the previous academic year, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the CLLB was delivered entirely online. This academic year was similarly affected by adaptations related to the pandemic, with classes delivered wholly or partially online, and also a period when on-campus teaching was suspended when COP26 was in Glasgow. Nevertheless, and building on lessons learnt the year before, students and staff still engaged with “case surgeries” (a chance for students to troubleshoot and discuss issues they have encountered with their peers and case supervisors); “continuing professional development” (training in relation to practice areas such as immigration and housing law); “Initial Advice Clinics” (where students assist solicitors in providing free, on-the-spot legal advice to members of the community); training in advocacy, mediation and negotiation; ethics training; and finally, “reflective diaries” (an exercise whereby students reflect on their journey through Law School and the Law Clinic, and how their ethical and practical responses to legal representation have changed and indeed improved during that time). The Clinical LLB programme culminates in a “portfolio” of work, representing all of the reflective diaries and a selection of important cases in each student’s Clinic work.

In 2021, we were joined by 27 new students on the Clinical LLB, with 13 of those being “graduate entry” students (i.e., those with previous degrees). As in previous years though, this recruitment was made possible only by the hard work of the Clinic supervisors in assessing a huge number of application forms, followed by interviews where the supervisors were assisted by members of the Law School. At the other end of the degree journey this year, we graduated 14 CLLB students – five from the graduate LLB, and nine with honours (including some with first class honours).

In between these incoming and graduating classes, we continued to have students enrolled in the Clinical versions of the Scottish Undergraduate LLB, the Scottish and English Dual Qualifying LLB, and the Graduate Entrant LLB programmes.

# *Clinical LLB*

## AN OVERVIEW

*cont....*

With reforms to the route to qualification as a solicitor in England and Wales, this will be the last intake of any students participating in a specifically named English law programme, although it is anticipated that English law elective classes will still be available in the future. The combination of these degrees, and the opportunity for Clinical LLB students to interact with others across a range of LLB degrees, continues to enhance their education and to provide the community with invaluable access to legal services and justice now and into the future.

Over the past year our Clinical LLB students have, along with everyone in the Law Clinic, continued to provide much needed legal advice to vulnerable members of the community despite any difficulties associated with remote hearings, internet connection problems and ongoing Covid-adaptations. Our CLLB students have also excelled themselves in producing all of the additional work required by the Clinical programme. Lecturers, tutors, supervisors, and clients continued to be both impressed by, and very proud of, our Clinical students' performance.



Malcolm Combe

CLLB Director

# *Maintaining a Voluntary*

## CLINIC

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Students on the Clinical law programmes represent a very small proportion of the total number of students who work in the Law Clinic, because the overarching ethos of the Clinic remains one of 'volunteerism'. That is, our students provide legal advice to many of the most vulnerable members of our community, free of charge, without gaining any formal academic or other credit for their service.

The Law Clinic and Law School remain committed to this principle, and for that reason, much of the training and work in the Clinical law programmes is available to all Clinic members, and Clinical students are not given priority of access to casework in the Clinic.

This system continues to reflect the principles of the Law Clinic founder, Professor Donald Nicolson, whose main concern was always the welfare of the members of the community who, without the Law Clinic, would not be able to afford legal advice or access justice.



*Our*

## COLLABORATIONS



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Both on our own, and in partnership with other bodies, the Law Clinic strives to provide the most comprehensive suite of services possible.

The Law Clinic works with partner agencies to ensure that the local community's full range of needs is met.

We are currently collaborating with the following organisations/agencies:

- Scottish Women's Rights Centre (SWRC)
- Refugee Survival Trust (RST)
- Miscarriages of Justice Organisation (MOJO); and
- Scottish University Law Clinic Network (SULCN)

# Scottish Women's Rights Centre

## SWRC

The SWRC is a collaboration between Rape Crisis Scotland, the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic and JustRight Scotland.

The SWRC strives to fill the gaps that exist between women's experiences of gender-based violence and their ability to access justice, by working with specialist solicitors and experienced advocacy workers. They provide free legal information, advice, advocacy, and representation to women affected by violence and abuse.

In 2021, the SWRC welcomed 8 new student volunteers from the Clinic, who supported the SWRC solicitors in providing this service, with the additional support of former Law Clinic advisors who have continued to volunteer. Throughout 2021/22, student volunteers continued to work remotely. During the year, volunteers have executed research, drafted blogs, carried out communications work and a variety of other tasks. The new student volunteers settled in brilliantly, and the project was able to continue to thrive, with one of the new recruits, Amy Woodcock, going on to be appointed as SWRC Coordinator for session 2022/23.

SWRC Helplines provide legal information and advice directly to survivors and are a first point of contact to speak to solicitors and advocacy workers about issues. It is free to call the helpline from most mobile phones and landlines. Callers are provided with initial information and advice and may be referred onto external solicitors, Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, or another appropriate service, including SWRC's own legal team and Advocacy service.

The legal helpline now operates on a Monday - Friday, with the advocacy support helpline operating on a Tuesday. The SWRC are currently focusing on revamping their website to make it more accessible to service users.



# Scottish Women's Rights Centre

SWRC

*cont'd...*

The SWRC undertook varied casework, where doing so would address a gap in justice for survivors of gender-based violence, including CICA compensation and appeals, protective orders, child contact, police complaints, housing issues, and employment.

They have recruited for the new Justice Policy and Training Officers who are funded through the Legal Education Foundations. Both roles will help the SWRC to focus on policy work and training development.

The 2-Day Domestic Abuse training continues and the uptake has been really good. It is delivered bi-annually by Helen Hughes with input from Scottish Women's Aid, to promote trauma informed practice and further develop the signposting network which is promoted on the SWRC website. Twenty solicitors completed the training in April and May 2022. Consents are currently being taken to add these solicitors to the signposting network on the SWRC's website.

The SWRC have also been working with the Labyrinth Project. Through this, the SWRC receive funding to deliver webinars and create associated resources. In 2021, the SWRC worked in partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland to deliver two webinars on the rights of EU nationals following Brexit. They also worked with the Women's Support Project to deliver a further webinar on Forced Marriage. The SWRC also held two further webinars on Female Genital Mutilation and immigration including No Recourse to Public Funds.

Amy Woodcock will be taking over the role of SWRC Coordinator from Erin Connor for session 2022/23. Amy shares Erin's passion for women's rights and the SWRC's work.



Erin Connor



# The Asylum Project



## TAP

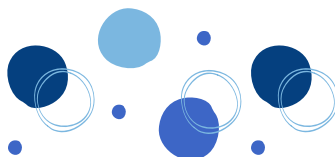
TAP is collaborating closely with the Refugee Survival Trust (RST) on the Breathing Space Project to assist asylum seekers who have exhausted all rights of appeal.

TAP provides legal assistance to destitute asylum seekers who, after having exhausted all their rights of appeal, may have grounds for a fresh application for asylum.

The Asylum Project (TAP) is a project within the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic dedicated to assisting individuals in their asylum cases and related immigration matters. TAP also provides free, specialist immigration advice at the Initial Advice Clinics (IACs).

Asylum seekers who have exhausted all rights of appeal are extremely vulnerable. Once their application for asylum is refused and their appeal is determined, they are normally no longer eligible for support or accommodation and often become destitute. They are not allowed to work, and they have no means of providing for themselves. This has obvious implications for their sense of dignity and their psychological, as well as their physical, health. Yet, many such asylum seekers have good grounds for remaining in the UK as a refugee or because their human rights will be violated if they return to their countries of origin.

TAP is collaborating closely with the Refugee Survival Trust (RST) on the Breathing Space Project to assist asylum seekers who have exhausted all rights of appeal. Breathing Space is a unique accommodation service which prevents people from becoming destitute by providing safe temporary accommodation and legal advice to people while they work to resolve their situation. TAP's role is to assess cases and provide legal support to those that are referred to the project.



# The Asylum Project

## TAP

*confd...*

Under the Breathing Space project, destitute asylum seekers who have been refused asylum and who have exhausted all rights of appeal will be eligible for accommodation pending a case assessment by the Law Clinic. The Law Clinic assessment will normally involve a review of the case paperwork, at least one case discussion with the client, and any follow up work necessary to establish case progress. If appropriate, we can also, in a limited number of cases, provide assistance such as evidence gathering or research in potential fresh applications for asylum.

The work is undertaken with the aim of referring the information and evidence compiled to an immigration solicitor that can lodge the fresh claim of asylum with the Home Office. Where required, we can also assist with signposting our clients to services that can support them.

Extensive ongoing support and detailed research is often required, to evidence and support clients' fresh claims of asylum. This can be time-consuming and often very stressful for our clients and legal aid provision for this type of work is extremely limited. TAP's work can therefore play a crucial role in helping asylum seekers advance a fresh application for asylum.

TAP also takes on a small number of referrals outside of the Breathing Space Project.

# *Criminal Justice Project*

CJP

The University of Strathclyde Law Clinic works in partnership with the Miscarriages of Justice Organisation (MOJO) to investigate potential miscarriages of justice.

This collaboration provides thorough investigations into potential miscarriages of justice, with a view to supporting applications to the Scottish Criminal Case Review Commission.

In order to achieve this, the Criminal Justice Project coordinates students to work with the partner organisation, MOJO. MOJO are often the last resort for those who have been convicted and maintain their innocence, but have often exhausted the ordinary appeals process.

Eligible cases for review are those which concern claims of genuine factual innocence. Examples of factual innocence are eyewitness misidentifications, inaccurate forensic evidence, or false confessions.

Our aim is to identify and correct miscarriages of justice through structured investigations whilst providing support for our clients.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and remote working, the CJP's activity was limited. However, with the return to in-person working and the appointment of our new CJP Coordinator Georgia Kyriacou, we are looking forward to a productive year working alongside MOJO.

MOJO

# Scottish University Law Clinic Network

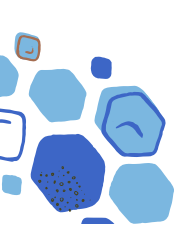
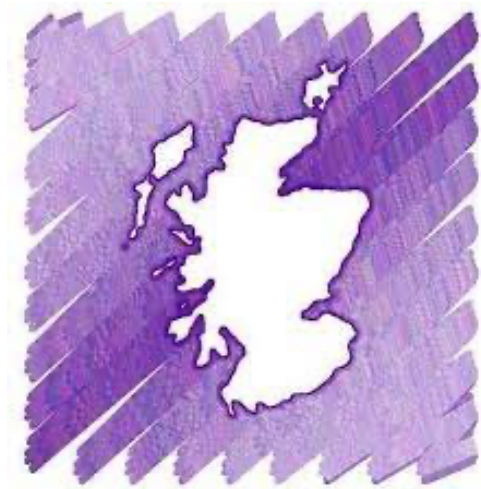
## SULCN

The Scottish University Law Clinic Network (SULCN) is an initiative that brings together and raises awareness of student law clinics in Scotland.

The Law Clinic remains part of the Scottish University Law Clinic Network (SULCN), formally launched in June 2012. This network provides a forum for the exchange of ideas between law clinics, based in Scotland, on subjects such as ethics, public legal education, practice, and procedure in Law Clinics and clinical legal education.

Working with fellow students and academics from Glasgow Caledonian, Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier, Dundee, Robert Gordon and Aberdeen Universities, SULCN continues to plan and strategise to expand its presence in Scotland.

The Network meet monthly to discuss new ideas. This has proved to be invaluable in establishing connections between students and academics across the Scottish university law clinics.



*Our*

## PROJECTS

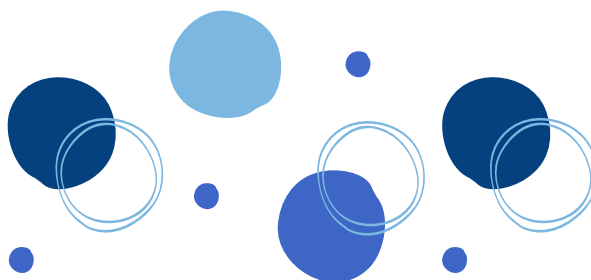


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In addition to our ‘core’ case streams, the Law Clinic is currently running, developing, and setting up a number of different projects to expand our reach in the community and increase opportunities for students. Each project is lead by a ‘Project Coordinator’, who sits on the Law Clinic Executive Committee.

We currently have the following projects:

- Anti-Oppressive Practice Working Group
- Prisons Project; and
- Environmental Justice Project



# *Anti-Oppressive Practice*

## WORKING GROUP

The Anti-Oppressive Practice Working group promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion. In recent years, these three terms have become familiar to most people in the academic and corporate worlds. Familiarity, however, is not the same as understanding or meaningful engagement; for the Law Clinic, the purpose of which is to provide access to justice, it is vital for equalities, diversity, and inclusion to be at the heart of our practice. Plus, Rule B1.15 of the Law Society of Scotland's Rules lists diversity as a standard of conduct for all practitioners.

What is the difference between equalities, diversity, and inclusion?

In other parts of the world, we often see the terms equality or equity used in place of equalities. The plural, however, speaks well to the important multiplicities at work here; it is not just about treating people equally or fairly – though, of course, these are important – but also about considering the importance of plurality, of targeting systems and structures of inequality, and of building communities of solidarity.

Diversity is about, metaphorically, who is in a room; inclusion is about how people get into the room and how they feel in that room. All of these concepts exist either explicitly or implicitly in the Equality Act 2010, which is legislation with which many advisors in the Law Clinic become intimately acquainted. It lists nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation. In equity studies, these are spoken about as -isms, -phobias, and -normativities, and as often as there are overlaps between the sociological (including socio-affective, socioeconomic, and socio-political) world and the legal world, there are crucial differences. Further, working in the public sector – as the Law Clinic does – means meeting the requirements of the public sector equality duty, which imposes a positive duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people and communities.

In December 2021, the Law Clinic appointed its first-ever Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer. In the months since, a compendium of equalities, diversity, and inclusion resources have been collected, relationships built or further entrenched with Strath Union and with the Law School (where work is ongoing to decolonise the curriculum), and the first sessions of training have been delivered. The Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer is supported by the Anti-Oppressive Practice Working Group, composed of Law Clinic members on an ad hoc basis who provide feedback, guidance, and raise issues of importance.

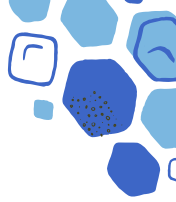
Work is ongoing to ensure that the Law Clinic is receptive and responsive to advisors, clients, and developments in the legal and sociological worlds. Equally, the aim is for the Law Clinic to be at the forefront of embracing client care, including creating an affirming, compassionate, sensitive, and supportive environment for everyone who comes through its doors. This is a priority in terms of serving the needs of advisors and clients, and it is also a priority given the Law Clinic's unique position of straddling both academic and legal spaces.

Access to justice is the Law Clinic's ever-moving destination; equalities, diversity, and inclusion are crucial parts of mapping how to get there.





# Prisons Project



The Prisons Project aims to offer people with convictions an easier transition back into employment and their community. We hope to provide them with legal knowledge and information about relevant ongoing issues that could arise when offenders are released from prison and seeking employment.

The Prison Project has an arrangement with Low Moss Prison for a weekly visit. Low Moss Prison is located on the outskirts of Glasgow and has a capacity of 784 prisoners, primarily from North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority area.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we have not been able to visit the prison and it is still unclear when visits will resume. However, we hope for this to change in the near future and are excited to relay the hard work we have been doing behind the scenes to the prisoners and the community. We have been advised when we return to the prison, that we will be assisting prisoners in their final week before release and believe this is better suited to have a positive impact on them. Typically, two students visit the prison and deliver a presentation to a group of around 20 prisoners, which is then followed by questions and discussion.

During the challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic, students have been working hard behind the scenes to develop the project. With new legislation introduced in late 2020, under the Management of Offender's (Scotland) Act 2019, the presentation given to the prisoners has been updated to include details of the new legislation. The presentation has also been updated with valuable information on employment and employment issues which we hope the prisoners will find useful in the future.

Furthermore, we are in the latter stages of developing a leaflet/handout which condenses the information included in the presentation. This was developed as a substitute for the presentation during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Moving forward, this will be given to prisoners upon request and used as an optional handout to consolidate information. In addition to this we hope to make the presentation and leaflet widely accessible to assist not just current offenders but ex-offenders. This is a move we wish to take to expand the projects reach beyond the prison and continue to have a positive impact in deterring people from re-offending.

We are continually developing useful resources in response to feedback from prisoners and staff, and the student volunteers have found their involvement in the project very rewarding. We hope to be able to get back into the prison very soon.



Gregor  
Henderson  
Coordinator



# *Environmental Justice Project*

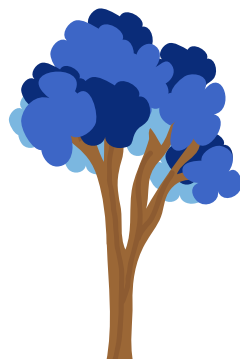
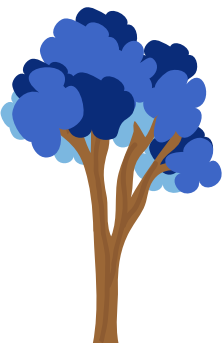


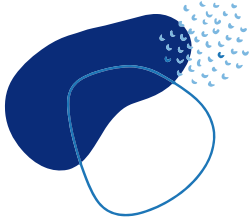
## EJP

The Environmental Justice Project is a new project within the clinic, established in 2022.

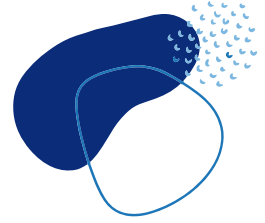
The Environmental Justice Project was founded by the Clinic's Executive Committee in May 2022. The project was founded following the COP 26 event held in November 2021. It was agreed that the Clinic would begin looking at creating an Environmental Justice Project. The project is currently in its early stages of development.

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. It acts as an umbrella term which covers climate justice, food security, and unfair exposure of poor and marginalized communities to harms associated with resource extraction, hazardous waste, and other land uses. The project was named the Environmental Justice Project with the deliberate intention to widen the scope of the project.





# Training



## AN OVERVIEW

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At Strathclyde Law Clinic we believe the provision of regular training for our student advisors and staff is paramount. Our training team, consisting of Mhairi Strachan (Training Coordinator) and Sophie Rook (Deputy Training Coordinator), provided excellent training events over the reporting period.

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The training of our student advisors is an invaluable aspect of the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic. Our robust training programme enables the development of our members' confidence, competence, and conscientiousness, and, in turn, this ensures our clients receive an excellent standard of service.

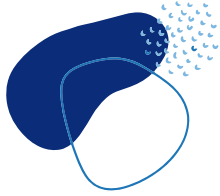
We provide our new intake of Student Advisors with Initial Advisor Training during our induction period in October and November. This training aims to provide new Student Advisors with the important core skills needed to succeed as members of the Law Clinic, such as client interviewing, case management, and professional ethics.

This year, we developed the IAT programme so that our new intake were able to learn about each aspect of a Clinic case, in the order that student advisors would deal with them during the course of a law clinic case. We also added a mock case so students could practice what they had learned.

This year, we adopted a more contextual and practical approach to delivering training on the law clinic practice rules and data protection laws. We integrated these topics into several training sessions including interview skills, file management, case management, and communication skills. Students were then provided with multiple opportunities to practice applying the rules throughout the mock case. The class was given general feedback which further emphasised the rules. We then provided a data protection and practice rules review session, where we quizzed students on their knowledge of these topics. The variety of ways in which we delivered training on these topics ensured that the differing learning styles of our new advisers were catered for.

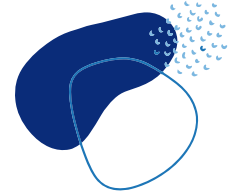
After the IAT, we provided two optional Initial Advisor Training sessions which were offered to all clinic members and had high rates of attendance. The first optional session was on "How to Get Involved in the Law Clinic" where the training team and project managers spoke about the many ways students could become involved in the clinic, and how to do so. The second session was "Initial Advice Clinic (IAC) Training", provided by our IAC co-ordinator, Cara Hope. Upon completion, attending students were able to volunteer for our IAC, where students discuss clients' legal enquiries, and solicitors provide initial advice.

# Training



## AN OVERVIEW

*contd...*



In the second semester, the training team arranged small informal group meetings with our new recruits. The content of the meetings was tailored to the specific needs of each set of new advisers. During these meetings we were able to discuss the new advisers progress so far, their next steps and address any further questions or issues they had. This was an extremely valuable experience for our new members as it allowed them to remain in contact with ourselves and feel supported by the clinic team. In addition, we felt that this also helped motivate the new students and encouraged them to continue advancing in their clinic journey.

Beyond the Initial Advisor Training, we offer a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme over the course of the year. Our objective is to enhance our Student Advisors' existing skills and expand their legal knowledge in specialised areas, allowing the Law Clinic to provide a more robust service.

We offered our Student Advisors 7 hours of on-going internal training delivered by both internal and external trainers. In this reporting period, we continued to provide training online in response to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, we were delighted to reintroduce in-person training sessions in March 2022.

One of the highlights of our training programme this year was when Law Clinic alumni and newly qualified Advocate, Callum Hiller, provided our students with training on "Becoming an Advocate". Callum spoke about his journey from being a clinic member to calling as an advocate, and how he felt his time in the clinic positively influenced his career. He also discussed the process of becoming an advocate and what it is like on a day-to-day basis. He alleviated many of our students concerns about perceived barriers to calling as an advocate, such as worries surrounding funding, specific qualifications needed, and social barriers. Callum made sure to spend time answering the seemingly never-ending stream of questions from students – and the session ended up running well past time, with students still highly engaged.

In addition to the training sessions we provided, we continued to develop the training resources that we make available to our students. We also continued to provide our students with a monthly training newsletter, which compiled many upcoming free/affordable training sessions and events from a variety of sources, which are relevant to our work at the Clinic. We continue to ensure our members are aware of upcoming Legal Services Agency webinars, seminars, and legal education which LSA provide to students free of charge (up to 6 sessions a year).

Afton Cook will be joining the training team as Deputy Training Coordinator, working alongside Mhairi and Sophie, during 2022/23.

*Student*



## ACCOUNTS

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Sasha Akavicis

Student Advisor

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I have just finished both the second year of the Scots and English CLLB, and my second year as a student advisor in the Clinic. Upon becoming an advisor, I decided to change from the LLB to the CLLB as I thought this would allow me to become more involved in the Clinic.

During my first year and into my second year, I was extremely hesitant to get involved within the Clinic, as I kept telling myself I didn't know enough and wasn't quite ready. I feel it wasn't until around springtime this year that I finally told myself I was going to become more involved, as this was the only way I was going to be able to help make a difference and I knew if I didn't do it now, I would keep delaying. Around this time Executive Committee applications were open, and I thought what better way to get involved and to really throw myself in at the deep end. I was successful in my application and I am now a Firm Coordinator. Upon entering this role, I had the full support of the Executive Committee, co-advisors, and staff which helped me to settle in.

Just shortly after my Firm Coordinator handover with Paige and Cara, the Clinic was recruiting summer students. This would be the first summer since the pandemic that summer students were encouraged to use the offices and to work in-person in the Clinic. Again, I was a little hesitant to apply but I am so glad I did. Prior to this role I had only stepped foot in the Clinic for my Firm Coordinator interview, so this opportunity gave me the ability to work from the offices twice a week and to become familiar with not only my fellow summer students but also other student advisors. As much as online working had its perks, there is nothing better than talking over your ideas in person with other advisors and supervisors, and I would encourage everyone to take up the opportunity in the new year to utilise the Clinic office and to get involved as much as possible. I think the summer student role has improved my confidence massively within the Clinic.

I am so glad I became more involved in Clinic work when I did. The difference the Clinic makes to its clients is immeasurable and it is really rewarding being a student advisor. Everyone I have worked with has a real passion for the work they do and this makes a huge difference. I am so glad I joined the Clinic, and I would recommend anyone thinking of getting involved to do the same.



*Student*

# ACCOUNTS



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Nicola Maguire

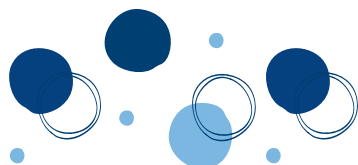
Student Advisor

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Four years ago, I chose the University of Strathclyde specifically to get involved with the Law Clinic as I had been so inspired by their commitment to furthering access to justice. Having completed my Clinical LLB, and returning to Strathclyde for my Diploma, I am immeasurably grateful to the Law Clinic for the rewarding experience of being a student advisor.

Looking back over my degree, I cannot believe the breadth of experiences I have had. Firstly, I have had an array of interesting cases that have taught me a myriad of skills about both the law and working with clients. This has been supplemented by my involvement in different projects which have allowed me to develop my legal research skills and dive into different areas of law that I may not have experienced otherwise. Finally, having a place on the Law Clinic committee built my confidence in working with others and gave me an invaluable insight into how organisations are run. Having these experiences whilst being surrounded by the most supportive and inspiring people in my fellow students and the Law Clinic staff has truly enriched my academic career and my life in general.

The Law Clinic has shaped me into both a better person and a better future solicitor. I have been able to learn skills and develop qualities that I am proud of, build friendships that will last long past my degree and contribute to providing access to justice for my local community. I cannot wait to take the passion instilled in me by the Clinic into my future career within the profession and watch as an alumni how the Clinic continues to grow and develop.





*Student*

# ACCOUNTS



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Cara Hope

Student Advisor

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Like many of my fellow student advisors, the Law Clinic was the principal reason I elected to study at Strathclyde. I chose law because I wanted to help people and make a difference and there seemed no better way to do that at such an early stage in my career, than joining the Law Clinic, which shared my passion for access to justice. After my successful interview at the beginning of first year, I added the Clinical element to my Scots and English Law degree, to make the most of my time at university and benefit from the additional classes and assessment methods. I am a practical learner and being able to apply skills and knowledge first-hand throughout my degree has not only prepared me for future practice, but also kept me engaged and inspired in a way unlike any other.

I got stuck into Clinic work quickly, joining The Asylum Project (TAP) and Prisons Project. I also attended a few IACs and took on my first case in January 2020. However, when COVID struck, Clinic life and all aspects of my personal life changed dramatically. Having a fear of boredom and finding far too much time on my hands due to lockdown, I offered to take on more cases which led to my first lead advisor role. Shortly thereafter, I was appointed as IAC (Initial Advice Clinic) coordinator with a lot of work ahead, as I contributed to the creation of Virtual IACs to continue our free legal advice sessions remotely. As summer approached, applications opened for the paid Summer Student positions available which I was also successful in applying for. Working entirely remotely and being several academic years behind the other summer students may have presented challenges at first, but I was very grateful to have the opportunity to be fully immersed within the workings of the Law Clinic. Towards the end of that summer, I conducted my first Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) hearing which instilled a love of advocacy within me, particularly when a client otherwise may not have been able to achieve the same outcome without representation. At the end of my first year, I was awarded 'Best Newcomer', recognising my work since joining the Clinic.

Throughout my second year, we remained working remotely. This, accompanied with online classes for university and being furloughed, enabled me to increase the time I could spend on Clinic work each week. I took on more cases and represented at my first full hearing at the Employment Tribunal. I had a fantastic experience, learning more every second and succeeded in achieving an excellent outcome for my client. The IACs also were 'Highly Commended' by the judges in the Attorney General LawWorks Pro Bono Awards 2021, which I humbly received on behalf of the entire team of student advisors and volunteer solicitors who make the IACs run so well.





*Student*

## ACCOUNTS

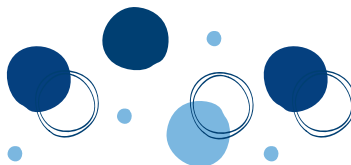
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By Summer 2021, I was reappointed as IAC coordinator for my third year within the Clinic and offered another summer student position. I continued to balance this with other commitments including a summer internship and part-time job. As I began third year, I was very proud to receive the award of 'Best Overall Contribution' at the AGM. While also advising clients one-to-one through casework and the IACs, I was also part of a team tasked with designing user friendly online resources. This was a significantly important project, as it allows anyone at any time to access legal information in a format designed to empower them to understand their rights and legal avenues. The online resources have been a huge success and I frequently refer clients to them, to develop their own understanding of their case, building the collaborative nature of our working relationship by empowering them with the detailed information. Accessing and understanding relevant legal information is a key aspect of access to justice. Consequently, I am proud to have been able to assist in making a difference by providing this, through the Law Clinic.

As a result of my Clinical classes, I have had the valuable opportunity of gaining practical skills and knowledge which has worked hand-in-hand with immediate application into Law Clinic cases to achieve good outcomes for my clients and also provide support and mentorship to fellow student advisors. Having the reflective diaries and undertaking Ethics and Justice has also shaped my approach to tasks, enabling me to properly reflect on previous actions and adapting practices based on my personal learning journey. This will no doubt play an important part in my future practice as a solicitor as I hope to one day become.

After two years of running the IACs and three years of casework and working with everyone in the Law Clinic, I was delighted to have been appointed as Student Director alongside Paige Alexander. In this role, I have drawn on my experiences and skills developed throughout my time in the Clinic, and I am already thoroughly enjoying the challenges the new role brings. My deep passion for access to justice has only grown since joining the Clinic, as I have been able to empower clients and understand the complexities they may face when seeking justice. I will always hold this close to my heart and strive to embed this within my future career as a result of the Law Clinic supporting me throughout the past few years.



# Student

## ACCOUNTS



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Paige Alexander

Student Advisor

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Volunteering as a Student Advisor at the Clinic over the last 3 years, has been the cornerstone of my university experience.

Upon choosing where to study, Strathclyde grasped my attention due to the Clinic. The opportunity to provide access to justice to those who need it most, whilst gaining invaluable legal experience, led to me choose Strathclyde with the hope of becoming a Student Advisor.

My clinical journey began in 2019 and since then my passion to enabling access to justice for all individuals has been ignited. Upon joining the Clinic, I transferred to the Clinical LLB programme as I was eager to become as involved as possible. I feel extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to transfer to the programme, as it has undoubtedly contributed to my development as an Advisor. Partaking in the clinically available modules, particularly Ethics and Justice, has equipped me with a profound understanding of the implications our clients face when accessing justice and the various vulnerabilities our clients may have. This has enabled me to provide a high-quality service by tailoring my approach to suit the client. By regularly producing reflective diaries, this has facilitated and encouraged deeper reflection into my strengths and weaknesses, which has led to monumental personal development. Additionally, this has greatly benefitted my clients, as this reflection has enabled me to evaluate my approach to different cases and clients and identify alternative approaches or strategies which I could apply in the future. My experience as a CLLB student has been extremely positive and has fuelled my passion to provide access to justice.

Upon starting at the Clinic, I was actively involved in the Online Project which strengthened my legal research and written communication skills. Whilst I enjoyed working behind the scenes on online cases, I always looked up to my fellow student advisors and was continuously inspired by their confidence and their ability to represent clients successfully. This instilled motivation within me to follow in their footsteps.

In 2020, Covid struck, and both university and clinic work moved online. During this time, I immersed myself in Clinic life and since then I have never looked back. I have been involved in numerous advice and assistance cases, which has involved preparing submissions, corresponding with clients and Respondents, as well as representing clients in SSSC and Employment Tribunal proceedings. The Clinic plays a pivotal role within society and being involved in the provision of its services is truly rewarding.



*Student*

## ACCOUNTS

*contd...*



Prior to taking this leap, I had been hesitant to become involved in advice and assistance cases, as I did not feel I possessed sufficient knowledge and experience. The co-advisor on my first clinic case played a pivotal role in my clinical journey by encouraging me to take on the role of lead advisor. It was due to this positive support that I am where I am today. This is testament to the encouraging, inclusive culture within the Clinic.

To date, I have taken on a total of 16 cases including online cases. I am also a student volunteer within the SWRC project, which provides a crucial service, assisting women who have suffered gender based violence. The Clinic has equipped me with an abundance of invaluable skills, which I will carry into my career as a solicitor.

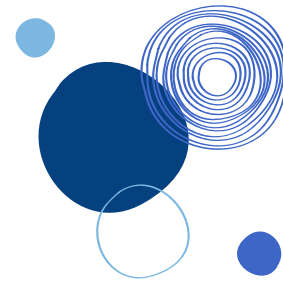
Receiving the Effie Shaw Award for Dedication at the 2021 Law Clinic Awards, encouraged me to put myself forward for the position of elected member within the Executive Committee. Looking back, my time as an elected member was truly insightful. Alongside building relationships with my peers, it enabled me to gain an insight into the operation of the Clinic. After gaining the confidence to apply, in June 2022, I was appointed to the role of Student Director, alongside Cara Hope. This is undoubtedly the highlight of my university experience. Truthfully, I still can't quite believe it!

I am forever grateful for the experience the Clinic continues to provide me with. Much of my professional success, such as securing a highly competitive traineeship for after university, is undoubtedly owed to the opportunities the Clinic has provided me with. Being part of the Clinic has not only enabled me to pursue my passion to help individuals who need it most, it has also enabled me to be part of a community of compassionate, caring, and incredibly talented, colleagues and friends. It is a privilege to be part of such an invaluable organisation working towards an honourable cause. The importance of the provision of pro-bono legal services is immeasurable and I am grateful to be able to play a part in the Clinic's invaluable work.

As a student-led organisation, much of our success is due to the hard work and dedication of our student advisors. The above student accounts are testament to the passion instilled in each of our advisors to provide access to justice to those who need it most. Each year the Clinic provides each student advisor with the opportunity for monumental personal and professional development and equips them with skills and knowledge that can be carried with them throughout their legal careers.



*Where are they*



NOW

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Callum Hiller  
2012 Graduate  
Scottish Advocate

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I was asked to write something about how I got to where I am. So where am I?

I called to the bar as a Lord Hope scholar in 2021.

Since calling to the bar, I have very quickly established myself as an extremely well instructed defence Counsel. I regularly conduct trials as junior alone and I also appear as junior to senior Counsel in a range of extremely serious cases.

In addition to my busy defence practice, I was recently appointed as an ad hoc Advocate Depute and I am now gaining experience prosecuting cases. I hope that experiencing criminal cases from both sides of the table will increase my skillset.

Prior to calling to the bar, I worked as a solicitor for 6 years. I trained at a personal injury practice, before spending 5 years at a leading criminal defence firm in Glasgow.

If you have an interest in court work, whether as a solicitor or counsel, then I hope to give you some advice to assist you in that journey. This is based on the things I did that I believe were a platform for getting to where I am. If you don't have an interest in court work, then much of what I have to say might not be relevant to you, but you never know; many principles in life are transferrable.

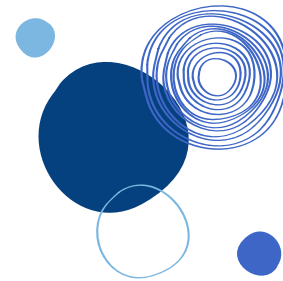
I attended the University of Strathclyde from 2009 until 2012. I was a member of the Law Clinic for most of that period and I still look back on it fondly.

When I commenced my accelerated LLB at Strathclyde in 2009, I was not aware of the Law Clinic, but I soon learned of its work. I was immediately attracted to it because it was a chance to gain practical experience during a period of study otherwise dominated by academic learning. The opportunity for students to expose themselves to the various demands of case work, such as consulting with clients, case analysis and developing a case strategy, complying with the rules and requirements of a court or tribunal, and pleadings, is invaluable at such an early stage. You will not get hands on experience like you do at the Law Clinic anywhere else. You also gain that experience knowing that someone who would otherwise struggle to get access to justice is getting the benefit of your efforts.

*Where are they*

NOW

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My advice to all Law Clinic members is, don't just be there, be active. If you join a gym, but you don't go, or when you do go you just sit around on your phone or talk to your mates, then you're not going to get fitter or stronger. You might be able to tell people you are a member of a gym, you might even talk your way into some competition squad or lifting club, but when put to the test, everyone will eventually see that you haven't got the skills or experience that you made out you did. So, if you are in the Law Clinic then make sure you are an active member who is getting the benefit of that and don't waste the opportunity.

In addition to taking advantage of the opportunities in the Law Clinic, I would encourage all aspiring court lawyers to moot. Mooting is an opportunity to develop your advocacy skills as they relate to legal problems. You will have to identify authorities relevant to your problem, develop submissions, and argue cases before real lawyers (and sometimes real judges). Plus, you get a jolly down to the Supreme Court if you make the quarter finals, or at least you used to!

What about developing your advocacy skills, are they related to examining witnesses? Well, you might get the opportunity to do that in the Law Clinic, if you are lucky enough to have something run to proof. I ran a three-day Employment Tribunal hearing for an unfair dismissal claim. I won and the client was awarded a law clinic record in damages of £69,358. That remains a Law Clinic record award to this day. I hate telling people that (insert your own Agatha wink meme).

Anyway, that was an excellent opportunity for me to examine a variety of witnesses, but you might not be fortunate enough to have a case run so I have two tips for improving your witness examination skills. Number one is read *The Devil's Advocate* by Iain Morley KC. Number two is to spend as much time as you possibly can observing trials at court. I did this A LOT. I skipped lectures to do so. It was like going to the cinema. I loved it. Although, it's not for everyone. I took a pal once and he fell asleep.

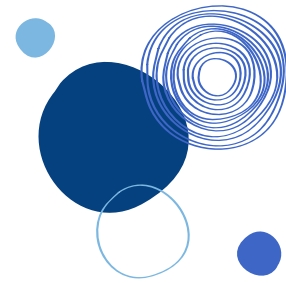
If you do go to court to observe, then I have a few bits of advice. First, the courts are used to students so don't wander round the foyer staring at your feet and then trot off home because you're too shy to ask someone where to go. Security staff tend to be sound, or you can just approach reception who will help you. Just say "Good morning, I'm a law student with an interest in court work. I would like to watch a trial/proof/procedural court, could you tell me what is on today please?". It's that easy. What should you watch? I'd mix it up. Remember that when you start, you'll be appearing in the lowest courts. So, there might be some utility in observing those courts to see the standard that you are expected to meet. Equally, there is no harm in going into the High Court to watch the KC's strutting their stuff in a trial. It's important to see a range of advocacy. You might see something and think "I think I could sound good doing that", but also beware of trying something that doesn't suit you. I think all the best advocates are magpies. They take little pieces of people they have watched that they thought they could use to build their own craft. So, go to court, go often, and watch as many different people as you can.



*Where are they*

NOW

*cont'd...*



Three final pieces of advice. The first is don't worry about not knowing. Don't pretend you know something that you don't. If you do that then you won't learn it and you still won't know it. Just admit you don't know, a short time later and you will know. If you spend your life trying to kid on you are the finished article then you will never get there, but if you realise that the journey is the best bit then you'll enjoy it all the way (mostly).

Second, don't worry about being nervous. You are supposed to be nervous. Anyone who says they aren't nervous is lying. It's natural. Accused persons often say to me that they are very nervous about appearing in the High Court. I say, "don't worry so am I!". Nerves lead to focus, and you need focus to succeed.

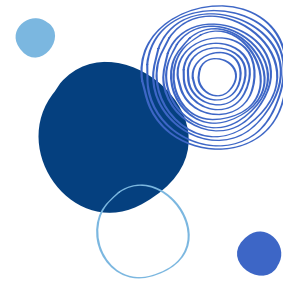
Lastly (drumroll please), whatever you do with your life and career, have fun. It's easy to view studies, interviews, case preparation, travel to courts in the middle of nowhere, late nights, early mornings, appearances before a difficult Sheriff or Judge, difficult cases, submissions, jury speeches, and all the other parts of the job, as something you must do. As a chore or a labour. Try thinking of them as things you get to do. Whatever you do for a living, it will occupy a large portion of your week every week. So, flip your mindset and enjoy the ride. Otherwise, it will be time to get off and you'll realise you forgot to take it in along the way.

May the force be with you.



Callum Hiller

*Where are they*



NOW

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Kirstie Webb  
2020 Graduate  
Previous Student Director (2018-2020)  
Trainee at the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

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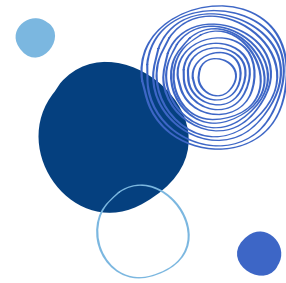
Whenever I'm asked about my time at Strathclyde, the Law Clinic is the first thing that springs to my mind and the first thing I want to talk to people about. It's hard to put into words just how much my Law Clinic experience shaped my time at university; it was the defining experience of my university career and an experience I feel so grateful to have had.

I know that a lot of the students who choose Strathclyde over other universities do so because of the reputation of the Law Clinic as the best of its kind in Scotland. For me, I stumbled into studying Law after a pretty difficult year at Glasgow University where I was studying Anatomy. Given I'm writing this piece, I think it's obvious that neither the course nor Glasgow University as a whole worked out quite how I'd hoped it would. Therefore, after a year, I decided to make a change. Moving to Strathclyde, I decided to completely change the trajectory of my university career, choosing to study English Literature alongside BA Law. I pursued this for a year before finally realising that the LLB was the course for me (third time lucky!). It was during one of the welcome week talks that two of the (now former) clinic members gave a presentation about the Law Clinic. They spoke about the Law Clinic's values and its goal for access to justice and I remember thinking that this is something I'd love to be a part of. My original course choice had stemmed from a desire to have a career helping people and I was ecstatic to now be faced with an organisation where I could do exactly that, in a subject that I enjoyed.

My time in the Law Clinic, much like my university career as a whole, felt like a complete whirlwind, though looking back now it's amazing to reflect on just how much our team achieved in that time. I started in the Law Clinic as a proud member of Firm F, taking part in projects such as the Criminal Convictions Unit and attending as many Initial Advice Clinics as I could. Following on from this I was lucky enough to be appointed as one of the Initial Advice Clinic Coordinators for the 2017/18 academic year, with some very big shoes to fill. Whilst extremely daunting at the time, this was a rewarding and challenging role which allowed me to build relationships not only with Law Clinic students, but also the wider legal community. This was due to the exceptionally dedicated team of solicitors and trainee solicitors who attended each of these sessions. From 2018 until the end of my time at university in May 2020, I was lucky enough to be chosen as one of the Student Directors alongside my good friend Jamie Anderson and surrounded by a fantastic executive committee. Whilst it was undoubtedly challenging at times, trying to balance course work with performing this role to the best of my abilities, I wouldn't change my time as Student Director for the world, as it was the best part of my university experience.



*Where are they*



NOW

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When I was part of the Clinic, I would regularly speak about it to family and friends, explaining the services which it provided and how it was ran and they were always so impressed by the work of the students. At the time, I don't think I really appreciated how true this was. The success of the Law Clinic is a testament to the dedication and passion of both the students and staff; many people have benefited from the tireless work that the Law Clinic does.

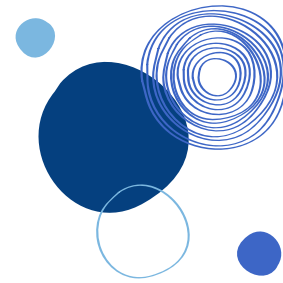
The opportunities I had in the Law Clinic, such as gaining advocacy experience and the values instilled within me, reinforced the direction which I wanted to go in for my legal career. I knew that I wanted to be in a fast-paced role in which I could make a difference. I finished my Diploma in Professional Legal Practice in March 2020 and, I'm sure like a lot of students, Covid-19 had a huge impact on my journey into a traineeship. I was due to start with a firm in the summer of 2020 but following a period of uncertainty, this had to be postponed. While this was disappointing, I was fortunate enough to have received an offer to join the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and in March of 2021 I commenced my traineeship. Now that I'm nearing the end of my traineeship, I look back and have no regrets, because starting with the Crown Office was the best path for me and I've absolutely loved my traineeship so far.

On the back of my own experiences, my advice to anyone on their journey right now would be; don't be afraid to take risks. Whether that's making a change when something doesn't feel right or applying for a position or opportunity that may feel daunting, take that step. Even when opportunities or things don't work out exactly how you hoped they would, you are still on the right path and you're exactly where you are meant to be. Everyone's journey is different and I think anyone would be lying if they said their path into the legal profession worked out exactly how they hoped or planned it would, but it is the most worthwhile path to follow. And, of course, immerse yourself in the Law Clinic...you won't regret it.



Kirstie Webb

*Where are they*



NOW

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Heather MacLean  
2011 Graduate  
Deputy Student Director (2011)  
In-House Counsel at Jacobs

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The Law Clinic has had such an indelible effect on me on both a personal and professional level, that it's hard to think back to the days before I knew of its existence! I joined the Clinic in 2006, just as we relocated from the dusty basement of the Stenhouse to our glamorous accommodation in the Lord Hope building- a tiny hub consisting of four computers squished into a small office room! Despite our cramped setting, there was no limit to the dedication, ambition and warmth of the group I found myself in, and I know that spirit and camaraderie continues to this day. I was fortunate to be elected to the Committee, then to lead Firm D as Firm Co-ordinator and subsequently to serve as Deputy Director, before hanging up my advisor boots in 2011.

I hadn't actually intended to practice law prior to joining the Law Clinic, but I had particularly enjoyed working on employment cases at the clinic and so went on to train as an employment lawyer with specialist firm Law At Work. In my view, some of the most important work the Clinic does is in the employment arena. The right to a decent, safe and dignified workplace and the ability provide for ourselves and our families has a fundamental impact on identity and wellbeing. Every client the Clinic advises or represents, regardless of the outcome of their case, will feel a benefit from the Clinic's support during what can be an incredibly challenging time.

I worked at Law At Work for a decade, but I couldn't resist the draw of the Clinic during that period. I returned as a part time Supervisor in 2015, splitting my time between the Clinic and Law At Work as well as continuing to volunteer at IACs. It was fantastic to see first-hand how much the Clinic had grown and developed since I'd left, and to contribute to exciting new initiatives. There were new faces and new surroundings (and, thankfully, more computers!), but the old spirit and dedication to access to justice remained under Donald and Kate's fantastic leadership.

I returned full time to Law At Work in 2017 and was so pleased that a number of former students decided to apply for traineeships there. The skills and work ethic of Law Clinic students were always attractive to us as an employer, as were the qualities of fairmindedness, equality and "doing the right thing" that Clinic students invariably displayed.

*Where are they*

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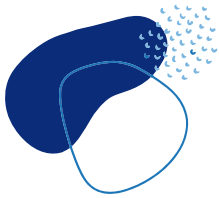
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I moved on from Law At Work in 2021 to take up an in-house counsel role at an international engineering firm, Jacobs, where I provide labour and employment law support to the business across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Although I have almost exclusively worked on the “employer” side of the fence during my career, I haven’t found that to be incompatible with the ethics of access to justice that formed during my time with the Law Clinic. As I have always seen it, my role is to guide employers to do the right thing, and that moral compass is constantly grounded in the experiences I had at the Clinic.

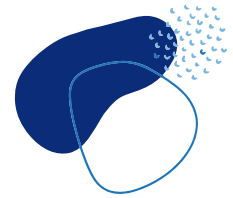
I continue to be involved with the Law Clinic through the IACs, and also by serving on the Supervisory Committee. I felt extremely honoured when Kate approached me in 2019 to join the Committee. I count myself fortunate to be able to contribute, in whatever small way I can, to the continued success of this incredible institution.



Heather MacLean



## THANK YOU



We are extremely grateful to a variety of people who have supported the Clinic throughout 2021/22. As a voluntary organisation, their support is crucial to our success and development.

Firstly, we would like to thank the Alumni Fund and our regular monthly donors for their continued financial support. During the reporting period, the Alumni Fund enabled us to purchase new computer equipment, which has proved very useful for our student volunteers, especially when we continue to offer some of our services remotely.

In Spring 2021, we received funding from the Refugee Survival Trust, Scottish Women's Rights Centre, Thomsons Solicitors, and the Alumni Fund. We are very grateful to each donor for this funding, as it enabled us to employ 8 summer students to ensure the Clinic was able to continue providing its services during the summer break.

We are extremely grateful to all those who took the time to assist with our training, in particular, Charles Hennessy, Callum Hiller, Kate Weisburd, and the Scottish Social Services Council. We would also like to thank the Legal Services Agency for continuing to provide comprehensive online training sessions to students, at a discounted rate.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the dedicated volunteer solicitors, who attend our bi-weekly IACs. Without their support, we would be unable to provide this crucial service to our enquirers.

We would like to thank Alasdair Stewart for the provision of and continuing assistance with our Case Management System.

We would also like to thank the Supervisory Committee for dedicating their time and enabling us to benefit from their experience and expertise. Thank you also to our previous Head of School Professor, Claire McDiarmid, for her strong support and encouragement of the Clinic.

Finally, thank you to the many law school academics and support staff who have given advice, assisted with interviews, and provided administrative help to the Law Clinic.



# THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Until May 2022

Rebecca Dyer and Jordan Hamlett  
Student Directors

Nicola Maguire  
Firm A Coordinator

Carly Morrison  
Firm B Coordinator

Martin Gallacher  
Firm C Coordinator

Carmen Rowat  
Firm D Coordinator

Daniel Leyden  
Firm E Coordinator

Cara Hope and Alana Sommerville  
IAC Coordinators

Francesca Pozzo (Casework) and Sarah Watson (Public Legal Education)  
The Asylum Project Coordinators

Ronan Leslie  
The Asylum Project Deputy Coordinator

Lauren McGovern  
Criminal Convictions Unit Manager

Laura Hart  
Online Project Manager

Gregor Henderson  
Prisons Project Manager

Laura Nicol  
Communications Officer

Mhairi Strachan and Sophie Rook  
Training Officers

Fiona Rennie, Paige Alexander, Karen-Lee Johnston, Sasha Akavicis, Arūn Smith, Natalie Marshall, Melissa McKillen,  
Alasdair Flett and Tara Waldman  
Elected Members



# THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



From June 2022

Cara Hope and Paige Alexander  
Student Directors

Firm A Coordinator  
Laura Nicol

Firm B Coordinator  
Sasha Akavicis

Firm C Coordinator  
Martin Gallacher

Firm D Coordinator  
Tara Waldman

IAC Coordinator  
Alasdair Flett

Natalie Marshall and Lauren Weetman  
Deputy IAC Coordinators

Peter Akehurst  
Online Project Manager

Hannah Stewart  
Deputy Online Project Manager

Mhairi Strachan  
Training Officer

Sophie Rook and Afton Cook  
Deputy Training Officer

Georgia Kyriacou  
CJP Coordinator

Gregor Henderson  
Prisons Project Manager

Fiona Rennie  
The Asylum Project Co-Coordinator

Rahmah Aslan  
The Asylum Project Deputy Co-Coordinator

Amy Woodcock  
SWRC Coordinator

Artin Smith  
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer

Anastasia Smith, Katy Li, James Marshall and Vanessa Rodrigues  
Elected Members



## THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE



Professor Alan Paterson (Chair) –  
Law School

Professor Claire McDiarmid –  
Head of Law School

Kate Lavery –  
Law Clinic Director

Sheriff Patricia Pryce –  
Glasgow Sheriff Court

Richard Farquhar –  
Solicitor

Dr Rose Mary Harley –  
University Graduate Association

Gwyneth James –  
Glasgow Central Citizens Advice Bureau

Alasdair Stewart –  
Age UK

Professor Donald Nicolson –  
University of Essex, Law School

Heather MacLean –  
Solicitor

Shona Simon –  
Employment Tribunal Scotland