

University of Strathclyde Law Clinic Annual Report

1 August 2020 - 31 July 2021



Address: Room GH844, Level 8
Graham Hills Building
40 George Street
G1 1QE

Email: lawclinic@strath.ac.uk

Website: www.lawclinic.org.uk

CONTENTS

2020-2021 AT A GLANCE	3
DIRECTORS REPORT	4
AWARDS.....	5
BACKGROUND.....	6
OUR CLIENTS	8
SUCCESS STORIES	13
PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION	15
COLLABORATIONS.....	16
MEMBERSHIP	21
TRAINING.....	22
STUDENT ACCOUNTS	23
CLINICAL	25
WHERE ARE THEY NOW.....	27
THANKS.....	30
APPENDIX	31

2020-2021 AT A GLANCE

Enquiries Received:
560

Advice and Assistance
cases:
105

Initial Advice Clinic
Users:
250

Online Advice Enquiries
answered:
61

Client cases worked on by
The Asylum Project:
34

Won or saved for our
clients in 2020-21:
£126,231.74

Won or saved for our
clients since inception:
£1,753,992.88

DIRECTORS REPORT



The past year has thrown up many challenges for many in our community and we are still living with the consequences of the global coronavirus pandemic. Many people's lives have been badly affected and the impact will be long lasting, particularly for low-income families and young people, but there remain grounds for optimism. This is rooted in the many acts of kindness and

compassion I have seen, not least from our volunteer students, volunteer solicitors and our terrific team of staff who have been incredible at rising to the challenges of working remotely. To remain motivated and committed to improving access to justice amid the many stresses COVID 19 has created is testament to the strength of their core values and resilience. What they have managed to achieve this year has been very impressive.

This report provides a summary of what we have been doing in the Law Clinic this past year, but statistics cannot capture the sheer effort involved in juggling academic work, family life and for many, work

life, while handling often difficult and complex cases as a student volunteer. We have continued to operate remotely for this entire year yet despite this our case numbers are high, the settlements we have managed to achieve for our clients are impressive, our outreach work has continued and collaborations with external organisations thrived.

Some of our project work has been impossible to deliver, for example, our work in prisons and our work with schools. However, the students running these projects have worked hard behind the scenes to develop ideas for future work and build new relationships in the community.

We know the year ahead will also have its challenges as we continue to forge new ways of working, holding on to lessons learned from remote working and trying to meet an increasing demand for legal services among those on low incomes who cannot get legal aid and cannot afford a solicitor. Having seen how our students and other volunteers have responded so far, I am very confident that they will do their utmost to continue to provide a high quality free legal service to those who need it most. What I hope will be very different this year is being able to see faces, catch up on news, share stories and bounce ideas off each other without the need to rely entirely on screens and Wi-Fi.

AWARDS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AWARDS

Some of the most important awards in each clinic session are those that we award internally to the students that allow the clinic to operate so effectively. These were awarded at our AGM on Wednesday 18 November 2020.

This year, the following students received awards in recognition of their efforts.

Best Newcomer	Cara Hope
Best Project Work	Kudakwashe Chinyani, Murray Kemp, and Lauryn Dawber all for work on The Asylum Project (TAP)
Best Case	Karen Yuill, Ewan Forsyth, Eilidh Withers, Denice Chalmers
Best Case Worker	Zoe Law
The Amanda Benstock Award for Compassion	Mhari Sharpe
The Effie Shaw Award for Dedication	Mhairi Strachan
Best Overall Contribution	Carly Morrison

EXTERNAL AWARD

The Law Clinic's Initial Advice Clinics was shortlisted as finalists in the category Best Contribution by a team of students at the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards 2021. The online ceremony took place on 12 May 2021 via Zoom in which the IACs was highly commended.

BACKGROUND

HISTORY

The University of Strathclyde Law Clinic was established in 2003 by Professor Donald Nicolson OBE. We provide free legal advice and representation to people in Glasgow and the surrounding areas who cannot access this through other means.

The Law Clinic aims to complement existing services (such as the Citizens Advice Bureau) and we act for those who cannot afford professional legal services or access legal aid. We are the first of Scotland's current university law clinics. 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.

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 in terms of developing legal skills, seeing law being applied in practice, while reflecting on the ethics and justice of legal practice. Students find their involvement challenging, rewarding and useful as an insight into law in practice.

The Law Clinic offers students a better understanding of the legal and other needs of their local community and the impact 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.



MODE OF OPERATION

The Law Clinic is a student-led, voluntary organisation based in the Law School at the University of Strathclyde. The Law Clinic is overseen by acting Law Clinic Director, Kate Laverty, who has considerable experience both advising low-income clients as a practicing solicitor and supervising students in the Law Clinic.

Our Executive Committee is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Law Clinic. Our Executive Committee is made up of predominantly student volunteers alongside Clinic staff. It comprises the Clinic Director, Supervisors, Student Directors and Deputy Student Director, firm coordinators, project managers and officers along with students appointed to take responsibility for different areas and aspects of Clinic management and members elected by the new student membership at the initial advisor training and the overall student membership at the AGM each year to represent the views of our entire student membership (see appendix 2). Our Management Committee makes urgent decisions concerning the Clinic and is made up of the Director, Supervisors, and Student Directors who lead the Executive Committee. Our Supervisory Committee is made up of non-members from the University, legal profession and local community and provides advice on the Law Clinic's strategy and direction (see appendix 1).

We had six "firms" of student advisors from August 2020 to July 2021. Student Firm Coordinators lead each firm, acting as a mentor and line manager, assisting firm members with their cases and any problems arising. Students primarily work in pairs to assist clients, unless the case requires a larger team.

We never give any advice to a client without it first being checked by one of our legally qualified supervisors. Law School academics and volunteer solicitors offer additional specialised advice where this is needed. We have an insurance policy in place and all clients sign a disclaimer which highlights that the advice and assistance we offer is delivered by students who are not professionally qualified. We operate a strict policy of confidentiality, and all client files are securely stored in line with current GDPR standards. We apply, at a minimum, the same standards of ethics and professional conduct that apply to Scottish solicitors.



OUR CLIENTS

OVERVIEW

The Law Clinic has developed an innovative approach to offering our clients the services they need. The Law Clinic divides its enquiries into three separate casework ‘streams’, rather, than offering an ineffective ‘one-size-fits-all’ service. The Law Clinic resolves urgent and simple enquiries through our award-winning Online Advice service. The Law Clinic also provides our clients the opportunity to seek immediate and more detailed advice from volunteer solicitors and trainee solicitors at our bi-weekly, remotely-held, Initial Advice Clinics. Finally, our traditional Advice and Assistance service continues to offer the most complete service, over a longer timeframe than that of the Online Advice service and Initial Advice Clinics.

Over the reporting period, there has been a noticeable decrease in Advice and Assistance cases and Initial Advice enquiries. This is due to the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

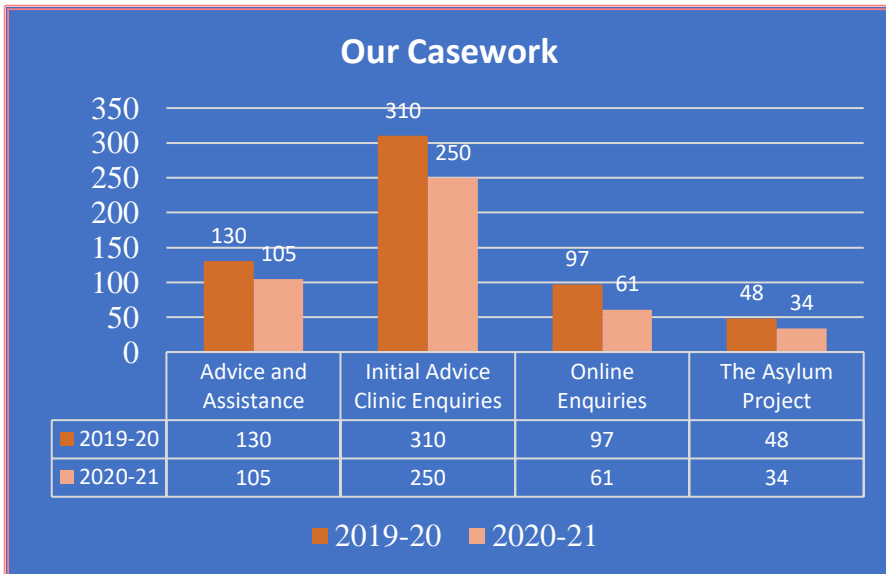
In addition, an Advice and Assistance case can typically run for weeks, months, or even years, which coupled with a loss of a Law Clinic supervisor in recent years, has slightly decreased the number of Advice and Assistance cases the Law Clinic can take on at any given point in the reporting period.

While the Initial Advice Clinic enquiries have typically increased year on year since its inception, the fall in IAC enquiries can be connected to the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We provide a full package of services: legal problems are rarely isolated from other issues. We aspire, where appropriate, to empower clients by equipping them with the knowledge to help themselves and provide them with access to other resources. To do so, we have updated our website to include Disability Discrimination and Employment Tribunal related resources to assist those in the community, to inform them of their legal rights and the required knowledge for bringing such claims in the Employment Tribunal.

We refer clients to selected legal practitioners and agencies better equipped to deal with specialist issues to ensure that our clients receive the assistance they need.

There is no single measure of our success rate as our clients are sometimes able to resolve their legal issues following basic advice,



whereas others have cases without any prospect of success or where there is no legal remedy.

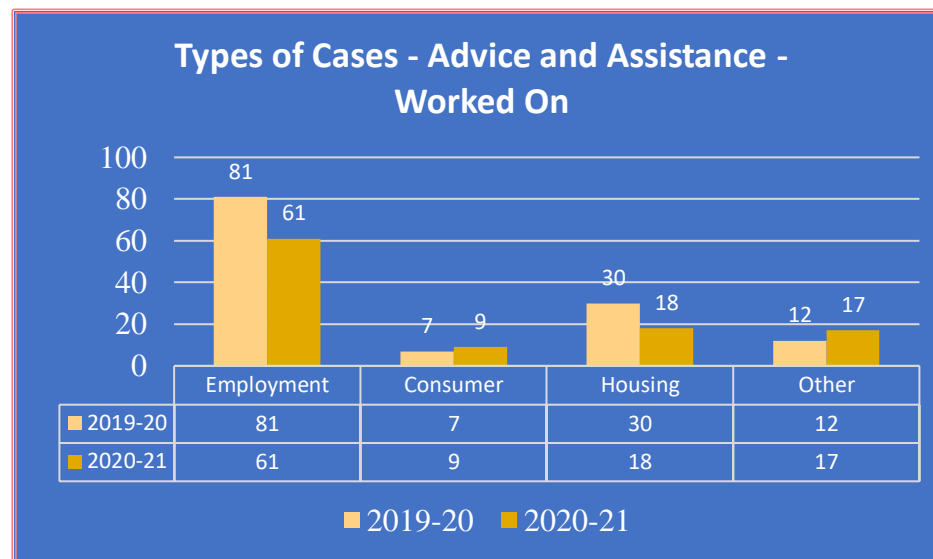
ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The outcomes of cases we helped with were many and varied with the measure of success often subjective. For some clients, success was a good reference, their wages paid or an acknowledgement of unfair treatment. For others it meant a well negotiated financial settlement or a full hearing resulting in a judgement in their favour. Many were satisfied just to receive advice on their options. Some felt a measure of success even though hearings did not go in their favour, but they got the chance to have their story heard.

Below is an attempt to record outcomes but they cannot reflect the nuances of how clients view success in a case.

In terms of financial gains alone our cases resulted in a total of **£126,231.74** won or saved for our clients this reporting period.

Our statistics are measured across all the cases we closed this season. We exclude cases where no assistance could be given beyond advice alone. We consider a case to be a success where it results in our client meeting, at least partially, their objective.



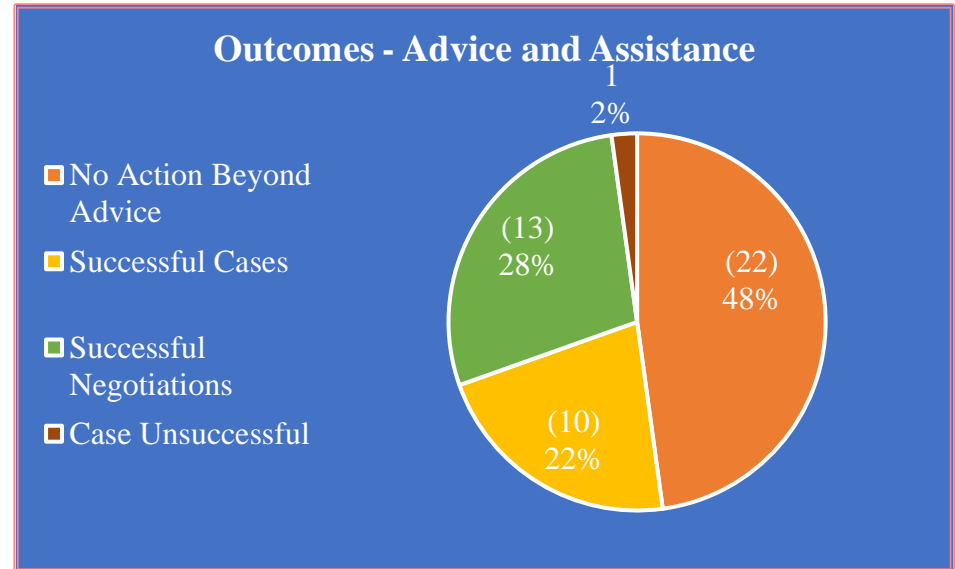
TYPES OF CASES

Employment cases by their very nature are very complex and often involve tight deadlines. Time limits are shorter and there are generally more procedural requirements. In terms of volunteer student time Employment cases require a substantially greater number of hours per case. We are seeing an increasing number of disability discrimination cases which 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 client’s 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.



INITIAL ADVICE CLINICS

Our Initial Advice Clinic service began in 2012 with the aim of providing some initial on the spot legal information, advice and guidance to those we cannot represent. The service is run by student volunteers with the advice being given by a dedicated team of volunteer solicitors and trainees many of whom are Law Clinic alumni. The ongoing pandemic has meant that all our sessions this year have been delivered remotely either by zoom or by telephone and although this is not the best option for everyone it has meant that we have reached some for whom our in-person service was not accessible.

The IACs have provided initial advice to over 250 people throughout the past year in a virtual setting. Previously, IACs ran on the first Wednesday and third Monday of each month, however, this changed to every second Wednesday in the autumn of 2020. The new occurrence of the IACs allows more solicitors to volunteer their time and provides a better service for those who need help. It means there is less time between sessions, and it avoids an overload of enquiries at subsequent sessions.

We are indebted to our excellent team of dedicated volunteer solicitors and students who give up their evening to help those who otherwise would have no access to legal information or advice. Our students benefit from the varied experience and expertise of our volunteer solicitors while gaining an appreciation of issues of access to justice.

It was unfortunate that we were not able to bring the IACs back to the in-person format over the past year, but the virtual IACs continue to grow from strength-to-strength. It has been an excellent experience in innovation and utilising available technology and we are delighted to have had consistent success with the IACs. We are aiming for a return to in-person IACs at the earliest opportunity, however, with the success of the virtual IACs, remote IACs will continue for the foreseeable future as it is very beneficial for solicitors and clients who otherwise would not be able to attend in-person sessions.

The IACs were ‘Highly Commended’ at the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards 2021 for the ‘Best Contribution by a Group of Students’ award. This was an excellent achievement given the high-quality of other nominees within the category. It is wonderful to see the IACs being recognised so widely for their work.

A recent IAC client had this to say:

“I want to say a huge thank you for the meeting last night – I hadn’t expected more than one advisor, so to have 3 including a solicitor was great!

The information that I gathered was really useful and at the end of the meeting felt I had a better understanding of my position, on both fronts! I compiled an email to Tribunal last night regarding the late bundle, so hopefully that will move things along more swiftly.

Your law clinic is a great service & much appreciated. I intend to make a donation (though it may not be very much due to my circumstances!)”

ONLINE PROJECT

The Online Project is a service run by the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic in an effort to further bridge the gaps in access to justice. The Online Project acts as a one-off legal advice service for those looking for guidance with legal issues. This can be a great first point of contact for those who are unsure how to progress a legal issue, or for anyone looking for some quick one of advice on a situation. It has been especially valuable in light of the pandemic, where access to legal advice became more difficult, and will no doubt continue to be a fantastic resource now with the advent of online and virtual based services as we emerge from lockdown restrictions.

We set out initially to streamline the process of answering online enquiries for the Student Advisors in order to encourage participation and meet the possible demand as a result of lockdown restrictions. We aimed to create clearer response forms and a bank of research toolkits to support Student Advisors as much as possible during the process.

By making participation in the project less daunting, we hoped that more Student Advisors would be keen to get involved, and therefore enable us to answer more enquiries.

The amount of Student Advisors on the project increased from 15 to 45 which was an excellent response to the interest we generated, and training sessions run. We hope that the amount of participation will

continue to increase in the new academic year, with the implementation of Firm-based allocation. This will allow Student Advisors to opt into answering Online enquiries during their Firm week on, meaning better and fairer distribution of cases and possibly more engagement with the project.

We are hopeful that the creation of clearer forms and a shared research resource will aid in reducing the amount of time our Supervisors spend assisting with research.

We are happy to say that thanks to the hard work of our Student Advisors and Supervisors, the Online Project managed to answer 40 enquiries total over the period from October 2020 to May 2021. We also managed to redirect a further 18 enquiries to Initial Advice Clinics to better suit the needs of the enquirer.

We are optimistic that the changes made to the project over the year will help it run more efficiently. It is essential that those in need of advice or assistance, yet are unable to afford solicitors fees, have a point of contact to clarify their own position. By generating more student participation through making the project and its undertakings more accessible, we firmly believe that the project will be able to provide valuable, timely, and quality assistance to those who seek it.

SUCCESS STORIES

ASYLUM PROJECT CASE

In one of our Asylum Project cases the Law Clinic worked closely with a Nigerian client over a two year period to prepare a fresh claim. To progress this application the Clinic obtained an expert report, carried out intensive research and prepared very detailed witness statements and submissions. The claim was centred on the serious risk of harm to the client's disabled child upon return. The outcome was that our client and his young family were granted humanitarian protection for 5 years and can now move on with their lives. The client expressed his deep gratitude to the clinic for our help in achieving that result.

RACE DISCRIMINATION CASE

In one of our employment cases we helped a client with a very complicated race discrimination case. The client was very stressed by the situation when he came to the clinic and had been trying to resolve the matter himself for the previous 2 years. The file he presented the law clinic was very large with complaints of over 300 pages. The claim looked very messy and complex. However the advisers worked very closely with the client to help him focus on the key issues and were able to get the case into good shape. The case settled for a very good outcome following a challenging judicial mediation which the advisers supported the client through and did an excellent job in doing so. After taking a few days to digest the issues that had arisen during mediation, the client got in touch to say he was very happy with the outcome and could finally let go of the issues that had been impacting his health until that point.

REDUNDANCY CASE

The pandemic proved a challenging time for many and we were glad to be able to help someone going through a particularly difficult time. This person had been made redundant in the early stages of the pandemic. This had a significant impact on her as she was a single parent with a young child and her job was her only source of income. She had worked for the same employer for a number of years and had performed well in her role. Both she and her son had a disability which presented them with further challenges. When she lost her job she felt the redundancy process was unfair on a number of grounds and after receiving some advice from a volunteer solicitor at our Initial Advice Clinic she was taken on as a client. She was very low at that point and needed guidance on her options and support in deciding the best course of action. The students on this case were very supportive and encouraging. It was a first case for one of the students but she was passionate about this case from the outset. Together with her partner they worked hard on this case and this was rewarded with a good outcome for our client. After being instructed to lodge a claim in the employment tribunal and starting preparations for a preliminary hearing they negotiated a settlement with the client being very grateful for their help.

SSSC CASE

The clinic was approached by the mother of a young nursery worker for help with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) proceedings. After discussing the situation with the mother and daughter the Clinic agreed to help. The client was suffering from mental health issues as result of losing her job and no longer having an income. She had been in work since an early age and was suddenly faced with having to survive on benefits with various financial commitments to meet. She was facing a twelve month suspension by SSSC from a job she loved and had been excelling in, as a result of allegations about her conduct at work all of which she strenuously



denied. She was very stressed by the experience. Our students agreed to represent her at the temporary order hearing. This was one of the first hearings to be conducted by our students remotely during the pandemic and the challenges were considerable. Although our students were very well prepared it was difficult to support the client remotely and anticipate how the remote hearing would be conducted. After some difficult initial technical issues our students did an excellent job and managed to ensure she was not suspended from the SSSC register which meant she could take up a new job offer. This was an excellent outcome and our client was very grateful. Despite the challenges presented by one of our first remote hearings our students remained calm and professional throughout.

PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION

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 some 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 which is located on the outskirts of Glasgow has a capacity of 784 prisoners. The capacity of the prison is made up by offenders on remand, short term offenders (serving less than 4 years), long term offenders (serving 4 or more years), life sentence offenders and extended sentence offenders (Order of Life Long Restriction) primarily from the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority area. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, we were not able to visit the prison from the beginning of March 2020 and it is still unclear when visits will resume. Pre-pandemic two students visit the prison on a Friday and deliver a presentation followed by questions and discussion to a group of around 20 prisoners.

During the challenging times of the Coronavirus Pandemic whilst students within the Prison Project were unable to attend Low Moss Prison they have been working hard behind the scenes to develop and

progress the positive impact the project aims to deliver. 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 the details of the new legislation. As well as the new legislation the presentation has 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 we provide to the prisoners within the presentation. This was an idea which was developed to substitute for the presentation whilst the project cannot attend the prison. In future this will be used as an optional handout to consolidate information to prisoner's who are interested.

Since the pilot of the project in 2010, the Prisons Project has experienced various levels of engagement. However, in 2019 we became more engaged with the Links Centre with HMP Low Moss and the staff there which has been productive. We are continually developing useful resources in response to feedback from prisoners and staff and the students involved have found their involvement in this work very rewarding. We hope to be able to get back into the prison very soon.

COLLABORATIONS

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S RIGHTS CENTRE (SWRC)

The Scottish Women's Rights Centre is a partnership between the Law Clinic, Rape Crisis Scotland and Just Right Scotland (JRS). The SWRC provides free legal information, advice, advocacy and representation to women affected by violence and abuse. The Centre 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. In 2020/21, 5 of our volunteer student advisors supported the SWRC solicitors in providing this service with the additional support of former Law Clinic advisors who have continued to volunteer.

This academic year has seen a new way of working for our SWRC volunteers. Instead of attending the JRS offices to assist on the helplines, volunteers have worked remotely due to the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. This has involved volunteers taking part in research, drafting blogs, comms work and a variety of other tasks. The volunteers adapted brilliantly, and the project was able to continue, even through the pandemic.

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. In 2020, the SWRC answered 573 calls.

Callers are provided with initial information and advice and may be referred onto external solicitors, Women's Aid or Rape Crisis Scotland, or another appropriate service, including SWRC's own legal team and Advocacy service. The legal helpline now operates on

Annual Report 2020-2021

a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, with the advocacy support helpline operating on a Tuesday.

SWRC legal advice surgeries are provided in collaboration with a network of local violence against women services and are an opportunity for survivors to discuss their case with solicitors and get tailored legal advice. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, all surgeries are taking place remotely by telephone or video call and are open to self-identifying women located anywhere in Scotland. In 2020, the SWRC surgeries assisted with a number of experiences of gender-based violence including stalking, harassment and domestic abuse.

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.

In 2021, the SWRC introduced a new project, RISE. RISE (Rights, Information, Support and Engagement) is a project created for women selling or exchanging sex in Scotland who have experienced any form of abuse or violence and wish to know what their rights are and how to use them. SWRC's aim is to support women to make informed decisions about their situation and to help them explore the legal options available to them in a judgement-free and confidential space. The project offers access to legal surgeries, advocacy support, webinars, legal helplines and limited legal representation in civil courts.

THE ASYLUM PROJECT (TAP)

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

As a partner of the Destitute Asylum Seeker Service (DASS), TAP works with the Refugee Survival Trust, British Red Cross, Scottish Refugee Council, Safe in Scotland, and Castlemilk Community Church to provide a holistic network of support for the UK's destitute asylum seeker population.

Through the work of student advisers and under the guidance of our OISC accredited supervisor, Gillian Melville, TAP provides clients with legal representation, advice, and support on a range of immigration related issues. This primarily consists of preparing fresh asylum claims, wherein student advisers gather evidence and provide detailed research in preparation for a fresh claim. The level of work this requires is not generally covered by Legal Aid, and TAP aims to provide assistance not otherwise covered by Legal Aid provision. The majority of cases are then referred on to specialist solicitors for submission. Due to the inherent sluggishness of the UK immigration system, these cases can be lengthy and span numerous reporting periods.

Fresh claims have notoriously low success rates and the best outcome we can hope for is to get the person a right of appeal. We were pleased to learn that two of our clients have been granted a right of appeal and will have their appeal heard over the next few months. We were also pleased to learn this year that four fresh claims we helped prepare were successful at appeal, resulting in fourteen people attaining refugee status.

Annual Report 2020-2021

At the conclusion of the reporting period, from August 2020 to July 2021, TAP had 23 open cases. Of these cases, seven are fresh claims awaiting outcomes. Student advisors are actively working on a further seven, with three due to be submitted shortly. The total number of new referrals was 11. 10 cases were closed, with one closed due to no client contact. Two clients are awaiting papers to carry out an assessment.

When a person has their first asylum claim rejected, this usually results in the loss of all rights to public support. As this includes housing support, many become destitute and are forced to rely on charity to survive. The positive impact of a successful fresh claim therefore cannot be underestimated, justifying the time and effort spent on preparation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented new challenges for TAP which has adapted much in response. This year, a new training program was launched which replaced the old, one-off and in-person sessions with a pre-recorded program which allows entry to the project at any time. The format centres on several informative videos finished with a quiz to test the knowledge imparted by the videos. This resulted in a steady stream of new members joining throughout the year and prevented any breach of restrictions on social distancing.

Student advisors also presented a public legal education movie named “Snow White and the Asylum Project” at the St Andrew’s Fair Saturday. As the previously favoured forum theatre performance was not possible, the session took the format of a movie which follows the fictional character Snow White as she attends a substantive asylum interview. Aiming to highlight the difficulties facing persons entering the UK asylum system, the movie was filmed and edited over a few weekends and premiered at the Fair Saturday online festival. It received much applause both from viewers and the organisers of the festival, the latter of which described it as “truly amazing”.

An exciting new development in TAP is the launch of the immigration initial advice clinics (IACs). Launched in partnership with Teneu Legal, the immigration IACs focus on citizenship applications for European Union nationals. This area of law is expected to become very prominent following the UK’s exit from the EU, and the IACs

aim to provide access to justice to EU nationals who cannot afford legal assistance. Since launching, they have had a promising start, providing assistance to three clients so far.

The impact TAP has on the lives of the people it assists can be profound. In their feedback, one client summarised it by saying: "my fresh claim was successful, I have been granted refugee status. I would like to thank everyone involved in the Law Clinic for making it happen. I got rid of such a burden, I am very delighted that I can live like anybody else and start my education again".

Another client whose claim was also successful sent this message of appreciation: "Happy New Year to everyone at the Strathclyde Law Clinic. We are forever grateful and always remember everything you've done for us, thank you very much”

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS UNIT (CCU)

The University of Strathclyde Law Clinic works in Partnership with The Miscarriages of Justice Organisation Scotland (MOJO) to investigate potential wrongful convictions.

MOJO was established in 2001 by Paddy Joe Hill, one of six innocent men wrongfully convicted in 1975 for the Birmingham pub bombings. MOJO seeks to support those seeking to challenge wrongful convictions who are found to have a legitimate factual claim of innocence. Their work encompasses case work, aftercare, education and campaign work. The Law Clinic's collaboration involves law clinic volunteers assisting with casework. It provides students with high quality training and experience of the conduct of thorough investigation into the potential miscarriages of justice as well as an in-depth understanding of the unique legal rules within the criminal law discipline. This is done with a view to supporting applications to the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (SCCRC).

The project saw 11 new students join this year despite the limitations posed by COVID. Students normally carry out their work in MOJO's offices but this was not possible at the beginning of the first lock down

but it was not long before the staff at MOJO, Euan McIlvride, Cathy Molloy and Scott Jenkins were up and running and continuing to provide their invaluable services.

Training for our new intake was provided remotely and although this involved a lot of extra work on the part of Euan and Scott there was a high attendance rate and in some respects remote learning had its advantages in that a larger group of students could attend sessions than may have been the case had it been in person.

Students have been meeting weekly on Wednesday afternoons between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. since 20 January 2021. Shortly after that breakout sessions were introduced in addition to the Wednesday group sessions. These breakout sessions are smaller groups of 3-4 students, who join Euan or Scott to discuss appeal cases, MOJO applications and difficult areas of the law surrounding appeals.

This project not only supports the invaluable work of MOJO in investigating miscarriages of justice and preparing applications to the SCCRC but provides law students with invaluable skills and experience and gives them an insight into how wrongful convictions occur. This creates a legacy of law students with an awareness of the problems in our criminal justice system that they can take into their own practice when they eventually enter the profession.

SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES LAW CLINIC NETWORK

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.

While the Coronavirus Pandemic continues to bring new challenges for SULCN, there has been numerous developments in SULCN. Working with fellow students and academics from Glasgow Caledonian, Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier, Dundee and, Robert

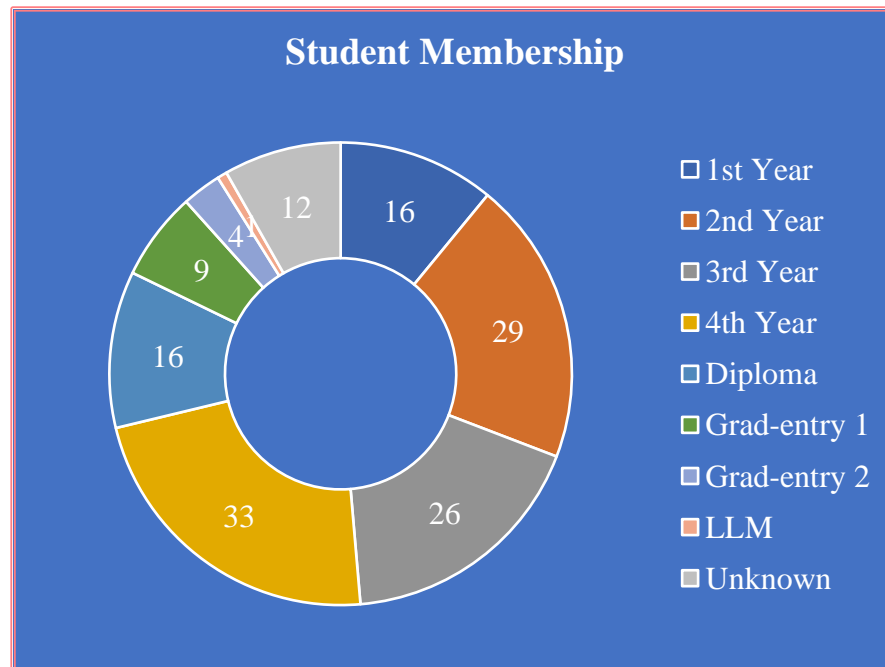
Gordon and Aberdeen Universities, SULCN has begun to plan and strategise to expand its presence in Scotland.

The student members of SULCN have established their own network within SULCN, which includes regular meetings to discuss new ideas and developing SULCN; before proposing these strategies to the academics and university Alumni members of SULCN. From this incentive, five key action points: creating a Constitution; creating a website; recruiting two students from each respective University's Law Clinics as SULCN Members/Ambassadors; and to take a more collaborative approach to the annual SULCN Conference.

MEMBERSHIP

STUDENTS

The Law Clinic operated with a total of **146** student volunteer members over the reporting period. The statistics below represent the percentage of students across each stage of their degree. These statistics were recorded prior to the recruitment of new student volunteers for each reporting period.



STAFF

The Law Clinic could not operate without our team of dedicated staff members who collaborate with our students to ensure a high quality of service provision 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; Diane Inglis; and Kathleen Bolt, Supervisor.

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 develop our activities and projects effectively.

In summer 2021, we employed **8** 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 the Scottish Women's Rights Centre, the University of Strathclyde Alumni Fund, the University of Strathclyde Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the DASS project, and Law At Work.

TRAINING

The training of our volunteer 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. During this reporting period, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we adapted our initial advisor training to be provided online, and provided additional training sessions on wellbeing and working from home (including updates to GDPR training). Training continued in January and February 2021 with training on legal research and letter writing.

Thereafter, we provided two optional Initial Adviser 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.

Upon completion, attending students were able to volunteer for our IAC, where students discuss clients' legal enquiries, and solicitors provide initial advice.

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 training delivered by both internal and external trainers. These sessions covered a wide range of legal topics including training in Employment Law, Housing Law, Advocacy and Preparation for Hearings. We are grateful to DAC Beachcroft, via our alumni John Stringer, for arranging training for our students and to Shelter, via our alumna Agata Soroka, for training on Homelessness with both of these sessions passing on invaluable knowledge to our students.

In addition, we introduced a monthly training newsletter in January 2021. This compiles many upcoming free/affordable training sessions and events from a variety of sources, which are relevant to our work. We also 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) which is an invaluable resource for our students.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

LAURA NICOL



Law Clinic work has offered the most inspiring, educational and, sometimes, stressful (but what part of law school isn't?) experience, and I am thankful that I get to be a part of the Clinic alongside my studies. The Clinic allows me to be a part of something important and it is amazing that I get to help others with my constantly developing knowledge and research skills this early on in my legal career.

I wanted to join the Clinic as early as possible as I got the sense that the longer, I was in the Clinic, the more time I would have to mature and grow and become a knowledgeable and valued student advisor. A year on, I can already see an enormous difference. I remember struggling to write my first letter of advice, panicking that I would do it wrong, and more recently, I have written two within a week with far less stress.

I have only known the clinic to be online, which, at times has been hard, but only for the same reasons every other online interaction has been hard. Otherwise, the Clinic has coped incredibly well, advisors have become masters of Zoom, student-student support has been maintained, and at no point have I felt isolated from the Clinic. Being back on campus this semester, the first people I met up with were fellow CLLB students who I otherwise wouldn't have known without the Clinic.

I am more confident, my people skills have developed massively, and I am enjoying the person I am becoming through being part of the Law Clinic. I look forward to seeing just how much the clinic has taught me by the end of my academic career at Strathclyde.

JUDITH RASKIN

I wanted to join the Law Clinic after hearing the amazing things that it was achieving for people seeking access to justice. The initial advice training taught us how to conduct interviews and draft documents that would be necessary for any case we worked on; it was extremely beneficial and the advisors who ran it were very helpful. In November 2020, I was assigned an employment case that dealt with race discrimination, unfair dismissal, and unlawful deduction of wages. When I was first made aware of the details of the case, I was overwhelmed because of its content and the thought of representing an actual client at a Tribunal was daunting yet exciting! Every meeting with our client, I was more and more comfortable discussing the case; I now know that this will help me during my traineeship. In September, my co-advisor, Carmen, and I represented our client at a 5-day Tribunal Hearing which was exhilarating! Carmen led the questioning whilst I oversaw taking notes and finding the relevant documentation for our questions and cross-examination. Carmen is an experienced advisor, and she was most helpful throughout the entire process; she broke everything down for me so that I understood fully the ins and outs of the law surrounding the case. The Judge that presided over our case pointed out where our arguments were strong and where they were not. We are now awaiting judgment and we really hope that it is in our client's favour. The Hearing was all conducted online which was a surreal experience. I never thought I would be representing my first ever client from my desk in my bedroom! Joining the Law Clinic has been one of the best decisions I ever made, and I feel very privileged to be a part of it.



CLINICAL

CLINICAL LLB (“CLLB”) OVERVIEW

Though the Strathclyde Law Clinic commenced in 2003, it was in 2011 that the Law Clinic and Law School began students with the opportunity to undertake ‘Clinical’ Law degrees rather than the regular LLB programmes. The Clinical degrees require students to undertake a rigorous set of compulsory tasks and training activities in addition to their regular work in the Law School and the Law Clinic. For the first time ever, this year the CLLB was delivered entirely online, but the same breadth of work was successfully carried out by our wonderful students and staff: Tasks included attending ‘case surgeries’ (where students benefit from sharing their experiences with their case supervisors, to improve how the students manage difficult case situations that arise in the Clinic); ‘continuing professional development’ (where students attend training in a huge range of areas including immigration, stress management, 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’ (where students reflect on their journey through Law School and the Law Clinic, and how their ethical and practical responses to legal representation have changed during that time). The Clinical LLB programme culminates in a ‘portfolio’ of work, representing all of the reflective diaries and a selection of the most outstanding cases in each student’s Clinic work.

Despite the enormous uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 we were joined by 18 new students on the Clinical LLB.

Annual Report 2020-2021

Unusually, this included a large proportion of ‘graduate entry’ students (i.e., those with previous degrees) comprising two third of the CLLB intake. 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 also graduated 16 CLLB students, including a large proportion of these being First Class Honours results.

In between these incoming and graduating classes, we continued to have a cohort of approximately 50 students enrolled in the Clinical versions of the Scottish Undergraduate LLB, the Scottish and English Dual Qualifying LLB, and the Graduate Entrant LLB programmes. The combination of these degrees, and the opportunity for Clinical LLB students to interact with others across a range of LLB degrees (even if only online this year), continues to enhance their education and to provide the community with invaluable access to legal services and justice even in times of pandemic.

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 the difficulties arising from social distancing, online learning, remote hearings, internet connection problems and zoom burnout! 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 amazed by, and very proud of, our Clinical students’ performance.

MAINTAINING A VOLUNTARY CLINIC

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 to access Legal Aid.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW

HANAN EL-ATRASH



I decided to undertake my Diploma in Professional Legal Practice at the University of Strathclyde in 2016 because of the Law Clinic. I had heard amazing things about it and the work that was being done, and I knew that I wanted to get involved. I chose to undertake my Diploma part-time over two years

so that I could have more time to dedicate towards being part of the Law Clinic, volunteering with the Scottish Refugee Council and working at a national law centre in Glasgow. As soon as I became aware of the Immigration Unit – now known as ‘the Asylum Project’ – I applied to be part of it. I held the post of Immigration Unit Coordinator throughout my time at the Law Clinic between 2016 and 2018. I worked closely with Gillian Melville, the OISC qualified solicitor, who taught me so many invaluable skills, as well as the student volunteers, who brought their passion for a fairer immigration system in the UK to all aspects of the Unit’s work. I enjoyed every moment of it, and I am so proud of the work that the Clinic has done to help asylum seekers in Scotland.

During my time with the Immigration Unit, we worked closely with partners in the Destitute Asylum Seeker Service (‘DASS’) to provide holistic support to appeal rights exhausted asylum seekers in Scotland as one of our primary focuses. Other areas of work included developing a series of Public Legal Education sessions that were delivered to asylum seeker and refugee communities around Glasgow and running public events for the Refugee Festival to raise awareness of the UK Government’s hostile environment policy and the issues that affect appeal rights exhausted asylum seekers. The skills and experience that I gained through these various types of work remain with me and have been invaluable to my career since I completed the Diploma.

Upon completing the Diploma, my time at the Law Clinic sadly came to an end. However, through the invaluable work of the Immigration Unit and its collaborative work with partner organisations across the sector, I was able to remain part of the project, albeit not directly within the Clinic, as a destitution adviser with DASS at the Scottish Refugee Council. The skills I learned at the Clinic stood me in good stead for the work that I went on to do as a Destitution Advisor.

I then went on to work at JustRight Scotland as a legal caseworker in the Scottish Women's Rights Centre ('SWRC') in 2019. The SWRC is a collaboration between JustRight Scotland, Rape Crisis Scotland & the Law Clinic that aims to assist women in Scotland who have been affected by gender-based violence. This meant that I was privileged to, again, remain part of a collaboration with the Law Clinic. In the midst of the pandemic in 2020, I commenced my traineeship with JustRight Scotland within the Scottish Women's Rights Centre. I am enjoying working in such a dynamic and varied traineeship which has improving access to justice as one of its central aims.

I have found that my path into the legal profession has been greatly influenced by the Law Clinic and its values. I identify with the individuals who have complex circumstances that mean legal solutions are not always easily accessible or attainable. I find fulfilment in working with individuals in these circumstances to assist them to better understand their rights and to help them to gain access to justice. I believe that practical experience is an asset in preparing law students to take the next steps in their careers. My time at the Law Clinic gave me so many skills, opportunities and experiences that have helped me to reach the position that I am in now. It is an unparalleled experience that benefits students, clients, the profession, and the wider community.

JACOB HAY



I remember being really delighted to join in the Clinic in my first year at Strathclyde in 2012. The Clinic had played a major part in my decision to study at Strathclyde and it definitely played a major role in the 6 years I was a member.

I'm sure that it wasn't entirely the

drinks at the end of the initial training that made me run for election to the committee, but after a year of being an elected member I then spent time as the Communications Officer, Deputy Student Director and subsequently co-Student Director together with Fergus Lawrie.

All of these roles, and the day-to-day case work in the Clinic, were a brilliant way of building up legal and non-legal skills while giving something back to the community.

I can still remember my first (trembling) appearance at Glasgow Sheriff Court when I was in second year. I am not sure if it was then that I decided I wanted to be a litigation lawyer but it can't have put me off completely as, after leaving Strathclyde, I trained at Pinsent Masons and now practise in the firm's litigation team. While I deal with different types of disputes now, it is amazing how many of the core skills the Clinic teaches remain so relevant. I am also very lucky still to have a lot of good friends from my time in the Clinic and would really encourage all current members to make the most of the chance to make contacts at all different stages of their university career.

It is always brilliant to see the Clinic continue to do so well. Coronavirus has, I am sure, brought lots of logistical challenges, but the Clinic seems to have adapted seamlessly and at a time when I am sure clients will be even more grateful than normal for your help.

THANKS

We are extremely grateful to a variety of people who have given their help and supported us during this period, which is crucial to us as a voluntary organisation.

We would like to thank the Alumni Fund and our regular monthly donors for their continued financial support. The Alumni fund allowed us to develop resources for our website by employing students over the summer on a part time basis to research and write relevant legal information made available on our website.

In spring 2020 we received the very welcome news that the Law School was very fortunate to receive funds from the Donald J Ferguson legacy and we are very grateful to the Law School for allocating this legacy in it's entirety to the work of the Law Clinic. This will be put to great use at the Law Clinic in increasing access to justice through the Donald J Ferguson post of supervising solicitor for a period of 3 years.

We are also very grateful to those who take time out of their busy schedules to assist with our training in particular John Stringer and Jamie Varney from DAC Beachcroft, Agata Soroka and various other staff members from Shelter, Professor Charles Hennessy for training on legal research skills as well as the Legal Services Agency who

make available their own training for Law Clinic members at reduced rates.

We could not run our Initial Advice Clinics without the dedicated support of many solicitors from Glasgow and the surrounding areas who give up their valuable time to come along and provide free advice to our enquirers.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Alasdair Stewart for the provision of, and continuing assistance with, our Case Management System.

We would like to thank the Supervisory Committee for giving up their time and the benefit of their experience and to our Head of School Professor Claire McDiarmid for her strong support and encouragement of the Clinic.

We are also very grateful to Gemma Harley, who is on placement with the Law Clinic via project Search. She helps with Law Clinic administration and has been a welcome addition to our team.

Thanks, are also owed to the many Law School academics and support staff who have provided advice, help with interviews or administrative help to the Law Clinic.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Professor Alan Paterson (Chair)	Law School
Professor Claire McDiarmid (Head)	Law School
Kate Laverty	Law Clinic Director
Sheriff Ian Miller	Glasgow Sheriff Court
Sheriff Patricia Pryce	Glasgow Sheriff Court
Judge Shona Simon	President of Employment Tribunals (Scotland)
Richard Farquhar	Solicitor
Dr Rose Mary Harley	University Graduate Association
Gwyneth James	Glasgow Central Citizens Advice Bureau
Professor Donald Nicolson	Law School, University of Essex
Heather Maclean	Solicitor
Alasdair Stewart	Age UK

APPENDIX 2: THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Staff Membership:

Director	Kate Lavery
Supervisor	Gillian Melville
Supervisor	Kathleen Bolt
Administrator	Diane Inglis

The Student Membership:

Until May 2021

Student Directors	Karen Yuill	Jordan Hamlett
Deputy Student Director	Rebecca Dyer	
Firm A Coordinator	Nicola Maguire	
Firm B Coordinator	Carly Morrison	
Firm C Coordinator	Beth Muirhead	
Firm D Coordinator	Carmen Rowat	

Firm E Coordinator	Lauryn Dawber	
Firm F Coordinator	Daniel Leyden	
IAC Coordinators	Anthony Pace	Cara Hope
SWRC Coordinator	Erin Connor	
The Asylum Project Coordinator	Murray Kemp	
Criminal Convictions Unit Manager	Becky Kane	
Online Project Manager	Francesca Pozzo	Laura Hart
Prisons Project Manager	Emelia Conner	Ruari Peacock
Communications Officer	Mary Decolongon	
Funding Officer	Darya Burton	
Training Officer	Mhairi Strachan	Katie Gardner
	Sophie Rook	
Elected Members	Ronan Leslie	Caitlin McAllister
	Jonathan McNamara	Rosie McIntosh

	Youssef Abdul Azeez	Ashlie Henderson
	Adriana Cavallaro	Karen Lee-Johnston
	Peter Akehurst	Laura Nicol

From June 2021

Student Directors	Rebecca Dyer	Jordan Hamlett
Firm A Coordinator	Nicola Maguire	
Firm B Coordinator	Carly Morrison	
Firm C Coordinator	Martin Gallacher	
Firm D Coordinator	Carmen Rowat	
Firm E Coordinator	Daniel Leyden	
IAC Coordinators	Cara Hope	Alana Sommerville
SWRC Coordinator	Erin Connor	
The Asylum Project Coordinator	Francesca Pozzo (Casework)	Sarah Watson (Public Legal Education)
The Asylum Project Deputy Coordinator	Ronan Leslie	

Criminal Convictions Unit Manager	Lauren McGovern	
Online Project Manager	Laura Hart	
Prisons Project Manager	Gregor Henderson	
Communications Officer	Laura Nicol	
Funding Officer	TBC	
Training Officer	Mhairi Strachan	Sophie Rook
Elected Members	Fiona Rennie	Natalie Marshall
	Paige Alexander	Melissa McKillen
	Karen Lee-Johnston	Alasdair Flett
	Sasha Akavicius	Tara Waldman
	Arūn Smith	