



OPEN JUSTICE CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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OVERVIEW

HUGH MCFAUL AND FRANCINE RYAN

As the Open Justice Centre approaches its third anniversary, our 2019 Annual Report provides an opportunity to review the progress of the Centre since its inception in 2016. The Centre's development has benefitted greatly from the support of the Faculty of Business and Law, the Vice Chancellor's Executive and from the generosity of our external partners who have provided invaluable advice, guidance and encouragement.

Open Justice sits within the Open University (OU) Law School. With over 6,000 students, the OU Law School is the largest provider of open access undergraduate legal education in Europe. We are privileged to work with a highly diverse student body: 23% of our students have a declared disability, and 18% of our learners self-identify as BAME. We have an open access policy: 39% of our students have prior qualifications equivalent to less than 2 A-levels, and a small proportion of our students are based in prison.

The Open Justice Centre (the Centre) exists to provide a bridge between the OU Law School and the community, and between students and the legal profession. We seek to challenge our students to apply their legal knowledge and skills in a way that furthers the OU's social justice mission by providing free legal advice, education and guidance to the public. We have made imaginative use of education technologies to pioneer the use of experiential learning in open-access distance legal education and have developed a series of innovative pro bono projects in co-operation with community partners in prisons, schools, legal charities and courts across the UK.

This report offers a summary of these pro bono and public engagement activities over the past 12 months and outlines our awards and research outputs. However, the best illustration of the success of the Centre is the commitment and engagement of our students, many of whom have described their experience in participating in the work of the Centre as being truly transformative.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report.



Hugh McFaul
Director



Francine Ryan
Director



I have always thought that by volunteering I could make a difference to someone else's life, but I never thought that volunteering would give my life more meaning. I have become more confident in different aspects of my life and have developed personal and professional skills. The value of ... the Open Justice activities has been ... beyond my expectation.

2019 Open Justice Student



OPEN JUSTICE CENTRE ACTIVITIES AND 2018/2019 UPDATES

Open Justice Law Clinic

The Open Justice Law Clinic, provides free legal advice to the public using an innovative case management system. The clinic is a result of a successful collaboration between students, Associate Lecturers, supervising solicitors and academics which has created a unique online and student led service.

The Clinic is award winning. It received the Best Legal Tech Award in May at the Attorney General Student Pro Bono awards and was also highly commended in the 'Best New Pro Bono Project' category at the Attorney General's Pro Bono Awards in December 2018.

The Clinic provides advice only on a range of areas of law including, employment, civil, consumer and small claims. Since July 2018, we have provided letters of advice on 22 cases, and signposted 138 cases. The Clinic is open throughout the year. We have between 10 to 40 students working in the Clinic dependent on the time of year. We offer appointments to clients at their convenience and most of our interviews take place in the evening or at weekends.



I was inordinately grateful for some help and guidance and had not found any other body who was willing nor able to give me advice. I had no idea of the questions to ask nor where to turn. I emailed 25 bodies from the 'law works' website and you were the only ones who were willing to look at my case. I'm really grateful. I feel that you looked at my case extremely professionally, in depth and with knowledge. Thank you!

Client feedback



Prison PLE projects

The prison projects are one strand of public legal education offered as a pro bono opportunity for W360 'Justice in action' students and other OU law students studying Level 3 modules.

Five prison projects took place between February and May 2019 across England and Wales. Over 30 law students took part supported by five law lecturers. All the projects involve the students researching general legal topics relevant to prisoners, followed by presentations either in person or over prison radio.



Tutor Paul Dale (right) and students at HMP Dovegate

HMP Altcourse prison radio project

This project was run over three sessions. The law students devised a long list of legal topics to research after speaking with prisoners. The final subjects chosen for research included release on licence, employment and housing issues. The students each delivered a 15-minute presentation on prison radio, followed by Q and A. Preparation for the presentations included a warm-up session on prison radio in a 'Desert Island Discs' format.

Four prison projects in partnership with St Giles Trust

These projects took place at: HMP Cardiff, HMP Dovegate, HMP Foston Hall and HMP High Down.

Each project consisted of four Law and Society seminars. The sessions were attended by prisoner peer advisers trained by St Giles Trust. They were given Student Learning Logs to complete before and after the seminars and materials that had been researched by the law students to read. A menu of general legal topics relevant to their work in supporting other prisoners was given to the peer advisers to choose from, but they were also encouraged to suggest topics for research.

Subjects covered included family visiting rights; restraining orders; social media, the internet and the law; and sentences of imprisonment for public protection. In the final session, the peer advisers were given advice and guidance about next steps in study by the OU's 'Students in Secure Environments' Team. The peer advisers were also given an OU Law School 'Certificate of Participation'.



2018 students and prison staff at HMP Altcourse



2018 students and staff from OU & Middlesex University at the Streetlaw Orientation Weekend

Streetlaw in Schools

We built on the success of the 2017-18 programme where 60 students delivered one-day interactive legal workshops in 20 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and in 2018-2019 delivered workshops in Hull, Warrington, Stirling, Newcastle and Kinghussie.

Topics included Social Media and the Law, Human Rights, Knife Crime, Joint Enterprise, Consent, Brexit and Routes into the Legal Profession.

We have improved the training for students on this project with a view to supporting them delivering better quality workshops. Lidia Dancu, the Open Justice Ambassador and winner of the 2018 Open Justice Award, worked to supervise and support some of the student groups and we teamed up with the University of Middlesex to run a three-day face to face training event facilitated by Streetlaw pioneer, Professor Richard Roe from Georgetown University.



The sessions were meticulously prepared and worked brilliantly with our students. The activities and resources were really engaging and a number of members of staff approached me afterwards to say that the students had talked in glowing terms about the session. Sarah, Richard and Sumayyah were all utterly professional and their delivery was really polished. It is a tough gig keeping 40 teenagers interested and engaged for four hours in a confined space and they managed it in style!

**Ben Dugdale, Assistant Head,
Culcheth High School Warrington.**



Legal education that changes the world

We create innovative [pro bono opportunities for students](#) to gain unparalleled access to criminal appeal cases and provide vital assistance to clients who can't fund legal representation and might otherwise be denied access to justice.

Our students work on real cases under the guidance of expert lawyers. They get access to the most rewarding and interesting pro bono casework imaginable. Our clients get free help and the benefit of the most enquiring minds, emergent legal talent and knowledge, supported by a permanent caseworker team recruited from the best and brightest students and graduates on our programme.



Online Public Legal Education

We developed our online PLE options and are delighted to be working with Young Citizens, a national legal education charity, to review and develop their SmartLaw resources which support the teaching of legal issues in schools.



We have also developed a project on employment rights for non-unionised workers in collaboration with Inverclyde Advice Centre. In addition to producing a pamphlet which contained local sources of support for people who have legal issues, students produced a fact sheet on an issue related to employment law.

The third online PLE project supported the work of the Open Justice Law Clinic by providing information to support litigants representing themselves in employment tribunals.

The work was disseminated via the Open University Law School's website, via Twitter and by students.

The outcomes from these projects were presented on our website as part of 'open-justice week'.

<http://law-school.open.ac.uk/open-justice/open-justice-week>

Freedom Law Clinic

Freedom Law Clinic is a not-for-profit company providing pro bono research and advice on appeals for people who have been convicted of very serious criminal offences but who are maintaining their innocence. Law students from eight UK law schools collaborate using the online platform Slack, to research grounds for criminal appeals. OU students have been appointed as case workers to mentor new students from other Higher Education Institutions. Our students have valued the rare opportunity to engage in pro bono criminal work.

Freedom Law Clinic was the most popular option amongst our October 2019 student cohort with 33 students listing it as their first choice. More information on the Freedom Law Clinic is available here:

<http://freedomlawclinic.org/>

Feedback we received from students concerning their experiences was positive. The Freedom Law Clinic were also complimentary of the work undertaken by Open University students. It is envisaged that some OU students will go on to consider applying to become case workers at the Clinic, which is external to the contribution undertaken as part of their work on W360.



The whole process of working with FLC felt like a professional collaboration rather than an academic exercise so this was a great motivator and certainly helped me to feel like I was contributing to a case and a client, rather than being treated as a student helper.



Mediation

Our e-Mediation Project transfers traditional mediation training to an online environment. Utilising the existing professional skills of AL team members, we have succeeded in training 15 students using simulated mediations in preparation for real client work.

Our two trained mediator solicitors wrote and delivered three training sessions. It had been the team's intention to have our students conduct 'real' mediations and contact was made with several institutions to develop this. However, many institutions and organisations already provide mediation clinic training to their students. As the students became aware that mediation is not suitable for all problems, they felt that the simulated mediation final session was a "safe environment" for them to practise their mediation skills. The simulated mediations took place in March 2019.

The feedback has been very positive and the group expressed a desire to keep mediating and developing. Some of the group wanted to return to next year's presentation and be the clients in the role play scenarios which were written to help future students train in mediation. There was 100% engagement in these final mediation sessions.



Allison Wolfreys
Mediation Project
Leader



Bryony Gilbert
Mediation Project
Leader

Digital Justice and technology



David Byrne
Digital Justice
Consultant

The team is committed to embedding our pedagogic practice across disciplines.

Our Digital Justice project was introduced in 2018-19 and involves collaboration with the OU's computing and learning technology departments. Our students are guided by a computing expert to develop publicly available smart phone apps to disseminate legal information and guidance.

Students have explored the challenges of exploiting technology to provide legal help, acquire technical and project management skills and design and build an app that enables self-help in an area of employment law.

We are delighted with the success of this project. We are in the process of conducting an evaluation, which includes a number of external organisations reviewing the smart phone app to comment on its usability for their clients. We will use the findings from the evaluation to develop the next iteration of the project and going forward we want to involve users from the start.

Developing student professionalism

Providing opportunities to participate in pro bono activities is a means by which we assimilate our students into professional legal culture, so we have prioritised the development of a professional partnership relationship with our students. The execution of each project relies on students taking ownership of their project, in close collaboration with ALs and the core team. We provide a set of clear aims in project handbooks which outline professional standards, training, safeguarding and levels of supervision and support expected. This includes fostering online skills to support the development of a culture of collaboration amongst dispersed teams.

Our partnership with students is manifested by their acting as project mentors. Students who have experience of pro bono activity brief new students and play a mentoring and/or leadership role. We appoint a Student Open Justice Ambassador from the previous cohort to take a leadership role on projects and to represent the team externally. Our current Student Ambassador represented the team at the Scottish Parliament and two international conferences. We have student representation on our Advisory Board. By encouraging students to lead and support others, we are equipping them with key employability skills.

Engaging national and local partners

A key plank in our success has been our creative engagement with national partners to provide pro bono projects for students in their own communities.

St Giles Trust

We have developed a strong partnership with the St Giles Trust, a national charity with award-winning prison and ex-offender projects, to develop OU student-led prison-based projects. We have run projects with over 70 students with serving prisoners in nine prisons across England and Wales. Projects consist of between three and six half-day visits over a three-month period and have included legal research and guidance projects in collaboration with prison-based peer advisors, and an innovative prison radio project. Students taking part in Open Justice projects are encouraged to reflect on their experiences on the Open Justice Blog, which provides a public forum to raise the profile of our project in and beyond the OU. Blog posts on the prison projects illustrate the impact of these opportunities on our students:



I didn't anticipate, the effect that this journey that I was about to embark upon would have upon my life as both a law student and a person. My fellow students, The Open University tutor, the inmates who we worked with and the staff at the prison, made this experience one that I will never forget, and the experience is a must for any law student.

Student





The Open Justice students have given our Peer Advisors in the prisons a real opportunity to develop, learn and become more professional but more than anything they have provided a forum where students and prisoners can meet as equals, learn from each other and discuss a whole range of relevant issues. The sessions I have observed have been the liveliest and most stimulating I have ever witnessed inside a prison.



St Giles

The ability of the team to work collaboratively with a wide range of external partners has had a direct benefit on students' learning, especially in relation to developing employability skills and raising aspirations. Our collaborative Immigration Advice project exposed students to working in a demanding and underfunded legal field. Following online training by Refugee Action, students have provided immigration information and have supported the provision of advice under the supervision of Lambeth Law Centre. One student commented that:



This project is a fantastic opportunity to work with a community law organisation that does really important work. It's been incredible to help and see the difference it makes to lives and the impact immigration law can have. I have learnt so much and working here has confirmed my ambition to practice as a solicitor.



Our partnership work with other national organisations has also had a direct employability benefit for students, in addition to providing meaningful legal services for the public. We have developed relationships with Citizens Advice (CA) and the Personal Support Unit (PSU) to create longer term advice and guidance roles for our students in their local communities. This has included CA placements in Milton Keynes, Derbyshire, Bristol, North Wales and Hull in both advisory and witness-supporting roles. PSU projects are court based and involve our students giving one-to-one support to litigants in person at various English courts.



What have I gained from this experience as a law student?

The concept of supporting clients through legal proceedings has never seemed less intimidating than now. The fascinating experience of seeing how judges interact with counsel in hearings cannot be substituted by reading about it in a textbook.



Student

Personal Support Unit

The Personal Support Unit provides support for litigants in person, who are attending court without legal representation. We are now in our second year of this partnership and are delighted that our students are continuing to make a positive contribution to the work of this important charity. Approximately 16 students have volunteered at sites across England including London (5), Manchester (1), Exeter (1), Liverpool (2), Chelmsford (1) Birmingham (3), Bristol (2) and Sheffield (1).

Our partnership with PSU now includes supporting them in the development of a series of podcasts on legal issues relevant to PSU volunteers starting with a planned pilot series on domestic abuse that will be finishing production by the end of 2019.

Mentoring scheme – UK Government Legal Service

2018/2019 also included the second iteration of the Open Justice professional mentoring project. As a result of close collaboration with the OU Careers and Employer Engagement team, we have succeeded in developing a prestigious link with the UK Government Legal Service who provide practising Government lawyers to mentor 10 competitively selected students over nine months. Sustained contact with UK Civil Service lawyers is an invaluable tool in raising our students' career aspirations.

advice UK

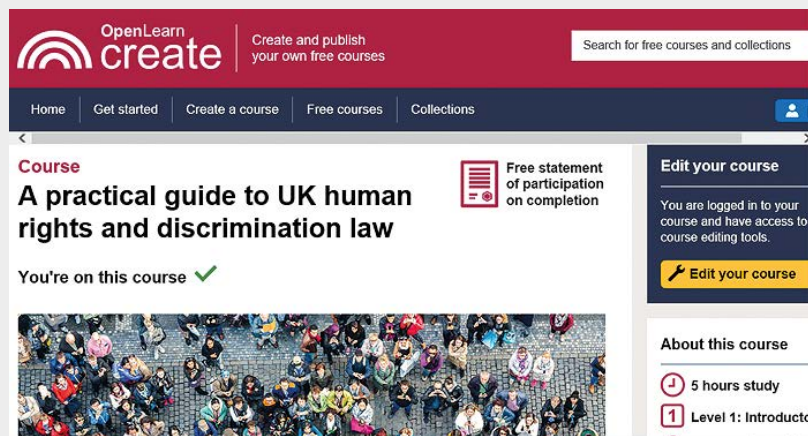
Advice UK

We have developed an online learning module in discrimination and human rights law training for the free advice sector.

This followed a five-month collaborative project in 2018 with AdviceUK, the UK's largest network of independent social welfare advice organisations, which was funded by a £67,000 grant from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

Hugh McFaul and Francine Ryan worked closely with Chilli Reid, Executive Director, and colleagues at AdviceUK on the 'Improving lives through online learning for the advice sector: Discrimination and Human Rights' project.

The course is available via this link: www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/view.php?id=3300. We will be promoting this module further to maximise the amount of learners who are able to access this material.



The screenshot shows the OpenLearn Create interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for Home, Get started, Create a course, Free courses, and Collections. The main content area displays the course title 'A practical guide to UK human rights and discrimination law' with a 'Free statement of participation on completion' badge. Below the title, it indicates 'You're on this course' with a green checkmark. A large image of a diverse group of people is shown. On the right side, there is a sidebar with 'Edit your course' options, including a button to 'Edit your course' and information about the course, such as '5 hours study' and 'Level 1: Introductory'.



Citizens Advice

Our students are continuing to work with Citizens Advice and we have discussed increasing the number of students with representatives of the national organisation.

This has led to the introduction of a new opportunity in the form of the CA Witness Support Service. As of June 2019, three students have been accepted to volunteer as part of the service and we are in talks with CA and the OU Careers and Employer Engagement team to ensure that we are working to give a consistent message to students and enable them to volunteer for CA in the most effective way.



United Nations

The Law School's Open Justice Centre has joined forces with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to help deliver its Education for Justice (E4J) initiative.

E4J aims to facilitate and promote university-level teaching on issues related to UNODC's mandate areas including anti-corruption, organised crime, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, counter-terrorism, cybercrime, crime prevention and criminal justice, firearms, as well as on integrity and ethics.

The Open Justice Centre team has been working closely with UNODC to develop an online resource to support the global roll-out of the initiative. It is hoped the first stage of the project will be completed by December 2019.



Hugh McFaul with colleagues from UNODC at a production meeting in April 2019

LEARNING AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Video and YouTube resources

The Open Justice Centre is expanding its presence on the Law School's YouTube channel. 'Open University Law School on YouTube'. We have commissioned a short introductory film due to premier in Autumn 2019 which will be used in digital and face to face engagement activities and raise the profile of the Centre.

OU and BBC Collaborations

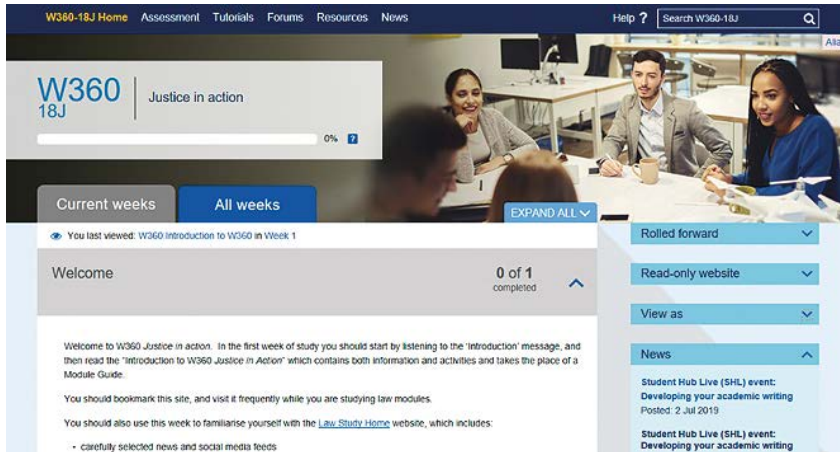
Hugh McFaul and Francine Ryan have been appointed as Academic Advisors to The Detectives; a 3 part BBC2 documentary on following Greater Manchester Police tackle complex and organised crime. This is due to be broadcast early in 2020 and is an excellent opportunity to raise the public profile of the OU Law School and the Open Justice Centre.

Hugh was advisor for the previous series which reached millions of viewers who were invited to explore the legal issues raised in the series on OpenLearn, the OU's public platform.

W360: Justice in action 2018/2019

The screenshot shows the OpenLearn website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the OpenLearn logo, a search bar, and a '50 YEARS' anniversary badge. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'Home', 'Free courses', 'Subjects', 'For Study', 'For Life', and 'TV & Radio'. The 'TV & Radio' tab is selected. The main content area features a promotional banner for 'The Detectives: Murder on the Streets'. The banner includes a photograph of three people (two women and one man) standing in a city street. To the right of the photograph, the text reads: 'The Detectives: Murder on the Streets', 'This four-part series follows Manchester's murder detectives as they crack complex cases in real time.', 'BBC TWO', and 'BBC Two on Wednesday 11th October 2017 at 9:00PM'.

W360: JUSTICE IN ACTION 2018/2019



W360 was presented for the second time to an increased cohort of 125 students in 2018/2019 and remains the newest of the three optional 30 credit law modules at level 6. It introduces law students to academic debate on three areas:

1. Social Justice
2. Professional Identity
3. Legal Ethics

This is followed by a period of ten weeks of engagement in Open Justice Activities from February to April. Students select one of eight practical projects:

- Open Justice Online Advice Clinic
- School Streetlaw
- Prison Engagement
- Citizens Advice Volunteer
- Personal Support Unit Volunteer
- Online Mediation Project
- Online Public Legal Education
- Online Freedom Law Clinic (Criminal Appeals)

All students are expected to take part in at least one project. All students were given their first-choice project. Students were also offered the opportunity to take part in extracurricular (additional) projects during the module. These included the following:

- OJ Online Clinic
- School Streetlaw
- Citizens Advice Volunteer
- Citizens Advice Witness Service Volunteer
- Prison Projects
- Digital Justice project – designing smart phone apps to disseminate legal information.

As mentioned previously ten students were placed with five mentors from the Government Legal Service. Places were allocated on a competitive basis and the project was heavily oversubscribed.

The Open Justice Student Award winners were announced in June recognising outstanding contributions to the Open Justice projects. More information on the winners is available here.

The Open Justice Centre received a University Teaching Award in March 2019 in the category of Excellence in Employability.

We were also nominated by the University for national Advance HE Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence.



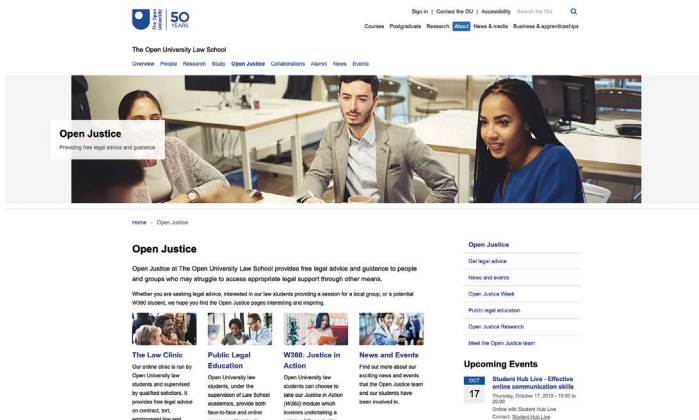
Devendra Kodwani, Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Law, celebrating the exceptional achievements of students and alumni from the OU Business and Law Schools

Developments for 2019/2020

In light of student feedback we have made some structural adjustments for next academic year.:

- Increased the level of teaching on reflective writing to support students in preparing for their EMA
- Developed the materials on social justice
- Facilitated changes to allow students to start their practical projects earlier in the presentation.

In addition the schools Streetlaw project will be run as partnership project with the OU Student Law Society, which will enable a wider proportion of OU law students to get involved. A training event will take place in October 2019 run in collaboration with Middlesex and Georgetown Universities.



The Open Justice Centre website is a source of updated information about our activities, public access to the online law clinic, knowledge exchange, events and news.

Between July 1st, 2018 and June 30th, 2019 there have been 3,770 unique visitors to the website (accessing multiple pages in 5,292 separate sessions).

44.4% of users typed our address directly or bookmarked it to find us. 40.8% used a search engine. 3.8% came from social networks and 1.3% accessed us through other websites.

The site was accessed by users in five geographic locations, the UK (88%), Unites States (3%), Germany (0.6%), India (0.4%) and Canada (0.3%)

The site was accessed by means of a variety of devices, 68% being 'unspecified' (most likely through a PC or Mac), 14% with an Apple iPhone, 6% with an Apple iPad and 12% with a Samsung Galaxy.

Most popular pages 2018/2019

Total visits	5,292
open justice the open university law school	3490
get legal advice the open university law school	1489
open justice law clinic - online form the open university law school	518
open justice week the open university law school	483
meet the open justice team the open university law school	465
public legal education the open university law school	313
news and events the open university law school	201
open justice week 2019 the open university law school	157
open justice research the open university law school	142
frequently asked questions the open university law school	136
becoming a client the open university law school	93
open justice week 2018 the open university law school	11
misc (page not found etc)	11

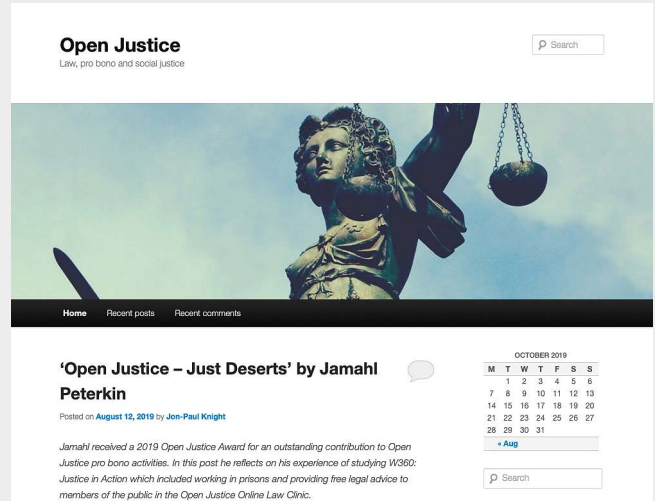
The Open Justice Blog

www.open.ac.uk/blogs/openjustice

The Open Justice Blog is where students, alumni, team members, wider OU staff in associated areas of the University (and anyone that wishes to apply) can publish writing that is accessible to the public.

We published 10 blog pieces from August 2018 to June 2019.

During 2019/2020 we hope to have more blog posts from students. To help with this we have made one of the assignments for the October 2018 'Justice in action' module a reflective piece in the form of a blog. A proportion of these will be published on the blog throughout the remaining months of 2019.



Twitter account report

Between July 2018 and June 2019, we gained 240 new followers.



This year we concentrated our efforts more fully on promoting our events, award wins, workshops and blog posts than we had the previous year as our activities and scope expanded.

'World Day of Social Justice' provided us with some popular tweets by way of an 'awareness campaign' that involved coordinating with the central media team and tweeting all day via the main OU account. This day is going to be managed more strategically in 2019/2020.

The busiest period of the year traffic-wise has been between February and June when we have had 881 visits and 90,281 'impressions' (the number of times a tweet showed up in somebody's timeline).

Top media Tweet earned 1,093 impressions

Really productive meeting about Open Justice with our colleagues at the Belfast office today. pic.twitter.com/GUQNJuk15C



2 10

Top Tweet earned 6,649 impressions

Francine Ryan from The Open Justice centre and current student Sarah Couling at the Houses of Parliament today. Absolutely thrilled that we are winners of the LawWorks Best LegalTech Contribution award [#OU_OpenJustice](https://twitter.com/OU_OpenJustice) [#wedoprobono](https://twitter.com/wedoprobono) [#studentawards2019](https://twitter.com/studentawards2019) [#LegalTech](https://twitter.com/LegalTech) pic.twitter.com/HvQSt68jtc



19 31

AWARDS WON IN 2018/2019

Our concern for developing professionally focused experiential learning led to an Open University Teaching Award for Excellence in Employability in 2019. The Pro Vice Chancellor for Students described our work as “an inspiring project which demonstrated an exciting set of initiatives.” We are the only team to be nominated from The Open University for a CATE award and were the only teaching team to be given specific mention in the 2018 OU Annual Report. Our success has also received national recognition by a commendation in the 2018 Routledge Legal Education Technology Prize.

OU teaching award promotional video link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3bDV_08QN8&feature=youtu.be



Get legal advice



The Open Justice Law Clinic is a free online legal advice clinic run by The Open University Law School. The clinic is led by law students under the supervision of qualified solicitors.



OUTA 2019 Winners – Open Justice Team

LawWorks awards

In May 2019 the Open Justice Centre's Law Clinic won the Best Legal Tech Contribution in the Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards. The clinic beat a strong field to take the category title at the Houses of Parliament.

The awards were hosted by High Court Judge, Sir Robin Knowles CBE. The awards were presented by the Attorney General, the Rt. Hon Geoffrey Cox MP QC and the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP.



Francine Ryan, Lecturer in Law and member of the Open Justice Centre, said:



This award is a wonderful recognition for all the hard work of the students and staff who have worked in the Law Clinic since it was launched in September 2017. This is a new category, and we are thrilled to be the first Law School to win this award. The award reflects the innovative way technology can be used to support access to justice.



LawWorks is a charity committed to enabling access to justice through free legal advice.

The judges for the 2019 Awards were:-

- Christina Blacklaws, President, Law Society
- Peter Farr, Trustee, CILEx Pro Bono Trust
- James Harper, Executive Sponsor, Rule of Law and CSR for LexisNexis UK & Ireland
- Joshua Richman, Senior Editor, LawCareers.Net
- Leanne Targett-Parker, Chair, Bar Council Pro Bono Committee

In December 2018 the clinic was also 'highly commended' in the Best New Pro Bono Project category at the Attorney General's National Pro Bono Awards 2018.



Team member Keren Lloyd Bright, Tutor Andrew Maxfield and student Ken Ragon-Chambers attending the event

INTERNATIONAL LECTURES, CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

Open Justice academics have contributed to a range of national public engagement events including meetings for the Government's Litigants in Person Strategy, the Attorney General's Public Legal Education Committee and Prison Education Trust conferences. We have disseminated our practice internally via OU events including Alumni Breakfast Briefings, OU Enhanced Employability and Career Progression seminars, OU Professional Development seminars and a high-profile public-facing event on prison education hosted by the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire. We have been proactive in engaging with the OU's Careers and Employability team and are contributing to a University-wide webinar on law and technology.

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE ITALY

September 2018

In September 2018, Keren Lloyd Bright and Hugh McFaul spoke about our prison projects at a session at the European Network for Clinical Legal Education conference in Turin.



'UNLOCKING POTENTIAL: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF EDUCATION IN PRISONS' OPEN UNIVERSITY EVENT – MILTON KEYNES

October 2018

In October 2018, Maria McNicol and Hugh McFaul were presenters (and Hugh was also a panellist) at a public event organised by the Open University entitled 'Unlocking Potential: the transformative power of education in prisons'.



This can be viewed on YouTube at the following link : www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVdp7jMG554

STREETLAW WORKSHOP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

October 2018 & March 2019

To support our Streetlaw training, we ran two weekend events at Middlesex University in October 2018 and March 2019 with colleagues from the University of Middlesex, The Law Society of Ireland and Georgetown University.

A report on the October event is available here: <http://law-school.open.ac.uk/open-justice/news-and-events>

We will be running a new workshop for the new student cohort in October of 2019.



IJCLE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

December 2018

In December 2018 Hugh McFaul, Francine Ryan and Neil Graffin presented a paper on 'Collaborative learning in online clinical legal education' at the IJCLE conference at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.





ILEC International Legal Education Conference
December 2018

In December 2018 Hugh McFaul and Francine Ryan presented a paper at the International Legal Education Conference in Melbourne, Australia entitled 'Exploring motivations for UK lawyers to work pro bone'.

Neil Graffin presented a paper entitled 'Are we adequately preparing our lawyers for the 'real-world' or supporting them when they get there?'

IMAGINE FESTIVAL BELFAST – IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND AND MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

March 2019

In December 2018 Hugh McFaul, Francine Ryan, Neil Graffin and Jon-Paul Knight from the Open Justice Centre, John Lunnie from the Law Society of Ireland and Lughaidh Kerin from Middlesex University presented a workshop 'Dead Bodies, Live Minds' as part of the Belfast 'Imagine Festival'. The workshop invited members of the public to 'crack a case' whilst at the same time presenting an engaging demonstration of 'Streetlaw' teaching methodology.



CORRUPTION, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTE, FLORENCE

20-21 June 2019

Hugh McFaul presented a joint paper on the UNODC Education 4 Justice initiative to an audience of anti-corruption experts.

EUROPEAN NETWORK OF CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE BRATISLAVA

July 2019

Hugh McFaul curated a stream of eight papers on theoretical approaches to clinical legal education which will inform the publication of an edited collection commissioned by Routledge and to be published in 2020.

Allison Wolfreys presented a paper on the development of the Open Justice Online Mediation project.



Lawyer Monthly and National Association of Licensed Paralegals

Francine Ryan and Emma Jones have published over 20 short articles and blog posts in *Lawyer Monthly*, a multi-platform publication with a UK readership of 43,100. They can be accessed at the following links:

www.lawyer-monthly.com/?s=francine+ryan

www.lawyer-monthly.com/?s=emma+jones

We have also published posts in the National Association of Licensed Paralegals blog.

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Original Manuscript

A realist evaluation of student use of a virtual reality smartphone application in undergraduate legal education

Hugh McFaul, Elizabeth FitzGerald 

First published: 15 July 2019 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12850>

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Abstract

This paper provides a realist evaluation of the Open Justice virtual reality (VR) smartphone app, designed to develop presentation skills for students on an undergraduate legal education module. This work addresses two research questions: what proportion of students engaged with the Open Justice app, and what worked for



Early View
Online Version of Record
before inclusion in an issue



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Many are published journal articles which can also be obtained through university libraries to those with access.

The incorporation of experiential legal education into a distance-learning programme is highly innovative and has been the subject of considerable interest in the field. The team has collaborated on producing scholarly materials to raise the profile of Open Justice and to reflect on ways to enhance the student experience. We have co-presented widely within the OU, and at national and international conferences. Open Justice team members have collaboratively produced publications disseminating research on experiential legal education including peer reviewed journal articles (Jones et al 2017; 2018), book chapters (McFaul and Ryan 2019), and books (McFaul and Madhloom 2020, and Jones and Ryan 2020).

Jones, E., McFaul, H. and Ryan, F., 2017. Clinical legal education in the United Kingdom: Origins, growth and the technological innovations and challenges of its future. *German Journal of Legal Education*, 4, pp.107-136.

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Jones, E. and Ryan, F., 2020. *Digital Lawyering Textbook*. Routledge. Forthcoming.

Madhloom, O. and McFaul, H. 2020 *Clinical Legal Education in Theoretical Perspective*. Routledge. Forthcoming.

McFaul, H. and Ryan, F., 2019. Technological innovation in legal education. In Cownie, F. and Jones, E. eds. *Key Directions in Legal Education: National and international perspectives*. Routledge Forthcoming.

McFaul, H., Hardie, L. and Ryan, F., 2020. 50 Years of Clinical Legal Education. In Claydon, L. and Derry, C. *Windows on the Law: Celebrating 50 Years of the Open University*, Routledge. Forthcoming.

McFaul, H. and Fitzgerald, E. 2019. A realist evaluation of a virtual reality smartphone application. *British Journal of Education Technology*. doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12850

Ryan, F. (2019) 'A virtual law clinic: a realist evaluation of what works for whom, why, how and in what circumstances?' *The Law Teacher*, DOI: 10.1080/03069400.2019.1651550

CENTRE MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS IN 2018/2019

Advisory group members

The advisory group meets twice annually in February and July

MEMBER	ROLE	ORGANISATION
Jon-Paul Knight	Centre Manager (Advisory Board Secretary)	OU
Hugh McFaul	OJ Centre Director, Module Chair W360	OU
Francine Ryan	OJ Centre Director	OU
Paul Catley	Head of Law School	OU
Avril Martin	AL Rep	OU
Lidia Dancu	Student Ambassador	Open Justice Alumni
Maria McNicholl	Partner Organisation	St Giles Trust
Tom Franklin	Partner Organisation	Young Citizens
Ben Thomas	Partner Organisation	Citizens Advice
Elaine Hall	External Advisor	Northumbria University
Sara Chandler	External Advisor	Southbank University
Keren Lloyd Bright	Prison PLE Lead and central academic	OU
Neil Graffin	Freedom Law Clinic Lead and central academic	OU
Lynne Copson	Criminology faculty guest	Criminology
Beth Hurrell	Partner Organisation	Citizens Advice

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Associate Lecturers and project support 2018/2019

Arj Arul, David Byrne (Digital Justice consultant), Paul Dale, Lidia Dancu (Student Ambassador & Streetlaw project support), Bryony Gilbert, Avril Martin, Gillian Mawdsley, Andrew Maxfield, Siobhan McCormack, Tamsin Morris, Kate Ritchie, Jenni Wilson, Allison Wollfreys (mediation project lead)



Members of the Open Justice Team 2018-2019 at the OU Edinburgh Office, July 2019



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