

THE EAGLE

2021 EDITION



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A Message from the Editor.

*Alice Smith, Final Year Law LLB,
Vice President of Edward Bramley
Law Society .*



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I thoroughly enjoyed being co-editor, designing and authoring articles for last year's 2020 edition. Therefore, I was delighted to be tasked again, but as editor, within my promoted role as Vice President. I am always so thankful and grateful for the opportunities that Ed Bram has provided me. Whether that be supporting and facilitating my idea for a Mental Health First Aid qualification or allowing me to network with the local community as well as industry professionals. After being on committee what is now over a year, my greatest advice to current law students is to create your own opportunities and be the driver of change that you desire.

This upcoming committee, Ed Bram has pledged to be more diverse and inclusive so as to better reflect the modern wave of talent entering the law school. The legal profession is far from a white, privileged, male profession, so we want to better reflect this. The need to be more diverse potentially is somewhat rooted, by both me and Ojas being from underrepresented backgrounds in law. Lessons are to be learnt here, truly any one can study a law degree and truly anyone can be a lawyer.

Educating and providing greater awareness for mental illness and disability has always been at the forefront of my mind. Rather than posing as a challenge, I prefer to use my disability to help inspire change and greater educate others. Following from my achievements last year, providing a platform for other underrepresented backgrounds and mental health orientated submissions was a natural choice. Additionally, showcasing the very many diversity initiatives/mentoring out there such as Aspiring Solicitors, was of equal importance. Please members, make use of these !

Other personal article highlights include topical submissions from those such as the Legal Hackers Society with their Legal Tech submission and Laura, our Charity and Volunteering Secretary and their Sustainability article.

I also am forever grateful for Our Bodies Our Streets submission, organised by Kirsty, given the on-going sexual assault and drink spiking issues within the student population. As a woman I appreciate this submission. As a committee member I believe this piece is symbolic of Ed Bram's stance against sexual violence, paired with our pledge this year to dispense free personal alarms.

Once again, thank you to everyone that contributed to this year's magazine, without you there simply wouldn't be a magazine. I'm incredibly grateful for the trust you have placed in me and Kirsty. I am immensely proud of this body of work we have produced and delighted to share it with the law school.

And lastly, I couldn't let you commence reading, this year's edition, without a little thank you note to those closest to me during this process. Firstly, I would like to thank Kirsty. She has been a very attentive co-editor and I will forever be in awe with how much energy she puts into everything she does. She has truly been passionate in the making of The Eagle and her endeavours as Publicity Secretary. I always appreciate those that have the same passion as me, and can already tell she will be a great asset to Ed Bram. Also, it goes without saying that I am always thankful for my partner. There's been very many late night editing sessions of this magazine, and always cherish his comforting presence and ability to rationalise any anxious thoughts I have. He is my biggest inspiration. A problem shared with you is always a problem halved.

*Enjoy,
Alice x*

A MESSAGE FROM OJAS PRADHAN, FINAL YEAR LAW LLB, PRESIDENT OF EDWARD BRAMLEY LAW SOCIETY.

After an arduous and trying year for all of us, we are yet again at the start of a brand new academic year. However, in comparison to this time last year, we can be far more hopeful of an amazing academic year, overflowing with an abundance of events, socials and activities. As President of the Edward Bramley Law Society (usually shortened to EdBram- definitely much less of a mouthful!), I can assure you that this will most certainly be the case for all new and returning law students at the University of Sheffield. My primary focus as President is to ensure that the Society's next academic year's calendar more than compensates for the abysmal last 18 months or so.

Prior to proceeding any further, I would like to introduce myself to everyone currently reading this year's edition of the Edward Bramley Law Society's Eagle Magazine. My name is Ojas Pradhan, I am a final year Law student here at the University of Sheffield, and since May 2021, I have been President of the Edward Bramley Law Society. For those of you who do not already know this, EdBram is the largest law society at the University of Sheffield, and one of the largest student law societies in both the UK and Europe. From being First Year Representative during my first year, Vice-President during my second year, and now President during my final year, it goes without saying that this society has been an integral part of my university experience. I am so grateful that a society such as EdBram exists within this university, as this Society has a stellar reputation for ensuring that its members have an amazing and unforgettable time during university. My fondest memory of the Law Society undoubtedly has got to be the 2019 EdBram Winter Ball; what a night that was. Having been fortunate enough to experience an event and a night as incredible as that spurs me on to try and guarantee that new first years and second years, both of whom would never have had a chance to attend an EdBram Ball, have the chance to attend both the Winter Ball and the Summer Ball- the latter even my year having never experienced before either.

Here at the Edward Bramley Law Society, we provide members with a vast range of events and opportunities, ranging from socials (the aforementioned Balls and bar crawls being our highlights) to academic and career events. With regards to career events, this year EdBram will be providing much more than usual, following the introduction of our brand new EdBram Bar Division. Our Bar Division will be responsible for organising and running events aimed at those members who are interested in becoming barristers; these events include talks and presentations, trips and of course our annual mooting and negotiation competitions. Other EdBram events and opportunities that are new for members this year include our inaugural Diversity & Inclusion Week. To my knowledge, very few former Presidents of EdBram have been coloured, and as a coloured individual, I feel very grateful to be in this position of responsibility. Our Committee is also amongst one of the most inclusive and diverse EdBram Committees to date. Therefore, I thought that it was essential this year to create a D&I Week within the EdBram calendar. I believe that it is about time that our law society takes those crucial steps to becoming a more diverse and inclusive society, most especially as law firms and chambers are also progressively becoming more diverse and inclusive as well.

Tying into diversity and inclusion, this year we have also sought to prioritise mental health and wellbeing within the Society, which is why some of our Committee members are mental health first aid trained, ensuring that our Committee is in the best position possible to support the mental health and wellbeing of our members.

I would like to conclude this by welcoming all new and returning law students to the Edward Bramley Law Society, a society that has always and will continue to strive to be the best possible society for its members. I sincerely look forward to meeting you all during this academic year, whether it be at one of our socials, at one of our academic and career events, or even just in passing. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my two previous EdBram Committees during my time studying law at the University of Sheffield. Being a Committee member for the past two years has truly helped to evolve and develop all aspects of my personality and character in the best ways possible, and I am very thankful to have had that experience. To those reading this who are yet to apply for a role within the EdBram Committee, I could not recommend it to you any more to please apply at some point during your time at the University of Sheffield. And to my current EdBram Committee, thank you to you all for being amazing so far, and I have no doubt that we will continue to achieve a great deal this year together! In particular, I would like to thank our Vice-President, Alice, and our Publicity Secretary, Kirsty, for putting together this fantastic issue of the Eagle, and I urge everyone to please read through it in your spare time. Who knows, you might just find some nuggets of valuable advice scattered around in here!

Thank you all so much and once again- welcome to the Edward Bramley Law Society.



Places to go in Sheffield

After living in Sheffield for nearly two years now, I am still constantly amazed by how much this vibrant city has to offer. This article is dedicated to showcasing some of Sheffield's hidden and well known treasures, in hopes you will get to explore and enjoy as much as I have!

The Peak District

The peaks lie just on Sheffield's doorstep and are an absolute must! My favourite place to hike is the Ladybower Reservoir, where the 1955 classic Dambusters was filmed. You don't have to walk for miles to appreciate the beauty this spot holds, as a stroll across the bridge easily allows you to draw upon the breathtaking views.

Sheffield Botanical Gardens

The Botanical Gardens are situated just off Ecclesall Road, with 5,000 species of plants in 19 acres of land! It is a magically beautiful garden and there is even a cafe too!

Kelham Island Museum

You should definitely visit this museum if you are interested in learning about Sheffield's industrial history! Christmas markets are also hosted here, which is super cute in the festival period!

Sheffield Winter Gardens

This is the largest glasshouse to be built in the UK in the last hundred years and the largest glasshouse anywhere in Europe. You will be amazed by the vast collection of plants and scenery in this gorgeous setting.



Pom Kitchen

Pom is an Australian inspired, vegan cafe, which definitely ranks as the most 'instagramable' spot in town! From a pink hotdog to whipped iced frappe, there really is something for everyone here.

Tiger Works

From an alcoholic perspective, Tiger Works is an absolute must! Offering it's iconic '£5 round', this truly is the ultimate student hotspot.

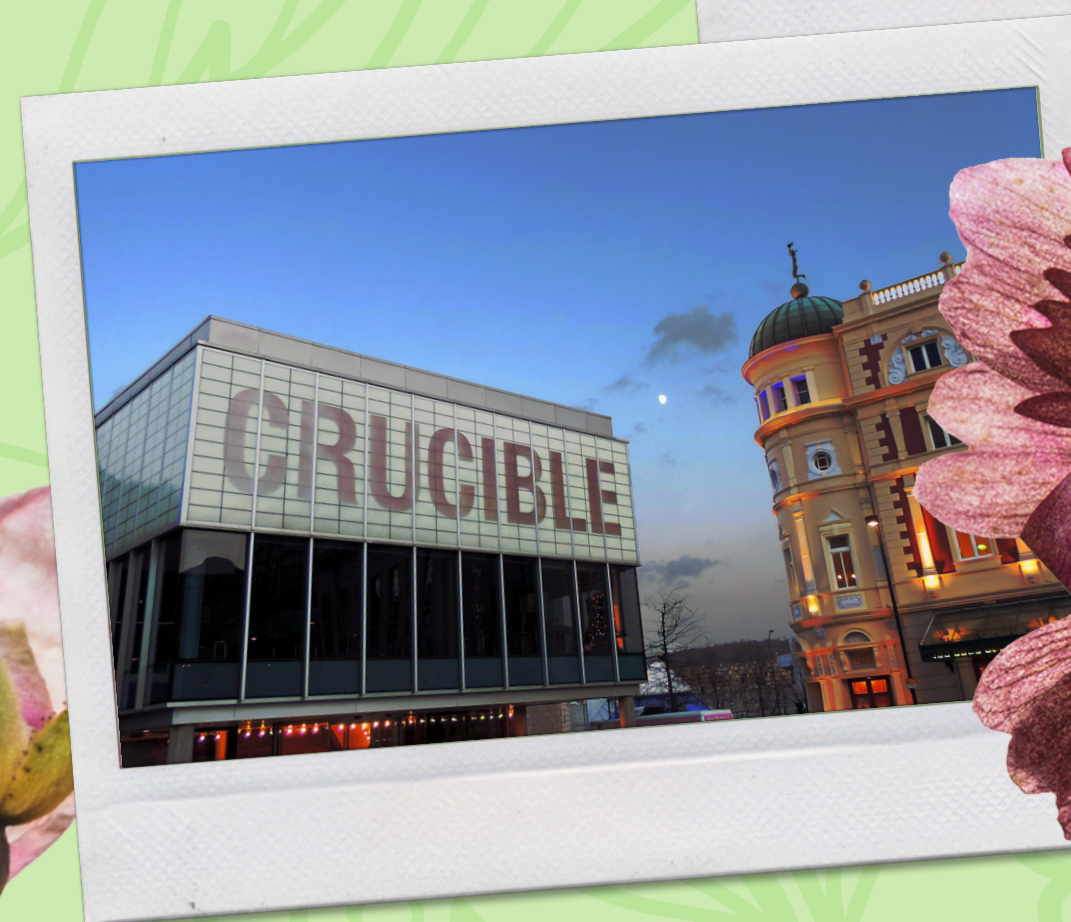
Foundry

Keeping with the alcoholic theme, the Foundry (University of Sheffield nightclub) is your ultimate University night out. There are a range of nights out here, from your classic sports night, Roar, on a Wednesday, to a night full of cheese at Poptarts on Saturdays.

Crucible Theatre

Finally, the iconic Crucible Theatre. This is an exemplary theatre, with award-winning production. Enjoy watching World Snooker here, as well as theatre plays!

By Kirsty Haynes,
Publicity, Second
Year Law and
Criminology LLB,
Publicity
Secretary for
Edward Bramley
Law Society



DATA PROTECTION... DO I NEED TO DELETE MY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS?



Authored by the winner of our essay competition '1500 words on a Niche Area of Law', Dhyasa Morgan, Second Year Law LLB

The Digital Age has resulted in rapid innovation around collection, access, analysis and usage of data- a blessing and a curse. A utopia and a dystopia. We have never had more information at our fingertips and been less knowledgeable as to how it gets there. At the click of a button, topics that are of relevant interest appear; whether to compare car prices or buy concert tickets. These hyper-personalised recommendations only exist because of the amount of unregulated data that companies possess about each of us. This essay discusses the idea that we are unwittingly selling our data through our use of social media, how this data is used to manipulate us, how the invasion of our privacy by both companies and government takes place on a daily basis and the legislative changes necessary for us to control our data.

'WE HAVE NEVER HAD MORE INFORMATION AT OUR FINGERTIPS AND BEEN LESS KNOWLEDGEABLE AS TO HOW IT GETS THERE.'

Data Protection is misrepresented in common media as meaning 'Privacy'. This is not the case. In fact, 'Data Protection' references the way third parties handle information about us and how this information is collected, processed, shared, stored and used- with and without our consent. Privacy, on the other hand, is a more fluidly defined concept dealing with human dignity and autonomy referenced in over 150 of the worlds' constitutions. To understand how our data is being shared, traded, auctioned and stored, we must delve into current practice and regulation within the cybersecurity sector. In the ICO's 'Update report into adtech and real time bidding' (RTB), the use of personal data by companies was analysed upon whether it complied with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR). RTB is not widely discussed outside of the spheres of cyber and privacy, despite this being one of the main ways the invasion of our privacy in the form of 'intrusion to seclusion' can take place. A common practice in programmatic advertising, RTB allows advertising technology (adtech) to facilitate advertisers to compete for available digital advertising space on our feeds- all in milliseconds. This raised a number of concerns with reference to data protection practices within RTB that relate to transparency and consent, and the data supply chain.

Since we do not pay for the internet or social media; the services appear to be completely free. However, as the saying goes: if you do not pay for the product, you are the product. Today, technology companies' business models rely on people agreeing to share personal data in exchange for access to content, services and social media. When we agree to the terms of service on a website such as Facebook for example, we allow the platform to sell our personal information to third parties. The fact that we agree to these terms without truly understanding the implications of them is an issue which is exacerbated by the fact that companies know that a small minority of people read these terms, and even fewer deny them and therefore the service. This leaves a wide area for misuse and exploitation of users. Companies such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat monetise their services through advertising- this is where RTB and adtech becomes integrated as a way for big tech companies to make a profit. A user's trusted tool, social media, becomes the vehicle for influence and manipulation. Our engagement time with posts, people, our interests, sexuality, political affiliations and even medical records are carefully monitored and can be taken as data points, which allow a direct profile reflecting who we are, to be built on the other side of our screens. In order for companies to understand users, our data is mined; building a stronger and more accurate model of us that guarantees where our next click will be. Certainty can only be sold with great predictions- this means there is one imperative. Lots of data.



What we now have is a marketplace exclusively trading in human futures at great scale. The profile model that has the most data points is the most likely to predict our next action correctly. Consider your text autofill. Or the increasingly relevant advertisements on your Instagram feed. What has also become apparent, due to the programming of the internal AI of social media and the ever-improving capabilities of machine learning is that, your next click can be pre-determined by whatever you have previously engaged with on the Internet across multiple platforms; even before you know what it is going to be. Not only is this unnerving, but it means that the true product of social media is the gradual, slight and imperceptible change in our perception and reactions. How can privacy, as a concept, retain its integrity if our thoughts and behaviours have the capability of being manipulated by something we willingly expose ourselves to?

'IT IS KEY THAT A BALANCE IS STRUCK BY GOVERNMENTS BETWEEN THE NEED TO INVESTIGATE AND RESPOND WITH CITIZENS' RIGHT TO PRIVACY.'

Companies and corporations are not the only ones who benefit from our lack of knowledge on the amount of data we are sharing. Governments also benefit. The idea of privacy- despite being the essence of Article 8 of the Human Rights Act and Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights- is not legally absolute. Privacy can be limited from a legal standpoint but only in cases where the protection of public interests or security are at stake, or are at a conflict with other rights such as freedom (of speech, press etc.). Consider the case of Katz v United States, where Katz was followed to a telephone booth, a microphone was placed on top of the booth and his conversation was intentionally overheard. There was no technical invasion of property because Katz did not own the telephone booth, however this was action that invaded the reasonable expectation of privacy; implying that privacy of an individual had been infringed upon. It is key that a balance is struck by governments between the need to investigate and respond with citizens' right to privacy. In a legal or criminal investigation warrants have to be granted before official bodies can gain access to private or personal property, however because our personal data is on public forums and stored within public bodies, we are no longer given the same rights to our data as we would our property. This suggests that once our data is given to companies and corporations, it is no longer our own. The GDPR determines that there are regulatory limits as to how long companies can store our data before it must be deleted. This theoretically allows us to reclaim it, but as the ICO have found, companys' data banks are increasingly difficult and unrealistic to regulate in practice without updated legislation when considering the sheer amount of our data that is being shared across platforms and between jurisdictions.



Legislation for data- 'the new oil'- is severely lacking and currently protects the rights and privileges of large companies and corporations rather than their more vulnerable users. Growth within the technology sector has been exponential over the last decade, and yet the laws have remained largely the same. We cannot allow or expect big tech corporations to regulate themselves. It is essential that public bodies such as the police, respect and acknowledge that their right to exercise power is licensed by the constitution. This also means that in the absence of a constitution or regulations, they cannot act. If there are little to no regulations defining the parameters where tech companies can operate, and- like Google- they lack competition in the marketplace; there is a high, if not inevitable risk of monopolisation of the market, resulting in blatant disregard of the law itself, which has not been properly defined in light of new developments.

As futile as the shout into the void for tech companies to change their ways may seem, it isn't. It is acceptable for companies to want to be profitable. Financial incentives run the world. However, when users are trapped by a business model, economic incentives and shareholder pressure; the need to realign the interests of these companies with regulation through legislation on Digital Privacy is increasingly apparent. This can include, but is not limited to, the concept of taxing companies on the amount of data they retain, collect and process. This would create an incentive for companies to mine less data and put a stop to the current 'attention extraction model'.

Public pressure and collective will can inspire change. It is not radical to demand that the products we use be created humanely- in accordance with laws about our human rights that already exist. We should not have to choose between access to information and media and the integrity of our personal data and privacy when trust is at the core of both. Instead, we should be able to make informed and autonomous decisions as to when and where we extend our trust, and consciously allow sharing of our data. A degree of professional scepticism would open our eyes to how we use social media. Or how we unconsciously allow social media to use us.





SUSTAINABLE

Student Living

Our Charity and Volunteering Secretary Laura shares her top tips on how students can live as sustainably as possible!

At the time of writing this feature, summer 2021 has already made it abundantly clear that global warming is more of a threat than we anticipated. From mass forest fires in Canada, to never-before seen floods in Europe, the western world is beginning to experience first-hand the devastating impact of rising global temperatures. Whilst the large scale changes needed to tackle climate change must be enforced by world leaders, we as individuals can make more sustainable lifestyle choices to ensure that we keep our environmental impact to an absolute minimum. Here are my tried and tested tips on how to live more sustainably as a student.



Opt to shop for plastic-free, local groceries where possible

Unwrapped, Just Natural, Beanies, Our Zero Waste Shop and Fruit A Peel are all shops within the Crookes, Crookesmoor, Broomhill and SU area that encourage plastic free shopping. Just Natural, Beanies and Fruit-A-Peel offer an extensive array of fruit and veg, local products and plant based alternatives, whilst Unwrapped, Our Zero Waste Shop and Beanies offer scoop and fill based shopping. There is a common misconception that this way of shopping is more expensive; however, I have found that buying items such as spices, baking ingredients and health foods are significantly cheaper, whilst other items such as pasta and cereals is almost a match for supermarket prices. Unwrapped and Beanies also have good websites so you can browse their products and prices before you go.



Opt for a more sustainable wardrobe

With the fashion industry contributing around 10% of global carbon emissions (roughly 4 x that of aviation). Individuals need to drastically change their wardrobe habits. Charity shops enable you to buy quality clothing cheaply, whilst simultaneously benefitting charities. Giving another's unwanted clothing a new lease of life is a significantly more sustainable fashion practice than buying new. Not only does shopping second-hand eliminate the need to harvest and manufacture new materials, but it also almost completely eliminates the carbon footprint that comes from producing the garments, packing them and transporting them (often thousands of miles by air). Thinking of throwing clothes away because they have a hole in them? Well, have you ever heard of a sewing kit? Stitching clothes up when they're looking a little worn should always be your first thought. But if you don't have the resources or skills, keep an eye out for clothing repair workshops that I'm going to try and run this year. Arming yourself with some basic sewing skills will also equip you with the ability to upcycle and reinvent your old clothing.

Opt for more sustainable skincare and makeup choices

Always make sure that the products you buy are cruelty free. Websites such as PETA offer extensive lists of brands which do and do not test on animals. Alternatively, when shopping in store, look out for the cruelty-free bunny as an indicator. Thankfully, more and more companies are ditching the animal testing so going cruelty-free really is easier than you might think. If you want to go plastic free, check out Sheffield Skin Care Co in Crookes. This independent shop sells some lovely plastic-free, cruelty-free beauty products without the carbon footprint that comes with buying products from high street stores. Lush, a company at the forefront of sustainable beauty, also give you money off for returning your used pots and bottles (And no I do not work for Lush, I just love shopping there).



Make your diet more sustainable by opting for plant-based where possible

Going vegan overnight is certainly not a realistic outcome for most people. Conditions such as coeliac disease or osteoporosis might make eliminating dairy from a diet a huge health risk for some. However, for most, reducing your meat intake really isn't too difficult. You might choose to go cold turkey overnight, or maybe just begin by practicing meat free Mondays. Whatever you choose, make sure you can commit to it!

Luckily, supermarkets now offer an impressive array of vegetarian and vegan options. However, from my experience, vegetarianism is easiest when you have the skills to make your own meals. I cannot recommend the Nosh Vegetarian Student cookbook more, as it is full of delicious, cheap and nutritious meal ideas that really don't require much skill at all!



Reduce your food waste

Don't bin it. Freeze it! - You'd be surprised at what you can freeze safely

Plan your meals! - Shop bought ready meals inevitably come with a surplus of plastic packaging and are often full of artificial, processed ingredients. Planning and cooking your own meals means that you don't over spend on ingredients you're not going to use and gives you the option to buy plastic free groceries.

Make the most of the free fridge in Endcliffe and Ranmoor - Saturday Morning can be gold dust sometimes

Invest in some beeswax wraps - A brilliant plastic-free alternative to Clingfilm that can be purchased online or from local shops such as Unwrapped, Beanies or Our Zero Waste Shop. Alternatively if you're feeling really ambitious you can find tutorials online showing you how to make your own.



Mind your energy usage

For those who rent bills included, opting to renewable energy providers isn't possible, however we can reduce our energy consumption.

Whilst it's a fairly obvious thing to remind you to turn off lights and appliances when you're not using them, here are a few lesser known ways of reducing your electricity consumption:

i. When boiling the kettle, only fill with the amount of water you're going to use e.g. a mug's worth for tea or a pan's worth for cooking

ii. Layer up - Before turning the heating on, try wearing a few layers. Your house should not be so hot in winter that you can walk around in a t-shirt!

iii. As mentioned, keep to one clothes wash per week - washing machines use up so much water and electricity.

Just because your energy allowance might be unlimited, you don't have to exploit that! Yes you might feel like you're getting more for your money, but is it really worth the environmental impact?

Following these simple, cheap and easy tips, won't solve the climate crisis, but they will drastically reduce your environmental impact. Adopting a sustainable mind-set is the first step towards solving the issue, and if enough of us adopt these practices, who knows, maybe our world leaders will start actually listening.

Keep your cleaning eco-clean

Make sure you buy biodegradable, eco-friendly washing-up, cleaning and laundry products. Shops such as Unwrapped, Beanies, Just Natural and Our Zero Waste Shop stock have refill stations for personal hygiene, cleaning and laundry products, and tend to match or beat supermarket prices. All you need is a container to fill up.

When washing clothes in a washing machine, try to keep to one wash per week. You don't have to wash your jeans after wearing them once! Additionally, using a clothes bag not only limits the amount of microfibers entering the ocean, but also helps to preserve the condition of your clothes.

When drying your laundry, it's a good idea to invest in a clothes horse (I say invest but they're usually only around £10), as this saves the excessive energy tumble dryers use. It will also save you money on your bills!



By Laura Harmer, Final Year Law BA, Charities Secretary for Edward Bramley Law Society

What is the European Union for a young person, and how can young people influence its future?



By Oskar Grzanka, Second year Law (European and International) LLB

In June 2021 in Strasbourg, I had the opportunity to discuss and debate with over 100 participants from all over Europe on many similar (as mentioned above) questions concerning, mainly, the current path of the European Union and its future.

The conference, organized by European Federalists' association (JEF Strasbourg and JEF Europe), was a large, one-week international event bringing together young Europeans on a substantial European cause.

During these few days of very intense discussions and long conversations, we had the opportunity to see what work in the European institutions really looks like. The conference resembled MUN (Model United Nations) simulation sessions, which are widespread worldwide, but differed from them in some distinct details. First of all, we worked in a division system into a commission, and I got the one chosen during the application process - The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. Another difference was the general assembly where, after working in individual committees, we gathered almost every day and, in special sessions, we voted on matters that were important to us young people, issues concerning the European Union. The exciting and well-planned form of debates brought noteworthy results. We have prepared a document supplemented with several amendments which, in our opinion, could positively affect one of the areas of the European Union.



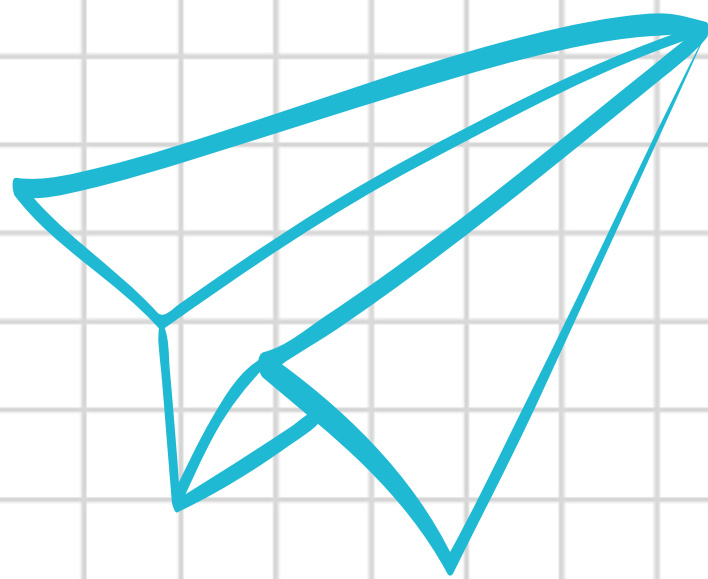
Some events were attended by members of the European Parliament and local politicians. A lecture presented by the former mayor of Strasbourg, Mrs Fabienne Keller, was a positive surprise for me. An exciting part of this international exchange program was the demonstration picket organised by the federalists of France in front of the European Parliament building, devoted to the conferences on the future of Europe that were taking place. Our demonstration mainly focused on the European Union aiming for greater unity and cooperation, but we also called for respect for the rights of each citizen and for mutual assistance between states in the face of the most difficult political topics.

In addition, the event organised by the branch from Strasbourg allows us not only to visit the European Parliament but also do many other inspiring things.



For example, I had the opportunity to visit and understand Strasbourg like a "typical French resident." It resulted in the exploration of the art culture and the most important monuments of this beautiful city. Strasbourg is an extraordinary city in terms of cultural and political aspects. Above all is worth visiting because of the multitude of this culture and people who are living there. While you are there, you can understand that Europe and Europeans can be very close to each other.

I realize great difficulties that can occur while the European Union representatives of a dozen or so different countries have to make a joint decision that sometimes substantially impacts several years of their future. However, thanks to participation in this event, I think we as the European Union can solve problems quickly and positively create our shared future by acting together. You may wonder why I am describing my exchange program or simply a great adventure in Strasbourg. Well, inspired by what I experienced in Strasbourg, I decided to join the young Europeans and Federalists team in Great Britain and create my own section in Sheffield.



And I obviously understand that "Brexit meant Brexit" and that by leaving the European Union, Great Britain regained some of its "sovereignty". But at the same time, I see many problems facing England today and those that may come. The organisation's mission to which I belong is, first of all, to preserve the community to which the UK, despite leaving the European Union, can still belong. Primarily Erasmus exchanges or simply common cultural events that should be maintained in order to, step by step, achieve greater unification of these two communities in the future.

If you want to learn more about how the Association of European Federalists works or simply join my Sheffield team, write to me or visit the Facebook page of YEM Sheffield UK.



Being an ethnic minority lawyer—is there actually space for me?

A question that has plagued my journey towards my goal of becoming a barrister, is, is there even a space for me and other people like me, who are labelled as ethnic minorities in the legal profession? Law firms and chambers portray themselves as being or at least striving to become increasingly diverse and inclusive. This was especially highlighted during the mass uproar of George Floyd's unjust death. Resulting in law firms and chambers, promoting their message of diversity and inclusion, struggling to be seen as changemakers at the forefront of a permeating issue in the legal profession.

I questioned the motives of every law firm and chamber, that I saw at this time, portraying themselves as asking the key questions to 'get it right'. Questioning if this would really instigate change? And if it did cause some sort of change, would this change survive after the uproar of George Floyd's death, died down? Questioning the extent of diversity and inclusion in law firms and chambers, has also been a key issue that Amanda Adeola has strived towards incorporating in her legal journey.

Mrs Adeola is a Partner at BHP law firm, a regional law firm based in the North East of England, specialising in private Family law and runs a platform on Instagram that mentors and supports aspiring lawyers (@chroniclesofamilysolicitor). I had the privilege of interviewing Mrs Adeola, discussing what inspired her to embark on her legal journey and how law firms/chambers can meaningfully create a space for ethnic minorities.



Why did you choose to work in the legal sector, particularly family law?

I wanted to be a lawyer from a young age, however, my desire to continue in my quest to be a legal professional stemmed from the injustice I saw growing up. I decided to pursue a career in law to provide a voice to whom I felt had their voices stifled and to really be able to provide access to justice to all who may need my assistance. In terms of Family Law, I like to think that this area of law chose me rather than me choosing it, as I fell into it. During my training, I was given the opportunity to attend Court to sit behind Counsel in a case involving Care Proceedings. Although I really enjoyed advocacy and knew I want that to feature greatly in my career, watching the lawyers argue their cases and present it before the Court together with the human element of family law, made it a more suited area of law to my personality.

As a black lawyer, have you ever felt misrepresented or misunderstood in the legal profession?

I would not say that I have felt misrepresented or misunderstood, but I would say that heavy is the head that wears the crown. I do feel pressure in some sense to work extremely hard and even more pressure to not make mistakes this is despite us being human and no one being infallible. These pressures are unhealthy, and we must work harder to change the system that creates these sorts of pressures and in some ways barriers. There is also the weight of being a positive representative to ensure that more young black people aspire to be lawyers. Although this is a weight, I am happy to bear as well as many others, it can be very heavy sometimes.

It has been argued that law firms need to be increasingly diverse and inclusive, do you believe that such change should begin with law firms or with the educational system?

Change must start from every angle and corner. Whilst Law firms have a large role to play, the educational system too must play its part. We talk about representation being very important therefore our educational system must encourage us all to be the best that we can be and to create that ripple of belief and positivity that one can be anything regardless of who they are, their background or where they come from. I believe that having diverse students, teachers, highlighting the value and benefit of our uniqueness and differences creates a space where we can all flourish. The system must not pigeonhole students and write them off from different career options but encourage any career path chosen whilst bringing in positive role models to make students know that their dreams and hopes are valid. Law firms must actively seek to be diverse and inclusive, and this must not be for aesthetics only.

In the article you wrote for The Law Society, you stated that there is more than one route to achieve your goals, "Ona Kan O Woja". Do you think there are other routes that law firms and chambers can take to increase inclusion and diversity, than their current efforts?

There is always another way to achieve one's goals and legal organisations need to look at their workforce to fully understand what they are doing wrong and be open to changing it or educating themselves on alternative means to do so. Creating an inclusive space must form the basis of any law firm/chamber's core values and to achieve this, they require the support of all their employees including those in senior management positions. The starting point should be in recruitment. Organisations must look at their recruitment practises and whether they are prone to recruiting the same types of people, they should be honest with themselves as to how to address this. It is not just about having the diversity but to also ensure inclusivity.

How do you think the legal sector can cater to the BAME community? If there was one thing you could change to make this profession more inclusive, what would it be?

The legal sector can start by taking away barriers. Remove the elitist nature of the profession and reinforce that everyone is welcome. Creating more opportunities for work placements and mentoring is also key. Regardless of the university you attend, a united message must be at the core to creating a more inclusive legal profession. The one thing I would change would be the stereotype around what a lawyer looks like. There is already a lot happening online with various legal professionals whom I hold in high regard including just to name a few, Paulette Mastin, Sally Penni MBE, Alexandra Wilson, Sahar Farooqi, Andrew Powell, Tunde Okewale, Cordella Bart-Stewart, Coleen Mensa, and many others, who are showing that the law is diverse, and a lawyer does not have to look a certain way.

Conclusion..

Following my interview with Mrs Adeola, I concluded that as an ethnic minority, there is space for us in the legal profession, arguably, this space could be broader and in depth, but that should never discourage us from pursuing a career in law. In fact, it should encourage us to make opportunities and spaces that will not only benefit this generation of ethnic minorities but also future generations. Building such spaces should dare I say, be established from grassroots – educational bodies (universities, sixth forms/colleges and high schools), should provide a space that allows for development, they should also ask these 'key questions' about inclusion and diversity that law firms have not only started to ask, but are striving to incorporate. Creating a space for ethnic minorities, should not just be a tick list or a poster for inclusion and diversity but it should be the beginning of the much needed change needed in the law sector and educational system – as Mrs Adeola stated 'The one thing I would change would be the stereotype around what a lawyer looks like', Law firms/chambers and educational bodies, need to begin such change by rewriting the narrative of what a typical 'lawyer looks like', only then can we truly create a space for ethnic minorities in the legal world.

*By Sharon C.O Uche, Second Year
Law with Chinese Law LLB,
Diversity and Inclusions
Secretary for Edward Bramley
Law Society*

After being recognised as the Woman of the Year in the Tees Valley BME Achievement Awards 2019, one of the things you emphasised was the lesson from your parents to embrace your "culture and background", what advice would you give BAME students who aspire to venture into the legal sector but feel that there is no space for them?

You must embrace who you are and never compromise on your values or that which makes you unique. It is easy to try to be someone else to fit in but remember that those who soar are those who choose and dare to be different, who stand tall as themselves and who remain authentic. There is space for you, and you must believe that you deserve a seat at the table to be able to occupy and disrupt the legal profession in a positive way.



LAW SPORTS

Football



Joining the Law Football team has given me the opportunity to meet many people that I may not have due to the restrictions that were in place throughout my first year.

Being involved in a sports team is beneficial particularly during the last year, both towards my physical and mental health.

The team has provided me with a good balance of socialising and exercise, in a fun but competitive environment and I hope to continue this next year. Last season was very different, to usual seasons, for obvious reasons. Although it was an interrupted season, we still had several games, and our overall performance was very promising. Having played only a handful of games myself, I was instantly welcomed and felt part of the team from the first minute. Therefore, maintaining the welcoming team spirit is my priority during my time as captain.

Next year I hope to replicate the level of competition, along with plenty of social events which will give the opportunity to meet new friends adding to your University experience – of course we will still be aiming to challenge for the top place in several competitions. Current plans are to enter the team into an 11 aside league on a Saturday, two six aside teams midweek and have several socials throughout the year.

For me, the football team has been a great influence and provided me with weekly exercise and an opportunity to make new friends. I cannot recommend it highly enough. If you are interested in joining a sports team I would strongly encourage you to get involved and go along to the trials.

My email address:

Bmjharrison1@gmail.com



***-Ben Harrison,
Second Year Law
LLB, Captain of
Law Football***



Netball



I was personally someone in school who often lacked confidence to join sports teams, generally because I believed I was in no way talented enough. I am still definitely not talented, however joining Law netball has allowed me to push both my social and sporting confidence boundaries. The team places a perfect level of emphasis on both the sporting and social aspects, in that people are there to develop their skills but also to have a laugh! With the team being made up of other law students, it is also a great place to meet course mates who can relate and support you in your studies. As I will be moving into second year, I hope to be able to offer some (slightly chaotic) guidance and support to any first years that perhaps may be struggling with settling into university life. This year's season was naturally disrupted however the amazing captain still managed to arrange some games towards the end of the year, giving the girls a taste of the competitive side to the sport, in a wholly light-hearted way. In the upcoming academic year, I hope to continue this legacy of organising regular games and perhaps would also like to introduce other things such as charity tournaments and a tour of some form. The team is a completely inclusive environment in that any gender or ability is welcomed with open arms. I intend to captain the team in a fashion that allows the members to decide the extent of their own participation in matches and socials. I am so excited to get to know old and new members and organise and host some amazing socials!!

My email address: lfmorgan1@sheffield.ac.uk



-Lucy Morgan, Second Year Law LLB, Captain of Law Netball



LEGAL TECH

PROVIDED BY:



BY QUDSIA SHAH, SECOND
YEAR LAW (EUROPEAN
AND INTERNATIONAL) LLB,
PRESIDENT OF LEGAL
HACKERS SOCIETY

The Legal Hackers Society is part of a global movement exploring the issues and relationship between law and technology. Our aim is to educate and empower students through various events to 'hack' problems within the legal industry and develop creative solutions.

We welcome students from all disciplines and all levels of knowledge that are interested in the current narrative regarding technology within the legal industry and tackling important issues.

Last year we held events such as a Design Jam on Legal Aid and Robot Judges whereby students were able to learn more about these topics and find solutions. We also hosted workshops exploring relevant topics such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, the 'billable' hour, and much more to improve students' understanding of these topics and develop their commercial awareness.

This year we are planning to host a series of events such as design jams, discussions, debates, and workshops regarding interesting and leading topics, as well as social events to encourage networking with academics and alumni.

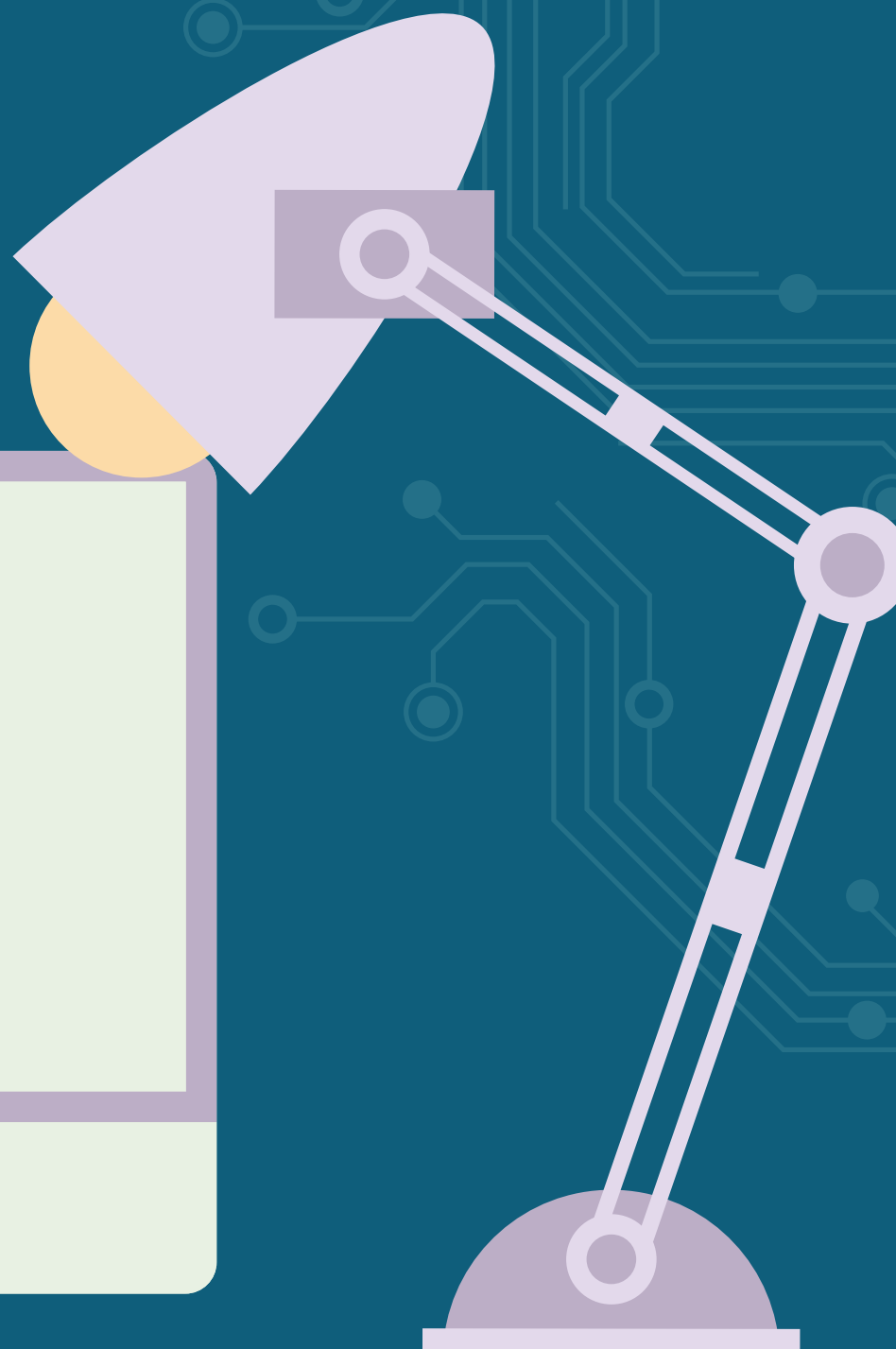
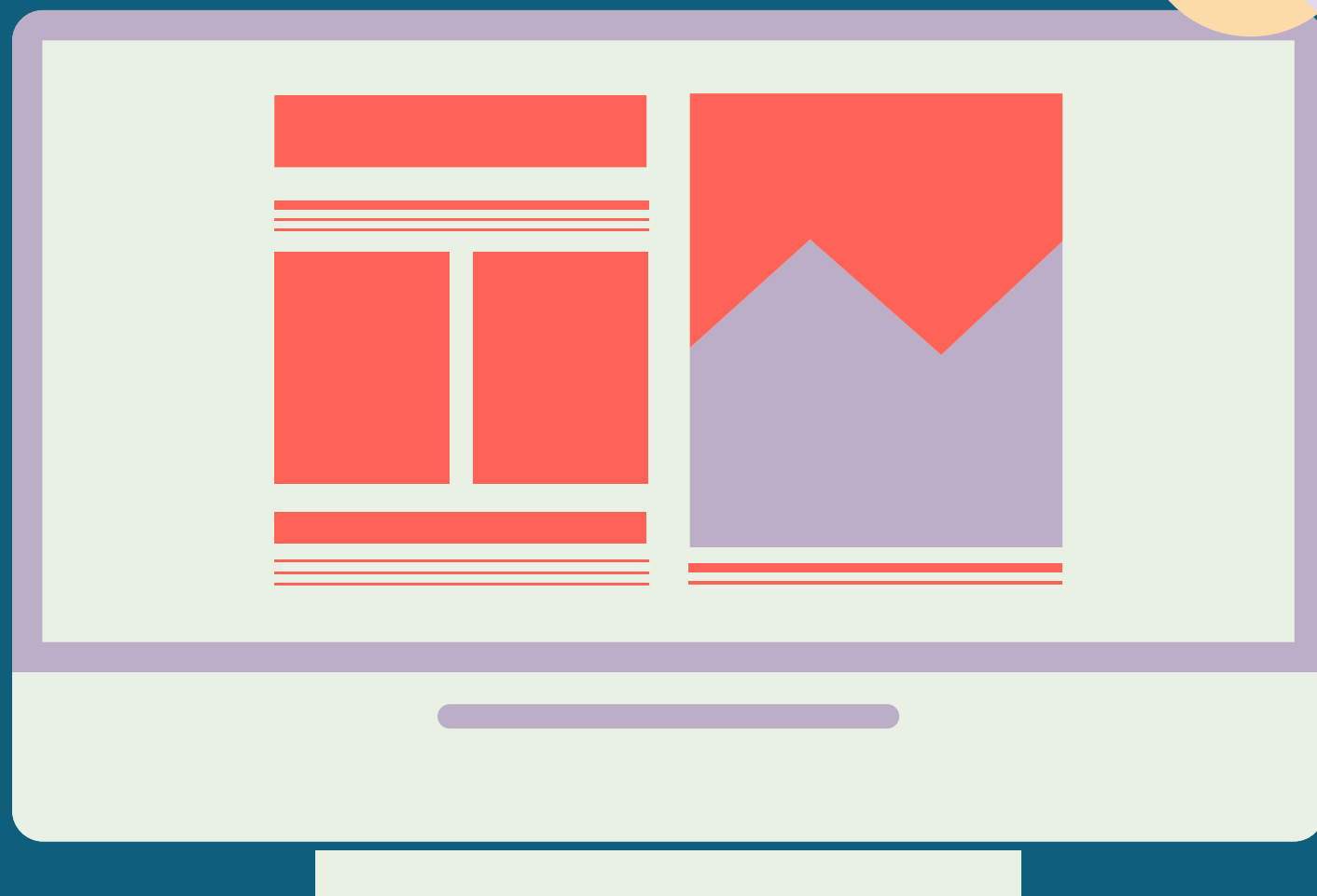
Follow our social media pages for more information :)

Facebook: UoS Legal Hackers

LinkedIn: UoS Legal Hackers

Instagram: @UoSLegalHackers

Twitter: @UoSLegalHackers



What is legal tech?

Legal Tech essentially refers to the use of software and technology to aid, improve, and provide legal services. Originally, this term referred to technology that helped law firms with accounting, billing, document storage and document retrieval. However, the term has progressed to include more sophisticated technology that aims to improve all aspects of the legal industry. The work of law firms and practices, such as handling M&A deals, drafting documents and creating contracts, can be quite repetitive and time consuming. Legal tech can easily be applied to optimise these processes, thus providing more time-and-cost effective solutions.

Uses of Legal Tech:

The current uses of legal tech are wide-ranging and diverse. Some of the most useful and notable examples include:

Legal Research and analysis: Most legal professionals are now using electronic databases that can perform research, verify case law, and track data such as Westlaw and Lexis/Nexis. AI powered applications can intelligently flag and summarize the cases that the lawyer should focus on. This allows lawyers to easily access a wide range of cases without visiting different libraries, and reduces time spent on research from hours or days down to minutes or even seconds.

Automated document review: This software automatically processes, reviews and tags documents online. The software can read and understand legal documents such as contracts or wills in any language. It can automatically and accurately find specific clauses, significant information, or anomalies. An example of this software is Luminance which was trained by legal experts, and it allows lawyers to conduct document review around 400 times faster.

Automated document drafting: This software analyses documents such as wills, NDAs, or contracts, and then it can create accurate automated templates. These templates can be further tailored by completing questionnaires, enabling the software to select and insert specific clauses based on the lawyers' needs or clients' answers. This can dramatically reduce human effort-and-error and is a time-and-cost effective manner of drafting documents. Examples include software such as Clio and Clifford Chances' Dr@ft.

Self-service legal chatbots: These are applications that can rapidly and accurately answer questions clients may have without a cost/fee. Legal questions and answers can be programmed into decision trees and delivered via chatbots to the public. This can be through a website or even a smartphone application. Currently these can help to solve quite simple, straightforward, and one-dimensional issues. Examples include DoNotPay to dispute parking tickets, and Robot Lawyer LISA which creates confidentiality agreements and non-disclosure agreements tailored to the needs of the parties.

Evidently, there are numerous benefits of implementing legal tech such as increased efficiency, productivity, and growth, as well as better client management.



Barriers to legal tech

□ **Manual processes:** Law firms currently rely on many outdated manual processes, such as 'wet-ink' signatures, and requiring 'original' contracts and documents. Legal tech will introduce automated processes to replace this, however this can be difficult to implement as it requires restructuring the way work is done at a law firm or practice.

□ **Billable Hour:** For firms using the billable hour as a method of calculating costs or with billing targets, it can be problematic to introduce legal tech as it disrupts this manner of working and may mean lawyers needing to accept fewer working hours due to an increased efficiency.

□ **Partnership Model:** The money needed to invest in legal tech generally comes from the partners' profit pool and thus needs support from all partners to introduce new technologies. Moreover, it is difficult to ask individuals that have been working in the legal industry for the majority of their professional lives to adopt new technologies and learn to use new tools, especially if they already see their work and workplace as an efficient working environment without adding legal tech to it.

□ **Security and Privacy Concerns:** Firms and practices are concerned about maintaining client confidentiality and GDPR compliance thus it can be difficult to introduce new, online technologies, or to rely on external providers for services. Any perception of risk will pose a threat to the introduction of legal technologies.

Reasons for implementing legal tech

□ **Clients:** Law firms are starting to adopt legal technology as it aids in optimising the work of lawyers and law firms and clients want to reap these benefits. Thus, to retain and gain new clients law firms and practices need to adopt legal tech. Legal tech can help clients to receive a better quality of advice quicker and at a lower cost, e.g., using Luminance software for document review. Clients can also benefit from cost transparency as legal tech has catalysed the move away from the traditional 'Billable Hour' model, towards fixed fees depending on service. Moreover, self-service tools can provide legal aid at minimal rate or at no cost, and e-billing systems such as Clio's BillerAssist feature can provide a clear, more accurate invoice by removing human error and flagging up 'problematic' entries. Evidently the adoption of legal tech is beneficial and thus attractive to clients, and law firms require clients to survive.

□ **Increased flexibility for lawyers:** Implementing legal tech can easily facilitate incorporating remote and mobile working patterns. This increased flexibility allows lawyers to use their time productively and produce a better quality of work without being overwhelmed or overworked. Moreover, increased flexibility and autonomy also means a higher retention rate of employees.

□ **Improved access to legal services:** Implementing legal technology, such as chatbots or online based services, can help firms and practices to provide their legal services to various jurisdictions and across countries. Clients will benefit from an easier access to service and will ultimately be able to utilise the legal system regardless of their socio-economic status, or nature of problem due to the wide range of self-service legal tools and match-making services available.

□ **Future ready:** The generation of lawyers currently entering the workforce are adept at using technology and expect a certain level of technology use within their professional lives. Plus, there is now an increased focus on Legal Tech within legal education with many universities choosing to add Legal Tech modules to their LLB courses. Law firms are also recruiting graduates with experience in technology and have even set up legal tech focused training contracts.

Implications of legal tech

The growing interest in legal tech has significantly affected the dynamics of the contemporary legal market. Independent, regional, or smaller 'high-street' firms that struggle with growing cost constraints and greater competition can utilise legal tech to produce an excellent standard of work at a lower cost, thus giving them a competitive advantage within the legal industry. Similarly for in-house counsel, the adoption of legal tech means that rather than focussing on securing clients, they can produce an excellent quality of work without outsourcing to law firms or practices. Legal tech has even led to the creation of a whole new set of alternative legal service providers. Over the last decade, there has been an increase in corporations developing and choosing in-house counsel, increase in tailored, niche start-ups and self-service legal aid. Clients have started using the growing options available, rather than simply relying on law firms and practices for legal advice and solutions. Law firms and practices will need to modify their historic strategies and structures and fully utilise technology to meet the needs of their clients and to remain relevant within the extremely competitive legal industry.

Future of legal tech

As legal tech continues to grow and attract interest and funding, there will be a change in the role and nature of legal jobs. It is likely that trainees and paralegals will not be required to carry out time consuming, administrative tasks. Instead, law firms and practices can make a better use of their resources and ensure the skills, knowledge and expertise of lawyers will be utilised more efficiently, as lawyers can spend more time with clients rather than completing monotonous tasks.



Although implementing technology means the "conventional" duties of lawyers will be less in demand, it is inevitable that a new range of roles and responsibilities will take their place. Firms and practices are already looking for graduates with experience in technology. Many firms have also started implementing legal tech in the workplace and have set up legal tech start-up incubators. Clifford Chance for example have set up their 'IGNITE' training contract to further facilitate this. We will see new job titles within the legal sector to accommodate the growing need for utilising technology.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that eventually the role of a lawyer will be completed by tech graduates or computer software or robots. They will still be needed! Lawyers are essential for giving advice and advocating for their clients; thus, they need exemplary communicative skills and empathy. Technology lacks the ability to replicate these skills, or to advise clients with the same professional judgement that lawyers possess. Moreover, although clients may value automated advice or chatbots for some issues, they prefer 'human' contact when needing advice for more personal, sensitive, or important matters. Furthermore, as time passes there will be new precedent set and more legislation created, thus the role of lawyers will never disappear. Evidently, Legal tech does not necessarily compete with the role of lawyers but rather works to complement, and work alongside professionals within the legal industry to provide optimal results.

The covid-19 pandemic has already accelerated the use of technology and changed the way lawyers think about using technology. 76% of lawyers surveyed by legal tech company MyCase in 2020 agreed that the covid-19 pandemic will have a lasting impact on the way their firm uses technology. The legal industry is on the cusp of an important transformation, and the future of the legal industry brings exciting and new developments that will be created by the experiences and ideas of current law students and graduates.

Resources:

Join our society UoS Legal Hackers for information and events related to law and technology!

Articles: Legal Tech within the UK, and The Decade in Legal Tech: The 10 Most Significant Developments

Books: 'Tomorrow's Lawyers: An Introduction to Your Future' by Richard Susskind and 'Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future' by Martin Ford

Podcasts: LawNext, and Law and Technology

Videos: Who is leading the way in UK legal technology?



For me, this year ended as it began: in isolation. I went into isolation on day 5 of freshers and here I am again on day 8 of 10 and feeling very ready to move on from this orange room in Endcliffe. I started my degree in September in the hope that the worst of covid was behind us and that my first year would be close to what I had always imagined and seen my older siblings and friends enjoy. It wasn't. Don't get me wrong, it has still been an amazing year, but the constant uncertainty, chance of being locked in and lack of connection to ACTUAL uni made for an experience I had not expected.

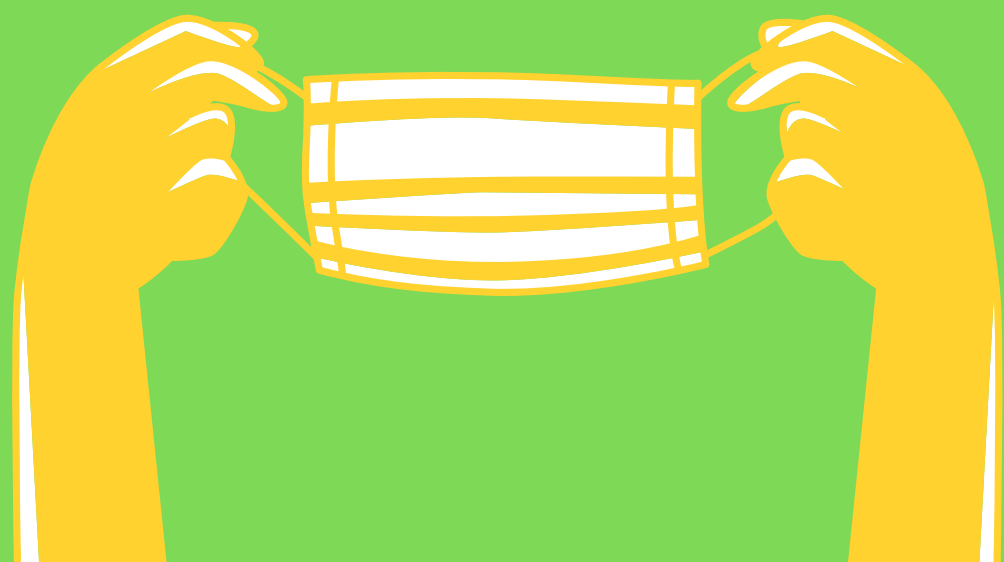
Being locked in with 9 flatmates who you just met and then being told that by law you cannot go home is tough. I was worried about my own mental health as well as my flat mates. I remember thinking about us all sat behind our own closed doors, all together but feeling very alone. Leaving home is hard enough, let alone under these circumstances, when life has gone from approaching A-Levels alongside best friends, to being stuck inside with family and then onto this isolating experience. But it did force us to create a flat bond which we may not have otherwise, so it wasn't all bad.

Moving onto my experience of my Law with Chinese degree, it hasn't been awful, but it hasn't been great. Our first 'CLASS' task was an online moot, teamed with strangers and delivering the moot on blackboard without cameras turned on. At the time I remember comparing this experience to what I'd imagined when I attended uni open days and looked at moot rooms in law schools with such excitement.

Being a Fresher During a Pandemic.

This was not that. But on reflection it was still a good experience and at the time was the only option. When people ask me how the study has been this year, I tell them it is tough but that I feel lucky because at least with a law degree, you expect to have to motivate yourself to do A LOT of independent reading and writing. I just can't wait for the chance to do the other things law students normally do alongside this. I really hope that over the long 3-month summer ahead these experiences become more reachable.

In early November I discovered the library and this was massive for me. I could stop rolling out of my bed onto my desk chair and struggling to find a space to switch off after that. This year, we have definitely been forced to get better at finding ways to allow our minds to balance work time and non-work time while not going into uni and going to the library really broke up my day and gave me some of the routine I needed. I have struggled with the lack of communication from some lecturers. I hated waking up on Monday ready to watch my weekly lectures and do the reading etc. to then have to wait until as late as Wednesday evening for any of this to be posted! I can't wait to go into Bartolome and knock on my lecturer's office doors and ask them what I am supposed to be doing when.





In terms of other connecting online, it has obviously been a lot tougher than usual for first years to engage with societies or clubs. We never had a freshers fair and even societies we did join online have sometimes been hard to stay engaged with alongside everything else going on virtually. But I commend committees for doing all they could to be accessible this year, I hope it doesn't have to be like this ever again.

Despite the circumstances, Sheffield has nonetheless proven itself to my peers and I to be a great city to study in. After spending months walking past an empty SU and down barren West Street, we have heard and seen enough in the past few weeks to know that once rules are relaxed Sheffield is a great place to go out. Having no access to this for most of the year however has forced us to look to entertainment elsewhere, such as walking in the peaks. I have LOVED days in the peaks this year and know they have been a highlight for many other first years as well. I already love living in Sheffield and am excited by the knowledge that this will only grow as the world begins to normalise again.

All in all, it hasn't been what any of us had imagined and has been hard for first years simply because it was all so new anyway and this made the challenges faced by everyone feel even more dramatic. Although, we are very lucky to still have so much ahead. I am happy that the risk of being locked in that flat are gone and at least next year I will have a living room and a garden and live with people I chose myself. But hopefully it'll be different next year, fingers crossed we will all get more of what we had imagined, and what we are paying for.



**By Anna Bulman, Second
Year Law with Chinese Law
LLB**

CAREERS IN CRIMINOLOGY, WHERE CAN STUDYING CRIMINOLOGY TAKE YOU?

PROVIDED BY SHEFFIELD'S CRIMINOLOGY SOCIETY



CRIMINOLOGY IS AN INCREDIBLE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY DEGREE THAT CAN LEAD YOU INTO A HOST OF DIFFERENT CAREER PATHS. THAT'S THE GREAT THING ABOUT IT, THERE ISN'T JUST ONE ROUTE FOR YOU TO GO DOWN ONCE YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR UNDERGRADUATE- THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER. SO, WHERE CAN STUDYING CRIMINOLOGY TAKE YOU?

First, let's discuss the primary routes. We have the obvious jobs within the police, which many go into after studying criminology. These police jobs include on the beat, army, and border control. Studying criminology gives you an advantage here, as now you need to have a degree to join the police. And when you join, you have to start at the bottom to work your way up. Then, what are your options from there? Well, there are higher up ranking policing jobs such as Detective and SCIO (very line of duty). These take a while to get but having criminology under your belt will definitely help you get there. Directly related jobs also include Crime Scene Investigation (you will need a masters for this), probation officer, and intelligence officer. Other primary routes can you take down a different road, including data analysis, community support officer, lecturer, researcher or even a sixth form teacher! The primary routes are endless, feel around and see what resonates best with you.

Now, as Criminology is multidisciplinary, it will equip you with skills that can help you in lots of different career paths. So, some jobs where criminology can help include paralegal, lawyer (you will need to do a conversion course), Government official, security (private sector), or a solicitor. These jobs will be great paths for someone studying law and criminology- as they integrate both degrees into one job. But the options don't stop there! Criminology can also help with jobs such as case worker, charity worker, counsellor (MA needed), social welfare, and criminal psychology (BPS needed). As you can see, criminology can open so many doors- especially if you do a masters in the next disciplinary you want to go into.

As mentioned, you develop lots of skills with a criminology degree, but what are they? Analysis and interpretation, intellectual debate, research and statistics, and problem solving are just a few! When applying for jobs, be sure to mention these and include examples from when you used them, and you will get far!

So, you've decided what you want to do after university. You've found the job that you cannot wait to apply for, and you've got all your skills under your belt. But what sets you apart from all the other candidates? That would be experience! But how can you get experience as an undergrad? Volunteering will be your best friend here. There are loads of Sheffield based charity that you can volunteer with.

- SnowDrop (Human trafficking victims)
- Victim Support
- In2Change
- Step Together

Besides volunteering, you can also get professional work placements through the police and prison service which will not only give you experience but give you a real taste for what it is that you want to do. Following on from this, PCSO work is also available to undergrads and is a great opportunity to gain experience on the beat with police officers. Even just getting involved with societies at university gives you loads of experience and will make you stand out from other applicants!

To summarise, criminology is so diverse that there isn't just one designated career path that stems from it. Whether you choose a direct or indirect routes after your degree, criminology will allow you to develop skills that will suit any job that you want to go into. My advice would be to volunteer and test the water, see if that job is really what you want to go into! Remember that this is your journey and nobody else's, so just see what is best for you.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Instagram- @crimsocsheff

Website link to become a member:

https://su.sheffield.ac.uk/shop?activity_id=125

MOOTING



WHAT IS A MOOT?

MOOTING IS BEST DESCRIBED AS A MOCK COURT SCENARIO. IN A MOOT YOU USE PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS IN ORDER TO ARGUE YOUR POINTS, THIS ALLOWS YOU TO DEVELOP YOUR CONFIDENCE AND ABILITY TO PERFORM UNDER PRESSURE. THIS MAKES MOOTING IMPORTANT BOTH IN DEVELOPING KEY SKILLS AND IN GIVING YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE AN INSIGHT INTO A COURT SCENARIO, INCLUDING THE DIFFERENT ROLES. AS FAR AS WHO CAN DO MOOTING, IT IS EXTREMELY BEGINNER FRIENDLY. FORMING AN ARGUMENT CAN AT FIRST SEEM DAUNTING BUT IT IS EXTREMELY REWARDING WHEN YOUR ARGUMENT COMES TOGETHER IN A WAY THAT EFFECTIVELY PUTS YOUR POINTS ACROSS. PARTICIPANTS IN A MOOT COURT COMPETITION ANALYSE A TOPIC, RESEARCH APPLICABLE LAW, PREPARE WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS, AND DELIVER ORAL ARGUMENT, SIMULATING A COURT HEARING. MOOTING ENTAILS EACH SIDE ARGUING TWO GROUNDS OF APPEAL.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SOME SIMILARITIES BETWEEN MOOTING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING AND DEBATING, IT IS NOT THE SAME. IT'S A SPECIALISED FORM OF PERSUASION ADVOCACY. FOR DECADES, IT HAS BEEN A PART OF THE PROCESS OF EDUCATING ATTORNEYS, AND IT CONTINUES TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN OXFORD'S LEGAL EDUCATION.

IF YOU'RE A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT, I CAN'T RECOMMEND HIGHLY ENOUGH GETTING INVOLVED WITH SOMETHING LIKE MOOTING. I WAS COMPLETELY THROWN IN AT THE DEEP END, INTO A WORLD OF LEGAL LANGUAGE AND ARGUMENTS THAT I COULDN'T QUITE GRASP, BUT IT WAS INCREDIBLY EXCITING. ONE OF THE REASONS THAT I WOULD RECOMMEND IT, IS THE FACT THAT I WAS THROWN IN THE DEEP END. IT WAS SCARY AT THE TIME, BUT I AM PROUD OF MYSELF LOOKING BACK BECAUSE IT WAS A BRAVE THING TO DO, ESPECIALLY HAVING HAD NO BACKGROUND IN LAW.



OUR MOOTING EXPERIENCES

WHEN I DID MY FIRST MOOT IN FIRST YEAR I WAS VERY NERVOUS AND THE SCARIEST PART WAS TO STAND IN FRONT OF THE CLASS FULL OF LAW STUDENTS AND JUDGES AND ARGUE IN A MOCK 'COURT' SITUATION. ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T MAKE IT THROUGH MANY ROUNDS OF THE COMPETITION, IF I REFLECT BACK ON IT THERE WERE A LOT OF THINGS THAT I LEARNT FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE MOOT WHICH HAS HELPED ME LATER AS IT TAUGHT ME NUMEROUS SKILLS. THE TYPE OF SKILLS IT IS POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP THROUGH MOOTING ARE RESEARCH SKILLS, AS YOU MUST EXTRACT JUST THE RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM CASES; TIME MANAGEMENT, AS YOU MUST REMAIN ON TOP OF EVERYTHING; AND ADVOCACY, SINCE HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK IN FRONT OF PRACTISING JUDGES AND BARRISTERS IS THE BEST EXPERIENCE YOU CAN ACQUIRE BEFORE ENTERING THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

I GAINED CONFIDENCE IN BOTH SPEAKING AND ADDRESSING LEGAL TERMS AFTER LEARNING HOW COURT PROCEEDINGS WORK AND HOW THE LAW APPLIES EVIDENCE TO CASES. DESPITE THE FACT THAT I DIDN'T FARE WELL IN THE COMPETITION, I ACQUIRED AN INSIGHT, A THRILLING GLIMPSE INTO A WORLD THAT HAD BEFORE SEEMED OUT OF REACH.

STUDENTS INTERESTED IN A CAREER AT THE BAR OR SIMPLY WANTING TO ENHANCE THEIR PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS MIGHT CONSIDER MOOTING AS A TECHNIQUE TO BUILD AN ARGUMENT IN A CLEAR AND COHESIVE MANNER THAT EXHIBITS THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER. MOOTING CAN BE A GREAT WAY TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND DISCUSS YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH MOOTING, LAW SCHOOL, AND PUPILLAGE/TRAINING CONTRACT APPLICATIONS.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE THINGS HAVE BEEN A LOT DIFFERENT IN COVID19, BUT THIS YEAR WE PLAN TO HOLD GIVE IT A GO SESSIONS SUCH AS NOVICE MOOT, INTERNAL MOOT WHICH CAN REALLY BE HELPFUL TO THE STUDENTS WHO WANT TO BRUSH UP ON THEIR SKILLS AND LEARN SOMETHING NEW BY PARTICIPATING IN THESE EVENTS. IF I REFLECT ON MY EXPERIENCE IT IS TAKING PART THAT COUNTS AS TAKING PART IN THESE COMPETITIONS TAUGHT ME A LOT OF SKILLS.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

BY JOINING ED BRAM YOU WILL BE KEPT UP TO DATE WITH UPCOMING COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS WE HAVE PLANNED, ALONGSIDE FINDING OUT ABOUT ANY EXTERNAL COMPETITIONS. GIVE IT A GO SESSIONS ARE A GREAT WAY TO GET A TASTER OF WHAT MOOTING, BAIL APPLICATIONS AND NEGOTIATING COMPETITION ARE LIKE!



BAR DIVISION CHAIR



AMELIA FRAGOLA-HUNT,
FINAL YEAR LAW LLB

BAR DIVISION MOOTING SECRETARIES



MIA FRISBY, 2ND
YEAR LAW LLB



RAZA ALI, FINAL
YEAR LAW LLB

SUPPORT THROUGH COURT

MY PROBONO
EXPERIENCE BY
NESTA GOULDING,
FINAL YEAR LAW
LLB



Support Through Court is a charity based throughout England and Wales which provides emotional and procedural support to individuals representing themselves at court. Owing to, the increased cuts to legal aid over the years causing individuals to be required to navigate through the complex legal system alone, often against the professional legal representation of the other party.

Experience

At support through the court, your role and responsibilities will involve dealing with numerous clients face-to-face, via telephone or through online zoom meetings. These appointments can consist of issues regarding money claims, domestic abuse, or child custodial issues, alongside all other Civil and Family law issues. This meant I was able to gain experience of dealing with numerous different clients, in a fast-paced working environment, which cannot be gained through university studies. After the initial short training sessions, you are provided from the offset, with the freedom to deal with clients on your own, using your initiative or collaborating with other members of the team. The opportunity to work independently with support from the approachable and encouraging management meant that I was able to quickly learn the process and further my knowledge of the justice system

Daily appointments often include clients attending with vast amounts of documents and court forms containing complex legal terminology, with no idea of the court process. Helping to support clients who felt overwhelmed and distressed helped me to improve my interpersonal skills and become more empathic to a client's needs. Learning how to deduce down irrelevant paperwork into appropriate bundles or applications that the court will accept also helped enhance my problem-solving skills alongside learning how to interoperate legal terminology into an understandable manner for clients. A major benefit I believe, you can gain from volunteering at Support Through Court is the ability to attend hearings with clients. Although the main responsibility is to take notes, this allows you to observe barristers presenting legal arguments and better understand the rationales behind judge's decisions. This is a great opportunity for those who are wanting to pursue a career as a barrister and has also helped me produce more well-rounded critical arguments in my academic work. requiring a minimum commitment of only 2 days a month also means that your studies will not be impacted by your commitment. Although you are required to volunteer during the exam period, working on a rota basis meant that I was able to work these days around my deadlines. Support Through Court also offers numerous optional training opportunities to help improve your legal knowledge and keep you up to date with the changes in the law. These opportunities are often provided by professionals within the field allowing for networking opportunities and the ability to improve your commercial awareness.

Final thoughts

Support Through Court has not only helped me improve my knowledge and academic work but also helped me gain immense confidence regarding applying for employment and training contracts when I finish University. Ticking off numerous boxes in the university of Sheffield graduates' attributes I would recommend Support Through Court as a Pro Bono scheme for all law students, regardless of their interest in becoming a solicitor or a barrister.

ARE LAWYERS HAPPY ?

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

Working in law can be interesting, absorbing and rewarding. However, for some it can also be stressful, difficult and sometimes overwhelming. This article looks at some of the recent research in this area and offers a few suggestions for aspiring lawyers to help them prepare for the demands of practice.

In 2020, the International Bar Association did a global survey on the mental wellbeing of legal professionals. It asked 'On balance, what impact do you feel your work as a legal professional has upon your mental wellbeing?'. Overall, 35% of respondents indicated that their work had a negative or extremely negative impact on their wellbeing, 24% of respondents indicated their work had a neutral impact and 41% indicated it had a positive or extremely positive impact. While it's good to hear that a majority found it to have a positive or neutral impact, it's still concerning to find that a minority had experienced a negative impact. This echoes other research carried out, particularly in the USA and Australia, which suggests that a minority of lawyers do experience wellbeing issues.

Of course, many people within society generally will experience issues with wellbeing at some point in their lives. This is likely to have been exacerbated over the last eighteen months with the challenges and uncertainties of living through a global pandemic. However, there are some specific factors which appear to impact upon lawyer wellbeing. One of these is the pressurized nature of the work and the billing model that is commonly used. Recording your time in six minute units and having weekly or monthly billing targets to meet can sometimes make it feel as if you are on a treadmill, constantly moving on to the next file without time to reflect or pause.

Another issue can be the demands and expectations that clients have. Lawyers are often working with clients during the most challenging and distressing periods of their lives. Even business clients may well be heavily invested in a particular issue (both financially and personally). This means lawyers are often expected to display excellent client care skills, without always receiving training in how best to do this. The increasing use of technology and the development of 'digital lawyering', while having benefits, has also sometimes led clients to expect their lawyer to be 'on call' 24/7, making it harder to put in place work-life boundaries.

Another issue can be the sense lawyers have of needing to project a 'strong' persona. This can lead to them believing that showing any sign of emotion is a weakness. In turn, trying to suppress or ignore emotion can lead to them ignoring important emotional cues about themselves and others

At present, there is a lot of work going on by the International Bar Association, the UK charity LawCare and various regulatory and representative bodies within the legal profession to tackle the issues with lawyer wellbeing. COVID-19 threw up many challenges for lawyers, for example, those with caring responsibilities. However, it now presents an important opportunity for discussions around what the post-pandemic legal profession should look like. This could eventually lead to widespread cultural and structural changes, such as introducing new billing models or ensuring managers and supervisors have appropriate wellbeing training.

**'35% OF RESPONDENTS
INDICATED THAT THEIR
WORK HAD A NEGATIVE OR
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IMPACT ON THEIR
WELLBEING'**



In the meantime, it is important for aspiring entrants to the legal profession to be aware of some of the potential challenges to wellbeing ahead of them. Not to deter them from becoming a lawyer, but to ensure they are equipped to deal with them in healthy and appropriate ways. Some ways to prepare can include:

PRACTICE YOUR SELF-CARE

Self-care is all about looking after yourself well. It can include eating nutritious food, being in a good sleep pattern, exercising regularly and ensuring study or work is balanced with hobbies and leisure time. It is important to have a healthy self-care regime in place before you enter the legal profession. Getting into good habits now will make them easier to sustain going forwards if you are facing a heavy workload or stressful situation. It will also make you less likely to adopt unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as excessive reliance on alcohol, which has been highlighted as an issue in some USA research on lawyers

BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR CHOICES

Getting into the legal profession can be competitive and challenging. This can sometimes lead to you feeling as if you have to take whatever is offered, even if it isn't really what you wanted. However, all these choices have a potential impact upon wellbeing. Therefore, it is important to do your homework and think carefully about what you want from a career when deciding upon which role, location and practice areas you are interested in.

One example could be if you wanted a training contract in Sheffield, but you end up with an offer in Birmingham it might entail you moving away from family and friends and having to settle somewhere new. Of course, for some people this can be a fantastic adventure, but others may feel they need a strong support network physically around them when embarking on a new career.

Another example could be if you are struggling to decide whether to focus on becoming a solicitor or barrister. It is important to factor in issues such as how important job security is to your peace of mind and how well you can deal with a potentially significant amount of rejection into your decision.



BE PREPARED!

There are lots of articles, blogs, webinars and other resources out there to help you think about issues with wellbeing within law. Often these are written by current, or former, legal professionals and give you a great insight into the legal working life. A good place to start is to take a look at [LawCare's blog](#) which has plenty of interesting and relevant posts on it.

To return to this article's original question of 'are lawyers happy?' The answer is probably that a lot of lawyers are happy a lot of the time. However, this can't and shouldn't be taken for granted. Starting to look after and monitor your wellbeing now, and including factors relating to wellbeing into your career planning, can help ensure you go to work with a smile on your face in future.



BY EMMA JONES, SENIOR LECTURER IN
LAW AND WELLBEING DIRECTOR OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD'S LAW
SCHOOL.



VOLUNTEERING TO COMBAT HOMELESSNESS



Our charity and volunteering secretary Laura shares her experience of working at the Sunday Centre. The Sunday Centre is a volunteer run, not-for profit organisation serving Sheffield's citizens living in poverty. As the name suggests, the Centre operates on a Sunday – filling the weekly Sunday gap when other homeless refuges close their doors. Normally the Centre opens up to provide sit-down, two-course meals in a safe environment; however, during the pandemic, rather than shutting their doors, the volunteers been providing a takeaway service, supplying guests with meal bags and clothing to those who request it.

VOLUNTEER ROUTINE

Volunteers arrive between 12:30 and 12:45. We then work to prepare and fill around 80 bags with a hot meal, snacks, fruit, a drink and bread and butter. Serving then begins at 1:30, with all bags usually distributed by 2pm. Generally, we're finished by 2:30.

That the services we offer are free does not change the fact that our role as volunteers is to serve guests with the same level of respect and professionalism that would be expected from hospitality staff.

As a volunteer, I have certainly felt that the coordinators really put you first. There is no rigid structure you have to commit to – Emails asking for volunteers are sent every Wednesday, and volunteers simply reply to express their interest in helping out on the coming Sunday, so there's no pressure to volunteer when it might be inconvenient for you.

CAREER AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS

Considering that our role is to serve guests in a friendly, professional and respectful manner, volunteering at the Sunday Centre is great experience to add to your CV when applying for hospitality jobs.

However, I have also found my volunteering to be a brilliant example of experience to add to any law CV or training contract application. My experience has taught me how to communicate with others respectfully and non-judgmentally, putting aside any prejudices or misconceptions you might otherwise possess.

Additionally, the crucial team working skills required to volunteer have massively improved my confidence when working with new people. Being able to confidently ask questions, take direction and think ahead are all skills that are improved by volunteering at the Sunday Centre.

WHAT HAS IT TAUGHT ME ABOUT HOMELESSNESS IN SHEFFIELD?

Volunteering has certainly confirmed that poverty is a big issue in our city, but it has also shown me how it is an issue that can affect anyone of any age, race, gender, culture or background

Many of our guests live in insecure accommodation with a few sleeping rough; however, the Sunday Centre serves all who are struggling to feed themselves, whether our guests are affected by poverty, substance issues, addiction, poor mental health or social exclusion.

If you are interested in joining the Sunday Centre team, a volunteer enquiry form can be found on the Sunday Centre website (<https://thesundaycentre.org>). Alternatively, if you would like to help, but are unable to spare the time on a Sunday, the Centre are always in need of clothing donations or unused toiletries. More information on this can be found on their website.

Laura is always more than happy to answer any additional questions you might have and can be contacted via email (lharmel@sheffield.ac.uk), Facebook or Instagram.

ASPIRING SOLICITORS

Since 2014, Aspiring Solicitors (AS) has become the largest and most impactful diversity platform in the legal profession. AS has assisted 4,500 diverse candidates secure training contracts and vacation schemes, including individuals who are:

- Black, Asian and minority ethnic;
- socially mobile (e.g. from low-income families, recipients of free school meals, state school attendees and the first generation in their family to go to university);
- disabled or with long-term health conditions; or
- LGBTQ+.

Historically, these successes have resulted from free one-to-one coaching and mentoring initiatives, events and employability workshops. With a focus on building confidence and refining skills and strengths, the team works with AS Members to strengthen their applications, help them excel at interview and secure an offer from the firm that's right for them. Today, AS is also able to offer a wide range of additional opportunities, including unique forums to showcase commercial awareness skills, a large and readily accessible network of professional ambassadors, and work experience placements at industry-leading commercial organisations.

AS coaching programmes, delivered by former lawyers, are available to you at each stage of your career journey. Apply for AS First to gain a grounding in commercial law and a career strategy to secure your training contract. The AS Aspire programme for second-year students and beyond entitles you to one-to-one coaching and limitless access to law firms to help you secure a training contract at your dream firm.

Mentoring programmes, run in conjunction with the likes of Facebook, Channel 4, Farfetch and Sky provide unique learning opportunities about some of the world's most successful companies.

The Professional Ambassador platform allows AS members to access a network of legal professionals that want to help directly via the AS website. Over 650 ambassadors representing over 100 law firms are putting their hand back down the ladder to provide insights about their firm and advice to those who want it.



The annual Commercial Awareness Competition is not only an effective means of improving commercial acumen, but it also thoroughly prepares candidates for law firm assessments. The Grand Final takes place at Barclays' HQ in Canary Wharf and winners are awarded six weeks' work experience at sponsoring firms, including new firms Allen & Overy and Skadden, and Barclays Legal.

A series of annual diversity events, including AS Pride, AS Ability, AS Social Mobility, AS Working Families, AS Women in Law and AS Culture, are hosted throughout the academic year. Panels of diverse professionals share their experiences of overcoming barriers within law on their road to success.

On campus, the universities team delivers a series of employability workshops and presentations at over 70 universities each academic year, the majority of which are outside the Russell Group. The HeadStart Programme combines advice from graduate recruiters, future trainees and qualified solicitors on how to successfully navigate vacation schemes and applications to law firms.



'Aspiring Solicitors was extremely helpful. It provided me with a real picture of what law firms want from an applicant. They aided us in tailoring our extra curricular activities, to suit the legal profession. It was an invaluable experience'. - Muhammad Saqlain, Treasurer for Edward Bramley Law Society, 2nd year Law LLB, AS First Candidate 2020.

Finally, work experience placements available through AS with its partner organisations with in-house legal teams include Apple, ASOS, American Express, Barclays, Network Rail, Virgin Money and XTX Markets.

AS is committed to increasing diversity in the legal profession and if you're a talented aspiring solicitor from an underrepresented group, applying for these opportunities could be the decision that secures your future in the legal profession.

Go to aspiringsolicitors.co.uk or follow AS on Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter to find out more about AS opportunities.

Necessary leniency or Legalising War Crimes? The Overseas Operations Bill

BY JACK ROBINSON, SECOND YEAR LAW LLB

The Overseas Operations Bill is currently making its way through parliament, passing through its first vote in early 2020. The Government claims that this bill is being introduced to ensure the military can operate and protect the country without fears of liberal lawyers scrutinising every decision that they make in combat. On closer inspection however, the bill appears to at the very least be sweeping potential crimes under the rug or in the extreme giving soldiers carte blanche to commit heinous crimes with virtually no chance of conviction. Despite this, the broad nature of the act regarding allowing soldiers leniency in the face of danger appears to be sensible. This difficult area needs careful consideration to balance the UK's commitment to upholding human rights and soldiers not having to carefully assess the legal ramifications during the heat of battle. This must be discussed, and the boundaries drawn to ensure the military does not become lawless and break the long-standing international restrictions on war crimes.

The content of the Bill has been carefully drafted to appear valid on first glance as just a bill to protect soldiers from undue scrutiny and other issues relating to overseas military operations. This seems fair to suggest as it is the job of the government to protect its soldiers as they are the ones who entrust them to defend the people of this country.

The act begins to take a turn into muddy waters through Section 2 as it creates a presumption against prosecution for any offence that took place 5 years before the legal proceedings are brought. This is very problematic as due to the nature of many of the charges that will be brought against soldiers will normally take many years to pass through the military system and then be passed onto a prosecutor at home, effectively giving soldiers immunity from crimes after 5 years. This appears to show the government as attempting to cover up any potential crimes by creating a bureaucratic mess for prosecutors to have to wade through to even get the case to trial, even before the inherent bias of the jury would take place during the trial. Therefore, the bill seemingly creates a bureaucratic tangle for lawyers who wish to bring a conviction and effectively giving soldiers soft immunity from prosecution.

The most extreme part of the act arises from the fact that the only war crime that is exempt from this presumption is the use of sexual violence in war. The rest of the crimes considered in the International Criminal Court Act Section 52 are exempt. This means that the act places this presumption against prosecution on heinous offences such as torture, murder of unarmed combatants and in potentially extreme circumstances acts of genocide. This is quite clearly damaging to the UK's reputation as a defender of rights. Also, this clear hypocrisy of condemning countries such as China for their weak adherence to human rights.

If other countries had introduced such a bill there would be international outcry and talks of trade sanctions which would be potentially spearheaded by the UK government. This bill seems to create a rather worrying trend of the UK military being exempt from the long-standing laws which govern the horrors of wars and ensure there is no gratuitous violence. This bill seems to circumvent the international community's views on what is deemed acceptable in times of war, causing the UK to go against its democratic principles.

The worrying nature of this bill can be highlighted by applying what the law would become to previous inquiries regarding torture and war crimes. A recent example of this would be the Baha Mousa Inquiry into soldiers conduct in the Iraq War, in which several soldiers were placed on trial for torture and the poor treatment of Iraqi prisoners. The soldiers were accused of torturing and inflicting cruel and unnecessary on civilian prisoners under the guise of trying to extract information. The claims were brought after several years and resulted in convictions for some of the accused. This is a true reflection of how the criminal court should treat serious war crimes.



While this is the current approach, if we view the Overseas Operations Bill as the law then this inquiry would have reached a vastly different outcome. Due to the length of time that had elapsed, the soldiers would have been covered by the presumption against prosecution. This would mean that it would become incredibly difficult for the conviction to be brought for a clear war crime. This shows how dangerous this bill will be if it passes into legislation. This real-world example clearly highlights how the bill creates far too much protection for soldiers who wish to abuse their position for their own sadistic pleasure. Furthermore, it damages the UK's position as one of the key defenders of human rights and diminishes the role the UK has created for itself alongside other leading nations. This is the salient issue that this bill creates as it goes against the UK's longstanding commitments to human rights and subverts the law of the UK.

The over judication of the army could become a real issue however as soldiers should not have to consider the legal ramifications of every act that they commit during a time of extreme stress. This is because soldiers are starting to face scrutiny for acts that are committed within a split second while carrying out their duty yet face prosecution. This is becoming an issue regarding soldiers who are facing murder charges while they are carrying out their duty and killing potential combatants.

A Key example of this is the case of R v Clegg. This case concerns a soldier who was stationed on a checkpoint during the troubles in Northern Ireland. He saw a car approaching his checkpoint at speed and gave a warning. When the car blew through the checkpoint he shot and killed the driver. He was found guilty of murder as the car was through the checkpoint and it was deemed that the danger had passed.

While this seems sensible for a civilian to be held accountable for a lack of self defence as the danger has passed. However, a soldier should not be held to the same standard in situations such as this. Clegg had to consider danger to both himself and the town he was protecting. Therefore, it could be seen as this conviction encroaching on his duty as a soldier to protect the area where he is stationed.

This article has aimed to highlight the devious nature of the Overseas Operations Bill and the way it aims to subvert both the UK criminal courts and international agreements on what is considered a war crime. This bill is obviously detrimental to human rights as it gives soldiers effective immunity from prosecution for war crimes if the offence took place more than 5 years ago. This has been drafted with the knowledge that offences such as these take a long time to reach prosecutors. This act would make it more difficult to prosecute war crimes which goes against the UK's reputation and previous sanctions against countries that have employed tactics such as this.

However as mentioned, there needs to be leniency for soldiers in combat zones as they are operating under extreme stress and are aiming to protect their fellow soldiers and wherever they are stationed.

Therefore, this article aims to show that there must be a balance struck between holding soldiers accountable for heinous acts and over criminalising and scrutinising soldiers as they aim to protect the country and themselves.

AN INTERVIEW WITH @SUCCESSWITHSTEPH, A TRAINEE SOLICITOR.

WE SPOKE TO STEPH, WHO IS A TRAINEE SOLICITOR WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN TUTORING AND MENTORING YOUNG STUDENTS FOR OVER EIGHT YEARS.



LET'S START WITH WHAT DID YOU STUDIED AT UNIVERSITY AND WHAT LED YOU TO PURSUE A CAREER IN COMMERCIAL LAW?

I studied Law at Durham University. I fell in love with commercial law after joining Rare. I joined the Rare foundations programme the summer after I received my IB results, and this opened my eyes to the world of commercial law. Open Days and Insight Days were the buzz words of the summer, but my biggest takeaway was learning that I could gain legal experience in a far simpler way than I had imagined. I could network. I signed up to every evening presentation I could find in my first year, and often found I was the youngest person in the room. But that did not matter, I was networking and finding out what working in a commercial law firm was like from solicitors who worked there; that was enough for me.

WHAT WAS THE APPLICATION PROCESS LIKE FOR YOU?

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WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS WHO ARE PREPARING TO ENTER THEIR APPLICATION CYCLES FOR VAC SCHEME AND TRAINING CONTRACTS?

1. Get into the right mindset
2. Do your research for the firms you're interested in; you can download a free guide here to help (<https://www.successwstephuk.com/free-resources>)
3. Put the open dates and deadlines in your calendar and set reminders
4. Reach out to people at the firms to find out more

Steph's Links:

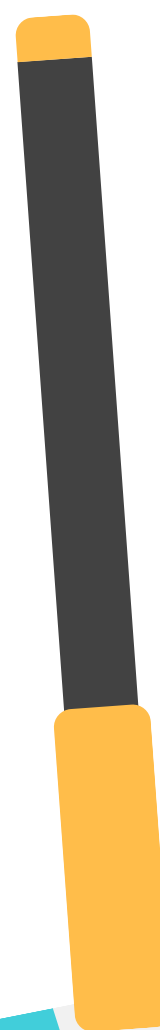
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/steph-l-169738124/> Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/successwstephuk/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/successwstephuk> Website:

<https://www.successwstephuk.com/>



CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR TRAINING CONTRACT AND I HOPE THAT YOU'RE HAVING FUN IN YOUR FIRST SEAT! TELL US A BIT ABOUT THAT YOU WILL BE DOING IN THIS ROLE?

I currently sit in the debt finance team which is a transactional practice area. This is non-contentious and my main tasks are:

Managing/liasing with local counsel in respect of the conditions precedents (things that need to be completed before a deal can close)

Filing MR01s (a statutory requirement for documents that need to go to companies house when security is created under English Law)

General business development tasks (e.g. creating slide decks on matters worked on or researching a particular area like the LIBOR transition)

Graduate recruitment support (e.g. delivering a Day in the Life of a Trainee session to students)

Drafting contracts/documents

WHAT DOES THE COMMERCIAL SIDE OF THE LAW IN PRACTISE LOOK LIKE?

It's so different to what you learn in university if you did a law degree. In my particular seat I can't even remember the last time I had to remember a particular statute or case off the top of my head! It's nice to understand more about how businesses run and what key client considerations are in matters.

WHAT TIPS OR ADVICE COULD YOU GIVE TO THE STUDENTS WHO WOULD LIKE TO BUILD ON THEIR COMMERCIAL AWARENESS?

It's so different to what you learn in university if you did a law degree. In my particular seat I can't even remember the last time I had to remember a particular statute or case off the top of my head! It's nice to understand more about how businesses run and what key client considerations are in matters.

WHAT TIPS OR ADVICE COULD YOU GIVE TO THE STUDENTS WHO WOULD LIKE TO BUILD ON THEIR COMMERCIAL AWARENESS?

Listen to the 'Wake Up To Money' Podcast on Spotify

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UNIVERSITY LIFE AND THE CORPORATE LIFE?

In University you are the master of your own time so you do what works for you. In the Corporate World as a junior you are often working with other colleagues so you need to work around what's best for them too.

WHAT IS THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE LIKE? AND LOOKING BACK NOW, WHAT IS THE ONE THING YOU WOULD TELL YOUR FIRST-YEAR SELF/FINAL-YEAR SELF?

I've found that the work/life balance is whatever you make of it. If you make the time to go out with friends/have fun etc. no one will stop you. If you want to work 24/7 no one will stop you either so you need to know how to set appropriate boundaries. Enjoy your university experience because there's nothing else like it.

AS A POC YOURSELF, ARE THERE ANY ADVICE THAT YOU WOULD GIVE TO OTHER STUDENTS THAT COME FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS? YOU WOULD TELL YOUR FIRST-YEAR SELF/FINAL-YEAR SELF?

The imposter syndrome never stops but there are some things you can do to try to manage it:

Pray (if you're religious)

Listen to affirming podcasts (like Better with Paul) Create a vision board

Recite positive affirmations whenever you feel down

**By Cheryl Lee, Final Year Law LLB,
Careers Secretary for Edward
Bramley Law Society.**



Law's other Snail Case: The Common Feeling That You Are Behind Your Peers

Hollywood is guilty of feeding the perception of Law as a glamorous, elitist career path. Actors don designer suits, flaunt briefcases and are driven by not only Bentleys, but revenge. Yet, we rarely see the actuality of what becoming a lawyer entails. Rather, the 'end goals' of success and wealth are all that is portrayed to impressionable young people, without the recognition of the struggle beneath this. This article will explore Imposter Syndrome amongst law students and the chronic feeling of being 'behind' one's peers that is exacerbated by the competitive nature of law school.

Studying Law at a Russell Group university is undeniably a privilege, with which comes the expectation of struggle. It is common for parents to chuckle when their child complains about their workload, stating that it is "why they earn so much in the future". Not only is this a false perception of the career, as not all lawyers make the extortionate amount portrayed in the media, but the concept that law students should merely accept their struggle is invalidating. This exacerbates the problematic lone-wolf approach to law school. As a result, studying Law often feels as though everyone is out for themselves, which is perceived as positive because of how competitive the career path is. Yet the lack of team spirit, unless to aid yourself, is an absurdity that I have struggled to understand throughout my time at university. Due to the feeling of being alone, it is common for students to believe that they will never be good enough, as they do not see their peers having the same experience due to the praised 'silent struggle'. This manifests itself as Imposter Syndrome, where the individual doubts themselves due to their internalised fear that they are a 'fraud' and do not deserve to be where they are.

So why is this feeling so familiar for law students in particular? The syndrome tends to impact those in high-achieving environments, which of course law school is. This feeling is only exacerbated by insecurity amongst students, leading to either bragging or dumbing themselves down - both in order to feel more worthy. This recurring cycle of grade-based worth is what makes law school an environment of great mental strain. Not only is the work hard, but constantly comparing oneself to others is even harder. This is detrimental to mental health, which can lead to burnout, as well as apathy towards studying Law.

Law can be fulfilling, not only as a vocation but also when studying it. However, the nature of law school has made it seem as though anything less than perfect is unacceptable. In reality, we are rarely as far behind others as we believe. Moreover, it should be recognised that being 'behind' is not always a bad thing; as they say, slow and steady wins the race. But studying Law should not be about 'winning'. Rather, it should be about passion and interest. Students and their universities must challenge the negative nature of studying Law - or risk the glorified subject becoming merely a Hollywood fantasy.



By Inci Miralay, Final Year
Law and Criminology LLB



THINKING ABOUT APPLYING TO CMS?

CMS IS A FUTURE FACING FIRM. WITH MORE THAN 70 OFFICES IN 40+ COUNTRIES AND 4,800+ LAWYERS WORLDWIDE, THEY COMBINE DEEP LOCAL MARKET UNDERSTANDING WITH A GLOBAL OVERVIEW, GIVING THEM THE ABILITY SEE WHAT'S COMING AND TO SHAPE IT. IN A WORLD OF EVER-ACCELERATING CHANGE WHERE TECHNOLOGY IS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF GLOBAL STRATEGIES, THEIR CLEAR, BUSINESS-FOCUSED ADVICE HELPS CLIENTS OF EVERY SIZE TO FACE THE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE.

BELOW WE INTERVIEW HAZEL FROM THE SHEFFIELD OFFICE TO FIND OUT WHAT SHE LOVES MOST ABOUT WORKING IN SHEFFIELD FOR A FUTURE FACING, GLOBAL LAW FIRM.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CMS AND THEIR TRAINING CONTRACT OPPORTUNITIES VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.CMSEARLYTALENT.COM/](https://www.cmsearlytalent.com/)



Name: Hazel Cox

Office: Sheffield

Seats you have covered to date: Real Estate Disputes, Medical Negligence, ICE disputes, Real Estate Transactions

So Hazel, why did you choose CMS?

I like the people and the culture, the variety of work and exciting clients, and the global nature of the firm.

What do you like most about working in Sheffield/The North?

I love Sheffield – I came for university and never left (like many!). I enjoy the amount of green space within the city and how close it is to the Peak District. I also enjoy cross-office/team working, as no matter where you are based you get a variety work and get to meet and work with people from other offices.

What are your top tips for someone applying to a future facing, global law firm?

1. Be yourself.
2. Keep up to date with the news – for example read the FT.
3. Know why you want to apply to that firm – is it the culture? The types of work? Have some examples and be ready to explain what made you want to apply.

What does a typical day at CMS look like for you?

WFH: Log on around 8:30. Check my emails and add anything new that has come into my to-do list. Check the FT.

Work on some of my matters – using the Land Registry to get title documents, and drafting documents such as leases, licences and CPSEs. Have a couple of calls with fee earners I am working for, or other trainees.

Take a break for lunch and go for a short walk if possible – I find this important to enable me to be refreshed ready for the afternoon.

Log back on – Check and update my to-do list and re-prioritise if necessary. Further work such as emailing clients with updates or for instructions, and emails with solicitors on the other side to negotiate documents. Some days there are team or client calls to join, or I may need to speak directly with them to negotiate documents or to confirm instructions.

Prepare my to-do list for the next day, check no urgent emails have arrived and finish time recording. Log off around 18:00.

In the office: Same as the above, except: arrive at the office around 8:30. Likely speak to colleagues in person rather than on the phone. Lunch with other trainees or members of the team. Possibly head for a drink or dinner after work with the other trainees.

NON-MOOTING COMPETITIONS



PLEA IN MITIGATION

Plea in Mitigation is a process when submissions are made by the defendant (or their representative) to the court, presenting evidence/information (usually referring to their involvement in the offence or personal circumstances) to persuade the judge and in result reduce their sentence if the mitigation is successful.

Plea in Mitigation competitions may be quite stressful, especially if it is your first time facing the Sentencing Guidelines that are used, however here are a few tips to help:

- Set out your facts clearly and concisely
- Refer to the guidelines accurately
- Be ready to back up your points with evidence

This competition develops your application of law to real life situations giving you a real life insight into the court system. It will develop your skills of planning and applying law to facts. Anyone who would like to pursue both the barrister and solicitor role in the future, especially in criminal law, should give it a go!

NEGOTIATIONS

A negotiation procedure is an out of court, non legal, dispute between two, or more, parties trying to reach a mutually beneficial settlement. This is usually done by a third party (usually a solicitor) to make arrangements much easier.

This competition develops your ability to actively listen and think on your feet, plus it is a great chance to develop your team working skills as you have to work with your partner to ensure you are on the same page as things may change during the course of negotiating.

Some tips to help with your first negotiations competition:

- Be flexible in the negotiation, however put your client needs first
- Engage with opponents arguments and rebut these well
- Go for the realistic and achievable outcome
- Communicate with your partner and have a clear plan with back up options before entering the negotiation

Taking part in this type of competition would definitely be helpful to anyone trying to pursue the career path of solicitors, especially if you would like to take on family law this would give you a great taster of what resolving conflict between parties could look like. It could help you even further in client interviews, when you are trying to find a compromise! Nevertheless, the transferable skills you will gain from this are just in general great to add to your CV.

BAIL APPLICATION

A bail application is usually made in a Magistrate court where a defendant makes their first appearance, this is when you need to be convincing enough to the judge for your defendant to be given the bail or if you are on the prosecution side for them to stay in custody.

This competition further develops your persuasion skills and articulation of particular points, it could even improve compromise skills when deciding on bail conditions.

Here are a few tips:

- Be ready to be questioned (think about what questions you could be asked)
- Engage with the court
- Try not to deliver a speech
- Be confident and to the point

This competition is perfect for any aspiring solicitor however anyone aspiring to be in the criminal barrister/prosecution service field would find this greatly beneficial. Even if these legal careers are not your forte, a real life bail application in front of a judge is one of the best experiences out there!



EXTERNAL MOOTING

PIWe also offer a number of external mooting competitions throughout the year. These are not through the University, however we will advertise on our social media platforms and via the Ed Bram email what various mooting competitions are taking place. This is your opportunity to represent the University across the country and against other Universities. Previous external moots that we have participated in are the National Mooting competition in Leeds, the Manchester Speed Moot and the Oxford OUP Moot.

THIS UPCOMING ACADEMIC YEAR

With face to face teaching resuming soon and our lives slowly getting back to normal we cannot wait to hold these competitions in person, in front of judges with zero zoom issues. With any restrictions in mind we would like to increase the competition amount especially for first year students to have a try at each of these great events before applying to go against others in the law school. This would be a great opportunity to find out what each of these competitions involves plus build on the confidence we sometimes need!

BAR DIVISION EXTERNAL COMPETITIONS AND ACTIVITIES SECRETERIES

EWA WAWRZYNSKA, SECOND YEAR LAW (EUROPEAN AND INTRENATIONAL) L0B



LUCHO HADZHIGENOV, SECOND YEAR LAW LLB



97%. A percentage we've all come to associate with one thing over the past few months – sexual harassment against women. We all know someone who's been at the brunt of the inappropriate actions of another – it may even be you – but we should also know at least one person fighting against it. We all should be.

Intersectional feminist campaigns and groups are at the heart of change, but this doesn't appear to be the opinion of the government in their new Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. Priti Patel said she is "determined to give the police the powers they need to crack down on perpetrators and carry out their duties to protect the public", but this isn't enough. The same level of importance needs to be placed on inciting systemic changes within education, and when people are young, to prevent the crimes being committed in the first place.

Like music to our ears, the Department of Education is aiming to develop support for teachers delivering health, sex, and relationships guidance to students nationally. This is vital in tackling sexual harassment and misogyny as this is where inappropriate messages tend to be ingrained in young people.

Achieving change can only be done by consulting women and girls and taking their lived experiences into account. Funds need to be directly invested in women-led decision making and co-design to ensure our streets are created with our safety and wellbeing in mind. The Women's Design Commission was the first glimmer of hope for this in the 1980s, shortly dimmed when it was ceased due to a lack of funding.

Although it's great to see public sexual harassment being reviewed to close the legal gaps, there's currently no full commitment to criminalising it. The police being given the most important role in ending violence against women and girls is limiting. This power needs to be embedded in every community, especially those with lived experience, not just in a single police role.

FOR THE 97%



The issue with too much power and funding being invested in the police and government strategies is that groups and citizens find it difficult to fit into their systems and how they operate – it requires being invited in from the outside, which can be extremely daunting.

The recent acknowledgement of women's suffering by the government is a huge achievement in itself, but the long-term impacts of public sexual harassment need to be reinforced further and wider than ever before. Everyone needs to be aware of how degrading it is and that females are always required to be instinctive due to its normalisation in today's society – and that's where groups and campaigns like Our Bodies Our Streets come in.

Through creativity, protest, and empowerment, Our Bodies Our Streets campaign for safer spaces free from public sexual harassment. The Sheffield-based intersectional feminist group was only launched in July 2020, yet has made some pivotal progress. From a socially distanced protest in November last year, to starting a petition in January asking Sheffield City Council to light up parks, the past year has been a ride but it's just the beginning.

From a lightbulb moment in March 2020, the public art lighting installation is now a reality at The Ponderosa, Sheffield. The group fundraised £1000, £500 of which was donated by the Architecture Department at the University of Sheffield, towards the project. Created by student engineer Kai Damani, MA Landscape Architecture graduate Emma Beaumont, and Architecture and Landscape student Alison Romaine, the installation now takes pride of place at The Ponderosa – and will until September.

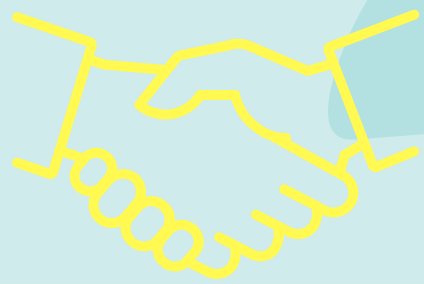
Our Bodies Our Streets, along with their supporters in Sheffield and beyond, believe women and marginalised genders have the right to an inclusive city, and to thrive in their everyday lives free from the fear of harassment. This is not a women's issue to solve, rather it's men's work to do. Society must call out the culture of misogyny, racism, and male violence – and it starts with you.

**BY KATIE WHEATLEY, REPRESENTATIVE FOR OUR BODIES
OUR STREETS CAMPAIGN GROUP**

* COMMERCIAL * AWARENESS TIPS

WHAT IS COMMERCIAL AWARENESS?

COMMERCIAL AWARENESS IS BEING KNOWLEDGEABLE OF PRESENT AND UPCOMING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS. IN GREATER DETAIL, THIS INVOLVES: PESTLE (POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL) ISSUES, BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS AND SUBSEQUENTLY HOW IT AFFECTS BUSINESSES AND LAW FIRMS.



WHY IS COMMERCIAL AWARENESS IMPORTANT?

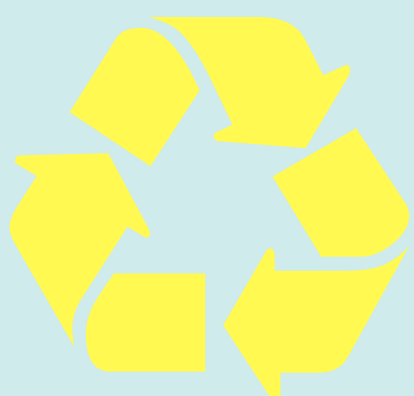
THERE ARE MANY REASONS AS TO WHY COMMERCIAL AWARENESS IS IMPORTANT. FIRSTLY, WHEN PRACTICING LAW, CLIENTS EXPECT THEIR LAWYERS TO UNDERSTAND AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE WIDER ECONOMIC CLIMATE SUCH AS EFFECTS ON STAKEHOLDERS, CHANGES TO REGULATORY BODIES, BUSINESS STRATEGY/OPERATING MODELS AND COMPETITORS. THIS IS TO ENSURE LEGAL ADVICE, ON BOTH CONTENTIOUS AND NON-CONTENTIOUS MATTERS, IS BESPOKE AND IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CLIENT.

COMMERCIAL AWARENESS IS ALSO INTEGRAL, IN REGARD TO UNDERSTANDING HOW LAW FIRMS OPERATE AS BUSINESSES. LAW FIRMS MOST OFTEN, ARE BIG CORPORATIONS THAT EQUALLY WANT TO EXPAND AS BUSINESSES, AND HAVE A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. AS A TRAINEE, YOU ARE AN INVESTMENT FOR WHICH A LAW FIRM INTENDS TO SEE A BUSINESS RETURN ON. THEREFORE TO BE MORE EMPLOYABLE, YOU OUGHT TO HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MARKETABILITY AND NETWORKING TO DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO PLAY A ROLE IN THEIR BUSINESS PROGRESSION.

LAW FIRMS MAY ASK YOU TO DEMONSTRATE THIS PARTICULAR KIND OF COMMERCIAL AWARENESS WITH A QUESTION SUCH AS:

'DESCRIBE AND EXPLAIN A FACTOR THAT WILL AFFECT HOW LAW FIRMS OPERATE WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS'.

WITH THIS, YOU MAY CHOOSE TO CONSIDER A KEY LEGISLATIVE CHANGE, COVID, BREXIT, TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES, SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT.



HOW TO DEVELOP COMMERCIAL AWARENESS

IT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO DEVELOP YOUR COMMERCIAL AWARENESS, BUT THIS CANNOT BE DEVELOPED OVERNIGHT. INSTEAD, IT TAKES TIME AND REQUIRES CONSISTENCY. THE NEWS IS ALWAYS CHANGING AND WHAT AFFECTS BUSINESSES CHANGES OVERTIME. THEREFORE, CONSISTENCY IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE THAT THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE IS NOT OUTDATED.

1*

BEFORE READING BUSINESS ARTICLES, I HAVE PERSONALLY FOUND IT EASIER TO FIRST GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE BUSINESS TERMINOLOGY BEING USED. THEREFORE, I RECOMMEND ENGAGING IN FOUNDATIONAL PREREQUISITE READING. THIS INCLUDES LITERATURE BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COMMERCIAL AWARENESS BY CHRISTOPHER STOAKES

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CITY BY CHRISTOPHER STOAKES
COMMERCIAL LAW HANDBOOK BY JAKE SCHOGGER

2*

ADDITIONALLY, CONDUCTING AN INITIAL PESTLE AND SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE BUSINESSES YOU ARE READING ABOUT ALSO HELPS TO UNDERSTAND HOW SAID ARTICLE AFFECTS THEIR BUSINESS STRATEGY AND OPERABILITY. PESTLE STANDS FOR IMPLICATIONS THAT ARE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL. SWOT STANDS FOR STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS.

A BRIEF EXAMPLE:

UBER V ASLAM ([LINK TO LEGAL IMPLICATION](#)) UNDER UBER'S CURRENT BUSINESS STRATEGY, AFFECTS UBER'S LOW OPERATIONAL COSTS. THEREFORE, THIS HAS COLLATERAL EFFECTS ON ITS STAKEHOLDERS SUCH AS CONSUMERS, AS THEY HAVE TO INCREASE FARE PRICES TO MEET THE 20% VAT INCREASE. THIS IN TURN, CAN HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON UBER'S COMPETITIVENESS AND MARKET DOMINANCE ([LINK TO STRENGTH FROM SWOT](#)), AS THEY ARE PRICED THE SAME IF NOT MORE THAN A REGULAR TAXI COMPANY. THIS CAN THEN FURTHER BE LINKED TO MARKETABILITY AND ATTRACTIVENESS TOWARDS INVESTORS, WHICH UBER NEEDS IN ORDER TO EXPAND AND OPERATE. BUT WHAT ABOUT IF UBER CHANGES THEIR OPERATING MODEL TO EXERT LESS CONTROL OVER THEIR DRIVERS? WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THIS CHANGE?

3*

THERE ARE EXTENSIVE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO EQUIP YOU WITH BUSINESS NEWS, SUCH AS UBER V ASLAM, FOR WHICH YOU CAN APPLY PRE-REQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND ANALYSIS TO. THIS INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- WATSON'S DAILY PODCAST ON SPOTIFY
- THE BUSINESS UPDATE ON INSTAGRAM
- THE GUARDIAN
- THE FINANCIAL TIMES
- THE ECONOMIST
- LAW CAREERS NET AND THE LAWYER PORTAL NEWSLETTERS



UBER



40

4*

YOU CAN ALSO ENGAGE WITH THE COMMERCIAL WORLD MORE PRACTICALLY, BY GAINING LEGAL AND NON-LEGAL WORK EXPERIENCE. FOR EXAMPLE, WORKING WITHIN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY I WAS EXPOSED TO HOW A COFFEE SHOP OPERATES. UNDERSTANDING HOW PROFITS TRANSLATE INTO WAGES AND PAYMENT OF OVERHEADS, OPERABILITY EFFECTS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY LAWS, HOW THEY MARKETED THEMSELVES TOWARDS CUSTOMERS IN THE CITY, WHAT THEIR UNIQUE SELLING POINT WAS AGAINST COMPETITORS AND HOW CORPORATE VALUES WERE UPHELD IN THEIR WORKFORCE. A CORE TALKING POINT WITHIN EXPERIENCES LIKE THIS, IS DISCUSSING IN APPLICATIONS/INTERVIEWS WHEN YOU RECOGNISED OR IDENTIFIED A KEY BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY. FOR ME, IT WAS SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS SAYING, 'STARBUCKS (A CORE CITY COMPETITOR) CAPITALISES ON THE CURRENT TREND OF A PLANT BASED DIET. THEREFORE I SUGGESTED TO THE OWNER THAT WE TRIAL USING PLANT-BASED MILK ALTERNATIVES, AND VEGAN TEA POWDERS TO GAGE WHETHER THIS IS POPULAR WITH OUR CUSTOMERS AND COULD INCREASE OUR MARKETABILITY'.



BY WILL JONES, SECOND YEAR LAW LLB, CAREERS SECRETARY FOR EDWARD BRAMLEY LAW SOCIETY



SUPPORTED BY ALICE SMITH, FINAL YEAR LAW LLB, VICE PRESIDENT FOR EDWARD BRAMLEY LAW SOCIETY



MUHAMMAD SAQLAIN, SECOND YEAR LAW LLB, TREASURER FOR EDWARD BRAMLEY LAW SOCIETY

FREELAW

The Challenges of Virtual ProBono Work Experience.

FreeLaw is a legal advice clinic based in the School of Law at the University of Sheffield and is free to members of the public. The clinic is led by law students and supervised by a solicitor who checks over the advice before it is issued. The clinic is appointment based, and students have the opportunity to interview clients and research various areas of the law. I joined FreeLaw in 2019 and have since been involved with a range of different cases focusing on areas such as Unfair Dismissal in Employment law and discrimination claims under the Equality Act. As a result of the discontinuation of face-to-face teaching, I was initially under the impression that FreeLaw would be put on hold for the year but despite the challenges of the pandemic, we were able to keep the clinic open and continue to interview clients throughout the year virtually. The clinic adapted to the circumstances, using an online booking system for appointments, and delivering virtual interviews via Google Meet.

Usually, we would have sessions to discuss cases and conduct research, but due to government restrictions the delegation of tasks and research also had to take place online. The students adapted to this well covering for each other's tasks. Researching the law was more of an independent task without the in-person sessions as we were not surrounded by other law students with whom to discuss the legal issues, and instead did all of the research at home.



By Zainab Suleman, 3rd Year Law (With Year Abroad) LLB

Hosting a virtual law clinic demanded a greater emphasis on punctuality, an example of this is signing in early due to the possibility of technical difficulties and ensuring that we were on time to join the client in the call.

It was frustrating to prepare for an interview, for the client to not show up, or to cancel last minute which happened frequently with online bookings. It is easier to remember a face-to-face appointment than a call. In addition to this, some clients struggled to access the appointments, particularly clients who were not accustomed to using technology and were unfamiliar with video calls. This may have deterred some individuals from approaching the clinic, and some members of the public may not have been aware that the option of online appointments was available to them in the first place.



Some clients struggled to access the appointments, particularly clients who were not accustomed to using technology and were unfamiliar with video calls'

By far the most challenging aspect of the online interviews was the difficulty in communicating. Through conducting face-to-face interviews last year, I learnt the importance of building a good rapport with clients so that they felt comfortable enough to discuss their legal issues. Strong communication with clients meant that it was easier to establish what the actual legal issue was and made it easier to take notes and ask questions about the scenarios that they would describe. A lot of communication relies on the use of gestures and face-to-face interaction which is lost in a video call. An example of this is keeping eye contact, which is hard to do on a call, and taking notes while still ensuring that I was paying attention to what the client was saying. There would be lags and delays which made it harder for the conversations to flow as I was afraid of talking over the client. Although it may have been difficult to pick up social cues through a screen, some clients enjoyed being in the comfort of their homes and found the process straightforward. There are definitely advantages to virtual interviews, such as saving the time and cost of travel, and the convenience of being at home. The experience taught me that people do not benefit from face-to-face interactions equally as some individuals prefer digital communication. This led me to think that post-pandemic law firms should keep the option of digital communication and consider incorporating some form of virtual consultation or interview system for those who would prefer this method of communicating. Offering this option would allow inclusivity for different types of people. Some firms have already incorporated this practice, and even have virtual chats so that people can type up their queries in a live chat instead of having to video call.

There are definitely advantages to virtual interviews, such as saving the time and cost of travel, and the convenience of being at home.'

Doing pro bono work in the past year was especially helpful to the public as the uncertainty and stress of a pandemic meant that some people needed legal assistance even more, so I am glad that students and supervisors worked hard to keep the clinic open despite the challenges.

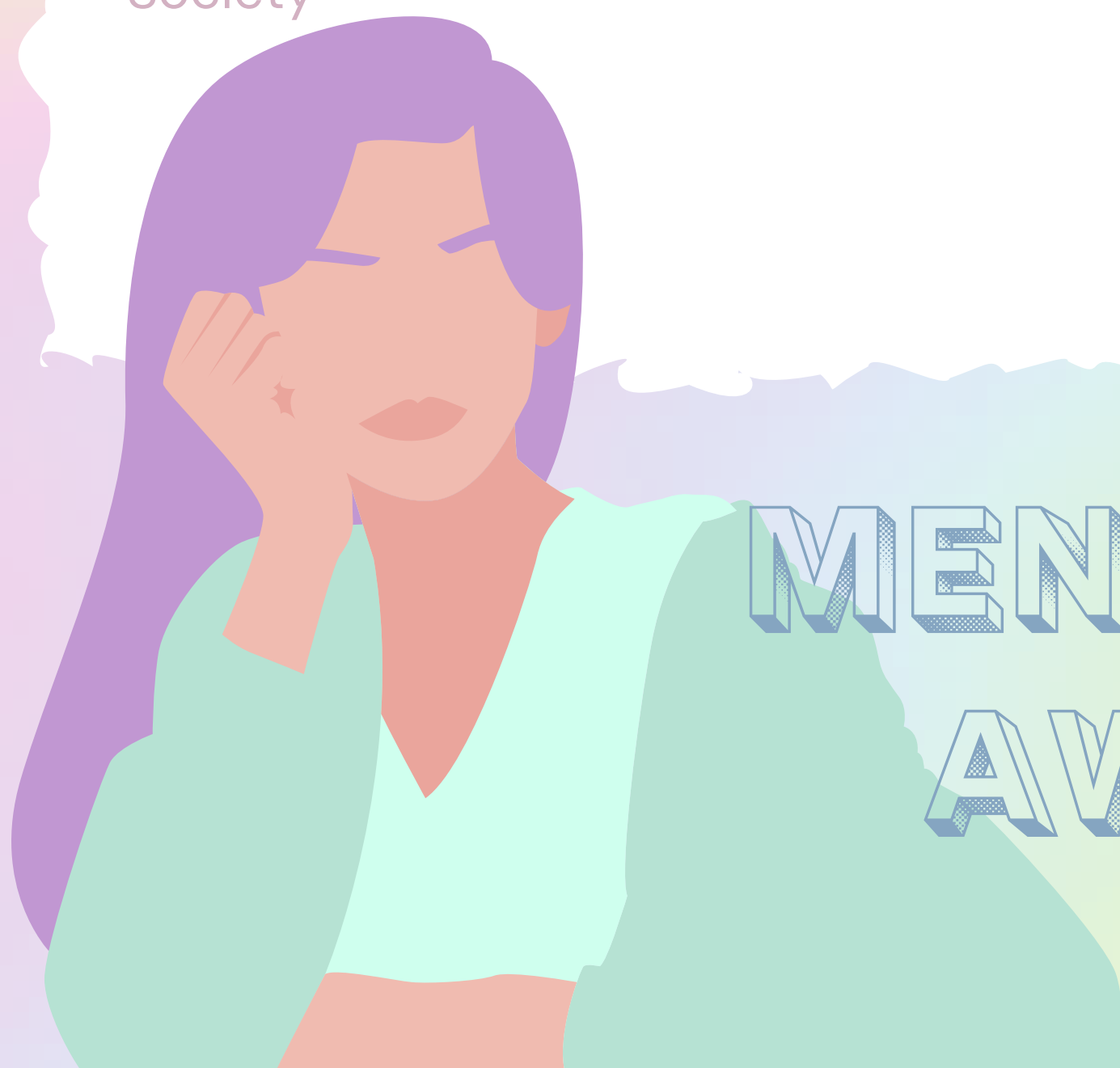


Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England has a core mission of raising mental health awareness among the general population throughout the country. On the 28th July 2021, me and my fellow Social Secretaries took part in the Mental Health Aware Half Day Course. The aim of the session was to break down stigmas surrounding mental health issues and focus on how to start a conversation with someone regarding their mental health.

We started the session by asking 'What is mental health?' and looking at the mental health continuum which shows how a person's mental health may fluctuate over time. Furthermore, we looked at factors which influence our mental health, including our environment and social skills and how our 'thinking distortions' can prompt behaviours and distressing feelings within us. Throughout this session, we took part in group exercises/discussions which included talking about our own stresses and our coping strategies for these. In the second half of the session, we looked at different mental health conditions, most notably the symptoms and treatments of each (e.g depression, anxiety disorders and eating disorders). I felt the most useful thing we looked at was the 'Take 10 Together' toolkit which looked at signs, both physical and emotional, that someone is struggling with their mental health and the key strategies to start a conversation.

Overall, the session taught me how to appropriately start a conversation with someone regarding their mental wellbeing whilst making them feel safe and giving them a space to talk through their struggles and look at potential solutions/strategies to help deal with this. I think it's so important that more people become mental health aware because when people struggle in silence is when problems grow. It's also important to look after our own mental health and to know when we need to take a step back and re-evaluate the situation we're in and look at what needs to change to improve this. I really hope more people choose to take part in MHFA whether that's just to become aware or fully trained. It's so important to look out for one another and have people who are trained to deal with situations just like with a physical condition.

By Rhianna Turner, Second Year Law LLB,
Social Secretary for Edward Bramley Law
Society



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORT

Hi my name is Liv and I am the Sports Secretary for Edward Bramley this year. I will be going into the final year of my law degree this year, and this will be my second year as Sports Secretary. I am excited to carry out this role in what will hopefully be a more normal year.

My role involves overseeing Law Sport which currently consists of a Netball team run by Lucy Morgan and a football team run by Ben Harrison. Both teams train, play matches and attend socials together. I will be in charge of arranging socials, organising kit and the general running of the teams.

Law Sport is a great way to meet new people and keep active without the commitment of the University teams. It provides a fun and relaxed way to play sport, meet new course mates, and either train casually or play competitively against other University Societies.

This year I am looking forward to hopefully being able to run some proper socials for the teams. This would usually entail a bar crawl in fancy dress ending up in Roar. The socials are a great opportunity to meet other people on your course and mix with a new group of law students. This is something I found really beneficial in my first year, Law Netball meant I was able to meet many law students from different years, and is something I will be encouraging at socials throughout the next year wherever possible.

A tournament had also been a previous plan of mine, involving other Law teams from various Universities coming together and playing friendly matches against each other before a night out. This is something I am hoping to look into organising this year, as for the past two years it has not been possible to arrange events like this. A similar event is the Law Sports trip away, previously I understand this has been to Manchester where friendly matches are played before a night out. This again is something that can be arranged this year, as hopefully restrictions remain lifted, and gives the teams a great opportunity to socialise together.

I would also like to introduce a new kit, Law Sport fleeces have previously been popular. I would be open to suggestions of any other kit that the teams would like to have arranged over the coming year.

Overall I am really excited for the year ahead, and look forward to meeting you all, hopefully lots of new faces, and many returning too. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions, my email is ohill4@sheffield.ac.uk.

BY OLIVIA HILL, FINAL YEAR LAW
LLB , SPORTS SECRETARY FOR
EDWARD BRAMLEY LAW SOCIETY





Studying Remotely from Sri Lanka .

By Nadia Salie, Final Year Law LLB



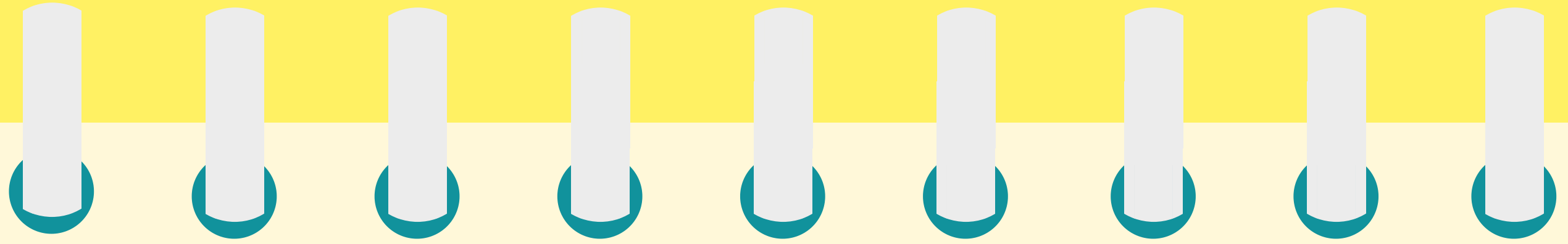
When I hurriedly returned my accommodation keys and boarded a plane back home to Sri Lanka in spring of 2020, I naively went off thinking that 'I'll be back on campus in no time'. As the COVID-19 pandemic only intensified from that moment onwards, my stay at home slowly extended, month after month. I could never have imagined at the time that now (almost a year and a half later), I'd be 2/3 done with my degree, yet still 8800 kilometers away from Sheffield.

Covid-19 has drastically altered the educational landscape for millions of university students across the globe, and international students such as myself face our own set of distinct challenges. In my case, the lockdowns' which have been imposed in Sri Lanka have been notoriously more intense when compared to those of the UK. If you think you had it bad, there was a time where we weren't allowed out of our homes for 2 months straight, not even for daily exercise. Easing regulations meant the introduction of an ID system, where civilians were let out in accordance to their ID number's last digit (yes, this was as much of a disaster as it sounds). The monotonous nature of life at home made finding the motivation to study especially challenging, something I think everyone studying remotely can relate to irrespective of their particular geographic location.

This being said, being on a tropical island came with some silver linings: instead of completing my January exams whilst shivering in Sheffield, a majority of my alternative exams were actually written by the beach, whilst overlooking the Indian Ocean. Most excitingly, what would've been much dreaded 9 ams, suddenly became 2:30 pm lectures due to the time difference. This was unexpectedly advantageous to my learning as I no longer arrived half-asleep to any lectures. Additionally, it meant I had prior time to revise during the day, so that I could truly make the most out of any crucial seminars. Moreover, the added flexibility provided by online learning meant that I was able to simultaneously receive much needed work experience interning in a local law firm alongside my studies.

It was interesting to see how my first year knowledge of UK law would transfer into a practical work environment in Sri Lanka. This experience solidified my aspirations of becoming a solicitor, a conclusion I may have not reached without the Pandemic's influence. Thus I would say I am one of those odd students whom feels they have actually benefited from remote learning overall. When I reflect back on the year, I try to focus on these positives as much as possible.

Looking ahead, it is clear that the implications of the pandemic are far-reaching and what we know as 'normal' may not necessarily be a reality again. Therefore, the need to be dynamic as an individual and in my learning has been emphasised to me. There are certainly some indispensable skills I have gained in coping with the current situation; remote learning has given me more autonomy over my time, the ability to self-reflect, as well as developing greater confidence with technological and time management skills. These are skills I am keen to transfer into my future career. I consider myself lucky to have been able to have at least a taste of the pre-covid 'normal' university experiences one might expect from the initial few months of my degree, back in 2019. From making new friends, joining various societies, and plenty of eventful nights out, I had plenty to reminisce about this past year. If there is any wisdom I have gained from this experience it is to make the most of any opportunity while you can. After a long year at home, I am looking forward to returning to the UK, my final year of my LLB, as well as any additional endeavors presented to me, more than ever.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Register your interest via Facebook

Webinar: Law School 101, Monday 20th September

An introduction on the pathway to becoming a Solicitor/Barrister + meet the Committee. The webinar will be hosted via google meet. (Fresher only)

Sheffield Treasure Hunt, Tuesday 21st September

A treasure hunt around campus/iconic spots in Sheffield, to win a prize at the end!
(Fresher only)

Law Netball and Football Drop Taster, Wednesday 22nd September

All genders and experience welcome to test out if our sports teams are for you!

Activities Fair, Thursday 23rd September

Come and visit our stall at the University of Sheffield Activities Fair! The Activities Fair is hosted in The Octagon, next to the Student's Union.

Ed Bram Pub Quiz, Thursday 23rd September

Join us after the Activities fair for a classic pub quiz, the perfect pre-drinks! (Fresher only)

Tropical Bar Crawl, Friday 24th September

Join us for a lively introduction to the best nightlife spots in Sheffield. Bar crawl route TBC, stay tuned!

