

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON GLOBAL LEGAL CLINICS

# WINTER NEWSLETTER

February 2026

## What is Included:

- **Welcome back [1]**
- **Winter Fundraiser [2-3]**
- **LawWorks Pro Bono Award Ceremony [4-5]**
- **McKenzie Friend [6-7]**
- **Legal Services Board Event [8-10]**
- **All things applications- Tips and Tricks with our Future Trainee's [11-20]**
- **Student advisor of the autumn quarter - year 1 winner [21]**
- **Student advisor of the autumn quarter - year 2 winner [22]**
- **Student advisor of the autumn quarter - year 3 winner [23]**

## Reminders

- **McKenzie Friend and Court Form Filling dates in your inboxes!**
- **Keep an eye on your inbox for upcoming talks/panel events!**

## Upcoming Events

- **Commercial Clauses Workshop - 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026**
- **Please look out for events coming up this semester**

## Contact Info

Instagram: @uoslegalclinic

LinkedIn: University of Southampton Legal Clinics

Created by Lizzie Brooke and Izzy Casey

# WELCOME BACK

Welcome back everyone, we hope your exams went well and you are settling into your new modules.

We are aware that application season is in full swing and, in light of this, we have an exclusive application tips and tricks article in this newsletter.

Be sure to keep an eye on your inbox and our social media for opportunities to help the local community by enhancing access to justice, and for opportunities for you to network and expand your own skills, gaining real life work experience!

# WINTER FUNDRAISER

*By Saleema Flynn, JLAP Lead*

In December, I had the privilege of organising our Winter Fundraiser as part of my role as a Junior Lawyers Against Poverty Lead, working alongside Lawyers Without Borders. After several months of preparation, the event became a positive evening bringing students together to support access to justice initiatives.

We were very grateful to welcome guest speakers who generously shared their personal journeys into the legal profession, offering valuable insight into different pathways at the Bar and in practice. Thank you to Kieran Whitt from Churchers Solicitors, Holly Laugesen and Mary Maynard from 12CP Chambers, and Melissa Polychronakis from Irwin Mitchell for taking the time to contribute.

# WINTER FUNDRaiser

*By Saleema Flynn, JLAP Lead*

Following the talks, the evening continued with fundraising activities and charity games, including a Kahoot, which helped create an engaging and community focused atmosphere. Working closely with my fellow organisers Nilana Manimaran and Shann Jalaly, we were proud to raise over £100 for Advocate.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event. It was a wonderful reminder of the impact students and legal professionals can have when working together for a good cause.

# LAWWORKS PROBONO AWARD CEREMONY 2025

*By Cecily Luther, A-Law Lead*

On the 3rd of December 2025, Isabelle Casey, Leyla Mammadova and I had the pleasure of attending the LawWorks Pro Bono Awards 2025 alongside the Global Legal Clinic's (GLC) supervising solicitors. The GLC was shortlisted for 'Best New Pro Bono Activity' following the success of the McKenzie Friend and Court Form Filling Assistance programmes. It was fantastic to see both programmes recognised due to the hard work of all the GLC members which has led to the positive impact they have made on so many individuals within the wider community.

Attending the event at the Law Society was an amazing experience with a tangible sense of community. Being in the same room as so many driven individuals all united by the aim of increasing access to justice was inspirational and it was excellent to witness the effort law firms and university clinics have put into their respective initiatives being recognised and rewarded.

# LAWWORKS PROBONO AWARD CEREMONY 2025

*By Cecily Luther, A-Law Lead*

It was great to see Hodge Jones & Allen Solicitors, official GLC sponsors, take home the award for ‘Best Contribution by a Small or Medium Firm’ after they partnered with multiple universities, a charity and a local Citizens Advice to deliver a personal injury legal clinic. Hodge Jones & Allen’s sponsorship of the University of Southampton Global Legal Clinic has been instrumental in the GLC’s success. The firm’s sponsorship has contributed to the GLC being able to deliver services including the McKenzie Friend and Court Form Filling programmes which continue to aid so many individuals in accessing legal support.

# MCKENZIE FRIEND PROJECT

*By Danica Custance, General Secretary*

In early December 2025, I attended court with the Clinic's McKenzie Friend program and was partnered with Lizzie Brooke, one of the Legal Clinic's Media and Publicity Leads, for the day. Lizzie and I had the opportunity to work with clients who were attending court that day and attend court with them for the entire process, including while judgement was given.

There is so much benefit to being in the McKenzie Friend program, and part of that is simply having the opportunity to look at court forms and understand what relevant information and evidence may look like. It was also fascinating to see how a judge analyses and weighs differing, and sometimes contradictory, information that is being presented during statements. Because of this, I would highly suggest that legal clinic students apply for this opportunity regardless of whether they are interested in becoming a solicitor or a barrister.

# MCKENZIE FRIEND PROJECT

*By Danica Custance, General Secretary*

The biggest benefit that I got from working with clients was understanding how I could enhance their legal acumen. While speaking to them they were very well read on the topics that they were arguing as litigants in person, but they were also very thankful for our understanding of the court process and our presence as emotional support. This was because their experience with the legal system was limited to this one interaction in which they had to utilise the legal system, rather than Lizzie and I's more expansive experience of learning about the history, operation, and rules of the system. As such, we were able to explain what was occurring and help make sure that they were feeling calm and confident when they were in the court room.

It was an amazing experience that I enjoyed immensely and would encourage everyone to get involved with.

# LEGAL SERVICES BOARD EVENT

*By Danica Custance (General Secretary) and Jessica Bosworth  
(Environmental Law Lead)*

Danica Custance and Jessica Bosworth had pleasure of speaking at the Legal Services Board Engagement Event in Southampton in early December. It was an event focused on discussing the future of regulation in the legal sector and to hear from legal professionals about how they engage with legal regulations and to hear what challenges they face that may be alleviated in the new business plan. There was a discussion period after the speeches and there was lots of interesting debate about how legal professionals could support communities and whether the LSB and current regulation contributed or restricted this ability to offer support.

The consultation and the report are available below if anyone is interested in looking further into the outcome of the event.

<https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/our-work/consultations-2/open-consultations-2>

# LEGAL SERVICES BOARD EVENT

*By Danica Custance (General Secretary) and Jessica Bosworth  
(Environmental Law Lead)*

## **Danica's Reflection:**

This opportunity presented me with an interesting opportunity to improve upon my public speaking, professional writing, legal research, and critical thinking skills. I really enjoyed the process of develop an interesting and relevant idea to speak about in front of legal professionals, especially while knowing that it would be a topic of discussion after we presented. It was also a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with Jessica and problem-solve how to write a cohesive discussion that would be presented semi-jointly. Additionally, I found it incredibly interesting to gain insight into how legal regulation are created and implemented, and to discuss the current changing standards, such as the new SQE, with established professionals.

# LEGAL SERVICES BOARD EVENT

*By Danica Custance (General Secretary) and Jessica Bosworth  
(Environmental Law Lead)*

## **Jessica's Reflection:**

Speaking at the LSB event was a fantastic opportunity to learn more about the practical implications of legal regulation for legal professionals, as well as its subsequent impact on access to justice. Furthermore, it was really exciting to present our own ideas on how legal regulation is likely to develop, particularly in response to rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and technology. Having had the opportunity to work with an AI start up, [CaseCraft.AI](#) through their partnership with the Legal Clinic, it was a great opportunity to draw on and share what I had learnt over the past three months and to introduce the platform as an example of how legal services are likely to develop over the next 5–10 years. Through the discussion panel, it was also great to engage in conversation about how closely innovation and regulation will need to work together and how legal professionals may need to adapt in order to help enhance access to justice.

For both Danica and me, the event was a personal success, as neither of us had never spoken publicly at an event like this before. It was therefore a fantastic opportunity to push ourselves outside our comfort zones and improve our confidence in public speaking.

# ALL THINGS APPLICATIONS- TIPS AND TRICKS WITH OUR FUTURE TRAINEE SOLICITORS

*By Akarshaa Bhargava (Future Trainee at CMS), Lizzie Brooke (Future Trainee at Moore Barlow), Tia Munton-Lowe (Future Trainee at Clifford Chance)*

## How to build your commercial awareness:

- Listen to podcasts daily e.g. FT News Briefing, News Agents
- Look at the news daily and think about how a variety of articles (business, legal, financial, social, political) apply to the firm and their clients/potential clients, and think about what law/departments are engaged
- Get involved with writing articles for different platforms on commercial awareness issues
- Attend open days to understand how law firms work and make money
- Look at the firm's own articles/blog entries on market issues/events
- Consider the above tips in relation to how this would help/affect a business

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## Application Questions:

- Identify common application questions and master these—come up with a structure that works and ensures you are including all necessary points e.g. practice areas of interest, your own experiences, firm values, what makes the firm unique
- Identify what the question wants from you e.g. ‘what is your greatest achievement’—this question may want to see a journey toward this achievement, looking at any setbacks you had, how you overcome these and persisted
- Use the STARR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result, Reflection)
- Practice and reflect on previous applications
- You can link back to a case the firm has worked on or mention a conversation you had with someone at the firm to tailor your responses
- Create research tables for firms covering practice areas, deals, when it was founded, mergers etc. This helps to answer questions related to the firm
- Do not reuse application answers, you need to tailor your answers to the firm by looking at what they do, their focus point, their clients etc
- Link the firm’s recent cases/deals to your own interests, experience, modules you have done etc

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## **Pre-recorded interviews:**

- Keep research tables to hand and memorise the firms core values and when you have demonstrated this value
- Body language is key- do not just read off a screen, show confidence in your answers and that you know what you are talking about
- Try and have model answers using the STARR method for different skills, scenarios, and common interview questions
- Practice recording yourself in a time limit, then watch back and see where you can improve
- Talk to people who have recently been through the process and ask for guidance and tips
- Make sure to have common questions prepared (why this firm, why commercial law, why this department)
- Plan a confident closing sentence so you finish each answer sounding purposeful then than trailing off

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## **In-person/Teams interviews:**

- Create a table with as many different skills/values as possible and provide three examples from your personal, educational, and academic life where you have demonstrated these
- Look at the firms 'what are we looking for' section to see what skills they value and make sure to have examples of these
- Look on different websites, like U-Law, which give examples of situational and strength bases questions and practice answering these aloud and without notes
- Think before speaking, stay calm, and show confidence, it is okay to take a minute to think

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## Online tests (Watson Glaser, situational tests, best answer response tests):

- Practice as much as you can
- Use online tests from firm websites and the Commercial Law Academy
- Create a cheat sheet giving a summary for each section and an example to read over before you begin
- For situational judgement tests, create a guide (there are some available online) and make sure you know the firm's values
- Do not answer based on what you think the firm wants, go from your gut. Firms want someone who will genuinely thrive working for them, so you do not want to pretend to be someone you are not
- Think like a trainee by staying professional, client-focused, and collaborative, choosing responses that show good judgement, clear communication, and appropriate escalation.
- For Watson Glaser tests, prioritise accuracy over speed by focusing strictly on the information given and avoiding assumptions, especially where conclusions sound plausible but are not supported. Practice recognising the different question types so you can approach each one methodically.

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## **Vacation Schemes:**

- Make the most of it, talk to people who work in the areas of law you are interested in, talk to trainees about their experiences, and do not be afraid to ask questions or clarification
- If you run out of work to do, ask if there is anything else you can help with, show that you can take responsibility and consistently show high quality work
- Be yourself, you do not need to ask questions for the sake of asking questions, ask questions to expand your own knowledge or get clarity on an issue
- Be proactive and eager to learn and help anyone and everyone whether that is a Trainee, Senior Associate or Partner
- Engage with other vac-schemers, the firm may also be assessing how you interact with one another
- Be early/on time as promptness is a good first impression

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## **Assessment Centres:**

- Go back over knowledge of the firm and delve deeper into niche areas of law you are interested in or projects that the firm has run
- Have examples of when you have demonstrated the firm's values
- Refresh on your application answers and common questions, like 'why this firm' 'why commercial law' etc
- Practice as many situational and strength-based questions as possible aloud
- Practice the kinds of things you could be asked, if you have to do a presentation, group task, or writing task utilise websites that give examples of common tasks that come up and ensure you understand what these mean
- Be confident and be friendly and talkative to everyone on the day, you deserve to be at the assessment centre so have a little confidence in yourself

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## **Assessment Centres:**

- Be yourself, yes, this seems a niche thing to say, but the firm want to see what your like as a person, how you interact with people and how you go about doing tasks and understanding them
- Talk to trainees beforehand about what to expect
- Practice using the STARR method and come up with a bank of answers and experiences in the back of your mind
- To stand out, strengthen your commercial awareness by tracking recent news and thinking in a client-focused way (what the business problem is, what risks matter, and what solution a lawyer would help deliver), so you can contribute intelligently to discussions without forcing “buzzwords”
- In group tasks, focus on being collaborative: listening actively, bringing quieter people in, summarising decisions, and staying calm under pressure
- Treat every interaction as assessed, being professional, positive, and engaged from start to finish

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## Getting/talking about your experience:

- The Legal Clinic is an excellent way to gain experience, it presents so many opportunities to interact with clients, conduct research, run and be involved with projects, and paid and voluntary internship experiences
- Any project you are involved in within the Legal Clinic provides invaluable and diverse skills that can be utilised across the application process whether it is soft skills, or key legal skills such as advocacy, client interviewing, and drafting legal correspondence
- Being involved in the live-client cases in the Legal Clinic offers opportunities to practice drafting letters of advice (which is a common written task in the application process)
- Look through our Instagram to identify which opportunities you can be involved in, our posts often include examples of how you could incorporate these experiences into your application answers and interviews
- Being involved in as many opportunities as possible across the Legal Clinic really gives you a head start and differentiates you from other candidates as you become comfortable doing tasks that lawyers and trainees do on a daily basis, preparing you to become a future trainee and gives you experiences that not many other candidates will have had

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## **A quick note on Law with Psychology candidates:**

- Utilising your interests, knowledge and experience from your psychology modules offers a unique position. This allows you to demonstrate that you have a wide range of interests, that you can manage two very different subjects and do so effectively
- For instance, managing two different disciplines, two different styles of referencing and different ways of writing demonstrates flexibility, excellent time management skills, and attention to detail
- You can levy your knowledge across different psychology modules to demonstrate you understand human emotion, interactions and relationships and that this gives you strong empathy skills and would make you an excellent candidate, particularly in personal legal services where emotions run high and dealing with this is essential to offering the best service possible
- The psychology discipline is very client-focused, your coursework in psychology modules focussed on this and offering multi-disciplinary advice to a client. This ties in with the legal profession which is also client-focussed

## STUDENT ADVISOR OF THE WINTER QUARTER - YEAR 1 WINNER

### Lilly Maddox

The Student Advisor of the Winter Quarter Year 1 winner is Lilly Maddox!



Lilly has been nominated by her peers for this award as she “has thrown herself into Clinic work from the beginning. From being one of the only first years to attend the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Pro Bono Committee, to asking all of the right questions. Lilly is very enthusiastic and professional I believe she is thoroughly deserving of Student Advisor of the Quarter Award.”

A huge congratulations to Lilly for this incredible achievement!

## STUDENT ADVISOR OF THE WINTER QUARTER - YEAR 2 WINNER

### Izzy Casey

The Student Advisor of the Winter Quarter Year 2 winner is Izzy Casey!



Izzy has been nominated by her peers for this award as she has “worked really hard on our case, contributing important insights in our client meetings and put a lot of effort into researching the issues at hand. Izzy has also done a lot of work outside client cases, such as organising a fundraiser for Hague Explained CIC in November. She consistently supports the Legal Clinic and has been a great committee member.”

A huge congratulations to Izzy for this incredible achievement!

## STUDENT ADVISOR OF THE WINTER QUARTER - YEAR 3 WINNER

### Jessica Bosworth

The Student Advisor of the Winter Quarter Year 3 winner is Jessica Bosworth!



Jessica has been nominated by her peers for this award as she is “very dedicated to her work in the Legal Clinic and in CaseCraft. Whilst being a part of the Legal Clinic and CaseCraft, she has demonstrated her commitment to facilitating access to justice and I believe her hard work should be recognized in being awarded Advisor of the Quarter. She has also gone above and beyond in helping me become acquainted in my role as an intern for CaseCraft.”

A huge congratulations to Jessica for this incredible achievement!