



***GREENWICH LAW
AND CRIMINOLOGY
JOURNAL 2025-2026***

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Part I: Foreword

Professor Natasha Vall

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, Faculty of Law, Arts and Social Sciences



It gives me enormous pleasure to welcome the latest edition of the *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal*. I have been looking forward to reading the journal, and once again I have been impressed by the quality, creativity, and thoughtfulness of the work presented by our students. The articles in these pages reflect not only academic achievement, but also curiosity, ambition, and a willingness to engage with some of the most important questions facing society today.

At the University of Greenwich, we believe that education is at its most powerful when it encourages people to think critically, question assumptions, and bring their own experiences and perspectives into the conversation. This edition of the Journal demonstrates exactly that. The contributions bring together rigorous legal analysis, historical understanding, personal reflection, and a commitment to social justice in ways that are both insightful and inspiring.

I am particularly delighted to see the continued success of our students beyond the lecture theatre. This year, students presented their project, *Connecting Law and Life: The Power of Many Stories*, at King's College London and the Student Researcher Hub Online Symposium. Their exploration of how lived experience can contribute to legal knowledge is a powerful reminder that education is not simply about acquiring information. It is about understanding ourselves, learning from one another, and recognising the many ways in which knowledge is created and shared. Seeing our students lead these conversations makes me exceptionally proud.

I would also like to congratulate the students who competed in this year's International Criminal Court Mooting Competition. Reaching such an advanced stage in an international competition is a remarkable achievement, particularly when competing against institutions with much longer-established mooting traditions. Their commitment, resilience, and professionalism are a credit to themselves and to the University. I am equally grateful to Tim Barnes KC, for the encouragement, expertise, and generosity he has shown in supporting our students throughout their journey.

What I find most inspiring about our Law and Criminology community is its diversity. Many of our students are the first in their families to enter higher education. They bring with them a rich range

of experiences, perspectives, and ambitions that strengthen our community and enrich the conversations that take place within it. Their achievements remind us why universities matter and why widening access to education remains so important.

This journal is a celebration of those achievements. It reflects the talent, determination, and creativity of our students and the support and dedication of the staff and partners who work alongside them. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this edition and to congratulate the editorial team on continuing to provide such an important platform for student scholarship and debate.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal* as much as I have, and that the articles within these pages encourage reflection, conversation, and inspiration.

Part II: Student editorials



Daria Ilyushenkova, President for Bar Society 2025-2026, Programme Representative for Law LLB (Hons), SU50 Award Recipient, Final Year Student and Editor at Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal

It is a privilege to present this new edition of the Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal. This edition reflects not only the work you see on these pages, but also the dedication, time, and care that have gone into producing it.

Taking on the role of editor has been both rewarding and insightful. It has shown me that a publication is not simply about presenting finished work, but about supporting ideas as they develop and ensuring that each voice is expressed with clarity and purpose.

This experience has also highlighted the strength of our academic community at the University of Greenwich. As a law student, much of my focus has been on legal systems and principles. However, working on this publication has allowed me to engage with a wider range of perspectives and appreciate the value of cross-disciplinary collaboration.

A defining feature of this edition is the connection between law and criminology. While often studied separately, these fields are closely linked in practice. Law provides the framework through which justice is delivered, while criminology offers insight into behaviour, social context, and lived experience within the justice system. Bringing these perspectives together reflects the complexity of real-world issues and deepens our understanding of justice.

The contributions in this edition reflect a diverse and thoughtful range of voices. They come from students and contributors who are engaged, curious, and willing to explore important and sometimes challenging questions. As editor, my role has been to guide and support this work. However, the success of this publication is truly the result of a collective effort. I have seen students and professors dedicate their time and energy alongside academic and personal commitments, demonstrating both professionalism and genuine passion for their work.

As I approach the completion of my degree and prepare for the next stage of my legal journey, this experience has been especially valuable. It has reinforced the importance of collaboration, the value of diverse perspectives, and the responsibility we share in contributing thoughtfully to academic and professional spaces.

I hope this edition encourages you to think more broadly about the relationship between law and criminology, and about the importance of interdisciplinary understanding in addressing the challenges of justice in today's world.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this publication in any way. You made this possible. I would also like to thank our readers for engaging with this work and

supporting the voices within it. More than anything, I hope it encourages you to question, reflect, and see justice not as something fixed, but as something shaped by the voices, perspectives, and efforts of those willing to engage with it.



Michelle Azeez, second year Law LLB Student, President for Women in Law Society 2025-2026 and Student Editor at Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal

It is my privilege to serve as Student Editor for this year's edition of the *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal*. My name is Michelle Azeez, and I am currently President and a founding member of the University's Women in Law Society, which was recently honoured as Academic Society of the Year for 2025/26.

I was awarded Best Performing Student in my first year at university, an achievement that encouraged me to continue striving for academic and professional excellence. My passion for law is driven by my ambition to become a solicitor specialising in medical negligence, where I hope to make a meaningful difference by advocating for those affected by medical errors.

As an advocate for diversity and inclusion in legal education, I am committed to creating opportunities for underrepresented voices and encouraging discussion about the evolving challenges in law and criminology. Through my work with the Women in Law Society, I have had the privilege of working alongside inspiring peers and professionals, organising events and leading initiatives that support students' academic and professional development.

In this issue, we showcase a wide range of talent from both emerging and established contributors, reflecting the dynamic and interdisciplinary nature of the fields of law and criminology. I am delighted to share the thoughtful research and analysis presented by our contributors, and I look forward to seeing our academic community continue to grow.

Thank you for joining us in exploring the latest ideas shaping law and criminology at the University of Greenwich.



Yasmine A Boumaiza, Final Year Criminology and Criminal Psychology Student, President for Criminology Society for 2025-2026 and Editor at the Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal, Care Experience Liberation Chair, Student Ambassador, SU50 Award Recipient

It is a privilege to serve as a Student Editor for this year's edition of the *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal*. My name is Yasmine Boumaiza, and I am a final-year BSc (Hons) Criminology and Criminal Psychology student at the University of Greenwich. Alongside my studies, I serve as the Care Experience Liberation Chair and a Student Ambassador, and I was honoured to receive a Students' Union Top 50 (SU50) Award in recognition of my contributions to the university community. I have also completed a work placement that strengthened my practical understanding of the field.

Throughout my time at Greenwich, I have been committed to creating opportunities for students to feel represented, supported, and heard. Through my roles within the Students' Union and the wider university, I have contributed to initiatives focused on inclusion, student engagement, and amplifying the voices of care-experienced students. These experiences have reinforced my commitment to social justice, equality, and the transformative power of education.

My academic interests focus on criminal justice, psychology, and social inequality, particularly the experiences of care-experienced and neurodivergent individuals. Through both my research and leadership roles, I have developed a strong appreciation for evidence-based discussion and the value of diverse perspectives within criminology and law.

This edition of the Journal showcases the exceptional work of our student and staff contributors and reflects the breadth of talent and insight within the School of Law and Criminology. I am proud to help present their work and hope you enjoy reading this issue.



Emaan Rizwan Gubitra, Final Year Law LLB Student, Vice President of the University of Greenwich Law Society 2025-2026, and Student Editor at the Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal

It is with immense pride that I welcome you to this edition of the *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal*, a publication that continues to reflect the intellectual curiosity, critical engagement, and academic rigour fostered within the law community at the University of Greenwich.

Returning to the journal this year as a student editor carries particular significance for me. This year's contributions exemplify the breadth and depth of legal inquiry that characterise our cohort. The journal stands as a testament to the collaborative spirit of the Greenwich law and criminology community, one that values intellectual independence, critical thinking, and the exchange of ideas. It is my hope that this edition not only informs but also inspires further discussion, research, and engagement among its readers.

Alongside my role as Editor of the *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal*, I have had the privilege of serving as Vice President of the Law Society (2026), co-creating a UGR Funded Research Project (2026), and representing the University as a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Moot Court Competition team. I am also grateful to have been recognised as the Weightmans Essay Competition Winner (2025–26), to contribute as a Political Column Writer for The Greenwich Daily, and to work as a Caseworker with the Innocence Project London. These experiences have shaped my perspective on the law, not only as an academic discipline, but as a lived and evolving practice.

As I contribute to this journal in my final year, I do so with immense gratitude for the opportunities it has provided and with confidence in this platform's growth for future students.



The four student editors at University of Greenwich Stockwell Library. Photo credit: Abraham Mfonpa're Ntienjem

Part III: Staff editorial

Welcome to the 2025-26 edition of the ***Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal***, a landmark issue that marks an exciting new chapter in the life of the Journal. For the first time, we bring together contributions from both Law and Criminology, reflecting the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of our fields and the vibrant student and staff academic community within the School of Law and Criminology.

This issue would not have been possible without the commitment, professionalism, and enthusiasm of our student editorial team, whose dedication has been nothing short of remarkable. Our four student editors have worked tirelessly to review submissions, liaise with authors, proofread manuscripts, and help shape the Journal into a publication of which we can all be proud. Their attention to detail, collaborative spirit, and commitment to academic excellence exemplify the strength of our student community. This issue is particularly distinguished by the breadth and rigour of its review process. In addition to undergoing thorough assessment by both the student editorial team and staff editors, all submissions were subject to external review by two leading legal scholars. We are especially grateful to Professor Constantin Stefanou, Editor-in-Chief of the *Statute Law Review* (Oxford University Press), and Doctor Lisa Ndyulo, outgoing Editor-in-Chief of the *Pretoria University Student Law Review* (Pretoria University Law Press) whose expertise and invaluable feedback helped ensure the high academic standards of this edition. We are also grateful to Rubaet Ahmed Esti, a First-Class Honours graduate from the University of Greenwich (Class of 2026), for serving as the first reader and providing invaluable feedback and insightful comments on the issue.

The contributions featured in this edition showcase the breadth and richness of contemporary legal and criminological scholarship, reflecting both academic inquiry and the lived experiences of students, staff, alumni, and practitioners. Several articles look towards the future of law and teaching practice, exploring themes such as artificial intelligence, intellectual property financing, aviation safety, and innovative approaches to learning in legal and criminological education. The Journal also engages with important questions of gender, justice, human rights, criminal law, and animal harm. Contributors examine topics ranging from hidden human rights concerns and wrongful conviction work through the Innocence Project London, to gender stereotypes in the family justice system, the insanity defence, domestic abuse and animal harm, and the influence of legal dramas and true crime media on public perceptions of law. Together, these articles encourage critical reflection on the role of law in addressing inequality, protecting rights, and promoting justice.

Beyond academic debate, several contributions highlight the value of experiential learning and professional development through client interviewing, mooting, marshalling, mentoring schemes, and international arbitration opportunities. The Journal also celebrates the diverse journeys of our students, featuring reflections on balancing study with professional commitments, navigating university life, and the personal experiences that inspire legal and criminological ambitions. Contributions from student societies and student leaders further demonstrate the importance of community, leadership, advocacy, and collaboration in enriching the student experience. Collectively, these contributions reflect intellectual curiosity, resilience, and a commitment to justice. We hope this renewed *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal* will inform, inspire, and encourage dialogue across our disciplines for years to come.

Emma Lubaale, Louise Hewitt and Hannah Gaffney

Staff Editors, Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal, School of Law and Criminology

Part IV: A word from External Reviewers

I am thoroughly impressed by the work produced by students at the University of Greenwich. The level of critical engagement and novelty in their ideas, given that most are undergraduate students, some in the first and second year of their law or criminology degrees, made reading the issue even more enjoyable. I am also blown away by the several extra-curricular activities and initiatives the students at the University of Greenwich have available to them - this is so enriching for their learning and preparing them for a fruitful and successful legal career. I wish them all the best!

Doctor Lisa Ndyulo, Outgoing Editor in Chief, Pretoria University Student Law Review (Pretoria University Law Press) and Lecturer in Law, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

This is a fun student-led publication!

Professor Constantin Stefanou, Editor in Chief, Statute Law Review (Oxford University Press) and Director Sir William Dale Centre for Legislative Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London.

The *Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal* is well presented, with a clear and logical structure that guides readers seamlessly to a wide range of legal and criminological topics. The journal offers valuable insights for both legal professionals and anyone with an interest in law, covering subjects that range from the history of legal principles to emerging issues such as artificial intelligence and its impact on the legal profession. As a law graduate, I found the articles engaging and appreciated the opportunity to explore different perspectives from students, academics, and practitioners. I was particularly impressed by the depth of research, as the sources were clearly identifiable and supported the credibility of the content. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed reading the journal and would like to express my appreciation to everyone involved in producing such an informative and well-crafted publication.

Rubaet Ahmed Esti, First-Class Honours Graduate, Class of 2026, University of Greenwich.

PART VI: THE FUTURE OF LAW, AND TEACHING PRACTICE

Scrutinising Innovation: The legal challenges of using Intellectual Property as collateral in debt financing

By Poulome Yadav, 2nd Year Law LLB Student

Traditionally, the term ‘collateral’ encompassed physical, tangible objects, like brick-and-mortar warehouses or machinery. Especially considering the surge post the Industrial Revolution Shift in 1750, where innovation accelerated, and patent filings rose dramatically. This allowed banks to send a bailiff to change locks or seize assets to recover losses if a borrower defaulted[1]. However, in an economy increasingly driven by intellectual change, some of the most valuable assets are often unseen.

Despite their great value, using abstract ideas to secure loans attracts fundamental friction. For startups and intangible-rich Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), patents are a vital asset for obtaining capital[2]. They often have high potential for growth and scale fast but have fewer tangible assets and physical collateral that banks rely on. Since intellectual property is difficult to value and hard to sell if a company fails, SMEs struggle to secure debt funding through traditional channels. In this case, the best solution is to find firms which provide IP-backed financial services, with investors focusing more on future cash flows and the value of the intellectual property itself, rather than the physical collateral that an organisation owns[3]. Once a company decides to enforce conditions on the use of its IP, its main issue becomes the valuation gap: the difference between the seller’s expected price for its assets and the lower price a buyer may be willing to pay. This differs from matters of real estate, where there are ample market comparables (a valuation method used to estimate the value of an asset), in that IP lenders distinguish between a signalling value and a collateral value. A signalling value refers to the notion of the simple existence of a patent acting as a quality signal, proving to lenders that the company is capable and reduces the information mismatch created by one party, in the transaction, possessing more knowledge than the other[4]. The collateral value[5], on the other hand, is the hard, tangible value that a bank can recover and sell in a secondary market, often from high-retention physical assets such as machinery or commodities. Research suggests that while both are crucial, the collateral value exceeds the signalling value, in that it can increase the debt capacity[6].

To quantify this and ‘put a price on the proposal’, lenders use three standard valuation approaches: an income approach which involves discounting of future cash flows (licensing royalties for example) that the asset is expected to generate, the market approach which compares the assets to recent sales of re-deployable patents which are intellectual property resources which can be transferred to or used in other business contexts. Finally, the cost approach can be enforced, which calculates the expenses that a competitor could incur if they recreated the technology from scratch[7]. Lenders specifically search for redeployability, so a highly firm-specific patent is risky collateral due to its value vanishing if the borrower fails. Conversely, trademarks can be preferred over patents in certain jurisdictions, like in France, where trademarks represent 81% of IP-backed loans because their cash flows are seen through established brand revenues, considerably easier to prove[8].

If a borrower defaults, the lender reserves the right to obtain a court order allowing them to sell the IP at an auction or even keep it as payment. If there is a bankruptcy, a class action can

enable claims to be pursued collectively, and the lender cannot claim exclusive ownership once the process has opened. Should a global financial crisis take place, the probability of a patent being released significantly decreases, suggesting increased debt restructuring or higher default rates occurring during economic downturns[9]. Upon complete payment, the lender then issues a security release that returns the full dominion of the ideas to the borrower.

While IP poses a speculative risk for banks, recent methods of circumventing these risks (such as the standard valuation approaches) give a crucial benefit to both banks and entrepreneurs. Banks can enhance profitability, while business owners can unlock a fresh alternative, making innovation more accessible. Within this, redeployability is especially sought after so the patent does not lose its value. Upon the event of a default, lenders can enforce the sale of the patent, and sole ownership only returns when the borrower has repaid the loaned amount. Coordinating legal frameworks and standardising valuation methods are essential to the evolving and dynamic scope of intangible collateral and the lucrative potential it holds. By simplifying redeployability and establishing transparent registries, policymakers can bridge the gap between innovation finance and the mere security necessary for a knowledge-based economy to flourish.

[1] Felix Bracht and Dirk Czarnitzki, 'Patent Collateral and Access to Debt' (2022) KU Leuven, Department of Management, Strategy and Innovation.

[2] C Le, B Nguyen and V Vo, 'Do Intangible Assets Help SMEs in Underdeveloped Markets Gain Access to External Finance? The Case of Vietnam' (2024) 62 (2) *Small Business Economics* 833.

[3] John P Ogier, 'Intellectual Property, Finance and Economic Development' (WIPO Magazine, 2016)

[4] Felix Bracht and Dirk Czarnitzki, 'Patent Collateral and Access to Debt' (2022) KU Leuven, Department of Management, Strategy and Innovation.

[5] Hanif Virji, 'What is Collateral Special Value?' (2023) 38(6) *Journal of International Banking and Financial Law* 389.

[6] Felix Bracht and Dirk Czarnitzki, 'Patent Collateral and Access to Debt' (2022) KU Leuven, Department of Management, Strategy and Innovation.

[7] Federico Caviggioli, Giuseppe Scellato and Elisa Ughetto, 'Patents as Collateral Assets in the Wake of the Global Financial Crisis' (2017).

[8] Felix Bracht and Dirk Czarnitzki, 'Patent Collateral and Access to Debt' (2022), KU Leuven, Department of Management, Strategy and Innovation.

[9] Andrej Gill and David Heller, 'Leveraging Intellectual Property: The Value of Harmonised Enforcement Regimes' (2024) 163 *Journal of Banking & Finance* 107169

Noise as Communication: Reframing Disruption in Large Law and Criminology Lectures

Ewomazino Caulker, Lecturer in Law, Department of Law and Criminology, University of Greenwich.

Abstract and Introduction

Disruptive noise in large undergraduate lectures is often treated as a behavioural problem requiring correction. This article argues that some classroom noise serves as communication, reflecting challenges relating to engagement, understanding and perceptions of authority. The article uses Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and procedural justice to identify three forms of classroom noise: social, disengaged and resistant. Each reflects different student experiences and requires a different pedagogical response. While punitive approaches may restore short-term silence, they can weaken legitimacy and long-term engagement. Focusing on large law and criminology lectures in UK universities, the article argues that classroom noise may indicate unmet psychological needs and concerns about fairness rather than deliberate misconduct. It develops a conceptual framework for understanding disruption and suggests that responses based on clarity, respect and procedural fairness are more likely to promote engagement while reinforcing the values of legitimacy and justice that legal education seeks to foster. [1]

Keywords: classroom disruption; legal education; procedural justice; self-determination theory; legitimacy; large lectures.

Theoretical framework

This article adopts a theory-informed conceptual approach rather than reporting primary empirical research. It develops a conceptual typology of classroom noise by synthesising UK scholarship on student engagement and large-cohort teaching with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and procedural justice. Although higher education research has examined engagement, authority and teaching in large classes, little attention has been given to classroom noise as a pedagogical phenomenon in its own right.[2]

SDT explains student engagement through three psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. When these needs are not met, students are more likely to disengage or become disruptive. In large lectures, noise may therefore reflect confusion, frustration or a lack of connection rather than deliberate misconduct. Procedural justice explains how students evaluate authority through perceptions of fairness, consistency, respect and opportunities to express their views.[3] These theories provide an interpretive framework for understanding classroom noise as a response to students' experiences rather than simply a disciplinary problem. The framework is intended to inform teaching practice and provide a basis for future empirical research.

A categorisation of classroom noise

Understanding classroom noise requires distinguishing between different forms of disruption rather than treating all noise as misconduct. Three overlapping forms are proposed. **Social noise** reflects students' attempts to establish connection in large lectures and may indicate a need for relatedness rather than deliberate disruption.[4] **Disengaged noise** arises when unclear expectations, pace or relevance reduce motivation and participation. Research consistently identifies clarity, inclusive teaching and active engagement as essential to effective learning in higher education.[5] **Resistant noise** reflects dissatisfaction with classroom authority, where

perceived unfairness or lack of respect undermines students' willingness to cooperate.[6] These forms are not fixed. Social or disengaged noise may develop into resistance if teaching or disciplinary responses are experienced as unfair or dismissive.

The limits of punitive control

Punitive responses may restore immediate silence but rarely address the causes of disruption. When students perceive classroom management as controlling, unfair or disrespectful, motivation, trust and voluntary cooperation may decline, reducing engagement over time.[7]

Recommendations for Large-Cohort Teaching

Responses to classroom noise should be proportionate and informed by its underlying cause. Lecturers should distinguish between social, disengaged and resistant noise before intervening. Teaching should promote clarity, structure and active participation to reduce disengagement.[8] Social noise can often be redirected through structured discussion with clear expectations, while resistant behaviour should be addressed through consistent, respectful and transparent classroom management. Procedural justice research shows that students place considerable importance on fair treatment when judging academic authority.[9] Where disruption persists, restorative dialogue may be more effective than escalating sanctions because it rebuilds trust while reinforcing shared expectations for learning.[10]

Conclusion

Reframing classroom noise as communication does not require tolerating sustained disruption. Instead, it recognises that noise may signal pressures around motivation, participation, or perceived unfairness that punitive control alone cannot resolve. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory and procedural justice, this article argues for proportionate, legitimacy-preserving responses that align pedagogy with socio-legal principle. In large lectures especially in law and criminology, such an approach supports both effective learning and the values the discipline seeks to teach.

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[6]. Ibid. (n3)

[7]. Ibid. (n3)

[8.]. Ibid. (n5)

[9]. Ibid. (n3)

[10]. Karp, D. (2019). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for Colleges and Universities second edition: Repairing Harm and Rebuilding Trust in Response to Student Misconduct*. Good Books; Advance HE, *Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum* (Advance HE 2022)

AI in Law: Threat or Opportunity?

Kinza Tariq, Final Year Law LLB Student

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming legal practice at an unprecedented pace. Tasks that once required teams of junior lawyers, such as document review, legal research and contract analysis, can now be completed in a fraction of the time through AI-assisted systems.[1] Legal tech systems like Relativity and other similar tools are notable examples of document review tools. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into legal services, an important question emerges: Does AI pose a threat to the legal profession, or does it offer an opportunity to improve legal practice? While AI presents genuine risks relating to professional competence, confidentiality and overreliance on technology, it is best understood as a powerful tool whose benefits depend on effective regulation, human oversight and ethical use.

One of the principal concerns surrounding AI is its potential impact on legal training and professional development. Traditionally, junior lawyers develop their legal reasoning through tasks such as disclosure exercises, due diligence and legal research. The increasing automation of these activities may reduce opportunities for experiential learning and skill development. Scholars have warned that excessive reliance on automated systems could contribute to the “deskilling” of lawyers by reducing engagement with fundamental legal processes.[2] This creates a significant challenge for the profession, as future lawyers must still acquire the analytical skills necessary to exercise independent legal judgment. Consequently, AI may become a threat if efficiency is prioritised at the expense of professional competence.

However, AI should not be viewed solely through the lens of job displacement. The legal profession has historically adapted to technological change, including the introduction of online legal databases and electronic case management systems. Contemporary AI tools can rapidly analyse large volumes of legal information, allowing lawyers to focus on higher-value tasks such as advocacy, negotiation and client advice. For example, AI-powered legal research platforms increasingly assist lawyers in analysing large volumes of legal information and identifying relevant authorities more efficiently. Research suggests that AI-assisted legal technologies can improve productivity and reduce the time spent on routine administrative work.[3] For example, Lexisnexis has a fully integrated AI into their online legal resource database to provide AI generated case summaries and also an AI chatbot (prodigy) to further assist with legal research. Importantly, these developments do not eliminate the need for lawyers; rather, they increase the importance of human judgment, ethical reasoning and contextual understanding. In this respect, AI appears less as a replacement for lawyers and more as a tool that changes the nature of legal work.

Perhaps the strongest argument in favour of AI is its potential to improve access to justice. Legal services remain expensive and inaccessible for many individuals, particularly those who do not qualify for legal aid. AI-powered legal assistance platforms and automated document drafting systems can provide preliminary guidance at a significantly lower cost. Legg and Bell have argued that technology may help narrow the justice gap by making legal information more accessible to the public.[4] However, such tools cannot replace tailored legal advice and may create risks where users rely on automated outputs without professional guidance. While AI cannot replace tailored legal advice, it can assist individuals in understanding their rights and navigating basic legal procedures. Therefore, AI has the potential to make legal services more accessible, provided users understand its limitations.

Despite these advantages, significant ethical and legal concerns remain. AI systems are only as reliable as the data on which they are trained.[5] If historical data contains bias, AI may

reproduce or even amplify existing inequalities. Furthermore, many AI systems operate as “black boxes”, making it difficult to understand how conclusions have been reached. This lack of transparency sits uneasily with a legal system founded on accountability and reasoned decision-making. Confidentiality also presents a challenge, particularly where sensitive client information is processed through third-party AI platforms.[6] These concerns demonstrate that AI can pose genuine risks to fairness, professional responsibility and public trust if used without adequate safeguards.

Questions of liability further complicate the integration of AI into legal practice. If an AI-assisted system generates inaccurate legal advice that causes client harm, responsibility cannot simply be attributed to the technology itself. The Law Society of England and Wales has emphasised that legal professionals remain accountable for work produced using AI tools.[7] As a result, lawyers must exercise appropriate supervision and ensure that AI-generated outputs are carefully reviewed before being relied upon.[8] Moreover, professional ethics and codes that underpin legal practice and that AI use require an added duty of care. Effective regulation, professional guidance and technological literacy are therefore essential to ensuring that AI supports rather than undermines legal practice.

Ultimately, AI is neither simply a threat nor a solution to the challenges facing the legal profession. While concerns regarding deskilling, bias, confidentiality and accountability should not be underestimated, the technology also offers significant opportunities to improve efficiency and widen access to justice. The future impact of AI will depend less on the technology itself and more on how lawyers, regulators and legal institutions choose to govern its use. Used responsibly, AI has the potential to enhance legal practice without diminishing the central role of human judgment.

[1] Michael Legg and Felicity Bell, ‘Artificial Intelligence and the Legal Profession: Becoming the AI-Enhanced Lawyer’ (2019) 38(2) *University of Tasmania Law Review* 27

[2] Michael Legg and Felicity Bell, ‘Artificial Intelligence and the Legal Profession: Becoming the AI-Enhanced Lawyer’ (2019) 38(2) *University of Tasmania Law Review* 27

[3] The Law Society, *Generative AI: The Essentials* (The Law Society 2025) <<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/ai-and-lawtech/generative-ai-the-essentials>> accessed 17 March 2026

[4] Michael Legg and Felicity Bell, *Artificial Intelligence and the Legal Profession* (Hart Publishing 2020)

[5] The Law Society, *Generative AI: The Essentials* (The Law Society 2025)<<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/ai-and-lawtech/generative-ai-the-essentials>> accessed 17 March 2026.

[6] The Law Society, *Generative AI: The Essentials* (The Law Society 2025)<<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/ai-and-lawtech/generative-ai-the-essentials>> accessed 17 March 2026. On the Black Boxes, see CM Klugman, ‘Black Boxes and Bias in AI Challenge Autonomy’ (2021)21 *The American Journal of Bioethics* 33-35; NE Winstone, K Gravett and S Elkington, ‘Black Box Assessment: rethinking integrity and learning for a time of Generative AI’ (2026) *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 1-18.

[7] The Law Society, *Generative AI: The Essentials* (The Law Society 2025) <<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/ai-and-lawtech/generative-ai-the-essentials>> accessed 17 March 2026.

[8] Solicitors Regulation Authority, ‘Compliance Tips for Solicitors Regarding the Use of AI and Other Technology’ (2026) <<https://www.sra.org.uk>> accessed 17 March 2026

Criminal Liability in Aviation: Navigating Legal Challenges in Air Safety and Security.

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Aviation is one of the most highly regulated industries in the world, related to accidents or serious incidents occur, the question of criminal liability becomes legally complex and politically sensitive[1]. As noted by Scott and Trimarchi, modern aviation systems are designed primarily to prevent accidents through regulation, oversight, and reporting mechanisms rather than punishment[2]. However, criminal law intervenes when conduct exceeds ordinary human error and reaches the threshold of recklessness, gross negligence, or intentional wrongdoing.[3] This intersection between criminal justice and aviation safety raises fundamental questions about accountability, deterrence, and the preservation of safety culture[4]. This article examines criminal liability in aviation from an international legal perspective, incorporating relevant case law and providing a comparative analysis between Spain and the United States.

Criminal liability in aviation arises when an act or omission connected to aircraft operations violates criminal law and endangers life or public safety.[5] While civil liability focuses on compensation, criminal liability is concerned with punishment and moral blameworthiness. As in general criminal law, liability requires proof of *actus reus*, *mens rea*, and causation. However, these elements are particularly difficult to establish in aviation, where accidents often result from a chain of technical, human, and environmental factors rather than a single identifiable cause.

Liability extends beyond pilots to a wide range of actors within the aviation system. Flight crew, maintenance engineers, air traffic controllers, and corporate entities may all incur criminal responsibility. In more extreme cases, liability arises from acts of unlawful interference such as terrorism.[6] For example, the Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 disaster occurred in July 2014 when a civilian aircraft travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur was shot down over eastern Ukraine, resulting in the deaths of all 298 people on board. This incident raised significant questions concerning international responsibility, accountability, and the application of criminal law in aviation. Lemnitzer emphasises that incidents such as the MH17 disaster demonstrate the need for international legal frameworks capable of determining responsibility and ensuring accountability for serious violations involving civil aviation.[7]

The international legal framework governing aviation criminal liability is shaped by treaties such as the *Convention on International Aviation 1944 (Chicago Convention)*,[8] which establishes state responsibility for safety oversight. and the *Montreal Convention 1971*,[9] which obliges states to criminalise acts such as hijacking and sabotage.[10] Additional instruments, including the *Tokyo*[11] and *Hague Conventions* [12]and the *2010 Beijing Protocol*,[13] expand this framework to cover offenses committed on board aircraft and emerging threats such as cyber interference.[14] However, these instruments rely on domestic implementation, leading to divergence among national systems.[15] Collectively, these instruments provide the legal basis for international cooperation and criminal accountability in civil aviation .

One of the most challenging aspects of aviation criminal law is distinguishing between human error and criminal negligence.[16] Aviation operates as a complex socio-technical system in which errors are inevitable.[17] The Air France Flight 447 crash illustrates this difficulty, as courts examined whether pilot error and systemic failures justified criminal sanctions.[18] Similarly, the Linate Airport disaster resulted in criminal convictions for negligence, reflecting a stricter approach in some jurisdictions.[19]

Jurisdictional complexity further complicates criminal liability in aviation. Incidents often involve multiple states, creating overlapping legal claims. The Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 incident exemplifies these challenges, involving a multinational investigation and prosecution.[20] Such cases highlight the fragmented nature of the airspace law owed to the limitations of a jurisdiction-based approach, thus the need for stronger international coordination.[21]

Recent academic literature highlights the growing challenges posed by technological developments, particularly cybersecurity threats and unmanned aircraft systems, to existing frameworks for aviation criminal liability.[22] As Klenka notes, existing conventions are not fully equipped to address these risks and require adaptation at both international and domestic levels.[23]

A comparative analysis of Spain and the United States reveals two distinct approaches. In Spain, aviation-related criminal liability is governed by general provisions of the Penal Code, which allows prosecution for serious negligence.[24] Spanish authorities often initiate criminal investigations following aviation accidents, emphasizing judicial accountability.[25] However, this approach has been criticised for potentially undermining safety culture, as the prospect of criminal prosecution may discourage the open reporting of errors and incidents that are essential to effective aviation safety management.[26]

In contrast, the United States adopts a more restrained model. Aviation safety is primarily enforced through administrative and civil mechanisms, with criminal prosecution reserved for exceptional cases involving willful misconduct or extreme recklessness.[27] The separation between safety investigations and criminal proceedings reflects a policy preference for prevention over punishment.[28]

However, corporate criminal liability further illustrates this divergence. Spain formally recognises corporate responsibility, while the United States frequently employs tools such as deferred prosecution agreements to promote compliance and reform rather than punishment. In addition enforcement of criminal liability remains challenging due to technical complexity, evidentiary difficulties, and political considerations.[29] International cooperation, supported by institutions such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, is essential for effective enforcement.[30]

In conclusion, criminal liability in aviation functions as both a safeguard and a legal challenge. Although it ensures accountability and deterrence, it must be balanced against the need to preserve safety culture. The comparison between Spain and the United States highlights differing legal philosophies and reflects broader tensions between punishment and prevention. As aviation continues to evolve, legal frameworks must adapt to emerging risks while maintaining this delicate balance. However, this approach has been criticised for potentially underdetermining safety culture, as the threat of criminal prosecution may discourage the open reporting of errors and incidents that is essential to effective aviation safety management.[31]

[1] Marta Sánchez-Barrueco, 'Criminalisation of Aviation Accidents and the Safety Culture' (2017) 98 *Safety Science* 11, 12–13.

[2] Benjamin I Scott and Andrea Trimarchi, *Fundamentals of International Aviation Law and Policy* (Routledge 2023) 151

[3] Ibid

[4] Farhang Heydari, 'The Private Role in Public Safety' (2022) 90 *George Washington Law Review* 696, 700–705

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- [5] A I R Law, A C Armageddon and T Quintana, 'Issues in Aviation Law and Policy' (2025) *International Journal of Law and Policy Studies*, 3–5
- [6] G Leloudas and F Bulut, 'Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Strict Product Liability in the UK: Time for Reform' (2026) 51(1) *Air and Space Law*.
- [7] Jan Martin Lemnitzer, 'Commissions of Inquiry and the North Sea Incident: A Model for a MH17 Tribunal?' (2016) 27(4) *European Journal of International Law* 923.
- [8] Chicago Convention 1944
- [9] Montreal Convention 1971
- [10] Benjamin I Scott and Andrea Trimarchi, *Fundamentals of International Aviation Law and Policy* (Routledge 2023) 157
- [11] Tokyo Convention 1963.
- [12] Hague Convention 1970.
- [13] Beijing Protocol 2010.
- [14] Benjamin I Scott and Andrea Trimarchi, *Fundamentals of International Aviation Law and Policy* (Routledge 2023) 154-163
- [15] Ibid
- [16] S Daniels, *Just Culture and the Criminalisation of Air Accidents* (CRC Press 2024) 3.
- [17] Ibid
- [18] L Z David and J M Schraagen, 'Analysing Communication Dynamics at the Transaction Level: The Case of Air France Flight 447' (2018) 20(4) *Cognition, Technology & Work* 637.
- [19] Gabriele Bricchi and Elena Carpanelli, "'Just Culture" and the Italian Approach towards Aircraft Accident Investigation' (2013) 62 *Zeitschrift für Luft- und Weltraumrecht / German Journal of Air and Space Law* 1, 21.
- [20] I Justice and K van der Pijl, 'The Coming Trial of the MH17 Suspects' (2020) <https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/dossier-i.pdf> accessed 3 April 2026.
- [21] Ibid
- [22] M Klenka, 'Aviation Cyber Security: Legal Aspects of Cyber Threats' (2021) 14 *Journal of Transportation Security* 177, 178
- [23] Ibid
- [24] Watkins JL, Frey SA and Kirsch SA, 'Recent Developments in Aviation Law' (2011) 47(1) *Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Law Journal* 67 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23210572> accessed 3 April 2026.
- [25] Ibid
- [26] ICAO, Safety Management Manual (Doc 9859, 4 th edn , 2018)
- [27] RM Dunn, SM Colombo and AE Nold, 'Criminalization in Aviation—Are Prosecutorial Investigations Relegating Aviation Safety to the Back Seat' (2008) 38 *Brief* 11.
- [28] Ibid
- [29] SB Habchi, 'Criminal Liability and Aircraft Accident Investigation' (2016).14
- [30] International Civil Aviation Organization
- [31] International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Safety Management Manual (Doc 9859, 4 th edn , 2018)

PART VI: GENDER, JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND ANIMAL HARM

Dismantling Gender Stereotypes in the Family Justice System: Welfare, Caregiving and Risk in Practice

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Introduction

This article examines the role of gender stereotypes within the family justice system in England and Wales, focusing on how such assumptions shape the interpretation of caregiving, harm and credibility in decisions concerning children. Drawing on a co-created research project with undergraduate law students, it focuses on three interconnected areas: the treatment of fathers as caregivers, the recognition of male victims of domestic abuse and the relative invisibility of female perpetrators. Notwithstanding the formal gender neutrality of the legal framework, its application remains influenced by gendered assumptions that shape evidential interpretation and risk assessment, so that the welfare principle enshrined in the Children Act 1989 [1] may not always operate in a wholly child-centred manner but may instead reflect broader social constructions of parental roles and behaviour.

Gender stereotypes, understood as socially constructed assumptions concerning the roles, behaviours and characteristics of men and women, continue to inform how caregiving, vulnerability and responsibility are interpreted within family law, particularly the expectation that mothers will assume primary caregiving responsibility and that domestic abuse [2] will predominantly involve male perpetrators and female victims. As Smart demonstrates, the apparent neutrality of family law cannot be separated from the social context in which it operates,[3] and Fineman similarly highlights the gendered foundations of caregiving within legal structures.[4] This article argues that such stereotypes are not merely external influences on legal outcomes but are embedded within the interpretive processes through which legal principles are applied, so that achieving fairness within the family justice system requires attention to interpretive practice as well as legal reform.

Methodology

This study adopts a doctrinal and socio-legal approach, examining legislation, case law and procedural frameworks governing caregiving, harm and risk alongside the broader social and institutional context in which they operate. It draws on a co-created project conducted in 2024 with a cohort of Level 6 undergraduate law students and one Level 5 student, who engaged in structured, discussion-based analysis of family law scenarios within a classroom setting. This qualitative approach offers focused insight into how legal principles are interpreted and reproduced in practice; the interpretive pattern observed within this cohort is reported as a finding about that group, not as a claim generalisable to the wider population. Primary sources comprise the Children Act 1989, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the leading cases of *Re H (Minors)*[5] and *Re A (A Child)*,[6] which address the standard and quality of evidence required to found findings of harm and risk, read alongside the MoJ Harm Panel Report.[7] Secondary sources draw on socio-legal scholarship addressing gender, parenting and domestic abuse.

Analysis and Discussion

The formal gender neutrality of the legal framework obscures the extent to which its application is shaped by social expectation. While both mothers and fathers may, in principle, be recognised as primary caregivers, interpretation continues to be shaped by entrenched cultural norms. Hays' argument that the ideology of intensive mothering constructs caregiving as an inherently maternal responsibility reinforces the expectation that mothers will assume primary responsibility for children;[8] fathers, by contrast, are frequently positioned as secondary or supporting caregivers and evaluated in terms of involvement rather than primary care. This distinction has material implications for how caregiving capacity is assessed within welfare-based decision-making, since gendered assumptions operate within the evaluation of evidence itself, rather than being explicitly mandated by law. *Re A (A Child)* [9] illustrates how readily such assumptions can shape outcomes absent rigorous scrutiny: the President of the Family Division dismissed a local authority's case against a father as resting on unproven assertions rather than proved fact, holding that findings must be based on evidence, not suspicion. The case stands as a caution that concerns about a father's caregiving can acquire unwarranted weight unless subjected to the same evidential discipline as any other finding.

This dynamic is especially evident in the assessment of harm and risk. In *Re H (Minors)* [10], the House of Lords confirmed that courts must assess the likelihood, rather than certainty, of harm on the balance of probabilities, reaching conclusions on the basis of incomplete and contested evidence. As Mnookin observes, such decision-making is inherently indeterminate, requiring evaluative judgments about future harm rather than determinations of objective certainty.[11] This indeterminacy creates space for interpretive frameworks to influence outcomes: concerns relating to fathers may be more readily construed as risk where they align with prevailing narratives of paternal absence, whereas comparable concerns relating to mothers tend to be read within frameworks of caregiving responsibility and emotional attachment.

A comparable dynamic arises in cases involving domestic abuse. Although the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 adopts a gender-neutral definition, its application is mediated through socially constructed understandings of victimhood, which shape how allegations are accepted, rejected or reframed. As Walklate argues, victimhood is itself socially constructed and institutionally mediated [12] and Hester demonstrates that women who perpetrate domestic abuse are frequently mischaracterised or rendered invisible within dominant narratives, often reframed as victims or as acting in self-defence.[13] This is not merely a matter of interpretive framing: Graham-Kevan and Archer found substantial female-perpetrated physical aggression and control across community samples, indicating that a straightforward male-perpetrator, female-victim pattern does not reliably hold across the range of relationships reaching the family courts.[14] Gendered expectations therefore shape not only who is recognised as a victim, but whose actions are understood as harmful, raising questions about which forms of harm are rendered visible within legal proceedings and which are marginalised. This is not to suggest that judicial practice is static. In *Re H-N and Others* [15], the Court of Appeal itself recognised that an incident-based approach to allegations can obscure a cumulative pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour and endorsed assessing abuse as a pattern rather than as discrete events. Yet the persistence of credibility-based scrutiny at the point of fact-finding suggests that procedural reform of this kind narrows, without resolving, the underlying interpretive dynamic identified above.

Insights from the 2024 co-created research project reinforce these concerns. The pattern was not confined to a subset of the cohort: across all participants, fathers were

consistently conceptualised as peripheral caregivers while mothers were constructed as primary carers, and male victim narratives were approached with greater scepticism than allegations involving mothers, which were more readily read within frameworks of vulnerability or stress. This consistency across the full cohort illustrates how gendered assumptions are internalised within legal reasoning itself. At a policy level, the MoJ Harm Panel similarly documented the minimisation of domestic abuse within private law proceedings and its reframing as parental conflict, while recommending measures to strengthen the recognition of harm and improve safeguarding practice. Barnett similarly argues that the prioritisation of contact may marginalise or inadequately address abuse within welfare-based decision-making,[16] and Scourfield demonstrates that these dynamics are reinforced within institutional practice more broadly, with child protection processes themselves shaped by gendered constructions of parenting and risk.[17]. The central issue, therefore, lies not in the absence of legal safeguards but in the interpretive processes through which evidence, credibility and risk are constructed within welfare-based decision-making.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This article has demonstrated that gender stereotypes operate within the interpretive processes through which legal principles are applied, rather than solely at the level of outcomes. While recent reforms indicate growing institutional recognition of these issues, their persistence highlights the limitations of legal change alone: ensuring that the welfare principle operates in a genuinely child-centred manner requires sustained critical engagement with how evidence, credibility and risk are interpreted in practice. Because the problem identified here is interpretive rather than doctrinal, intervention must target the point of interpretation itself, not merely the rules that surround it. First, professional training across the family justice system should use paired, contrasting case scenarios, for example a father and a mother presenting comparable concerns, to expose the moment at which a concern is read as risk for one parent and as stress or vulnerability for the other; general awareness training does not reach this level of specificity. Second, safeguarding frameworks such as Practice Direction 12J require not new rules but published, reasoned findings of fact, so that how a pattern of abuse or a credibility assessment was reached is visible on the face of the judgment rather than resting on unarticulated impression. Third, evidential consistency should be treated as an interpretive discipline: welfare-based decision-making must subject comparable evidence to comparable scrutiny irrespective of gender, so that the same fact pattern is not read differently according to gendered expectation. Finally, because these interpretive habits are reproduced across the wider network of professionals and not only by judges, addressing them requires shared training and case review across the judiciary, Cafcass and social work practice, so that the evidential context of decision-making becomes the site of reform.

1. Children Act 1989, s 1
2. Domestic Abuse Act 2021, s 1
3. Carol Smart, *Feminism and the Power of Law* (Routledge 1989)
4. Martha Albertson Fineman, *The Neutered Mother, the Sexual Family and Other Twentieth Century Tragedies* (Routledge 1995)
5. *Re H (Minors)* (Sexual Abuse: Standard of Proof) [1996] AC 563
6. *Re A (A Child)* [2015] EWFC 11
7. Ministry of Justice, *Assessing Risk of Harm to Children and Parents in Private Law Children Cases* (June 2020)

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8. Sharon Hays, *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* (Yale University Press 1996).
 9. n 6.
 10. n 5
 11. Robert H Mnookin, 'Child-Custody Adjudication: Judicial Functions in the Face of Indeterminacy' (1975) 39 *Law and Contemporary Problems* 226.
 12. Sandra Walklate, *Gender, Crime and Criminal Justice* (2nd edn, Willan 2004).
 13. Marianne Hester, 'Portrayal of Women as Intimate Partner Domestic Violence Perpetrators' (2012) 18(9) *Violence Against Women* 1067.
 14. Nicola Graham-Kevan and John Archer, 'Physical Aggression and Control in Heterosexual Relationships: The Effect of Sampling' (2003) 18(2) *Violence and Victims* 181.
 15. *Re H-N and Others (Children)* (Domestic Abuse: Finding of Fact Hearings) [2021] EWCA Civ 448.
 16. Adrienne Barnett, 'Contact at all costs? Domestic violence and children's welfare' (2014) 26(4) *Child and Family Law Quarterly* 439.
 17. Jonathan Scourfield, *Gender and Child Protection* (Palgrave Macmillan 2003).

How Legal Dramas and True Crime Media Affects Society's Perception of Law?

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Members of the public often argue that law seems incomprehensible, due to its complicated legal jargon. However, the media enables the public to understand the law and how it affects victims, the guilty and even prosecutors. Law is portrayed through various forms in media, with the two main ones being true-crime documentaries and legal dramas. This article will discuss three shows that focus on the law, namely 'When They See Us'[1], 'Suits'[2], and 'How to Get Away with Murder'. [3] While these are famous legal shows, this article mainly discusses how fictional and non-fictional portrayals of law influence and affect public perceptions of justice.

'When They See Us' is a crime show, based on the events of the 1989 Central Park 5 case.[4] It focuses on how the state falsely accused five Black and Latino male teenagers of raping a White female jogger in Central Park. It presented how racist legal officers dehumanised the suspects, calling them 'animals', traumatised, assaulted, and railroaded the suspects into confessing. While the show is dramatised, it stays true to the events that occurred over the years. The show spotlights the victims' families and the impact of their young children being thrust into the limelight. The show presented the legal trials, shedding light on how the court operates in serious cases. The public trial, as depicted in the show, was not only influenced by the law; many members of the public contributed to the convictions, with an example being Donald Trump. He bought page-long adverts in newspapers, declaring the suspects as guilty and demanding death as their punishment, which he has not apologised for to date.[5] Actions such as these affect court cases and emphasise how key the public is for convictions, beyond just the jury. However, the public can also use their power for good, as shown shortly after the show was aired. The main prosecutor of the case, Elizabeth Lederer, announced her resignation as a professor at Columbia Law School a month after the show. She noted her "portrayal" in the show as her reason for this; however, she did not include that the Black Law Students Association of Columbia University demanded that she be fired, to hold her accountable and called for mandatory antiracist training for all educators at Columbia. This demonstrates the power the public holds through persistent activism, emphasising how media can expose legal injustice.[6]

Legal dramas, such as 'Suits' offer a highly glamorised version of law, which is instantly recognisable to viewers, but far from the realities of corporate law. The series imagines a legal world where cases are won through instinct and personal brilliance rather than the slow, research-heavy process that is typically applied. Harvey Specter and Mike Ross, who are main characters in 'Suits', embody the fantasy of the exceptional lawyer: confident, intuitive, and unburdened by ethical constraints that shapes practice. But one could also argue that that it reinforces the idea that lawyers are arrogant, as opposed to confident, especially in Harvey's character. Their success is framed as a product of individual talent rather than teamwork and regulation. While this makes a good show, it also subtly shapes public expectations of Law, encouraging the belief that legal practice is glamorous, fast-paced and dominated by extraordinary personalities. Beyond that, public perceptions of lawyers as having infallible knowledge in any area of law are reinforced. Ethical breaches, such as Mike's lack of qualifications, are used to advance the plot rather than serious professional misconduct. Moreover, Mike's lack of qualifications were dealt with somewhat of a 'slap on the wrist'. This does not depict how legal professional misconduct is dealt with in reality and the gravity of the matter. These risks normalise the idea that bending rules is compatible with achieving justice.

'How to Get Away with Murder' presents a different, but equally influential, version of Law. The series immerses viewers in a world of criminal defence that is emotionally charged and

often chaotic. Annalise Keating is a complex figure: brilliant, vulnerable, and shaped by personal trauma. Her character challenges the traditional image of the rational lawyer by highlighting the emotional labour and moral paradox that can coincide with criminal practice. At the same time, the show amplifies these tensions to dramatic extremes as no real lawyer would encounter this. The series raises key issues especially around race and systemic injustice but also risks reinforcing the belief that criminal law is inherently corrupt or unstable. Additionally, the show amplifies (even exaggerates) these tensions for dramatic effect by depicting an overlap between a lawyer's personal life and their legal practice. This often in ways stretching beyond the parameters of what is expected of a legal practitioner and in some instances bordering on unethical and even unlawful conduct. The intensified drama can leave viewers with an exaggerated sense of how lawyers face such extreme ethical dilemmas - often displaying criminal practice that is far more volatile than it typically is. It also presents criminal defence a somewhat under-regulated or ungoverned area of legal practice. Viewers get the impression that criminal practice is an under regulated allowing lawyers to do as they will, as opposed to it being an area of law like any others where lawyers follow the code of the law and seek to enforce that even as defence counsel.

Together, these portrayals show how legal media shapes public expectations of the justice system in vastly separate ways. 'Suits' presents an idealised, glamorous version of corporate law, while 'How to Get Away with Murder' emphasises emotional pressure and ethical uncertainty within criminal defence. When considered alongside true crime and wrongful convictions, these shows form part of a broader media environment through their understanding of legal authority and fairness. Even though these shows are designed for entertainment, it influences how viewers interpret real legal processes and think about issues like race, power, and institutional trust. This highlights the need to pay closer attention to media representations when considering how legal consciousness is formed today. For many people, these shows are their main exposure to the justice system, so the narratives they present can quietly shape what viewers think lawyers do and what "justice" looks like. When these portrayals become familiar reference points, they can influence how people interpret real cases and assess credibility. In this way, the media does not just reflect public ideas about law but actively helps construct them, often in ways that go unnoticed.

1. Ava DuVernay, *When They See Us* (Netflix, 2019).
2. Aaron Korsh, *Suits* (Universal Content Productions, 2011-2019).
3. Peter Nowalk, *How To Get Away With Murder* (American Broadcasting Company, 2014-2020).
4. Krieger SA, 'Why Our Justice System Convicts Innocent People, and The Challenges Faced By Innocence Projects Trying to Exonerate Them' (2011) 14 *New Crim. L. Rev* 333.
5. Hayes FW, 'Film Review: 'When They See Us' by Ava DuVernay' (2018) 7 *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men* 91.
6. Morgan A, 'The Ongoing Struggle of the Black Ivy League' (2020) 6 *Journal of Civil and Human Right* 91.

Is the Insanity Plea Really for the Insane? A Nineteenth-century doctrine for a twenty-first-century mind

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The insanity defence in English law occupies a peculiar position. Despite being termed 'insanity', it is not always applied to those genuinely mentally ill. Instead, it operates within the established 19th-century legal framework, prompting a fundamental question: Is the insanity plea truly designed for the mentally ill or for the convenience of the legal system?

It has been argued that insanity, automatism, and intoxication are not true defences, raising questions about whether the insanity plea is an excuse or an absence of culpability.[1] The current law is governed by the *M'Naghten* Rules, formulated in 1843 following the attempted assassination of Sir Robert Peel's secretary. Under this test, a defendant must prove they were suffering from a "defect of reason" due to a "disease of the mind" at the time of the offence, meaning they either did not understand the nature and quality of their act or did not know it was wrong.[2] Legally, a "disease of the mind" refers to any internal condition affecting reason, memory or understanding, while a "defect of reason" requires an impairment of reasoning, whether total or partial. It presumes all defendants are sane unless proven otherwise, with the burden of proof uniquely falling on the defendant on the balance of probabilities.

Initially, this appears to protect those suffering from mental disorders, but its limitations become apparent. The test is purely cognitive, assessing whether the defendant understood their actions, not whether they could control them. This excludes many who may be aware but cannot restrain their conduct due to mental illness. Criminal responsibility traditionally requires both the capacity to understand and control, which the current test does not fully capture.

The courts have broadened the definition of "disease of the mind" beyond medical standards. In *R v Kemp*, arteriosclerosis was deemed legally insane, despite being physical rather than psychiatric.[3] Similarly, in *R v Sullivan*, epilepsy was classified as a disease of the mind.[4] These decisions illustrate a gap between legal and clinical understandings of mental illness. This approach was reinforced in *R v Burgess*,[5] where sleepwalking—despite being involuntary - was treated as insanity due to an internal condition. Courts clarified that a "disease of the mind" need not involve brain damage, just a malfunction of mental faculties like reason, memory, or understanding.

Conditions that might normally be considered "insanity" can be excluded. In *R v Quick*,[6] a diabetic who assaulted a victim during hypoglycaemia was not deemed legally insane because the cause was external (insulin), and he relied on automatism. Conversely, in *R v Hennessy*,[7] hyperglycaemia from insulin shortage was treated as insanity. This distinction is criticised as artificial and medically unsound. The law emphasises the condition itself, as well as whether the cause is internal or external, even when both can produce similar symptoms such as confusion, irrationality, and loss of awareness.

The difficulty in distinguishing insanity from automatism has long been recognised. In *Bratty v Attorney-General for Northern Ireland*,[8] Lord Denning described automatism as "an act done by the muscles without any control by the mind," but the boundary remains unclear. Recent case law, like *R v Coley*; *R v McGhee*; *R v Harris*,[9] the Court of Appeal examined how intoxication and psychotic states interact, emphasising the challenge of differentiating transient external factors, like intoxication, from mental conditions, demonstrating ongoing struggles to apply the insanity framework coherently.

The cognitive nature of the *M'Naghten* test limits its scope. In *R v Windle*,[10] the defendant's remark "I suppose they will hang me for this" showed awareness of his act's

wrongness despite a mental disorder. This illustrates its narrow application, emphasising awareness over genuine mental impairment. The scope was broadened in *R v Keal*,^[11] where the Court clarified that “wrong” includes both legal and moral wrongfulness. Further, in *R v Oye*,^[12] the Court of Appeal affirmed that if a psychotic episode causes a total misinterpretation of reality – such as believing police are evil spirits – the insanity defence may succeed if the defendant cannot understand the nature or wrongfulness of their act. The test remains narrow because it excludes cases in which the defendant understands their act but cannot control it, limiting its practical application.

The practical consequences of pleading insanity discourage its use. A successful defence leads to a “not guilty by reason of insanity” verdict, resulting in compulsory hospitalisation under the *Mental Health Act 1983*.^[13] For many defendants, this is less attractive than alternatives like diminished responsibility under the *Homicide Act 1957*, which reduces murder to manslaughter without the stigma of insanity.^[14] The court can also impose a hospital order, supervision order, or discharge, reflecting the defence’s hybrid civil-criminal nature.

This stigma cannot be overstated. The label “insane” affects social and moral impacts beyond the courtroom. As a result, defence counsel often avoid the insanity plea, even when applicable, often reframing it as automatism or diminished responsibility, which marginalises insanity within criminal law. It is seen as a “quagmire of law,” rarely used except as a last resort.

This tension is not merely theoretical. Recent high-profile cases highlight issues with mental health and criminal responsibility. Valdo Calocane was convicted based on diminished responsibility despite evidence of severe paranoid schizophrenia, questioning the adequacy of the current test.^[15] Axel Rudakubana’s case also fuels debate on mental disorder and responsibility. These cases show the practical and controversial limits of the insanity defence.^[16] In clinical legal work, especially wrongful conviction cases, it becomes clear how rigid legal categories often fail to capture defendants’ lived reality with mental disorders, reinforcing the need for a more coherent, medically informed approach.

From a policy perspective, the defence reveals discomfort within the legal system. The law aims to uphold moral culpability for criminal liability but struggles with mental illness complexities. This creates a doctrine focusing on certainty and categorisation over fairness and medical accuracy. The *Law Commission* criticises the current framework as outdated and recommends reforms.^[17] Proposals include replacing the *M’Naghten Rules* with a test based on recognised medical conditions and incorporating cognitive and volitional elements. These reforms would align better with modern psychiatric knowledge and ensure that the defence serves those it is intended to protect.

Ultimately, the insanity plea shows a disconnect between law and reality. It is not irrelevant but outdated. Relying on a Victorian test, the legal system risks excluding those most in need of protection while including those not fit the ordinary understanding of insanity. For law students and future practitioners, understanding doctrinal rules is only the starting point. The real challenge is questioning whether those rules achieve justice. The insanity defence, as it stands, indicates the answer is far from clear.

In conclusion, the resolution to the inquiry posed appears to be that the insanity plea is not genuinely intended for the “insane” in the conventional or medical sense. Instead, it signifies a nineteenth-century legal construct focused on categorising defendants by legal responsibility rather than psychiatric reality. The *M’Naghten Rules* continue to emphasise cognitive understanding, legal certainty, and public protection, often at the expense of medical accuracy and individual justice. As demonstrated by cases such as *Kemp*, *Sullivan*, *Quick*, and *Hennessy*,

the law's classification of insanity frequently diverges from contemporary clinical understandings of mental disorder. While the defence remains a vital safeguard for those who genuinely lack criminal responsibility, its limited scope, outdated terminology, and artificial distinctions undermine its legitimacy. If the law is to reflect modern knowledge of mental illness and principles of fair attribution of blame, meaningful reform is no longer merely desirable but imperative. Until such reform occurs, the insanity plea remains less a defence for the mentally ill than a mechanism through which the legal system addresses challenging questions of responsibility and risk.

[1] David Ormerod and Karl Laird, *Smith, Hogan, and Ormerod's Criminal Law* (16th edn, OUP 2021) 325.

[2] *M'Naghten's Case* (1843) 8 E.R. 718 [209]-[213] (Lord Chief Justice Tindal).

[3] *R v Kemp* [1957] 1 QB 399, page 407 (Devlin J).

[4] *R v Sullivan* [1984] AC 156, page 172 (Lord Diplock).

[5] *R v Burgess* [1991] 2 QB 92, page 101-102 (Lord Lane C.J.).

[6] *R v Quick* [1973] QB 910, page 922-923.

[7] *R v Hennessy* [1989] 1 WLR 287, page 292-293.

[8] *Bratty v Attorney-General for Northern Ireland* [1963] AC 386, page 409 (Lord Denning).

[9] *R v Coley*; *R v McGhee*; *R v Harris* [2013] EWCA Crim 223, paras [12]-[13], [20]-[26], [30].

[10] *R v Windle* [1952] 2 QB 826, page 831-832.

[11] *R v Keal* [2022] EWCA Crim 341 para [41].

[12] *R v Oye* [2013] EWCA Crim 1725 para [16]-[17].

[13] Mental Health Act 1983, ss 37-41.

[14] Homicide Act 1957, s 2 (*for diminished responsibility*)

[15] BBC News, 'Nottingham attacks: Valdo Calocane case explained' (BBC News, 23 January 2024) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-68080872> accessed 31 March 2026.

[16] BBC News, 'Southport attack: Axel Rudakubana case explained' (BBC News, 2024) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cg5zmlvln4o> accessed 31 March 2026.

[17] Law Commission, *Insanity and Automatism: Supplementary Material to the Scoping Paper* (2013) page 68-86.

The Innocence Project London: Bridging Legal Theory and Justice in Practice

Anthony Chidiadi Nwaneri, Programme Representative LLB, Law (Hons) Level 6 Extended UGIC Caseworker, Innocence Project London (2024/2025 - 2025/2026)

Within legal education, there is often a perceived divide between doctrinal learning and the lived realities of the criminal justice system. For students in the School of Law and Criminology at the University of Greenwich, this gap can only truly be understood and meaningfully addressed through direct engagement with real cases. It is in this context that the Innocence Project London (IPL) stands as one of the most impactful and transformative opportunities available to students. Innocence projects are university based projects that seek to educate students, assist the wrongly convicted, and contribute to research and reform within criminal justice and about 36 projects have been established between 2004 and 2014 under the Innocence Network UK. [1]

The Innocence Project London, a model adapted for the English criminal justice system, involves students deconstructing criminal cases, analysing evidence, and developing legal theories to find factual evidence of innocence. It was established in 2010 as a registered charity that works with law and criminology students to review and investigate cases of convicted individuals who maintain their innocence after completing the criminal appeals process. [2] In January 2016, the IPL became an official member of the Innocence Network, which is based in the United States of America. Drawing from my years of experience within the IPL, this article reflects on its significance, both as a vehicle for justice and as a cornerstone of professional and intellectual development for aspiring legal practitioners and criminologists.

The Purpose and Importance of the IPL

The IPL, as a pro bono innocence organisation, moves with the mission of identifying and overturning wrongful convictions in England and Wales. The organisation is a local chapter of the global Innocence Network (IN), which has over 70 member organisations around the world dedicated to the same goal; offering pro bono legal and investigative services to convicted individuals with the aim of exonerating wrongfully convicted individuals and reforming the criminal justice system to prevent future miscarriages of justice. [3] The IPL is dedicated to deconstructing claims of innocence from convicted individuals who have exhausted the criminal appeals process. Students work on real cases often involving serious criminal offences to review evidence, analyse trial transcripts, and identify fresh grounds for appeal.[4] This is not hypothetical learning. The work carried out within the IPL has tangible consequences as it engages directly with institutions such as the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC), which has the authority to refer cases back to the Court of Appeal.

The importance of the IPL lies in three key areas. The first is access to justice, which provides a critical avenue for reviewing wrongful convictions, particularly where traditional routes have been exhausted. This is evident in student casework, where students review court transcripts to identify fresh evidence or a new legal argument to challenge the wrongful conviction of their assigned client. Students serve as social justice advocates for the client, believing in their innocence and drafting applications to the CCRC on their behalf when all other avenues of appeal have been exhausted. Secondly, the IPL promotes accountability by encouraging scrutiny of investigative and prosecutorial processes. Thirdly, the Innocence Project London contributes to broader conversations about systemic issues within the criminal justice system.

Transformative Benefits for Students

Participation in the IPL offers a level of experiential learning that cannot be replicated in lectures or textbooks. It offers the development of advanced legal skills in students such as case analysis, evidence evaluation, legal research, and drafting CCRC submissions. Moreover, what distinguishes the work done in the IPL is the depth and stakes involved. This means reviewing inconsistencies in witness testimony or identifying procedural irregularities, which become more than just an academic exercise as they become a matter of potential liberty. Additionally, the IPL helps in the development of practical critical thinking which demands intellectual independence. Students are not merely applying legal principles; they learn to question these principles such as challenging the reliability of forensic evidence, interrogating police conduct and evaluating the role of jury reasoning. Such work cultivates a level of critical engagement that is essential for both legal practice and criminological inquiry. Furthermore, the IPL exposes the harsh realities of the justice system to students. Students are often acquainted with the textbook portrayals of justice which often assume procedural fairness. However, with them joining the IPL, they are exposed to a more complex reality as the students' case workers are confronted with the persistence of wrongful convictions, the limitations of appellate systems, and the human cost of legal error. This exposure fosters not only professional competence but also ethical awareness. Most importantly, for some students (Criminology Students), the IPL offers a rare opportunity to connect theory with practice. Concepts such as miscarriages of justice, institutional bias, and evidence based policy are no longer abstract. These concepts are observed, analysed, and experienced firsthand.

Why Students Should Join the IPL

Joining the Innocence Project London is to step into a role that carries both responsibility and purpose. It is not simply an extracurricular activity. It is a commitment to justice. Students should consider joining the IPL because of the impact it has on them, as it gives students the opportunity to contribute to cases with real world consequences. It is very hard to find such opportunities, but with the IPL, you are given this opportunity on a gold platter. Also, experience with the IPL is highly regarded by legal employers, particularly in criminal law, human rights, and public law, and it also helps students build key employability skills. Joining the IPL also helps to reshape students' understanding of the law. They learn that it is not a static body of rules, but a dynamic system that must be constantly examined and improved. Joining equally helps to instill a sense of duty in the student that extends beyond academic achievement.

A Personal Reflection

My time with the IPL has been one of the most defining aspects of my legal education. It has challenged my assumptions, sharpened my analytical abilities, and reinforced the importance of diligence, integrity, and empathy in legal work. It has also left a significant impact on my perception of criminal cases. Perhaps most importantly, it has underscored a simple but profound truth. Notably, this truth is that the law is not infallible. It is a human system, and as such, it requires human effort to correct its errors. Before joining the IPL, I saw most case verdicts as absolute and carrying on the precedent as most law students would; however, upon engaging with cases on the IPL, I now look at the facts of the case with great detail, increasing my analytical skills and problem-solving skills with issues of wrongful conviction into consideration. I engage with the case facts with great scrutiny and keen attention to detail.

The Innocence Project London represents a form of legal education where academic rigour meets social responsibility. For students of Law and Criminology, it offers an unparalleled

opportunity to engage with the justice system in a meaningful and impactful way. In an era where questions of fairness, accountability, and reform are more pressing than ever, the IPL does not merely prepare students for legal careers, it prepares them to be advocates for justice

[1] Holly Greenwood, 'Rethinking Innocence Projects in England and Wales: Lessons for the Future' (2021) Vol 60 Issue 4 The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice p. 459-492.

[2] Innocence Project London, 'What is the Innocence Project London?' (*Mysite2020*) <<https://www.iplondon.org/who-we-are>> accessed 14th June 2026.

[3] Innocence Project, 'About' (*Innocence Project2024*) <<https://innocenceproject.org/about/>> accessed 14th June 2026.

[4] Innocence Project London, 'Application Pack | Innocence Project London' (*Mysite2025*) <<https://www.iplondon.org/application-pack>> accessed 14th June 2026.

The Case for Ruby's Law: Domestic Abuse, Animal Harm, and the Limits of Current Legal Protection

Christina Warner, Barrister and Stacy Banwell, Professor in Criminology

Current situation

I first met Christina Warner, a human rights and animal protection specialist at 33 Bedford Row Chambers, at the British Society of Green Criminology Network Seminar in October 2025. We were both presenting on issues relating to animal harm and victimisation. I was particularly moved by Christina's talk on *Ruby's Law, Protecting Pets in Family Law*. This prompted me to invite Christina to deliver a talk at the University of Greenwich, as part of the Conversation Series hosted by Institute for Inclusive Communities and Environments. Generously, Christina accepted the invitation, and we held a seminar in February 2026. During the conversation I posed a series of questions to Christina, covering the origins and rationale behind the campaign, its current legislative status and anticipated future trajectory, as well as potential obstacles that may impact its development and implementation. This piece provides a summary of the themes of the conversation during that seminar, focusing on the origins, rationale and significance of the proposed bill.

Origins and rationale

Ruby's Law emerged as a legal reform campaign aimed at addressing a significant gap in the protection afforded to victims of domestic abuse whose pets are used as instruments of coercive control. The campaign was grounded in a growing body of empirical and legal research demonstrating the strong correlation between domestic abuse and the abuse or threatened abuse of animals within the household.

Coercive control, now recognised as a core component of domestic abuse under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, refers to a pattern of behaviour designed to subordinate and entrap victims through psychological, emotional, and practical domination. Within this framework, threats or acts of violence directed toward animals serve as a highly effective tool for manipulation. Perpetrators may threaten to kill, injure, or abandon pets, or may directly harm them as a means of reinforcing control over the human victim. These acts can generate profound psychological consequences, often compounding the trauma experienced by survivors and delaying their ability to leave abusive environments due to fears for the safety of their pets. In some cases, perpetrators explicitly leverage this bond by threatening harm to the pet if the survivor attempts to escape or disclose the abuse.

Children within abusive households may also experience profound psychological harm when they witness violence toward animals. Evidence suggests that such experiences can intensify trauma and exacerbate the emotional consequences of domestic abuse. The presence of animal abuse therefore functions not merely as isolated harm but as part of a broader pattern of family violence with intergenerational implications.

Despite these realities, the legal architecture in England and Wales treats pets primarily as property. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, animals are afforded protection against cruelty and neglect; however, the statute is designed to regulate animal welfare rather than to intervene within domestic abuse dynamics. Consequently, the Act does not provide mechanisms that enable victims of domestic abuse to secure the safety of their animals as part of protective legal proceedings.

Similarly, the Family Law Act 1996 provides courts with the power to grant Non-Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders to protect individuals from abuse within domestic

relationships. Yet these remedies are directed toward safeguarding human victims and controlling perpetrators' conduct toward them. Pets are not explicitly recognised within the current statutory framework.

Finally, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 does not explicitly address the role of animals within coercive relationships. As a result, the law remains incomplete: it acknowledges coercive control in principle but fails to account for one of the most pervasive and emotionally powerful mechanisms through which coercion is exercised.

Domestic Abuse (Pets) Bill

Following sustained advocacy and cross-sector engagement, in March 2026, the campaign received its first reading in Parliament and formally became the Domestic Abuse (Pets) Bill. This Bill seeks to introduce targeted reforms within the family law framework so that courts can explicitly protect pets in domestic abuse proceedings.

Examples include: the recognition of pets within Non-Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders, which will prevent perpetrators from harming, threatening, or controlling pets as a means of manipulating victims; an acknowledgment of the use of animals within coercive control frameworks and mechanisms which allow survivors to retain custody of their pets.

Significance

The significance of these reforms extends beyond the protection of animals alone. By integrating animals into the legal understanding of domestic abuse, the proposed Bill acknowledges the relational realities of abuse within the household. It recognises that violence against animals often functions as violence against people by proxy, serving as a mechanism through which perpetrators exert psychological domination and reinforce patterns of control.

By enabling courts to protect pets within domestic abuse proceedings, the Domestic Abuse (Pets) Bill seeks to close a critical gap in the current legal framework ensuring that survivors are not forced to choose between their own safety and the safety of the animals they love.

Hidden Human Rights in Wealthier Countries

Vicki Prais, Global Human Rights Speaker, Human Rights Consultant & Coach, Professor and Daria Ilyushenkova, Final Year Law LLB Student, University of Greenwich

Introduction

Human rights abuses are often linked to developing countries, but serious violations also persist in wealthy ones.[1] This article shows how poverty, homelessness, abuse, and barriers to justice continue to undermine women's rights across Scotland, Wales, England, and Northern Ireland, even where legal protections already exist.[2]

Scotland: Gendered Poverty

In Scotland, the cost-of-living crisis has exposed how poverty can be gendered.[3] Women are more likely to be trapped by low pay, caring responsibilities, debt, and benefit dependence, and recent reports show the crisis is also hitting their mental health and long-term financial security.[4] The Scottish Government's first Equality Strategy for Women and Girls, published in March 2026, shows that this is now being recognised as a serious equality issue.[5]

Wales: Hidden Migrant Abuse

Wales shows a different kind of hidden rights harm: women may have legal rights on paper but still be unable to use them in practice.[6] Immigration insecurity, NRPF ('No Recourse to Public Funds') status, language barriers, fear of removal, and lack of safe accommodation can block migrant women facing gender-based violence.[7] The result is structural exclusion, where abuse remains hidden, and the law's protection is out of reach. [8]

England: Hidden Homelessness

Moving on, homelessness in England is a hidden human rights failure, especially for women. [9] Official rough sleeping figures often miss the scale of women's homelessness. [10] At the same time, Shelter has reported 12,740 women homeless alone in temporary accommodation, and the Women's Rough Sleeping Census found 815 women sleeping rough. [11] With women dying on average at 43, the UK's housing crisis is not just a housing issue but a human rights emergency.[12]

Northern Ireland: Women in Justice

Moreover, Northern Ireland shows how poverty, trauma, and abuse can push women into contact with the justice system. [13] The Department of Justice's *Supporting Change* strategy recognises that many women and girls in this position have complex needs, including abuse, mental health difficulties, and caring responsibilities.[14] With women making up a small but significant share of the prison population, the key issue is not punishment alone but whether rehabilitation and trauma-informed support are working in practice.[15]

Conclusion

Hidden rights crises still exist in wealthy countries, and women across Scotland, Wales, England, and Northern Ireland remain affected by poverty, homelessness, abuse, and exclusion. [16] The real test is whether rights actually improve women's lives.[17]

1. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3, art 11(1).
2. National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, *#GenerationEqual Report* (May 2024); Senedd Cymru, *Gender Based Violence: The Needs of Migrant Women* (Equality and Social Justice Committee Report, 26 October 2022) [6.12]-[6.15]; Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, *Statutory Homelessness in England: January 2024* (Live Tables, 2024) Table TA1(a); Justice NI, *Supporting Change: A Strategy for Women and Girls in or at Risk of Contact with the Justice System 2022-2029* (Department of Justice, Northern Ireland 2022).
3. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3, art 2(1).
4. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3, art 2(1); Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (14 December 1990) UN Doc E/1991/23, Annex III.
5. National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, *#GenerationEqual Report* (May 2024); Senedd Cymru, *Gender Based Violence: The Needs of Migrant Women* (Equality and Social Justice Committee Report, 26 October 2022) [6.12]-[6.15]; Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, *Statutory Homelessness in England: January 2024* (Live Tables, 2024) Table TA1(a); Justice NI, *Supporting Change: A Strategy for Women and Girls in or at Risk of Contact with the Justice System 2022-2029* (Department of Justice, Northern Ireland 2022).
6. Welsh Government, *Welsh Government Response to the Equality and Social Justice Committee's Report on Gender Based Violence and the Needs of Migrant Women* (6 December 2022) <<https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-response-equality-social-justice-committees-report-gender-based>> accessed 16 June 2026; BAWSO and Welsh Women's Aid (evidence to Senedd inquiry, cited in [7.22]).
7. Welsh Government, *Welsh Government Response to the Equality and Social Justice Committee's Report on Gender Based Violence and the Needs of Migrant Women* (6 December 2022) <<https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-response-equality-social-justice-committees-report-gender-based>> accessed 16 June 2026; BAWSO and Welsh Women's Aid (evidence to Senedd inquiry, cited in [7.22]).
8. Ibid.
9. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, *Statutory Homelessness in England: January 2024* (Live Tables, 2024) Table TA1(a).
10. Shelter England, *Women and Homelessness Statistics* (March 2025) 4; Women's Rough Sleeping Census, *Hidden Figures: Women Sleeping Rough in England* (May 2024) 7.
11. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3, art 11(1); Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No 4: The Right to Adequate Housing (Art 11(1) of the Covenant) (13 December 1991) UN Doc E/1992/23, Annex III.[18] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, *Statutory Homelessness in England: January 2024* (Live Tables, 2024) Table TA1(a).
12. St Mungo's, *Still Dying on the Streets: Women Experiencing Homelessness* (2025) 12.
13. Penal Reform International, *Global Prison Trends Report 2025* <<https://www.penalreform.org/resource/global-prison-trends-2025/>> accessed 16 June 2026.
14. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 'Prison population in Northern Ireland rises to an average of 1,911 in 2024/2025' (23 October 2025) <<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/news/prison-population-northern-ireland-rises-average-1911-202425>> accessed 16 June 2026.
15. Justice NI, *Supporting Change: A Strategy for Women and Girls in or at Risk of Contact with the Justice System 2022-2029* (Department of Justice, Northern Ireland 2022).

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16. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3, art 11(1); National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, *#GenerationEqual Report* (May 2024); Senedd Cymru, *Gender Based Violence: The Needs of Migrant Women* (Equality and Social Justice Committee Report, 26 October 2022) [6.12]-[6.15]; Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, *Statutory Homelessness in England: January 2024* (Live Tables, 2024) Table TA1(a); Justice NI, *Supporting Change: A Strategy for Women and Girls in or at Risk of Contact with the Justice System 2022-2029* (Department of Justice, Northern Ireland 2022).
 17. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (14 December 1990) UN Doc E/1991/23, Annex III.

PART VII: BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Sharpening Legal Skills Through the Client Interviewing Programme

Ceylan Yildiz Begum, Lecturer in Law, University of Greenwich

The Client Interviewing Programme runs every year during the first term. Building on the client interviewing skills acquired in the first year, the Programme is tailored for second- and third-year law students. In the 2025/26 academic year, 43 students enrolled in the Client Interviewing Programme. After a series of workshops delivered by Dr Ceylan Begüm Yıldız and Aqilah Uddin (last year's finalists and alumnae), seven teams entered the internal competition, where they were given an office memo and interviewed a client to elicit relevant information, outline the problem, and propose solutions.

The programme aims to promote and develop the skills involved in client interviewing within a creative, educational context. It fosters what are referred to as soft skills (effective listening, asking the right questions, analysing the client's situation, and formulating advice), which are essential in the legal profession.



Congratulations to Annabell Schwarm and Mohid Singh, who represented the University at the National Client Interviewing Competition 2026, held at the University of Westminster on 13 February 2026, following their success as finalists in the internal competition. In this year's national competition, student solicitor teams advised two clients on issues concerning Land Law after receiving a brief office memo.

Annabell and Mohid impressed the judges with their professionalism, teamwork, and exemplary interview skills. The team finished 9th in the semi-finals, with the top six progressing to the finals. We congratulate Annabell and Mohid on their success and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

The Client Interviewing Programme offers an excellent opportunity to develop practical legal skills, build confidence, and gain real insight into client-focused legal practice. It is also a chance to challenge yourself, collaborate, and represent the University at the national level. We strongly encourage all second and third-year law students to take part in the 2026/27 programme and make the most of this rewarding and enriching experience.

The Crown Prosecution Service Mentoring scheme

Thierry Shillingford-Brown, Final Year Law LLB Student

During the third year of a law degree, students often face a difficult choice: focusing entirely on achieving the best possible grades or dedicating time to diverse experiences that bolster a CV. Regardless of the path you choose, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Mentor Scheme is undoubtedly one of the most profound opportunities available at Greenwich. While it involves quiet and dedicated work with the CPS, it is arguably the best initiative introduced for aspiring legal professionals.

The scheme is led by Associate Professor Carol Withey, an exceptional lecturer specialising in criminal law and leader of the Advanced Criminal Law module. Having participated in this annual highlight, I can attest that it was the defining experience of my academic year. There are four main parts of the mentorship. The first was the online group activities, where we were given legal scenarios and, during the sessions, divided into breakout rooms with our mentors to present our findings. This environment served as a professional crucible in which we fully developed presentation skills and legal etiquette.

Beyond the group dynamic, the scheme provides bespoke 1-to-1 mentorship. These sessions allow for a candid exploration of the profession, covering everything from the psychological demands of criminal law to specific career progression within the CPS. Our mentors were available most of the time and always reachable. They were some of the friendliest and most down-to-earth mentors who really helped people advance and understand the profession, with some students walking away with apprenticeship applications as paralegals and future CPS solicitors. They bridged an important understanding between the CPS and students, showing that CPS is a wonderful place to work and start a career, and breaking down negative stereotypes and connotations.

This guidance is complemented by multi-day courtroom shadowing. Observing prosecutors provides a firsthand view of the advocacy process and day-to-day insight into how the law works and how hard the CPS prosecutors work. Seeing a prosecutor navigate a volatile witness or respond to a judge's intervention transforms academic theory into a tangible, high-stakes reality. These days in court highlight the essential skills of a prosecutor: adaptability, brevity, and composure under pressure.

The CPS Mentorship Scheme is a transformative experience for any aspiring solicitor or barrister. It strips away the law's abstract nature and replaces it with the practicalities of strategy, advocacy, and public service. I would like to extend a profound thank you to the expert guidance of Associate Professor Withey and the dedicated CPS staff. Week in and week out, hundreds of emails were sent and numerous hours outside their working hours were spent in team meetings, taking time out of their productive and hectic careers. Students leave the programme not only with enhanced knowledge but also with the professional confidence required to pursue a career at the Bar or within the Government Legal Profession.

What the Classroom Didn't Teach Me: Learning from Women in Practice

Annabell Schwarm, Second Year Law Student, University of Greenwich

For many law students, the transition from the academic study of law to the realities of legal practice can be both daunting and disorienting. The structured environment of lectures, textbooks, and theoretical problem-solving, while foundational, often differs significantly from the fast-paced, multifaceted demands of the legal profession. This disparity is not always immediately apparent during the gruelling years of a degree, leaving many students unprepared for the soft skills, networking nuances, and cultural navigation required in professional practice. In recognition of this gap, the University of Greenwich Women in Law Society has dedicated its recent efforts to bridging the divide between theory and practice. Through panel discussions and direct engagement with legal practitioners, the Society has fostered a space where professional readiness is not just taught but modelled.

The cornerstone of the Society's recent initiatives was a panel event featuring women who have not only navigated the legal profession but have actively reshaped it. Hearing directly from practitioners like Nina Champion and Mellissa Akinya provided a level of insight that a curriculum simply cannot capture. Nina Champion, a current PhD student at Greenwich and Director for Champions Social Change [1], brought a wealth of 'boots-on-the-ground' experience. Her background as a former criminal defence trainee solicitor and former Director of the Criminal Justice Alliance illustrated how a legal education can be leveraged into systemic advocacy. Similarly, Mellissa Akinya, a Solicitor Advocate in the Government Legal Department, Diversity Officer, and Founder of the Black Lawyers Circle [2], offered a blueprint for how a legal career can intersect with equity and inclusion work. For the students in attendance, these stories made career pathways feel tangible and realistic. They dismantled the myth of the 'perfect candidate' and replaced it with something far more attainable: the authentic professional.

One of the most profound takeaways from these sessions was the recognition that legal careers are rarely linear. In the classroom, students are often conditioned to think in terms of a strict chronology: degree, LPC/SQE, training contract, and partnership. However, our guest speakers emphasized that 'it's a marathon, not a race.' Students were encouraged to keep an open mind to unexpected opportunities, letting a sense of purpose and genuine interest guide their decisions rather than a rigid five-year plan. This perspective provides a necessary safety valve for the high-pressure environment of law school, offering reassurance that there is time to grow, pivot, and explore different facets of the law.

Beyond technical expertise, the Women in Law Society's events highlighted the critical importance of networking, not as a transactional exercise in collecting business cards, but as a method of building authentic connections. The advice was clear: seek out individuals who align with your personal career aspirations. Mentorship is not just about gaining a professional edge; it is about learning from the mistakes and successes of those who walked the path before you. By asking for advice and showing curiosity about the 'bigger picture' beyond immediate tasks, students can begin to see themselves as part of the legal community before they even graduate.

A significant portion of the Society's discussions centred on the persistent gender dynamics within legal spaces. While the number of women entering the profession continues to rise, statistical disparities remain in senior leadership. According to the Solicitors Regulation Authority 2023 diversity data, while women make up 53% of lawyers in law firms, they represent only 37% of partners. In larger firms, this number drops further to approximately 28%.[3] Reflecting on these dynamics, our speakers observed that men often display greater outward confidence in professional settings. The practical strategy offered to the women of Greenwich

was clear: 'own the room.' This involves asserting one's voice in meetings and professional environments, asking questions not just for information but to assert presence and engagement, and owning one's uniqueness rather than trying to fit a traditional, often masculine, 'mould' of what a lawyer should be. The panel argued convincingly that authenticity is not a liability; it is a professional strength. When women bring their full selves to the office, they don't just fill a seat; they advocate for change and improve the organisation's culture from within.

The University of Greenwich Women in Law Society's recent initiatives have proven that the most valuable lessons often happen outside the lecture theatre. By bringing together practitioners who are "being the change," the Society has provided a roadmap for students to move from passive learners to proactive change-makers. Paving the way means more than just personal success; it means holding the door open for those behind you [4].

[1] Nina Champion, 'Nina Champion' (LinkedIn) <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/nina-champion-58b87646> accessed 12 February 2026

[2] Wallington County Grammar School, 'Pathways to Law Programme at WCS' (12 January 2023) <https://www.wcsch.com/538/latest-news/post/652/pathways-to-law-programme-at-wcs-1> accessed 12 February 2026

[3] Mondidipa Fouzder, 'Women make up 37% of law firm partners, new SRA figures show' *The Law Society Gazette* (London, 14 December 2023) <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/practice/women-make-up-37-of-law-firm-partners-new-sra-figures-show/5118209.article#:~:text=Women%20make%20up%2037%25%20of,Obiter> accessed 12 February 2026

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From Mooting to Marshalling: Building Advocacy Skills Beyond the Classroom

Zahra Rashid, Second Year Law LLB Student, University of Greenwich

This article explores how aspiring legal professionals can develop practical advocacy skills through extracurricular experiences, with a particular focus on mooting, mock trials, and judicial marshalling. Drawing on my own journey of winning a moot that led to a mini pupillage (yet to be undertaken), being a finalist of BPP's Advocate of the Year Mock Trial, participating in the London School of Economics (LSE) Mock Trial, and marshalling a family law judge, the piece combines personal reflection with practical advice for students looking to strengthen their legal skillset beyond academic study.

At its core, the article argues that while academic success is important, it is often these hands-on experiences that truly shape a confident and capable future lawyer. Many law students become comfortable with reading cases and writing essays, yet feel less prepared when it comes to speaking, persuading, or thinking on their feet. This gap between theory and practice can feel daunting. However, engaging in activities like mooting and mock trials allows students to bring the law to life, transforming abstract principles into real arguments, decisions, and outcomes. Along the way, students develop not only legal knowledge but also confidence, resilience, and the ability to perform under pressure.

First, I would like to focus on mooting as a starting point for building advocacy skills. Mooting teaches students how to structure arguments clearly, engage with legal authorities, and respond to challenging questions from judges. It can feel intimidating at first, but it quickly becomes one of the most rewarding experiences in legal education. Reflecting on my own success in a moot competition, I would like to emphasise how preparation, practice, and perseverance can lead to both personal growth and unexpected opportunities. In my case, this included securing a mini-pupillage, demonstrating how mooting can open doors and develop skills.

Second, I turn to mock trials, which offer a very different but equally valuable experience. Unlike mooting, which is largely appellate and focused on legal argument, mock trials recreate the atmosphere of a real courtroom. Participants must think quickly, adapt to new information, and work as part of a team. Drawing on my experiences in BPP's Advocate of the Year competition and the LSE Mock Trial, I observed how mock trials develop practical skills such as witness handling, persuasive speaking, and courtroom presence. They are particularly valuable for students interested in becoming barristers, as they provide a realistic sense of what advocacy looks and feels like in practice.

Third, I had the opportunity to participate in judicial marshalling, an experience often overlooked yet incredibly insightful. Marshalling a family law judge allowed me to observe real cases unfold, offering a perspective that no textbook can provide. Watching how judges analyse arguments, manage proceedings, and deliver decisions deepens a student's understanding of the legal process. It also highlighted the importance of professionalism, preparation, and ethical awareness. Marshalling complements advocacy experiences by demonstrating how students' skills are applied to real-world legal settings.

In conclusion, the article reinforces the idea that experiential learning is not just a bonus but an essential part of becoming a well-rounded legal professional. Students who take the initiative to engage in mooting, mock trials, and marshalling gain a clearer understanding of the law in action and develop the skills needed to succeed in practice. These experiences build not only competence but also confidence, helping students transition more smoothly from university to the professional world.

Ultimately, this article highlights the transformative impact of stepping beyond the classroom. By engaging in practical experiences and taking ownership of their development, students can more effectively bridge the gap between theory and practice. The opportunities available are not only accessible but deeply enriching, equipping aspiring legal professionals with the tools and perspective necessary to succeed in their future careers.

Marshalling Experience

Robert Gayfer, Second Year Law LLB Student, University of Greenwich

When I walked into his office at 9.25 am, Judge Gumpert, instead of a traditional ‘hello’ or ‘good morning’, greeted me with a quote from King Louie XIV: “You almost made me wait...”. An ominous, and perhaps, as we will see, prophetic introduction to my 5-day marshalling opportunity at Woolwich Crown Court in December 2024. This experience opened my eyes to the logistical issues the judicial system faces, as well as the reality of the practical application of law in criminal proceedings; from million-pound drug smuggling to rape and murder - Courtroom 10 saw it all. Barristers on both sides of the fence advocated their submissions, and the judge, positioned at the centre, weighed competing arguments in pursuit of a just and lawful outcome.

At the time of writing, if one’s finger had been placed on the pulse of current affairs as mine was, one might agree with me when I say that the contemporary ‘hot topic’ was the large backlog of cases the UK courts face, which our Justice Secretary, Mr Lammy, hoped to reduce by increasing the number of magistrates. It’s easy to blame this backlog on lazy bureaucrats, but in reality, administering justice is as complex, if not more so, than an engine with hundreds of thousands of moving parts. If just one cog stops or needs repair, then the whole system grinds to a halt. Common examples which I experienced during my time as a marshal include waiting for defendants to turn up due to miscommunication from prisons, and delays in connecting or lagging during a Zoom call. Yes, the 2-5 second delay doesn’t seem like much in the moment, but when compounded, over a whole day, week, or even year, considering the fact it costs £38 per minute to keep a crown court open, it outlines a necessity to balance the efficiency of the justice system, with the accuracy of law to avoid miscarriages of justice.

I write this in the hope of convincing the constant reader, not that the justice system is broken beyond repair and needs immediate replacement, but that this complex issue is not an easy fix and should be a collective responsibility of us to ensure the smooth running of the law, and our country in general. Perhaps it is important to stress to a budding young(ish) legal professional the practice of punctuality. But a small part of me thinks that it would be more appropriate to direct the Sun King’s quote towards other, more eminent individuals and institutions in the legal profession.

In my experience, all the court staff are very helpful in performing their role and assisting students in the early stages of their legal career. This exposure to direct contact with legal professionals is paramount in coming to terms with legal jargon such as ‘Boxwork, PTPH, and Adverse Inference’. Do not underestimate the power that a simple lunch around a table of motivated and highly intelligent people has, because you will get immediate, accurate, but sometimes conflicting feedback when asking complex questions (just be ready to hold your own corner when it comes to banter!)

Such is what you can expect from having the privilege to marshal a judge. It is experiences like this which are pivotal in a student’s journey in learning, and I would encourage every student at the University of Greenwich and Kent to apply for these positions and to get involved with the extra-curricular competitions and events run by the societies! Dare to compete against your peers in debates and moots. You may just win an opportunity to get valuable work experience in the legal profession, such as marshalling. This was the case when I participated in the family court moot last year, in which my teammate and I went to the quarterfinals; we were both offered the opportunity to marshal Judge Cassidy at the Central Family Court. As anyone familiar with the court system would know, unlike criminal and civil courts, the general public cannot observe family court proceedings due to the sensitive nature of the subject.

The insights I gained during my marshalling experience were invaluable as they significantly influenced the direction of the area of law I'm considering pursuing. Unless a student comes into higher education already complete with a comprehensive understanding of law, then it is clear that these experiences are fundamental to educational development and a career path post-graduation.

In short, I think marshalling is essential to fully comprehend the complexities of the law. I would encourage other law students at the University of Greenwich and Kent to seek out these opportunities, and in doing so, learn how it actually applies in practice, and maybe a little bit about yourself.

Mooting: Essex Court/English Speaking Union Competition.

Serpil Tas, Lecturer in Law at University of Greenwich

Mooting occupies a central role in legal education by bridging the gap between academic study and practical application. It enables students to move beyond theoretical understanding and actively engage with legal principles. Through this process, students develop key professional skills, including legal research, written advocacy and analytical thinking; all of which they will require if they pursue the bar.

Mooting fosters confidence, resilience, and professional discipline. Appearing before a panel of judges encourages clarity of expression and composure under pressure, while also instilling the ability to respond constructively to critique and feedback.

Mooting is not merely an extracurricular pursuit, but an essential component of legal training. This article highlights the experiences and achievements of our students who recently participated in the ESU–Essex Court Chambers National Mooting Competition (ESU Competition), showcasing their impressive performance and the valuable skills they gained throughout the competition.

The ESU Competition, founded in 1972, is widely regarded as the most prestigious mooting competition in the United Kingdom. It provides a platform for students to develop and demonstrate excellence in appellate advocacy, requiring participants to engage deeply with complex legal issues, construct structured and persuasive submissions, and respond effectively to judicial questioning. In doing so, the competition reflects both the intellectual rigour and practical demands of legal practice.

Each team is composed of two students, who work collaboratively to prepare written and oral submissions.



The second round of the competition took place on 26th February 2026 against the University of Kent, who hosted the round in Canterbury. Cass Tsang and Elyza West successfully represented the respondents in a contractual dispute. Their submissions centred on the implication of terms into a contract, drawing on *Marks and Spencer Plc v BNP Paribas Securities* [2015] UKSC 73. They argued that three key factors must be considered: (i) the express terms of the contract, (ii)

commercial common sense, and (iii) the facts known to both parties at the time the contract was formed. Cass and Elyza submitted that the traditional tests for implied terms remain authoritative, namely the business efficacy test (*The Moorcock* (1889) 14 PD 64, at 68) and the officious bystander test (*Shirlaw v Southern Foundries* [1939] 2 KB 206, at 227) remained unchallenged and were satisfied in the case. Their second submission followed the grounds that the contract was discharged by frustration, as a supervising event rendered performance radically different from that undertaken.

Stuart Snow, Barrister at Pump Court Chambers, challenged their submissions by probing the necessity and scope of the implied term, requiring the students to justify its consistency with the express provisions of the contract.



The third round of the competition was held on 25th March 2026 against the University of Essex, hosted by University of Greenwich. Dylan Rolland and Yasemin Ozturk successfully represented the appellants in a criminal law matter. Their first submission was that the proper construction of Section 5(2)(b) of the Criminal Damage Act 1971 establishes a subjective test for the defendant's belief; relying on *R v Hunt* [1978] 66 Cr App R 105 and *R v Kelleher* [2003] EWCA Crim 3525.

Their second submission addressed the requirements for attempted aggravated arson, arguing that the prosecution must prove that the defendant intended to commit all elements of the offence. In advancing this argument, they relied on the authority of *R v Mohan* [1976] QB 1.

His Honour Judge Grout challenged both of their submissions requiring them to expand on the doctrinal basis of the subjective test under section 5(2)(b) and to clarify the extent to which intention must be established in relation to each element of the offence, particularly in light of established authority.

The Quarter Finals of the competition was held on 14th April 2026 against London Metropolitan University. Cass Tsang and Elyza West represented the respondents in a land law matter. Their first submission referred to the decision in *Regency Villas Title Ltd v Diamond Resorts (Europe) Ltd* UKSC 57 which recognises that easements generally serve or accommodate the use and enjoyment of the land by human beings, and in the case of recreational easements, they are often enjoyed for their own sake, rather than as a means to some end that directly benefits the use of the dominant tenement. Their first submission also referred to the criterion provided by *Re Ellenborough Park* [1956] Ch 131. Their second submission was that the agreement was a valid easement referring to the reasonable use of land: *London & Blenheim Estates Ltd v Ladbroke Retail Parks Ltd* [1992] 1 WLR 1278; *Batchelor v Marlow* [2003] 1 WLR 764.

The students narrowly missed out on victory, finishing just one point behind the winners. They performed exceptionally well throughout the competition, producing high-quality submissions that received excellent feedback from the judge Dr Matthew Parry.

All participants in the ESU Moot have demonstrated exceptional dedication throughout the rounds. Alongside their academic studies, competitors are required to undertake extensive legal research, prepare written submissions, and draft and exchange detailed skeleton

arguments and court bundles. The process demands both precision and resilience, particularly in the face of tight deadlines and the need to master unfamiliar areas of law within limited timeframes. They contend with the pressures of oral advocacy, including rigorous judicial questioning and the need to respond persuasively under scrutiny.

The teams are supported by Tim Barnes KC, who provides guidance on moot strategy and offers valuable feedback on advocacy techniques. This mentorship plays a crucial role in refining students' legal reasoning and enhancing their performance.

A defining feature of the ESU Moot is its dual emphasis on written and oral advocacy. Students are required to submit skeleton arguments in advance, which are then tested through oral submissions during the moot rounds. This process demands not only careful preparation, but also the ability to think critically and adapt arguments in real time. Judges frequently intervene with probing questions, requiring competitors to defend their reasoning, acknowledge weaknesses where necessary, and respond with clarity and precision.

A huge well done to all the students who participated in the ESU Competition. Their hard work, enthusiasm, and professionalism were evident throughout, and they should be extremely proud of their achievements and the experience gained from the competition.

Beyond Advice: Lessons from a Commercial Law Mentoring Scheme

Daria Ilyushenkova, Final Year Law Student, University of Greenwich

Mentoring has made me think more carefully about what support really looks like in practice. Before taking part, I probably saw mentoring as mainly about advice, CV tips, or hearing from someone more experienced about how to 'get ahead.' But what I have learned is that a good mentoring scheme is much more than that. It creates a space where you can ask honest questions, admit uncertainty, and think out loud without feeling judged. That in itself can be incredibly powerful.

One of the most valuable things about mentoring is that it makes professional life feel less distant and intimidating. For students and early-career people, the legal and commercial world can sometimes feel full of unwritten rules that everyone else seems to know already. A mentor helps make those rules visible. They can explain how to approach opportunities, how to build confidence, and how to deal with moments of self-doubt. Just as importantly, they can remind you that not knowing everything is normal. That reassurance can be as useful as any practical tip.

What stood out to me most was how mentoring is not a one-way process. It is easy to assume the mentor is the only person giving something, but the relationship is often more mutual than that. Mentees bring fresh perspectives, curiosity, and a real sense of purpose. Conversations are often most interesting when they move beyond formal career advice and into broader discussions about ambition, values, work-life balance, and what success actually means. In that sense, mentoring can be as reflective as it is practical.

I also think mentoring matters because it can make access to opportunity feel more real. In competitive areas like commercial law and intellectual property, talent alone is not always enough. Confidence, networks, and knowing how to present yourself all play a huge role. A mentoring scheme cannot remove structural barriers, but it can help level the playing field a little. It gives people access to guidance that they might not otherwise have, and that can shape how they see themselves and their future.

Another thing I have appreciated is the human side of the experience. In professional settings, people often feel pressure to appear polished and certain all the time. Mentoring allows for something different. It is a reminder that careers are not built in a straight line. People change direction, make mistakes, and grow through experience. Hearing that from someone further along the path makes the process feel more realistic and less overwhelming. It also makes achievement seem less like a fixed destination and more like something shaped over time.

Overall, I think mentoring is valuable not only because it helps with career development, but because it builds confidence, perspective, and connection. It can be a small but meaningful source of support at a stage when a lot of people are trying to find their place. For me, the most important lesson has been that mentoring is not simply about giving answers. It is about helping someone think more clearly, believe in their own potential, and feel less alone in the process.

Beyond Borders: Gaining a Global Legal Perspective Through Arbitration in New Delhi

Alexia Higgins, Final Year Law with Criminology Student

Gaining practical legal experience is a vital part of developing as a future lawyer, but opportunities to do so on an international scale are particularly transformative. Through the University of Greenwich's Turing Scheme, I was fortunate to be selected as part of a small group of students to undertake an international legal internship. I was placed at Law Senate, an arbitration law firm in New Delhi, India, where I spent a month gaining hands-on experience and developing both professionally and personally.

From the outset, the experience allowed me to step beyond the classroom and engage with legal work in a real-world context. During my time at Law Senate, I was involved in international arbitration work, including conducting legal research, drafting case documents, and observing proceedings. Being able to contribute to active matters provided valuable insight into how legal principles are applied in practice, particularly within a commercial and cross-border setting. It reinforced the importance of clarity, structure, and attention to detail in all aspects of legal work.

I am incredibly grateful for the guidance and support of the team at Law Senate. Their willingness to involve me in meaningful tasks and share their knowledge created an environment where I felt encouraged to learn and develop. This support played a significant role in building my confidence and allowed me to approach legal work with greater independence. It also gave me a clearer understanding of the professionalism, responsibility, and high standards expected within the legal profession. The impact of this experience has extended into my time at university. Returning to my studies, I have found myself engaging with my degree in a more focused and purposeful way. Topics that once felt abstract have become more relatable, as I am now able to draw on practical experiences to support my understanding. I have also become more confident in contributing to seminars and discussions, as well as approaching assessments with a clearer sense of direction. This shift has made my academic work feel more meaningful, as I am able to see how it connects to legal practice in a tangible way.



Living and working in New Delhi also encouraged a great deal of personal growth. Being in a completely new environment required me to adapt quickly, navigate unfamiliar surroundings, and step outside of my comfort zone. Over time, this fostered a sense of independence and resilience that I had not previously experienced to the same extent. Everyday tasks, from commuting to communicating in a new cultural setting, became opportunities to develop confidence and self-reliance.



One of the most memorable aspects of my time in India was travelling to visit the Taj Mahal. I undertook an eight-hour round trip alone, something I would not have imagined doing prior to this experience. However, the confidence I had gained during my internship gave me the reassurance to take that step. Standing in front of such an iconic landmark was incredibly rewarding, not only because of its significance, but because it reflected how much I had grown during my time abroad. It was a moment that captured both the personal and cultural value of the experience.

Another valuable element of the internship was the opportunity to meet and work alongside individuals from a range of backgrounds. Engaging with different perspectives highlighted the importance of communication, adaptability, and collaboration within the legal profession. It also reinforced the value of building connections and learning from those around you, particularly within an increasingly global legal landscape.

The Turing Scheme plays an important role in making opportunities like this possible. By supporting students in accessing international placements, it allows individuals to gain experiences that go far beyond traditional academic study. Being selected as part of this programme was a privilege, and it has encouraged me to continue seeking opportunities that challenge and develop me further, both within the UK and internationally.

Reflecting on the experience, it is clear that it has had a lasting impact on both my personal and professional development. It has strengthened my confidence, enhanced my practical legal skills, and broadened my perspective on the legal profession. Most importantly, it has shown me the value of embracing new experiences and pushing beyond my comfort zone, even when they initially feel daunting.

As I continue my studies and look towards a future career in law, this internship will remain a defining part of my journey. It has not only deepened my interest in the legal field, but also reinforced my ambition to grow, adapt, and pursue opportunities within an increasingly global profession.

Part VIII: The Untold stories of Students' Journeys at the University of Greenwich and Recollections of a by-gone age

Born into Effort: Intergenerational Labour and the Making of a Law Student

Ashna Kaur Dhaliwal, Final Year Law LLB Student

This article explores the intersection of first-generation ambition and intergenerational sacrifice within a Punjabi-immigrant context. Moving away from the trope of the 'self-made' law student, I argue that a legal education is a collective project built on accumulated labour, emotional, practical, and financial. I reflect on the 'invisible infrastructure' provided by my mother and grandmother: from the daily domestic support that allowed for uninterrupted study to the reclamation of opportunities they were personally denied. By framing my pursuit of law as a tribute to their resilience, the piece highlights how familial support validates student ambition and transforms an individual degree into a shared legacy for the next generation.

My journey into law did not begin with a lecture; it began in the quiet resilience of the women who came before me. At the heart of this lineage is my maternal grandmother, my Maa. When I left India at nine years old, I left the physical touch of her hand but carried the weight of her expectations across oceans. For over a decade, she has watched my life unfold through video calls, her influence bridging the distance between her home in India and my desk in England.

Maa's own life was a map of boundaries drawn by others, a landscape of 'what ifs' that never arrived. Yet, she never let the dust of her restricted horizons settle on mine.

Our daily calls are the heartbeat of my degree. She asks what I am learning, what I am experiencing, whether I am making the most of what surrounds me. She is the first to laugh about how much she hated studying at my age, refusing to romanticise the "academic grind". Yet she pushes me to squeeze every drop of marrow from these opportunities, treating my education as a key she is helping me turn. She lived in a world of 'No' so she taught me how to say 'Yes'.

If Maa provided the vision, my mother built the scaffolding. As a single parent, she did not merely support my ambitions; she organised her life around them.

My degree was never a private struggle but a shared mission. She sat in some of my lectures, every mooted competition, following the arguments, discussing them on the journey home, learning the language of my future alongside me. At home, she created stability in ways that were easy to overlook but impossible to replace. Meals appeared without discussion, daily routines shifted around deadlines, and practical burdens were quietly absorbed so that I could concentrate. None of this was framed as sacrifice. It was simply how she believed education should be supported.

When opportunities required more, travel, internships, professional costs, there was never hesitation. Despite the limits of a single-income household, she treated each expense as an investment. She never asked me to justify ambition; she validated it. In doing so, she did something more profound than paying a bill: she validated my right to be ambitious. She taught me that my dreams were not a burden to the family, but the point of it.

While the women before me built the foundation, my sisters shape the present and the future. My twin is the architect of my daily peace, making my bed, packing my lunch, and letting me have the last piece of chocolate, become expressions of care. These are not simple favours; they are her way of holding the world steady while I study it.

If my twin is my mirror, my younger sister is my 'why.' Being her older sister is a profound privilege; she brings a necessary whimsy to our home that balances the rigid weight of my degree. As the youngest, she is pampered and protected, and I am acutely aware that she is watching how I navigate the sharp edges of this career. She sees how I handle the 'no's', celebrate the 'yes's' and carry myself in spaces that weren't originally built for us. My education is no longer just a personal pursuit; it is a blueprint. Every late-night study session and every hard-won internship is a promise made to her: that the ceiling I am pressing against today will be the floor she stands on tomorrow. I want my path to be so well-trodden that by the time she reaches it, she doesn't have to wonder if she belongs, she will know she does.

Beyond my immediate home, there is the quiet, steadfast grace of my Masi ji. As my grandmother's sister, she carries the same warmth, a tether to my roots that does not fray with distance or my own occasional absence. In the seasons where the law consumed me and I grew silent, her support remained unchanged, a steady hum in the background of my life. Her kindness is an unconditional constant, a reminder that I am loved not for what I achieve in a courtroom, but for who I am at the dinner table. She is the grounding force that ensures I never lose sight of the person behind the practitioner.

My legal education is not an individual effort; it is accumulated labour. My degree may carry my name, but it belongs to them, the women who ensured effort did not end with them, and the younger sister who will, I hope, one day walk even further.

Balancing Studying Law at University and Running a Firm

Tetiana Kiltyka, Immigration Lawyer and Final year Law LLB Student

When I first applied to the University of Greenwich in 2023, I was convinced I would study part-time. Not because I doubted my ambition, but because I understood my reality. I was already working, already building something of my own, and I didn't want to sacrifice every part of my life just to keep up. I wanted space - to think, to live, to breathe.

I remember when I phoned the University of Greenwich - in August 2023. Someone from the university gently challenged my plan. "Why not try full-time?" They asked. "If it's too much, you can always switch." What convinced me in the end was surprisingly simple. Full-time meant three years. Part-time meant four. And I value my time too much to stretch something that could be done faster. So, I said, "Let's give it a try."

Now I'm in my final year of my Law (Hons) degree, attending university four days a week, while also working as an immigration lawyer in my own firm, Gates. And the truth is - it's not about doing more. It's about doing things differently.

If there's one thing that keeps everything from collapsing, it's planning - not in a vague "I should be organised" way, but in a very practical, almost ruthless way. Every week, I plan ahead. I distribute my clients evenly, set clear timelines for each case, and closely track deadlines, especially immigration permission deadlines, which leave no room for delay. My clients know what to expect and when. That clarity removes chaos before it even begins.

The same applies to university work. Essays don't sit in the background waiting for "the right moment." I start them in the first week they're assigned. Not because I'm overly disciplined, but because I know what happens if I don't, things pile up, stress builds and quality drops. So, I don't negotiate with procrastination. I just start doing the job.

Everything lives in my phone calendar. Lectures, client meetings, deadlines, personal time - all of it. If it's not scheduled, it doesn't exist. I also use reminders constantly. Not because I forget things, but because I don't want to waste mental energy trying to remember them. People often underestimate how exhausting "keeping everything in your head" actually is. Once you remove that burden, you suddenly have space to think more clearly and perform better.

I've been living in North Greenwich for years, and one of my favourite habits is walking to university. It's not just about getting from A to B. It's part of how I manage my energy. I have a strong interest in biohacking, and I use my Oura Ring to monitor and track my daily activity. By the evening, I get a full picture of how I've moved, how I've rested and how I've performed. That walk to university isn't "wasted time." It's time. It's decompression. It's often where I process ideas, solve problems, or simply reset before the next part of the day.

One of the biggest shifts in how I work has been building systems that support me. My partner developed my own AI assistant, Penelope, for me. She's not just a tool; she's more like a digital extension of how I operate. Penelope manages my schedule, helps me prepare for client consultations, and organises information so I can focus on what actually requires my attention. Using document templates I designed, she prepares files for new clients - structured, consistent, and ready for review. At the moment, I still personally send everything out. But I'm already working towards the next step, where she'll be able to handle that independently. For me, this isn't about replacing human work. It's about removing friction. The less time I spend on repetitive tasks, the more I can invest in thinking, strategy, and people.

People often ask how I "find the time" to do everything. But time isn't really the issue. Energy is. There are days when everything feels aligned, and days when nothing flows. Balancing both study and business means constantly adjusting. You learn when to push and when to step

back. What helped me most was letting go of the idea that balance means equal distribution. It doesn't. Some weeks are heavier at university. Some are dominated by work. The key is awareness, knowing where your attention is needed most, and being intentional about it.

You don't need perfect conditions to begin. You need structure. You need honesty with yourself. And you need to accept that it won't always feel comfortable. Start small but start seriously. Respect your own time. Build systems early. And don't wait until you feel "ready", because that moment rarely comes.

Most importantly, don't try to do everything manually. Whether it's a calendar, a workflow, or an AI assistant - create support around you.

Because doing both, studying and building something of your own, isn't about being superhuman. It's about being intentional.

My life at the University of Greenwich as a Criminology and Criminal Justice Student!

Calum Stanley Menzies, Criminology and Criminal Justice Student

Being a Criminology student at the University of Greenwich gives you several opportunities, one of which is being part of the “Innocence Project London”. The Innocence Project London is run by one of the lecturers, allowing students the opportunity to gain experience within the Criminal Justice system and to personally develop their skills — enabling them to build a wide range of transferable skills, not only within the criminal justice system but across several areas. The Innocence Project London is a pro bono organisation which works on cases of individuals who have been convicted but maintain their innocence.[1] The organisation works closely with the Criminal Cases Review Commission,[2] where, from April 1997 to January 2026, there were 34,653 applications submitted to the CCRC. The cases submitted to the CCRC are sent to the Innocence Project, where they are then analysed by students, who deconstruct them by looking for new evidence, identifying potential legal arguments, and reviewing the evidence presented in court throughout the case to support their client.

As a student who volunteers with the Innocence Project London, I myself have gained an enhanced understanding of miscarriages of justice within the United Kingdom's criminal justice system. We first started to learn about miscarriages of justice in the ‘Process of the Criminal Justice System’ module in our first year of university; however, hearing about and directly examining real cases has transformed my perspective — it is no longer just numbers on a slide, but real, hands-on work for those who want to make a meaningful difference in someone’s life.

As a student who has been given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to undertake innocence work, I have been able to develop skills within my academic, professional, and personal life. Within only a year of being involved in innocence work, I have developed my understanding of the justice system, which has motivated me to pursue a master’s degree in modern human rights. I aim to build on the knowledge I have gained not only from my university course but also from my experience with the Innocence Project, with the long-term goal of progressing to a PhD while pursuing a career in my chosen field after university.

As a Criminology student, the number of opportunities I have been able to participate in has been immense. I have also had the opportunity to take part in a fire investigation experience day with the London Fire Brigade, following a guest lecture on fire investigation. This further strengthened my existing interest in joining the fire service after university.

In conclusion, my experience with the Innocence Project London, alongside the wider opportunities offered through my degree, has significantly shaped both my academic ambitions and career aspirations. It has provided me with a deeper, more practical understanding of the criminal justice system, while equipping me with valuable transferable skills such as critical thinking, analysis, and effective communication. These experiences have not only strengthened my commitment to pursuing a future within the criminal justice field but have also prepared me to make a meaningful and informed contribution to the sector and beyond.

[1] Innocence Project London (2025) Who are we? Available at: <https://www.iplondon.org/who-we-are>

[2] Criminal Cases Review Commission (2026) Facts and Figures. Available at: <https://ccrc.gov.uk/facts-figures/>

Recollections of a By-Gone Age

Tim Barnes KC

My pupil master was called Miles Henry Jackson-Lipkin. He always had two pupils, who were required to walk behind him like undertakers' mutes at a funeral, so as to enhance his status. He would stalk ahead wearing spats and a bowler hat. We did not establish a warm relationship. He required one of his pupils to drive his wife in an elderly Bentley from their home in Eaton Terrace to Harrods most afternoons. I did not think this was part of pupillage and told him so. This did not go down well. He told me that I was wholly unsuited to the Bar and that the best I could hope for in the legal profession was to become a junior partner in a small firm of country solicitors. We did not part on the best of terms. He did not recommend me for a tenancy in chambers, so I had to look elsewhere.

However, life did not turn out too well for Jackson Lipkin. He served as a High Court judge in Hong Kong between 1981 and 1987, but in January 2007, he became the first former judge in Hong Kong's history to be convicted and sentenced to prison. He was convicted of social welfare fraud charges brought against him and his wife.

By then, I had become a QC specialising in fraud cases in the UK and had considered writing to offer him my services, having slightly exceeded his career expectations of me. But I was content to watch from afar as the house of cards he had erected came tumbling down. He was not born Miles Henry Jackson-Lipkin and had not attended Harrow School. He had falsified his date of birth in order to claim a fictitious distinguished wartime naval career in the Atlantic convoys.

When I started at the Bar, you had to pay 100 guineas to your pupil master. By the time I had pupils of my own, however, the rules had changed, and chambers paid the pupils, not vice versa. I had many pupils before I took silk and always enjoyed the relationship. It is helpful to have someone with whom you can bounce arguments and ideas. I formed warm friendships with all of them. They gave my wife and me a celebratory dinner when I became a QC.

Many of my pupils have gone on to achieve success exceeding my own. Kate Thirlwall is a Lady Justice of Appeal and is about to deliver her report into the Letby case. Derek Sweeting is a High Court judge, and Tim Spencer has been a senior judge at Leicester for many years.

I fear that they achieved such eminence not because of my example but despite it! When we gave Kate a chambers dinner on her elevation to the Court of Appeal, she said that from Peter Crane, her first pupil master, she had learned a great deal about the law. From me, as her second pupil master, she had not learned as much law but had come to appreciate what an enormously enjoyable career life at the Bar could be. I am happy with that!

PART IX: Student Leadership and Societies Spotlight

Bar Society 2025-26: A Year of Momentum, Creativity, and Impact

Daria Ilyushenkova, President for 2025-2026

The academic year 2025-26 has been defining for the Bar Society. After winning Best Academic Society in 2024-25, we realised that continuing momentum required creativity and intelligent leadership. This year's events program lived up to those expectations, reflecting the range of legal practice and student interests.

From advocacy and commercial awareness to human rights and social mobility, our calendar showcased the diverse paths the legal profession offers. Our journey began at the Greenwich Students' Union welcome fair, where we celebrated our role in shaping university life and highlighted the importance of student-led societies in creating leadership, initiative, and professionalism. We were grateful that the Vice-Chancellor stopped by our stall.

One of our standout moments was our session with Özgür Cinar, which immersed members in Europe's contemporary legal challenges. It illustrated our goal of bridging academic study and real-world practice, an aim central to the society's mission. Likewise, an invitation to a hybrid event with Fountain Court Chambers, one of the UK's top commercial sets, offered invaluable insights into high-level arbitration, making the prestige of leading chambers accessible to students.

Collaboration remained at the core of our activities. Our joint Murder Mystery with the Criminology Society, the Debate Challenge: Prosecution vs Litigation, and the social mobility debate with the 93% Club showcased the innovative formats we embraced. These events weren't just fun - they showcased advocacy, teamwork, and critical thinking, essential skills for future legal careers.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion glowed through our work with the 93% Club. Hosting a debate on social mobility highlighted the importance of access, opportunity, and representation within the legal profession - topics that are often overlooked but are vital for a more equitable future. Similarly, our human rights evening with Vicki Prais offered a rare glimpse into law as a tool for justice amongst global conflict, while the collaboration with the Debate Society on 'Debating Democracy' brought public law and civic responsibility into sharp focus.

Bar Society's visits to the Law Society headquarters, UK Supreme Court and Grey's Inn provided members with insights into the professional structures that support legal careers. We also partnered with the Greenwich International Relations Department on 'Global Citizenship & Universal Responsibility,' which highlighted the interconnections among law, ethics, and global cooperation, featuring a speaker who travelled from Japan. That event reminded us that legal education does not exist in isolation; it sits within a wider global conversation.

One of our most notable achievements was our involvement in BPP's National Advocate of the Year competition. Our team's success, with Zahra Rashid reaching the finals, demonstrated our commitment to encouraging talent and building a culture of support and excellence. Additionally, our role as one of the main sponsors and judges at LSE's Non-Law Into Law conference allowed us to promote legal careers to students from diverse academic backgrounds - a vital step toward greater inclusion. Throughout the year, our basic objective remained clear: to provide members with exclusive insights, skill-building opportunities, and a lively community dedicated to equality. Our events, partnerships, and conversations

demonstrated that success is more than mere recognition; it is about building a supportive environment in which members can thrive.

This year has shown that success can be sustained, increased, and redefined. Building on cooperation and a common vision for the future of law, it was one of the most fulfilling years in the society's history. Looking ahead, we are excited about what lies further and proud of what we have accomplished.

Criminology study café: A student-led supportive space

Farha West, BA Hons Criminology and Criminal Justice Student and Melissa Pepper, Associate Professor of Criminology

The criminology study café is an established fixture in the ‘crim calendar’ with students getting together every Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtime in the Greenwich campus Queen Mary Café. The study café is an informal space for students to meet, relax, have a chat, discuss their current studies, and offer academic support.

The study café was originally set up by academic staff. However, when time pressures meant they could no longer run it every week, former criminology student Clarissa Evertz developed it into a successful student-led space with a rota of volunteer academics who came each week. After Clarissa graduated in summer 2025, the criminology team feared the study café would leave with her, so they were delighted when the brilliant Criminology Society (Crim Soc) crew, Farha West, Aimee Stickells, Yasmine Boumaiza, and Lauren Tanner, put themselves forward to continue to facilitate this important opportunity for student support.

In this short reflective piece, Level 5 student and Crim Soc Communication and Publicity Officer, Farha West, and Associate Professor of Criminology, Melissa Pepper, share their reflections on being part of the study café.

A student view: Farha West

The Criminology study café at Greenwich is a relaxed environment and this is why I enjoy it. There is no requirement to work on assignments or other university tasks. Sometimes we just come together for a chat but are always ready to offer help and support when students need it. The study café is a great place to get academic support in an informal setting but, it is also a space for students and lecturers to come together to discuss ideas for future events and things they would like to see from their Criminology Society.

I took on running of the study café at the beginning of my second year after our previous Communication and Publicity Officer graduated, with the goal of keeping it going for more students to enjoy. The café now offers two sessions per week (Tuesdays and Wednesdays) after Student Voice feedback requested another day to be added so that more students could attend.

Students who participate in the study café really appreciate the dedicated space and academic support provided by lecturers. Following discussions at 2025/26 Student Voice meetings, we are planning to introduce themed cafes in 2026/27 that focus on specific areas where students would like support. Popular themes emerging so far include research methods, Student Voice, study skills, and essay writing, where we hope to collaborate with the university’s Academic and Digital Skills team. I would like to see the study café continue as a student-led initiative where students shape the experience in order to make the most of their time at university.

A lecturer’s view: Melissa Pepper

The criminology study café is a place for students to chat about studies, prepare for forthcoming assessments, make sense of marks and feedback, or just connect with their criminology peers. It’s where friendships are formed, study fears are allayed, and essay marks are boosted. As a lecturer, I really value the opportunity to meet with students in a more relaxed setting away from the pressures of the classroom. Alongside academic support, topics of conversation have included career aspirations, part-time jobs, hobbies, celebrity crushes (some of them quite a

surprise!), and the stories behind the colourful sticker bombs which adorn many a criminology student's laptop.

Some of the most meaningful interactions in the study café have been where students have added their advice and 'top tips' alongside my own. It is hard for me to match the power of a level 5 student telling a level 4 student that they remember 'that essay' and how they went about tackling a particularly tricky question. Or when a level 6-er leaps in to share how they integrate literature within a sentence, or how they cracked the puzzle that is Harvard referencing style.

[Advance HE](#), the professional body that defines the competencies, knowledge, and values expected of higher education practitioners, emphasises the importance of peer learning and support in higher education pointing to its vital role in improving academic confidence, attainment, and retention, and providing a sense of community and belonging to students. Effective co-curricular peer learning examples include peer-assisted study sessions, mentoring, buddying, and peer feedback on assessments, all of which feature weekly in the criminology study café sessions.

The study café is at the heart of our Greenwich criminology community and, as a lecturer, it is a real joy to be part of this student-led support. A huge thank you to Farha and Crim Soc for their dedication and commitment to facilitating such a valuable and inclusive space. All students studying criminology-related topics as part of any degree are warmly welcomed every Tuesday and Wednesday in term time at 1pm in the Queen Mary Café. Come and join us!

Building Dialogue: The Growth of the Greenwich Debate Society

Mohid S, Second Year LLB Law Student, Co-President of the Greenwich Debate Society

In recent years, there has been a clear need for spaces where students can engage constructively with complex and often polarising issues. This article examined at the establishment and development of the University Debate Society, which was founded in June 2025 to provide a platform for open discussion on topics ranging from euthanasia to immigration. It reflects on the challenges of building the Society, its early successes and the role of debate in encouraging critical thinking and wider engagement across the student community.

In June 2025, the idea emerged to create a platform where students could engage in meaningful discussion and debate on pressing and often polarising issues, ranging from euthanasia to the impact of social media.

Building the Society from the ground up presented significant challenges. Securing support, registering members and forming a committed team required persistence and coordination. However, these efforts proved worthwhile. At the Autumn Welcome Fair, we successfully registered over 50 members from more than 10 different courses, an encouraging start that demonstrated strong student interest.

Over the following months, the society hosted a wide range of debates spanning politics, philosophy and current affairs. We collaborated with several university societies, including the Law Society on a debate about illegal immigration and the Public Health Society on euthanasia. We also expanded beyond our institution, partnering with students at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London) to explore philosophical topics and foster inter-university dialogue.

In addition to debates, we provided public speaking and debating training for our members. The feedback was particularly rewarding. One MBA student noted: “This kind of public-speaking training should be provided by our course leaders, but you are delivering it. My confidence in speaking publicly has significantly increased.” Such responses highlighted the Society’s practical value beyond discussion alone.

We were also fortunate to host a range of distinguished guest speakers, including a senior partner from a commercial law firm, a member of the London Assembly and a political consultant who founded a debate society in 2012. Their insights added depth and real-world perspective to our sessions.

On a personal level, leading the society tested and strengthened leadership skills through managing both a core team and a growing membership base. Equally important, it created an environment where assumptions were challenged. Engaging with diverse perspectives encouraged critical reflection and the refinement of views, which reflects the wider purpose for which the Debate Society was founded.

Finally, I would like to thank the entire team. Their dedication and teamwork made the Society’s success possible.

Beyond the Academic Year: Women in Law Impact and What Comes Next

Aaravi Baskaran, Second Year Law LLB Student

At the University of Greenwich, the Women in Law Society has grown into a space that goes beyond academic support. It is a community that connects students, builds confidence and encourages meaningful engagement with both the legal profession and wider social issues affecting women today.

Society plays an important role in bringing students together within what can often feel like a competitive academic environment. Many law students, particularly those from underrepresented or non-traditional backgrounds, may feel that they lack confidence or a network to actively participate in the legal field. Through its inclusive and supportive approach, the Women in Law Society provides a platform where students can develop their voice, share experiences and build connections with others who share similar aspirations.

A key strength of the society lies in its collaboration with other student groups, particularly the Law Society and Bar Society. These partnerships have enabled the organisation of larger-scale events, including panel discussions featuring guest speakers from diverse legal backgrounds. These panels offer students valuable insight into the realities of legal careers, helping bridge the gap between academic study and professional practice. For many attendees, these events provide their first real opportunity to engage directly with legal professionals, ask questions, and begin building networks that may support their future careers.

In addition to panel events, the society has hosted a range of workshops designed to develop practical legal skills. Sessions focusing on networking, career pathways, and professional development have allowed students to actively engage and receive feedback. These workshops are particularly valuable in preparing students for opportunities such as vacation schemes, training contracts and mini pupillages, ensuring that they are not only academically capable but also professionally prepared.

Beyond professional development, the Women in Law Society has made a significant impact through its commitment to social awareness and advocacy. A recent fundraising initiative, focused on supporting women and children affected by abuse, demonstrated the Society's dedication to addressing real world issues. This work is particularly important considering ongoing concerns about access to justice for vulnerable individuals.

Legal developments and cases continue to highlight the importance of advocacy in this area. For example, in *R v Challen*,^[1] the Court of Appeal recognised the impact of long-term coercive control in reducing a murder conviction to manslaughter. This case marked a significant shift in how the law understands domestic abuse, acknowledging that abuse is not always physical but can be psychological and cumulative. Developments such as this reinforce the importance of raising awareness and supporting those who may otherwise struggle to access legal protection and recognition.

The Society's impact can be seen not only in the events it delivers but also in the confidence it builds within its members. Students who engage with the Society often report feeling more prepared to pursue legal opportunities, more informed about the profession, and more comfortable participating in discussions. The ability to create this kind of supportive environment is one of the Society's most valuable contributions to student life.

However, like many student-led organisations, the Women in Law Society faces practical challenges. In their early stages the society began with just four first-year students and was often overlooked, but their determination helped it grow into a respected community.

Today, a recurring issue is event attendance, where students secure tickets but fail to attend. Last-minute absences can reduce engagement and limit opportunities for others. Addressing this remains a priority with solutions such as improved communication and management.

Despite these challenges the society continues to grow and evolve. The Committee's dedication has been central to its success, with strong teamwork enabling the organisation to have impactful events and initiatives. At the heart of this vision of the society is our president Michelle, whose goal has been to create a space where students are empowered to speak up. By encouraging participation and fostering inclusivity, the society ensures that all students, regardless of background, feel their voice matter.

This year, the Women in Law Society was honoured to receive the University of Greenwich's Best Society of the Year Award. This Achievement reflects the hard work of our committee, the engagement of members, and the positive impact the society has had across the university. As we look ahead, we remain committed to supporting students, promoting inclusivity and creating opportunities for future legal professionals.

Looking ahead, the Women in Law Society aims to expand its reach even further. Plans include increasing the number of workshops, strengthening connections with legal professionals and continuing to support charitable causes. There is also a clear focus on building a more engaged and committed community, ensuring that the society remains accessible and beneficial to all students.



Ultimately, the Women in Law Society represents the importance of community within legal education. It is not only about academic success, but about creating a space where students feel supported, inspired and empowered to pursue their ambitions. Through its continued work, the society is helping to shape a more confident, informed and socially aware generation of future Legal professionals.

[1] *R v Challen* [2019] EWCA Crim 916

Part X: Final staff editorial note

The views and opinions expressed in the articles published in this edition are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of their respective organisations or of the University of Greenwich.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the contributors who made this year's edition possible. To our two external reviewers, thank you so much for sharing your precious time with us.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Maria Veraj, a Film and TV Production, Stage and Screen student at the University of Greenwich, for providing the photograph featured on the cover. We are grateful for her generosity in allowing us to showcase her creative work in this publication.

We also welcome contributions for next year's edition. Readers interested in submitting their work or becoming involved are invited to contact the staff editors. We look forward to hearing from you.

Emma Lubaale, Louise Hewitt and Hannah Gaffney

Staff Editors, Greenwich Law and Criminology Journal, School of Law and Criminology
