

ALL THINGS LAW.

NOTTINGHAM
LAW SCHOOL
NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

Summer 2020



**The biggest
change in
a generation.**

How will the new Solicitors
Qualifying Examination affect you?

NLS LIFE:
7 THINGS I WISH
I'D KNOWN BEFORE
STUDYING LAW

BROTHERS IN LAW.

*Two siblings, both Nottingham
Law graduates. How have their
careers differed?*

Plus:

- The Law in 60 Seconds
- BBC doc 'How to Break into the Elite'
- **Top tips** for Employability

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A warm welcome to **All Things Law** Magazine Summer 2020 edition.

I am very proud of **Nottingham Law School's** reputation for excellence in legal education. It is our mission to support all our students at every stage of their journey from academia into the professional world and I would like to reassure all of you that our mission remains unchanged despite the challenges that Covid-19 brings.



BY **JENNY CHAPMAN**
EXECUTIVE DEAN, NOTTINGHAM
LAW SCHOOL.

Our success to date has been driven by our innovative curriculum and teaching methods, and we will continue to innovate to ensure that we provide our students with a rich and diverse Nottingham Law School experience, with the highest quality learning and teaching experience for all our students as we move into the new academic year.

Some examples of the innovations we have recently made available to all our students are featured in this edition. These include both the Employer Challenge and the opportunity to work in Nottingham Law School's Legal Advice Centre, our very own Solicitors Regulation Authority authorised teaching law firm. The Legal Advice Centre has won many prestigious awards, including most recently the ABS of the Year award at the 2020 Modern Law Awards.

On top of this tremendous success, Callum Scott, one of our LAC paralegals, was named Paralegal of the Year at the same event.

Much of our innovation seeks to combine practical legal skills development in tandem with academic excellence. That this approach breeds success for our students is evident when they go on to win external competitions, as distance learning undergraduate students James Ball and Sophie Horne did at the Old Bailey in March.

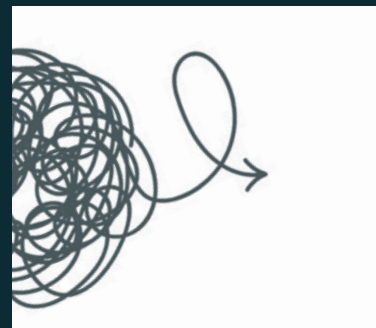
Beyond the curriculum, we aim to provide as many opportunities as we can for our students to develop the kinds of skills that will set them up for life.

Examples include the development of leadership and community engagement skills through participation in student societies and volunteering programmes, and the opportunity to travel abroad as part of our international summer school programme.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition, including Nottingham Law School's dedicated Employability team and several of our practitioner colleagues who have shared their experiences with us.

As you can see from the varied examples of our students' successes, Nottingham Law School is a rich and vibrant community which offers many opportunities for students both to study hard, and to pursue the activities that they feel passionate about beyond the classroom. Some of their achievements are truly remarkable, and I hope that they will inspire you to follow in their footsteps during your time at Nottingham Law School.

Enjoy the read!



01.

NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO THINK ABOUT YOUR CAREER.

Many law firms recruit trainees two years in advance, and barristers' chambers often recruit pupil barristers a year in advance. Now is a good time to think about the sort of firm or chambers you want to be part of and the areas of law that you would like to practise in. Apply for open days and fill your spare time with work experience or mini pupillages at places you're interested in working at.

02.

KNOW YOUR LEARNING STYLE.

Everyone has different learning styles. It's important to find out what works for you, whether it's revision cards, mind maps or mock exams. I found that creating audio notes and listening to them in my spare time was a simple and effective method of study that worked well for me. You should also make the most of the academic support available to you.

NLS LIFE: 7 THINGS I WISH I'D KNOWN BEFORE STUDYING LAW

By **Billy Shaw** Trainee Solicitor at Rotheras

03.

COMMERCIAL AWARENESS.

Understanding the business environment of the legal sector is important. The specific commercial considerations will differ from firm to firm and sector to sector. However, most firms will generally be looking for candidates who understand what it means to provide excellent client service and understand the need to think in innovative and cost-effective ways. It is also important to recognise how commercial, legal and political changes can affect the legal landscape and the typical client base, so it's a good idea to keep on top of the news.

04.

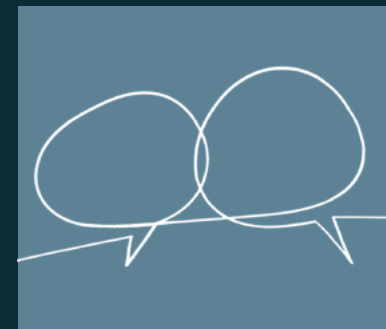
MAKE THE MOST OF EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT AT NTU.

I used the employability service all the time. Some of the NTU Employability staff have vast experience in the legal sector. It's worth dropping by to have a chat with them to see how they can help you boost your CV, put you in front of the right people, and offer you some tips and advice for your career.

05.

GET INVOLVED IN THE LAW SOCIETIES & MOOTING CLUBS

I developed my professional network through LEX Law Society. Taking part in moot/negotiation competitions gave me relevant work experience as I developed my core legal knowledge. It also gave me with the opportunity to visit other universities (including a couple of trips to Belfast) and make new, like minded friends.



06.

GET INVOLVED IN THE LEGAL ADVICE CENTRE

The Legal Advice Centre is a great way to boost your professional skills and expose yourself to real, practical legal issues. In my experience, it seems to be highly regarded among employers. In my partner interview at Rotheras, all partners seemed interested that I had volunteered with the Legal Advice Centre and I was asked several questions about the work I had done.

07.

ENJOY YOURSELF!

Finally, studying for a law degree comes with its own challenges and can sometimes feel full on. I found that taking time out for myself or with friends doing things I enjoy were equally as important as the lengthy stints in the library. For most, uni will be one of the most exciting periods of your life. It's a time for moving away from home, making new friends and experiencing the next stage of your life. Try not to wish these years away!

Spotlight On Elspeth Berry

Our top legal experts are fully engaged in pushing the boundaries of legal knowledge and practice, working with innovative ideas and analysis that feed directly into all our courses. We catch up with **Elspeth Berry**, one of our **Associate Professors** at Nottingham Law School.



01. What's your area of research?

My research mainly focuses on the law relating to business partnerships, but I also teach Human Rights.

02. What does your job involve?

My main focus is on researching, writing and publishing articles in legal journals, but I also give papers at conferences and have written and co-written a number of books. I use my research to enhance my teaching, in particular my Masters in Law (LLM) module in Business Organisations.

03. What sparked your interest in research?

When I started work at NTU I imagined that my job would be all about teaching, but the head of research in the Law School at that time was so inspirational and encouraging that I decided to give research a go. My first publication was very short and not particularly earth-shattering, but he was so enthusiastic about it that I persevered, and it became a really rewarding and important part of my job.

04. Why did you choose to specialise in business partnerships?

My company law tutor at university was a specialist in partnership law – almost the only one in the country (and there are still very few of us).

For me, partnership law is interesting because the 'partnership' ethos of mutual trust makes the personal relationship between partners very important, and because in partnership law the caselaw is at least as important as the legislation – and caselaw is all about the people involved. Also, partnerships are a very ancient form of business organisation, and that history informs the law.

05. What impact has your research had?

Obviously, it informs my teaching, and my articles and books have been cited by other academics. A House of Commons Select Committee adopted some of my recommendations and I am hoping that my ongoing engagement with the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), in its reform of partnership law, will influence the legislation that is produced.

06. Biggest challenge?

I think my first lecture was fairly alarming – walking on to a stage with 200 students all looking at me and not smiling! Otherwise, keeping up with legal developments is an ongoing challenge. A colleague and I used to joke about how much easier it would be if we taught ancient Greek, or something that doesn't constantly change!

07. What are the highs?

I was pretty excited the first time I saw a book with my name on it! But probably giving evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee was the highlight to date – walking in to the Palace of Westminster that day felt very special.

08. Any lows?

The workload is an increasing problem, and that sometimes produces times of great stress. Aside from that, getting critical comments on research from referees, or on teaching from students, can be grim. Fortunately, most referees and students say nice things!

09. What advice would you give someone interested in what you do?

I'd say – it can be really rewarding, but remember that most people spend more time doing teaching than research, so you need to enjoy the teaching.



For more information on research courses visit www.ntu.ac.uk/research

HOW TO BREAK INTO THE ELITE



Paige Tugby discusses her starring role in the BBC Documentary about elite professionals.

'How to break into the elite' is a BBC documentary by journalist **Amol Rajan** (pictured above), who spends time with students from different backgrounds, investigating how much class still matters in Britain's elite professions. The episode of the documentary I have been involved in follows aspiring barristers from non-traditional backgrounds during their BPTC year and through the pupillage process. The programme highlights the issues faced today and aims to understand and break down some of those barriers.

I decided to become involved with the BBC documentary because I want people from all walks of life to see that it is possible for them to study law and become a solicitor or barrister. I think it is vital for young students to see people from a similar background to them in the legal profession. I believe that without highlighting these issues the courts will continue to be inundated with middle-class white men, and children from backgrounds such as mine will continue to think that the Bar is not a place for them.

As well as being interviewed by Rajan, the BBC filmed my examination-in-chief mock exam to show other aspiring barristers what takes place during the BPTC training. The witness in the mock exam was played by an actor and I played Counsel. It was quite nerve-racking having the camera crew in to film, but it went well and I'm glad that other aspiring barristers can see the training we go through on the BPTC.



DOUBLE TAKE

NLS Legal Advice Centre awarded **ABS of the Year** and Caseworker Callum Scott scoops **Paralegal of the Year** at the Modern Law Awards 2020.

Student volunteers work on real-life cases through the NLS Legal Advice Centre, providing a vital service to those who would not otherwise have access to justice. The Modern Law Awards celebrate and identify talent and success in entrepreneurship, market development, business management and best practice in the modern legal services arena.

The ABS of the Year award is industry validation of the work that the Centre does. Student volunteers make the Centre's model sustainable and unique, and recognition received as part of the award gives their experience greater credibility and authenticity.

The Centre was the first of its kind when it was granted an ABS (Alternative Business Structure) licence to operate as a fully regulated law firm in 2015. The Centre is able to carry out reserved activities to offer further services to clients and provide students with greater experience.

Supervised by qualified solicitors, students support clients with a range of legal issues either through modules within the curriculum, or by volunteering in addition to their study. Students work in areas such as employment, social justice, criminal law, business support and commercial law, family law, community legal issues and tribunal and court representation.

"I am delighted that both the Centre and Callum have been recognised in these prestigious national awards. The Centre takes a proactive and novel approach to access to justice whilst training, and inspiring, the legal professionals of the future."

"I am so proud of Callum and all our brilliant staff and student volunteers for their dedication to the community and the value they bring to society. These awards are recognition of their hard work and commitment."

Laura Pinkney
Head of the Legal Advice Centre

Find out more about **Callum Scott** and his success at the Modern Law Awards on page 17.

Meet the Graduates

A snapshot into the lives of **NTU alumni**.



Victoria Barber

COURSE LAW, YEAR 1999, TITLE SENIOR LEGAL COUNCIL, EMPLOYER DLA PIPER.

Q. Current role? Advising DLA Piper on multijurisdictional contracts with clients and related relationship issues, alongside the development of risk management policies.

Q. Typical day? I work in one of DLA Piper's UK offices and my role involves reviewing client engagement contracts and advising on issues of liability, general contract terms, and structuring cross-border client engagements. I consult with colleagues across the firm on ad hoc legal or risk issues and support the marketing teams in their responses to client tenders.

Q. Career developments? After graduation I completed a year of postgraduate study and then went on to a two-year training contract with a high street law firm eventually joining the commercial property team. A short while after qualification, I joined a firm with a stronger commercial bias, and from there I was offered a role with DLA within their real estate team. I stayed there for 8 years before moving into my current legal counsel role, which I've been at for 9 years now.

Q. Career highlights? I never anticipated working for one of the world's largest law firms. I didn't achieve the best grades in my studies, and I started out wanting to be a legal aid lawyer, but my experience in the smaller firms gave me an advantage over other junior lawyers applying for roles at the same time.

Q. Advice for others? Don't be closed to new opportunities. Whilst it is extremely helpful to have a plan, you'll be presented with challenges and opportunities. Don't discount them immediately.



Elliott Moulster

COURSE LAW, YEAR 2016, TITLE DUTY SOLICITOR, EMPLOYER LEVY & CO SOLICITORS LLP.

Q. Current role? I advise and represent clients that have been accused of committing criminal offences. The allegations typically range from simple shop thefts to complicated frauds, serious sexual offences and even murder. My current role involves representing them both at police stations and magistrates' courts.

Q. Typical day? Mostly involves conducting advocacy at a local magistrates' court. My case load in a single day can range from a couple of my own clients, to 10+ duty clients during a busy court duty session. When not in court you'd likely find me at a police station representing clients who have just been arrested. On a rare day that I get in the office I will either be catching up on admin, or preparing for upcoming trials.

Q. Career developments? Since leaving I have completed my training contract as a regulatory lawyer. I then made the jump from regulatory law to general crime. I qualified as a Police Station Representative, Higher Rights Advocate and Duty Solicitor. I have also relocated from Nottinghamshire to Essex.

Q. Career highlights? Representing clients during military police interviews in countries outside of the UK. This was particularly special for me as I never thought that I would get the opportunity to work abroad whilst practicing in criminal law. It is a great example that opportunities can arise when and where you least expect them to.

Q. Can you share some exam revision tips? Revise smart. I would always focus my revision on quality rather than quantity. It is better in my opinion to revise a fewer number of topics well than a larger number of topics badly.

Visit www.ntualumni.org.uk to hear more from our alumni.



Brothers in Law

By **Laura Barrett** and **Andreea Serban**, students at Nottingham Law School, Nottingham Trent University.

Brothers Richard and Andrew Needham both graduated from the LLB (Hons) Sandwich degree at Nottingham Trent University in 2005 and 2007. Each had the same career plan – to try and be the best lawyers in their field.

Now over ten years later, Richard is a Partner at Baker McKenzie and practices global Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) and Andrew is the Group Legal Counsel for Synectics plc.

We had the opportunity to catch up with the Needhams to find out how their careers have progressed.

Q. Tell us about yourselves

Richard (R) I am a Corporate Partner at Baker McKenzie. I advise multinational clients on M&A transactions on a global scale.

I help companies all over the world and as a result, have managed to live all over the world through my career.

Andrew (A) I am the Group Legal Counsel at Synectics plc, an international company who design, manufacture and install security surveillance products, systems and solutions. I am an in-house lawyer and I advise Synectics on a very broad range of legal issues arising both domestically and internationally.

Q. What was the best thing about studying at NTU?

R/ Without a shadow of a doubt, it was doing a placement year on my Sandwich course. Without that experience, I probably would not have landed my first job at Baker McKenzie. It was pivotal, to both my professional and personal development. The skills I gained there may not have come until later in my career.

A/ I agree, the placement was why I picked the course. My A-level results were not as good as anticipated, so I needed to differentiate myself from the competition. I thought the chance to complete a year of work experience would give me that 'edge' when applying for graduate roles.

Q. Why did you decide to become a solicitor?

R/ I sometimes ask myself that question! My placement was at the Crown Prosecution Service and I gained invaluable experience and insight into the legal profession. I enjoyed the combination of legal theory with practice and the sense that I was helping others. I used my placement year to explore other areas of law, and even did a vacation scheme at another firm using my annual leave! I particularly enjoyed the variety of work that commercial law offered as well as the opportunity to get close to businesses, and decided it was the career for me.

A/ I wanted to work in a profession that would always be relevant in the future and our recent history (e.g. Brexit or COVID-19) has shown just how important the profession still is. I also wanted a career that could develop and evolve because I do not want to specialise in just one area of law for my whole career. The legal profession is very broad, so you will always find something interesting to work on or someone interesting to work with. I have found this particularly relevant since working in-house.



Q. Tell us about a memorable case you've worked on...

R/ My most memorable case was advising Emerson Electric Co to divest its global Network Power business in a deal valued over \$4 billion. The project ran for over eighteen months, involved people from all over the world, and I was one of the lead associates working on it, which meant I had a lot of responsibility to deliver for my client.

A/ Last year I helped guide the business through a piece of work that was subject to an area of American law that I had no real prior knowledge of. I travelled to California twice in as many months to properly support the business on this project. I was amazed at just how differently matters are handled by US Attorneys compared to lawyers in England. It felt like being in a movie at times. It was the most intense 'working period' of my career (so far) and was almost certainly a 'one-off' project. It is highly unlikely that I would have worked on something like that whilst in private practice.

Q. What is the best thing about where you work?

R/ The best thing is my firm's international culture and outlook. My workplace is truly diverse and inclusive.

A/ Variety. As an in-house lawyer I am sent anything that may have a legal flavour from the business. We have offices on four different continents, so the sun never really sets on Synectics. Someone always needs help with something. In a day, I can deal with queries relating to commercial contract negotiations, anti-terrorism investigations and selling shares on the stock market.

Q. How has the legal profession changed during your career?

R/ Law firms face increased competition and cost pressures. Some of this pressure now comes from non-traditional sources in the market, for example, the big four accountancy firms building legal practices and alternative legal services providers. Law firms are having to redefine themselves and their clients' offering to maintain their competitiveness. Clients look for law firms to offer them more than legal advice. You now see firms investing in innovation programs and legal technology (AI), to help make their processes quicker and more efficient. All of this has an impact on the role of the legal profession who must learn to adapt to the changing world around them.

A/ I agree. It is a completely different landscape from when we were trainees. The profession is more accessible than ever before and competition to achieve qualification is even tougher. Practically you can see a lot of changes, many aspects of the job are run online via the Cloud and the days of being permanently stuck in one office seem to have changed too – I have not had 'my own desk' for years now – I almost always work remotely.

Q. What advice would you give to a law student at NTU?

R/ Take ownership of your career as early as possible. I see students focused on academics. Academic records are important but they are just one part of your CV do not distinguish candidates. They are an entry requirement. Firms are looking to build a fuller picture of your experience, skills and attributes and what makes you different from the next candidate. Building your work experience and broader skills base is critical to ensure you have a well-rounded CV.

A/ Get work experience. The competition in the market is tougher now because there are more candidates and less roles available, so you must find a way to stand out. There are two ways of doing this – work experience and personality.

The Law in 60 Seconds

WE CATCH UP WITH **CHRISTIAN WEAVER**,
BARRISTER AT GARDEN COURT NORTH CHAMBERS



Imagine your life taking a devastating turn for the worse, simply because you were unaware of your legal rights. As a **pro-bono adviser** at Nottingham Law School's Legal Advice Clinic, this was a sight all too familiar. If you are a law student, it can be easy to assume that everybody, like you, understands their basic legal rights – but you would be surprised.

Whilst people understand the importance of the law, very few people take the time to become knowledgeable in it - often deeming it too difficult or time-consuming a task. All too often, the catalyst for an individual learning the law is when they have faced an injustice. It is too late at the point, but the #TheLawIn60Seconds seeks to address this.

My **#TheLawIn60Seconds** videos are a series of quick clips seeking to simplify the complexity of legislation in to a few basic principles. Topics so far have included the truth about whether shops can refuse to give you a refund, your rights if stopped and searched by police, what to do if bailiffs knock on your door, and what to do if your taxi driver overcharges you.

I truly believe that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, although the idea of bailiffs knocking on your door might be a distant concern for the time being, it costs nothing to watch a 60 second video on the subject, just in case the information is one day needed.

Knowing your rights at the split second they are required could be the difference between you having valuable possessions removed from your home, or instead being able to agree on a sensible plan to repay your debts.

My videos are posted regularly on YouTube (**Christian Weaver**) and Twitter (**@ChristianKamali**). They can easily be stored on your phone, WhatsApp'd to somebody who may find them useful, or even used as a revision aid. It's a completely free resource, so the more people aware of it, the better!

Nottingham Law School have done a huge amount for me and it feels only right that I share this resource so that if any current students (or their parents) require free basic legal support, they know where to turn to.



The Law in 60 Seconds has been featured on the BBC, in The Guardian, and the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Commercial awareness is about having an understanding of how businesses and organisations work, and how current affairs can have an impact on them. It is about analysing what's going on in the world and how that might affect a specific sector or company. It's a vital skill not just for lawyers, but for a wide range of other careers.

In March 2019, we set up the new NTU Commercial Awareness Society with the key aim of supporting students through the training contract application process.

We're incredibly proud of what we've already achieved as a society – alongside partnering with Bright Network, we've organised and hosted events with magic circle law firm Linklaters and Aspiring Solicitors. Committee-led events, guided by member demand, also ran through the year, including our Law Fair 101, The First Year Schemes Presentation and the App Slam, which gave members the opportunity to get peer feedback on their VS/TC applications.

During term time, the committee also sent daily news updates on our group chat. This forum meant members could ask questions at any time, whether about applications, business terms or news stories, and get an instant response from either the committee or another member.

Following the success of our first year and thanks to our members' feedback, in February 2020, we were nominated and recognised as one of the best Law Societies for Commercial Awareness in the National Law Careers Net Student Law Society Awards. This was a fantastic achievement and led to further nominations in the NTU Student Union Awards for Best New Society and Best Society.

So why should you get involved? Students who are looking to find out more about commercial law and how best to approach applications will find a like-minded community of students who are looking to support one another to achieve their potential. Joining the society is a great opportunity to share your experience and learn from others, as securing a training contract can often be an arduous journey.

As a member, you will get to know your fellow members through our range of events and socials throughout the year, and gain exclusive opportunities with our partner organisations, including some of the top law firms in the country. Our members will be well equipped, supported and enthused to make quality applications to the firms of their choice.

If you have any questions or want to get involved, please contact our 2020/21 Executive Committee:

Victor Taiwo (President)
Finley Edwards (Vice President),
Bethany Fraser (Secretary),
Emily Burtoft (Treasurer),
Jess de Heer (Current Affairs Officer)
Ore Majekodunmi (Social Media Executive)

JOIN THE COMMERCIAL AWARENESS SOCIETY

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SQE: THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO LEGAL EDUCATION IN A GENERATION.

The Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) is expected to be introduced on 1 September 2021, subject to final approval from the Legal Services Board. As the date draws closer, **All Things Law** has put together a guide to everything you need to know.

How do you qualify now?

Currently, in order to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales, the route taken in most cases is:

- Successful completion of either a qualifying law degree or a non-law degree and a conversion course (the academic component); and
- Successful completion of the Legal Practice Course (LPC) (the vocational component); and
- Successful completion of two-year training contract (the work-based learning component); and
- Application to the SRA to be admitted as solicitor.

How will you qualify under the SQE?

Future qualification as a solicitor in England and Wales will require:

- Successful completion of a degree (which need not be a law degree); and
- Successful completion of the two stages of centralised assessments – SQE 1 and SQE 2; and
- Successful completion of two years qualifying work experience (QWE); and
- Passing the character and suitability requirements set out by the SRA and qualify.

What do the SQE assessments look like? Unlike the LPC, the SQE is not a course. It's simply two sets of assessments which you must pass in order to qualify.

SQE 1 will primarily test the application of legal knowledge across two examinations using multiple choice questions. It may also contain a written exam testing legal research and writing skills although this is yet to be confirmed. The examinations will be sat at specific locations, in much the same way as a driving theory test is taken.

SQE 2 will test practical legal skills such as interviewing, advocacy, drafting and research across a number of practice contexts.

As with SQE 1, it's expected that the assessments will be sat at specific locations but unlike SQE 1, they will involve a mixture of role play and written work. Candidates may only sit the SQE 2 assessment after passing the SQE 1 assessment.

What is 'Qualifying Work Experience'?

The requirement to complete two-years qualifying work experience will be more flexible than the existing training contract requirement. The two-year period can be made up of experience with up to four employers and can include; working on placement, working at a voluntary organisation and experience gained in provider-run Legal Advice Centres (such as Nottingham Law School's award-winning teaching law firm).

Are there any transitional arrangements?

Yes, transitional arrangements will exist meaning that some students may still qualify under the existing regime. The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) have stated: "if you are already on your way to becoming a solicitor or have accepted an offer for a law degree or conversion course before autumn 2021, you can choose to qualify through the existing routes (up until 2032) or through the SQE." They go on to say that "This includes anyone who has started, completed or accepted an offer for the Common Professional Examination, Qualifying Law Degree or a training contract by the time the SQE is introduced in autumn 2021."

How much will the SQE assessments cost?

The SRA estimates it will be between £3,000 - £4,500. This is not yet finalised and the eventual fee may be either side of this range. It should be noted that this fee is for the assessments themselves and does not include any training needed to prepare for them.

Do I need to do a course to prepare for SQE?

Whilst the SRA will not require completion of a particular course, the cost of the SQE assessments and the challenge they will present will mean that preparation in advance will be hugely important. Of course, some people may be able to gain the required knowledge and skills without undertaking a preparation course. However, the pilot assessments that the SRA have conducted for both SQE 1 and SQE 2 have underlined the rigour of the assessments – in most cases it would be difficult to do the SQEs with confidence, without first completing a quality preparation course.

What preparation courses will there be?

It's likely a variety of models will emerge, from undergraduate courses incorporating SQE preparation such as the innovative Applied Legal Knowledge Pathway on the LLB course at Nottingham Law School, to LLM Courses providing SQE preparation which will attract postgraduate funding. Within these models, there will be significant flexibility with varying degrees of online study.

It's important to carefully consider all aspects of the provider and course offering, including quality of teaching, quality of resources, academic and pastoral support, commitment to equality, diversity and widening participation, pro bono opportunities and dedicated employability support.

Do I need to do anything now?

There is nothing that you need to do at this stage. The transitional arrangements the SRA have put in place ensure that anyone who starts their legal studies before the SQE is introduced will be able to choose which route they follow. However, it's important to ensure that you are up to date with the latest information and are able to make informed choices.

📌 **NLS** will keep you fully up to date on the very latest developments on the SQE to help you make the best decisions for your future. Visit www.ntu.ac.uk/nlssqe



WHY YOU SHOULD DO A PLACEMENT YEAR

By **Laura Barrett**,
LLB Law Sandwich (Hons)

During my third year at Nottingham Law School, I completed a placement year at Volkswagen Financial Services (UK). As well as gaining some first-hand experience out in the 'real world', I knew this would be the opportunity to put what I had learnt into practice.

About my placement

VWFS UK is the captive finance company for Volkswagen Group in the UK, who provide finance and insurance services to customers of Volkswagen Group brands, which includes Volkswagen, Audi, Bentley and Porsche. Everyone that I met throughout my placement was friendly and willing to support my progression – I was treated as a permanent member of the team.

As my placement was in-house, my role was multifaceted. I was able to take ownership of the business' litigation disputes and criminal matters, and assisted with commercial contracts. I also participated in key business projects such as the implementation of GDPR.

Where possible my team made sure that I was working on things that interested me, so I could get the most from the experience.

My five takeaways:

01. I've expanded both professional and personal networks.
02. My confidence has developed and I've gained several skills that will help me to manage my final year more efficiently.
03. An appreciation of the importance of commercial awareness and why this is a vital skill for trainee solicitors.
04. It helped me decide which area of law to pursue.
05. After liaising with external law firms, I gained insight into their culture and got help with my Vacation Scheme and Training Contract applications.

Top Tips:

The best advice I can give to students who wish to complete a placement year is to ensure that you read the application answers thoroughly and research the firm or business – this will make your application answers stand out. And make sure you are yourself throughout the entire application process.

📌 For more helpful advice on all things law visit www.ntu.ac.uk/course/law



A SUPREME TRIP

Three NLS students tell us about their experiences at the **Supreme Court**.



**EMMANUEL
ARIMORO**
LLB LAW

I'm glad that I went on this trip in my final year because it definitely reminded of why I wanted to get into Law in the first place – it was good to take a break from the rigours of final year studying to absorb the history of the legal system.

Surrounded by other iconic sites, such as Parliament and 10 Downing Street, at the Supreme Court we saw Lady Arden preside over a Trusts Law case. She's one of few female judges in the Supreme Court, and her name appears in a lot of the case law that we study on the LLB. It was interesting to see some of the arguments used by the appellants and the legal reasoning behind the judges' rejections.

We also toured "Legal London", visiting The Old Bailey and High Court, which taught us about the history of how our court system has become what it is today.



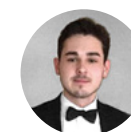
**ABIGAIL
EASTEP**
LLB LAW

The trip to the Supreme Court was great! I really enjoyed it. The building was beautiful, particularly the courtrooms themselves.

We had the opportunity to sit in on one of two cases on the day. I chose the one about land law as those were the modules I found most interesting in second year, so it was fascinating to see it in practice.

To be able to see the Supreme Court in person meant I could conceptualise what our lecturers talk about, and got to witness first-hand the day to day running of the Court.

I would recommend to students to go on the trip because it can be quite intimidating to go to courts alone, plus it was a nice break from the day-to-day of university.



**JACK
FERDINANDO**
LLB LAW

My trip to the Supreme Court was a great experience, not only was the guided tour informative and interactive, we were also able to visit other legal landmarks in London, including the gardens of the Honourable Society of the Inner and Middle Temple, the Royal Courts of Justice, a few chambers local to the inns of court and around the Strand area.

We also sat in on a matter of insurance/tax law presided on by five Justices. What helped me most with my studies this year was listening and analysing the barristers' style of speech from this case. It's not until you witness a professional in action that you can fully appreciate how you should speak and operate within court.

📌 Visit www.ntu.ac.uk/llblaw to find out more about our LLB Law course.

For the public good. How to get involved in pro-bono work.

Pro-bono is free legal advice and representation provided to those that cannot afford to pay for legal services and cannot access legal aid. Pro-bono comes from the Latin phrase, 'pro bono publico', meaning **'for the public good'**.

What sort of opportunities can I participate in?

Students can get involved in a huge range of opportunities, from assisting with administration of the firm, right through to legal research, client interviewing, preparing advice and representing clients before the tribunal and county court.

How do I get involved?

We offer opportunities to get involved with the NLS Legal Advice Centre, both as part of credit bearing modules and/or on an extra-curricular basis.

Generally, application is by way of a CV and covering letter, but there are different selection processes for different projects or roles. All students need to undertake training with us and pass online tests.

"There are some great opportunities to get involved in pro-bono work through the NLS Legal Advice Centre, which can really help you develop relevant skills and bolster your CV."

Luke Shaw, LLB Law

"I have always believed that knowledge goes hand in hand with practical experience, therefore I was very attracted by the prospect of working within the Legal Advice Centre, and the many other pro-bono opportunities that Nottingham Law School has to offer."

Alice Atay, LLB Law

"There's the opportunity for students to gain legal experience by taking on real cases as part of the Legal Advice Centre pro bono scheme."

Billy Shaw, LLB Law



To find out more about pro-bono work and the opportunities available visit www.ntu.ac.uk/lac

PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR



A look at the professional life of **Callum Scott**, winner of Paralegal of the Year at the Modern Law Awards 2020.

Callum is also an experienced Free Representation Unit (FRU) representative and works with the national charity to train our students to become FRU representatives, as well as providing the ongoing required supervision.

Alongside the responsibility of overseeing the Welfare Benefits service, Callum also led on the implementation of a new service area, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). Callum undertook intensive training in order to develop this service, identifying it as an unmet legal need in the local community through his welfare benefit work. This training was kindly funded by Santander Universities UK.

The SEND service was also developed as an extension to the Autism Law Service, which Callum founded in 2016 during his time as a Legal Assistant. The Autism Law Service provides additional support to clients with autism and promotes best practice when representing clients with the condition. Callum has established relationships with local charities and organisations, including a SEND legal aid provider, to create a referral network to assist those in need of SEND advice, and to provide pro bono representation before the SEND tribunal.

"What Callum has achieved at such early stage of his career is nothing short of incredible. Based on all of the above, it is difficult to imagine a more positive contribution to the reputation, not only of paralegals, but also to the profession. He continuously exceeds expectations, going above and beyond for his colleagues, clients and the student volunteers."

Laura Pinkney
Head of NLS Legal Advice Centre

In February 2020 Callum Scott, Legal Caseworker at the NLS Legal Advice Centre, won **Paralegal of the Year** at the Eclipse Proclaim Modern Law Awards. A former NTU student, Callum was nominated for the award for his continued exceptional performance and his outstanding dedication to access to justice and client care.

Callum first joined the Legal Advice Centre in 2015 as a student volunteer, whilst undertaking his Graduate Diploma in Law. After excelling as a volunteer, he then secured employment as a Legal Assistant in 2016, working full time alongside his part time Legal Practice Course.

In December 2018, Callum secured the post of Legal Caseworker, supervising our Welfare Benefits work initially as maternity cover. Under Callum's supervision, the Centre secured an outstanding £1.1million in benefit entitlement during the 18/19 academic year, an 11% increase on the previous year. Callum, and the student advisers under his supervision, represented 55 individuals before the Social Security tribunal and achieved an impressive success rate of 85%.

"I am honoured to have won this award for NLS. I feel incredibly privileged to be a part of such a dedicated and inspiring team of staff and student volunteers at NLS Legal Advice Centre. I have witnessed first-hand the tangible and long-lasting benefits the Centre's work brings to our local communities. Whilst these awards are not the reason that we do what we do, I am delighted that the Centre's achievements have been recognised on a national stage."

Callum Scott.

Introducing Laura Pinkney

HEAD OF NOTTINGHAM
LAW SCHOOL LEGAL ADVICE
CENTRE LTD.



Laura studied at Nottingham Law School before training as a solicitor with national law firm Cartwright King, where she became a partner in 2015. NLS welcomed her back as the new Head of the Legal Advice Centre in early 2019.

Specialising in complex fraud and confiscation cases, she has been recommended in the Legal 500 for her expertise. She is also a leading light in the Nottinghamshire Law Society having been the youngest person to hold the position of President. She also founded the Society's Equality and Diversity Committee and was closely involved in the national Law Society's "Women in Leadership in Law" campaign.

Laura is excited about taking the Centre forward over the next few years to allow more students to get involved in their innovative work, and further improving access to justice to the local community. We caught up with her to find out a bit more about our newest member of the NLS Senior Management Team...

01. Why did you decide to become a lawyer?

I studied Law at A-level and got the bug for criminal law at that stage! I understand that being a criminal defence lawyer wouldn't be for everyone but I absolutely loved it. It's clichéd, but I do genuinely enjoy helping people. It's really rewarding to be able to help and support people through such life changing events. Also, I firmly believe that to live in a civilised society everyone should be provided with access to justice no matter what the circumstances are. I also enjoy fighting for the underdog and I have brought both those values with me to the Legal Advice Centre.

If you ask my mum this question though, she will say it is because I am competitive and I like to win an argument!

02. What do you consider your greatest achievement?

I am really proud that I was President of the Nottinghamshire Law Society (2018/2019). Aside from being their youngest President, I was only the sixth female ever in their 144 history to hold the title.

I went to a normal comprehensive school in Grimsby and was the first generation in my family to go to university. It therefore meant a lot to me personally, but I also see it as an indication that the legal profession is becoming a little more diverse, even if it is taking some time.

03. Your job is really busy and intense. How do you relax?

Am I allowed to say wine?! I also have a rescue dog, a lurcher/terrier cross called Badger, so walking and spending time with him (although he recently accidentally broke my finger so his company is not always relaxing!). Guilty pleasure TV and reading (mainly crime novels) also help me to switch off.

04. Tell us a something that no one would guess about you!

I once ate live termites whilst trekking in a Nicaraguan jungle (I was really hungry!). They taste a bit like parsley in case you were wondering!

STORIES FROM STRASBOURG

We hear from two LLB International Law students about their time at **Strasbourg Summer school**.

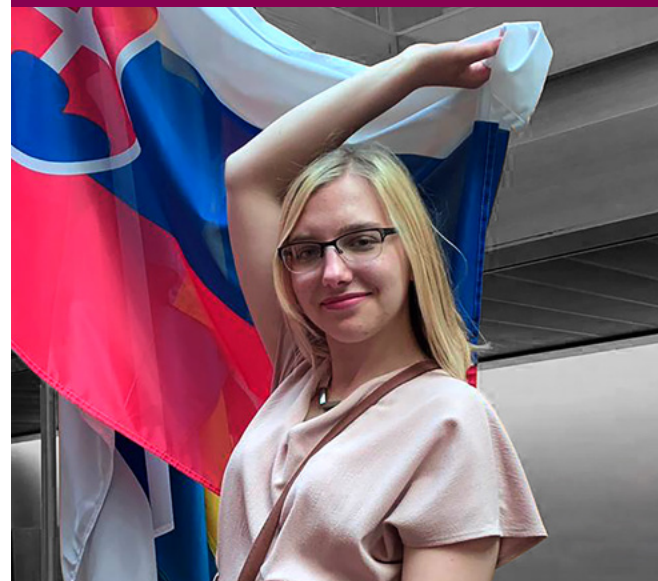
Zuzana Kucerkova
Strasbourg Summer School
LLB International Law

During my first year I studied EU Law and Public Law, learning about European institutions and what they have done for human rights. I knew the Strasbourg Summer School would be the perfect place to deepen my knowledge – also, I would be able to practice my French!

We visited the European Parliament, Council of Europe and European Court of human rights, attending talks and touring the buildings. We also had some lectures on human rights and bioethics.

I really enjoyed the summer schools as it was fun as well as informative. I made new friends and we spent our free time together eating out and exploring the city.

I would definitely recommend the Strasbourg Summer School to other students as it is a great way to find out how EU and human rights law applies in real life.



Bethany Fraser
Strasbourg Summer School
LLB International Law

Instead of taking a year out to study abroad, I decided to sign up to the Strasbourg Summer School as an alternative, meaning I wouldn't need to add an extra year to my degree.

The summer school involved spending a week in the lovely area of Strasbourg learning about bioethics, health and human rights law, taught by two amazing lecturers. As well as attending these lectures, we got to go visit the European Parliament, the European Commission and the European Court of Human Rights. In the evenings, we had plenty of time to explore the city and towards the end of the week, we even got the chance to visit Colmar and Kehl in Germany.

Before arriving, we set up a group chat of the students attending, allowing us to all meet up at the airport so we could travel together. We instantly became great friends and to this day I am still in contact with them. My favourite parts of the trip included having the freedom in the evenings to explore the city – there was always something new happening, such as a light show projected alongside the Strasbourg Cathedral. The three institutions are a key part of what we learn about in our degree, so seeing them in person gave me the motivation to work hard to someday be able to work somewhere so prestigious.

I would definitely recommend this summer school to everyone – it's a once in a lifetime experience that would be a shame to miss. If you are looking to travel abroad, add more to your CV, or would like to meet some new people, then I would definitely urge you to take this opportunity.



Find out more about international opportunities at www.ntu.ac.uk/nlssummerschools



Dates for your diary

A LOOK AT THE YEAR AHEAD AND THE
APPLICATION DEADLINES WORTH MEMORISING.

Larger commercial law firms tend to recruit trainee solicitors up to two years in advance, so you'll need to plan ahead to secure the training contract you're after. **Application deadlines** vary and some firms have a rolling application deadline, rather than a final cut-off date. But it's always good to be prepared! We've put together a couple of checklists, depending on where you are in your studies.

Application checklist:
Second-year law or final-year non-law students

Autumn

- Research, research, research! Where do you want to work? What areas of law would you like to practise?
- Attend the Nottingham Law School Law Fair (January) and employer events through the Employability Team.
- Use the CV resources on Employability Online to draft or update your CV and get it checked by a member of the Employability Team.
- Non-law students: apply for winter vacation placements (most deadlines fall in October and November).

- Law students: research Easter and summer vacation placements.
- Arrange informal work experience with relevant firms if interested in non-commercial practice areas, or working for smaller firms.

- Learn more about the sector and check out virtual internships at insidesherpa.com.

- Apply for legal-related volunteering if interested (do-it.org).

Winter, Christmas and Spring

- Apply for Summer vacation placements - some firms' deadlines are in December; many are in January.

- Investigate open days/insight events; another excellent way to get an understanding of how law firms operate.

- If relevant, apply for a conversion course: try the GDL or SQE preparatory courses, depending upon when you want to start.

Summer

- Apply for training contracts (many law firms have a 31st July application deadline; some will be earlier so do check to avoid missing out).

- Make speculative applications for opportunities with smaller firms.
- Take part in vacation placements. If you haven't been fortunate in securing one, try contacting smaller firms or start enquiring about Christmas placements and undertake other work experience in practice areas that appeal to you.

- Attend training contract assessment centres and interviews.



If you are in doubt about what you should be doing and when, visit the Employability Team and go to futurehub.ntu.ac.uk.

Application checklist:
**final year law students
or conversion course year**

Autumn

- Finalise your funding options and be clear about closing dates for funding applications.
- Be available for interviews. Don't forget to re-read your applications beforehand.
- Apply for the Legal Practice Course (LPC) if wanting to start in September 2020.

Spring

- Get organised for your exams. Legal practice requires a sharp intellect and graduate recruiters in law firms expect to see evidence of a consistently strong academic record on your training contract application. If there are or have been genuine mitigating circumstances affecting your exam results, make sure you mention these on your application.

Summer

- Acceptance deadline for LPC place.
- Make the most of opportunities to gain relevant experience.

Gap years for graduates who want training contracts

Many firms are happy for you to take a gap year before starting your training contract and a number offer training contracts beginning in March as well as September, but if you do want time out you'll want to plan for it in advance and use it well – having unexpected time on your hands can put pressure on your finances as well as creating a potentially awkward gap in your CV. Attending recruiters' events and law fairs will help you keep on top of deadlines, as you'll be able to ask questions and check application deadlines in recruitment literature.

Making your own application calendar is one way to keep track of what needs doing when. Discuss it with a careers adviser and try mapping out your plans alongside the crucial dates on a large sheet of paper.

MYTH BUSTERS

Five common misconceptions about applying for **graduate schemes**.

01. I can only apply for a graduate scheme in my final year.

You can apply for a graduate scheme at any point during your final year and beyond as long as you meet the application deadline for that year. It is normal for graduate schemes to be open to you for five years post-graduation – although many don't have limits. Lots of students graduate and specialise in one area, but change their mind and apply for a graduate scheme later.

02. I need a 2:1, or a specific degree.

Most employers don't specify a particular degree. And while there's no denying that 2:1 degrees are often used as a filter in the recruitment process, there are plenty of organisations that will accept a 2:2 – such as the Civil Service, HMRC, Government Legal Service and Network Rail.

03. All the good graduate schemes are in London.

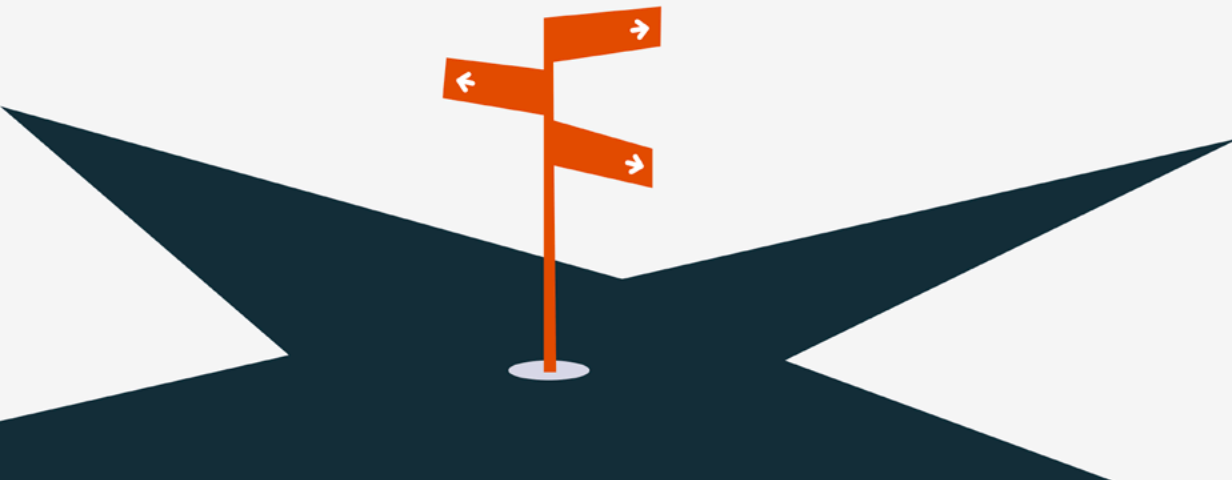
This is not true. Clearly, due to London being the capital there are a huge amount of opportunities available, but there are also plenty in other areas of the UK, including Birmingham, Manchester and, of course, the East Midlands.

04. Graduate schemes are the most common form of graduate employment.

The opposite! Less than 10% of graduate employment is in graduate schemes, most are employed in graduate jobs in companies that don't even offer them. And smaller companies offer fantastic opportunities and great routes for progression. In fact, in 2017 total employment in SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) was 16.1 million; this is 60% of all private sector employment in the UK.

05. I have to decide if I want to go into Law in my final year of my UG study.

Not at all! If you are unsure about whether you want to go into the legal profession, it is fine to go and do something else for 12-24 months, and if you still have the burning interest there will be plenty of opportunity to pursue it. Likewise, you might find you are thoroughly enjoying something else and are happy going in a different direction. There is no right or wrong route to take, it is whatever is best for you and your circumstances.



YOU'RE GRADUATING! WHAT'S NEXT?

Most people have mixed emotions when they're on the brink of graduation – the hard work, essays and exams will soon be over, but that also means, for most, the student lifestyle is coming to an end too. **So what do you do next?**

Don't heap the pressure on.

Your parents and peers may expect you to have everything figured out, but don't feel that you should have all of the answers yet. This is just the beginning – the joy comes from trying new things and exploring ideas! Look at your options in smaller chunks of time and focus initially on the next six or twelve months, rather than your whole career.

Postgraduate Study.

For those of you wanting a career in the legal profession you will need to undertake some kind of postgraduate study depending on your particular interests. Some of you might want to head in a different direction and a postgraduate course can be a good way to do that. Check out university open day events and speak to employers to see what qualifications they are looking for.

Graduate Schemes.

There are plenty of employers that are looking for candidates for their graduate jobs, starting later this year or next year. There are the big, well-known schemes, but don't overlook those small to medium sized employers (SMEs) that have some great opportunities too.

Do something different.

Just because you have a law degree, it doesn't mean you need to go into law. There are lots of different areas and sectors that law graduates go on to do – this can include marketing, compliance, public sector, human resources, insurance, finance and business. Don't be limited by just thinking about legal options as a law degree is transferable to a huge number of areas.

Get experience.

How can you know what you want to do if you don't give things a try? One of the best ways of deciding what to do next is to get some first-hand experience. Dive in and try things via internships (keep an eye out for graduate internships from NTU), work shadowing or using tools like LinkedIn to contact people working in sectors that appeal to you.

Get support from the NTU Employability Team.

Whatever stage you are at with deciding what you want to do after university, take advantage of Employability Team. There are loads of ways they can help you throughout your three or four years with us, so make the most of them!

Go to futurehub.ntu.ac.uk for more information, help and support.

Employer Challenge: Student Experience



EMILY BURTOFT
LLB INTERNATIONAL LAW

Students Emily Burtoft and Philip Crampton tell us how they tackled the **Employer Challenge** in their second year.

PHILIP CRAMPTON
LLB LAW

The Employer Challenge is mandatory, but can be completed a number of ways. I thought a courtroom experience would be most useful and felt I had to take the opportunity to help me decide if it was something I wanted to do in the future.

My friend and I were tasked with presenting a case in the NTU Courtroom on whether a man should be granted bail. Two former magistrate judges were there to officiate proceedings.

After visiting Nottingham Magistrate Court with the Court Visit Association and getting some advice from magistrate judges, I formulated an argument to present to judges in court for our moot. The judges gave feedback on our performance and ultimately favoured my argument.

It was an invaluable experience, given my aspirations of becoming a barrister in the future. I got to meet some experienced people within the legal system and gained some solid advice. Testing my ability to debate in a courtroom is a huge experience that has given me new found inspiration to pursue the career that I'm want.

The employer challenge is a compulsory element second-year studies. At first, I didn't know much about it, but I thought I would be better completing it at the beginning of my second year before my exams. I applied for my challenge in December and when I got accepted and started researching with my group, I started to think about law firms as businesses.

I applied for a group challenge with VHS Fletchers. The challenge brief was delivered by Nick Walsh who is a partner at VHS Fletchers – he asked us to look at ways the firm could increase their market share. We had to do a ten-minute presentation to Nick outlining our groups findings.

I delivered a segment of the presentation which I received good feedback for. Nick then asked us some questions on our research which I was able to confidently answer. I then had to write a reflective report where I received a distinction. My group's achievements led to us being chosen to deliver a presentation on the employer challenge at the Celebrating Excellence in Law Evening.

Out of this I secured work experience with VHS Fletchers – I had provided them with several suggestions on how they could improve their market share, focussing on website and merchandise opportunities. Nick was very pleased with the research we did as we were able to provide him with contacts who could help them produce merchandise and bring in new technology. We were also able to provide him with adequate pricing options which he was very impressed with, to the extent that our ideas were taken onboard.

I found the idea of presenting in front of a law firm's representative daunting, but I enjoyed researching what the company could do to increase their market share. When I had to present my slides to Nick, I felt nervous, but I knew I had done enough research to deliver my section and answer questions on it after.

Read more about our Employer Challenge on our course pages, visit www.ntu.ac.uk/nls

Employer perspective

Bill Jennings of Nottingham Magistrates Court and **Ghufran Shah** of Metsi Technologies give us their thoughts on the importance of student experience.



Bill Jennings has been heavily involved with the Employer Challenge since its inception. A new segment to the LLB degree syllabus, the Employer Challenge exposes second year students to real life employment situations – Bill tells us why Nottingham Magistrates Family Law court case scenarios are a great approach for first-hand experience.

I was a Nottinghamshire magistrate who had the privilege of being elected as chairman of the Nottinghamshire Family Panel, which covered both of the county's courts. I specialised in Family Law and was officially known as a magistrate sitting as a lay judge in the Family Court. I found the whole role to be incredibly rewarding, though of course it could be quite distressing at times.

Getting involved with NTU's forthcoming programmes was an opportunity not to be missed.

It gave me the chance to continue with the law, whilst being able to share my knowledge and experience with new and receptive audiences. Now recently retired, I have the chance to continue with Family Law court practice in a renowned, educational environment.

Currently I am providing Family Law Court Employer Challenges to LLB undergraduates, LLM students and GDL students. Each student is given an accurate case study, based on true events that I have witnessed. As well as this they will get information on their client and the other three parties that will be represented by other students at the "hearing".

This is exactly as would be the case in an actual hearing. At the hearing, each student gives an oral submission for a maximum of 10 minutes on why their client should have their application ordered and not the others. After these submissions the court will then decide on the order on the strength of their argument and always asks testing questions for the students to "think on their feet." In theory, any of the parties' cases are "winnable"; however, the students are not judged on whether they "win" or "lose", but on the quality of their argument.

These scenarios cannot be duplicated elsewhere – students not only participate in a true courtroom environment, but they can then informally discuss anything with myself and the other Magistrates after the sessions.

They leave without any unanswered questions – something that could never be achieved in a "live" court sitting.

I strongly believe that these challenges give the students an incredible insight into the law at work, especially in the Family Courts. Anyone can observe a Criminal Court in action but Family Courts are closed for important privacy reasons. This is the closest that students can get whilst studying.

I know that students have found including the skills and experience gained from the Employer Challenge on their CVs hugely beneficial when applying for jobs. It certainly gives NLS students an edge by demonstrating that they have experienced true to life scenarios, already encompassed within their syllabuses.

The quality that I have seen since the scheme started has been of a high standard. Although some may raise their eyebrows in disbelief, I can confirm that a good number of the "court" presentations are superior in quality to those that I have experienced for real in the Family Court!

It gives me great satisfaction to know that I have helped in some way to fulfil part of the students' studies.



Ghufran Shah has over 25 years of experience in the technology industry. In 2012, he founded Metsi Technologies to help organisations in digital transformation, business orchestration, and enterprise cloud management. Ghufran is a co-author of 8 IBM Redbooks and a worldwide instructor in enterprise service management.

He has worked globally with clients to deliver value-based IT solutions and holds a Bachelor of Computer Science from the University of Bradford. Ghufran tells us what students get out of the Metsi experience.

I've always had a natural inclination to academia and opportunity to engage directly with students and present some real-world challenges was one which I couldn't turn down.

When I graduated many years ago, a lot of the academic knowledge I learnt in my Computer Science degree was, although technically challenging and satisfying, not completely relevant in my job as a Graduate Programmer. So, I thought it would be good to share my experiences of transitioning from academia into employment. Also, being born and brought up in Nottingham, I felt an obligation to support a local university in nurturing talent!

The Employer Challenge allows the students to perform research on real-life issues faced by employers globally. The students gain experience in researching the subject set by the challenge, capturing the data and presenting as a team to the employer. Independent and group research, working in a team, allocating tasks to different team members and then writing and delivering a group presentation – these are all valuable skills sought after by all employers.

I believe education should be about preparing students for the real world. Practical skills gained by taking part in these challenges enable students to apply knowledge and develop skills needed to seize the opportunities offered by employers. Knowledge and facts learnt in the classroom can only be completely understood and put into context when they are applied in the real world.

Seeing students from all skill levels and backgrounds was encouraging, and going into this process I wasn't sure what to expect. Although the level of interaction with the students was quite minimal, the output produced by all teams was impressive, considering the subjects I set were not related to their Law degrees.



Pathways To Law

Three NLS students who made their way here through the **Pathways to Law** programme tell us about the support they received, and how they're now helping others kick off their Law careers.

The Pathways to Law programme was established in 2006 by the Sutton Trust and the Legal Education Foundation, with support from partner law firms, to improve access and social mobility within the legal profession. The Nottingham Pathways to Law programme is delivered jointly by Nottingham Law School, Nottingham Trent University and University of Nottingham.

Currently in my third year, I signed up to the Pathways To Law scheme when I was studying for my A levels – I had no idea how valuable it would be. Before I even got to university I was able to take part in activities and opportunities that would improve my chances of becoming a lawyer.

Where I come from, the idea of being a lawyer is constantly met with shock and concern (from anyone but my family). People just don't expect it to be achievable. I'm the first in my family to go to university and I know it would've been so much more difficult without Pathways.



ELOISE BANNISTER
LLB LAW

It helped me to feel that someone was on my side, and I felt that they really wanted me to achieve. After years of being told that Law wasn't for people like me, it was empowering and refreshing to feel supported.

From e-mentoring to personal statement workshops, mock trials and forensics days, I had so many opportunities to succeed. I knew I wanted to study Law at university from my first ever Law GCSE lesson at 14, but it wasn't until Pathways that it felt like a possibility. For that, I am so grateful for the support I had.

Studying Law at Nottingham Trent University has been amazing. I am now in my third and final year and it has completely flown by. I've tried to give back to Pathways so for the last two years I've been mentoring A Level students who are in the same position that I was. This has been really rewarding – being able to see first-hand the value and impact that Pathways has on these students, giving them confidence and aspirations. I have also spoken about Pathways and the importance of it for a recruitment video, and have visited schools in Nottingham, teaching year 11 students on the law around cyber bullying.

Pathways has given me some amazing memories, such as being able to shadow a Judge at Derby Crown Court. It's provided me with some wonderful friends, like Renee and James who I am proud to have shared my journey with – and hopefully will know for many years to come!

Looking back on what I have learnt from Pathways and NTU I would say, just take one day at a time and keep going. Work hard! Be kind, patient and respectful and just keep putting one foot in front of the other. At the end of the day if you know what you want, go out and work for it. It will not be easy but that does not mean it's not possible.

Going forward, I am hoping to stay on at NTU to complete the LPC next year. Which I can honestly say my 14-year-old self would not believe was possible!



JAMES CHAPMAN
LLB LAW

I joined the Pathways scheme when I was at college. When I first signed up, I knew I wanted to be a Barrister, but didn't think the scheme would have such a positive impact in getting me there. The scheme included a Criminal Court day, where I was able to cross-examine a witness, as well as a Legal Professional day where we learnt how to successfully network. Pathways built the foundations for my career – I was able to gain confidence and get insight into life at NTU before I even arrived.

University has had lots of ups and downs for me. Initially, I found it extremely difficult moving away from home and struggled to fit in with the student lifestyle, both socially and financially. Unfortunately, this reflected in my first-year exam results, so I decided to commute from my hometown of Leicester instead.

This proved to be one of the best decisions I've ever made (closely followed by applying for Pathways of course!) Not only did I notice how much more financially viable it was, but I was able to focus more on my degree. My grades significantly improved in my second year and helped me to firm up the decision that I wanted to become a Barrister.

In second year, I became an Outreach Ambassador and helped out with the Pathways to Law Scheme for the new cohorts. Coming from an area of low attainment I was able to share my story – I like to think I've inspired others like me to aim high. Going into my final year, I had already completed two work placements shadowing a Barrister, as well as marshalling with HHJ Mukherjee at Birmingham Crown Court.

I then did loads of research and found the next thing to aim for – becoming a student on the NTU Barrister Training Course.

I applied for a scholarship with The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, which helped me to fund the course and gave me some experience in a legal interview environment. I was fortunate enough to be a part of a successful minority and was given an interview for the scholarship. I'm still waiting on the outcome on this, but am proud to say that I have been accepted to start studying on the Bar as of September 2020.

Whoever is reading this whether you're at college or university, I have one key piece of advice – just be yourself. You'll need to work hard and be professional, but I am a firm believer that in order to be successful in any chosen career, you must demonstrate what you are like as a person.

Never change to try and fit in. Also, always try and show how keen you are. Go on court visits, apply for work experience and keep up with current legal news. All of these little things will make a big difference – they certainly have for me.



RENEE FREEMAN
LLB LAW

My journey into Law started with the Sutton Trust's Pathways to Law programme. At sixth form I didn't have the option to take Law, so this programme allowed me to find out more about what it would be like to study it at university. Pathways provided the opportunities to widen my access to the legal profession. I was able to build the essential knowledge, skills and confidence required to go on to higher education and succeed in the training contract application process.

As well as an experience placement, I had mentoring from older more experienced students, a trip to the Inner Temple and a four-day residential at the University of Warwick. I found the ability to network with working professionals a particularly useful source of support and guidance beyond the programme. I can honestly say that the Pathways to Law programme is one of a kind – it provided me with opportunities, I don't think I would have otherwise been exposed to.

After having experience within Nottingham Trent University through the Pathways to Law programme, my decision to study at NTU was an easy one. The law school's exceptional reputation for excellence in legal education speaks for itself and so far, my time at NTU has been faultless. Both staff and students are friendly and approachable which has allowed me to get the best out of my experience, both academically and socially. The law school's close industry links and the Legal Advice Centre have allowed me to develop my practical skills and add to my experience. And the support I received from the employability centre when applying for training contracts and preparing for assessment centres was incredible.

I've been keen to advocate the positive impact of the programme to others who would benefit from the scheme. As well as supporting their events, I joined the Sutton Trusts Pilot programme, delivering presentations to year 11 students who had an interest in law around Nottingham. I find it fulfilling to know that the programme still exists today and continues to provide students who wouldn't necessarily see a career in law as a possibility for them.

Looking forward, next year I plan to study the LPC before beginning my training contract with Actons Solicitors.

Congratulations to... **Francesca Shellard**

SHORTLISTED FOR
**'BEST CONTRIBUTION BY AN
INDIVIDUAL LAW STUDENT'**

LAWWORKS AND ATTORNEY GENERAL
STUDENT PRO BONO AWARDS 2020.



Francesca joined the Legal Advice Centre as a Legal Assistant in September 2018 as part of her LLB Sandwich course placement year. During this time Fran trained to be a FRU Social Security Representative and, since November 2018, represented over ten clients at tribunal.

She achieved a staggering 100% success rate and recovered over £460,000 in benefits for those clients. Fran has also worked on a number of complex business and enterprise law cases, including litigation cases and the Centre's first professional negligence case.

During her placement year, Fran was also the Chair of the Student Pro Bono Committee and worked hard to promote pro bono work and enhance the Centre's student volunteer experience. As a Committee, they entered the 2018/19 LawWorks Law School Challenge.

Via everything from bake sales to merchandise, the Committee raised a total of £1,330.45 for the two charities involved – LawWorks and Advocate. Placed fourth overall, in light of the success, Fran attended the House of Commons to celebrate the Committee's achievements.

Fran also worked closely with the Nottingham Women's Centre and supported a student-led outreach project, giving employment, family and housing advice to vulnerable women through drop-in sessions. Alongside her full-time studies, Fran continues to be involved with the Student Pro Bono Committee, acting as a link between the committee and the Legal Advice Centre, and remains a Free Representation Unit representative.

Fran has now returned to her full-time studies but continues to be involved with the Student Pro Bono Committee and remains a Free Representation Unit representative.

"We nominated Fran for this award due to her exceptional performance and her outstanding dedication to access to justice and client care. She has been a highly valued member of the team, who adapted extremely well to the fast pace of a real law firm environment and has contributed to the successful development of the different service areas. Watching Fran grow in confidence during her placement was hugely rewarding and we have no doubt she will go on to succeed in her chosen career at the Bar."

Laura Pinkney
Head of the Legal Advice Centre

"To have even been nominated for the award has been an honour, so I am nothing short of amazed at being shortlisted too! It's not solely a reflection of the work that I have done – they're a truly great team who have taken the time to train and endlessly encourage me."

Francesca Shellard

Visit www.lawworks.org.uk
for more about the awards.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT NLS



Dr Elyse Wakelin,
Principal Lecturer in Law
and Student Experience
Manager, talks to us about
how wellbeing comes first.

At Nottingham Law School, the student experience is not just about what you learn in the lectures and seminars. We know that our students all have different experiences outside of the classroom – some may be starting university at eighteen and learning to adapt to living away from home for the first time.

Others may be returning to education while balancing a busy home life and caring responsibilities. These diverse experiences of our students mean that we have developed a personalised approach to wellbeing in Nottingham Law School.

Each student has a dedicated personal tutor allocated to them right at the start of their course. The overarching role of a personal tutor is to coach and mentor students, providing personalised academic, pastoral and professional advice and guidance, serving as a gateway to further specialist support.

Your personal tutor is central to your wellbeing; they are the first person that you should speak to if you have any concerns as they can provide you support and guidance on both personal and academic issues. All students should meet with their personal tutor at least once a term for a check-in to discuss how the term is progressing. But they're always available to support you outside of these termly meetings too.

They can make referrals to one of our dedicated law school student support advisors, who are part of the university wellbeing team – from time management, home sickness, bereavement, anxiety and depression, they're experienced in supporting law students for anything they need

Peer support plays an important role in your wellbeing and feeling part of community is a key part of this. As a first-year undergraduate student, you will meet your CERT mentor on the first day of term. They will be a current student from NLS and they will be on hand to provide you peer level support throughout the year.

The mentors organise a number of community building events and trips throughout the year, from pizza and board game nights to quizzes, movie nights, Legal London trips and academic sessions on helping you to focus on your studies. The Law School also has a number of active student societies to help you feel part of the law school community. These include LEX, the Court Visit Association, The Commercial Awareness Society, The New Black Society and the mooting club.

Your wellbeing is central to everything we do at Nottingham Law School and if you do need to speak to someone, there is always support available.



Have you heard?

Here's the latest in **research news**
from Nottingham Law School.

NLS Researcher in Netflix Piracy Documentary

Dr Mark Chadwick is one of the world's leading experts on the law of piracy. His highly acclaimed book, *Piracy and the Origins of Universal Jurisdiction: On Stranger Tides* was recently shortlisted for the highly prestigious Society of Legal Scholars, Peter Birks Prize for Outstanding Legal Scholarship. In a fascinating read, Mark explores how and why piracy on the high seas came to be recognised as an international crime, giving rise to the principle of universal jurisdiction. If you want to see Mark in action he appears in Netflix documentary 'Explained', in a special episode dealing with pirates, available for streaming indefinitely. Mark was interviewed in our Chaucer Moot Court as the International Criminal Justice Expert in the film.

Learning law by the roll of a dice

NLS researchers Dr Helen Hall and Professor Tom Lewis usually write in the areas of constitutional law and human rights. Now, they've used their expertise to invent a role-playing board game that teaches players about constitutional principles, human rights and equality.

But there is a twist. The game is set in a fantasy world inhabited by goblins of different characters, races and ethnicities, and also beset by some of the prejudices and problems that plague real societies. Players have to stand in the shoes of a particular character, and live the best life they can live, choose a supreme 'High Law', deal with the (often unfair) laws that are passed and, when all else fails, can risk resort to revolution. Helen and Tom have played the game with school children across the UK, as well as with NLS students and trainee solicitors.

Senior lecturer advises top athletes on gender discrimination

NLS' Dr Seema Patel is one of the UK's leading experts on sport and discrimination law. She has recently been working with the legal team representing the South African sprinter Caster Semenya in her discrimination claim against IAAF World Athletics before the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Seema has subsequently been interviewed by tennis great Martina Navratilova, appearing in the BBC1 Documentary 'The Trans Woman Athlete Dispute'.

Most recently Seema has been working with the Transgender Working Group for World Rugby, the world governing body for rugby union. For the first time in sport the specialist working group included experts in the fields of biology, performance science, insurance, risk, law and human rights.

International experts gather to protect environment

In collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Professor David Ong organised an acclaimed international workshop in November. The topic was 'Assessing the Relationship between Access, Benefit-Sharing and Intellectual Property Rights over Marine Genetic Resources within biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.' The event brought together international experts from the public, private and academic sectors and important contributions were made concerning intellectual property rights as well as access to and benefit sharing of marine genetic resources. The workshop's report will be published shortly.

FAIR PLAY.

Every year Nottingham Law School holds an annual **Law Fair for students** to meet with industry professionals and for lawyers, academics and recruiters to network while they gain access to a talented pool of undergraduates and postgraduates.

Open to all years and anyone who has an interest in working in the legal and related sectors, students are able to speak one to one with law firms, barristers' chambers, in-house legal departments and other legal employers including recruiters and HR teams.



MARK THOMAS
ACADEMIC TUTOR OF THE YEAR



DR SOPHIE GALLOP
PERSONAL TUTOR OF THE YEAR

And the winner is...

The Nottingham Law School prize-giving evening is an annual event welcoming outstanding students, their families, friends and sponsors to enjoy an evening of celebration

This year, over 40 prizes were awarded to successful Law School students, the majority for outstanding academic performance. Other prizes were presented for mooting, pro bono work, advocacy, research and work carried out on placement. Skills in business and family law were also recognised with awards.

Two prizes were awarded to staff members **Mark Thomas** (for *Academic Tutor of the Year*) and **Dr Sophie Gallop** (for *Personal Tutor of the Year*).



Visit www.ntu.ac.uk/nls
for the full list of winners.



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**ALL
THINGS
LAW.**

**NOTTINGHAM
LAW SCHOOL**
NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY