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As this academic year draws to an end, we want to take a moment to note how incredible it has been to be back operating in person both here at the Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre (QMLAC) and while undertaking our community work.

It has been wonderful to watch students develop and learn from interacting with each other, our volunteer lawyers and our community groups. It has been a year of transition where we have held onto the positive lessons learnt from the pandemic and appreciated all the aspects of our service that we can now get back to.

On our staff team we sadly said goodbye to Mary Abidakun and wish her all the best in her new role in private practice. We warmly welcome Herabans Kaur who joins us as the Client and Community Coordinator. Thank you to the Claire King Charitable Trust for their generous grant which part funds this post. We are also delighted to welcome Gbemisola Obolo who joins us as a Client and Student Administrator.

The QMLAC is an integral part of our Law School and wider University. In the past year our civic engagement work contributed to QMUL being the first University to be awarded the Platinum watermark for Public Engagement from the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement. The QMLAC was also incredibly honoured to be awarded first place in the prestigious 2022 MacJannet
Prize for Global Citizenship. There is always more that we can do as a Centre, and the release of our QMLAC Strategy 2022-2027 recognises the vision that we and our collaborators have for the next 5 years.

As ever, we are enormously indebted to the partnerships and collaborations which enable the QMLAC to work. We hope this report pays tribute to, and thanks all our clients, volunteer lawyers, community partners and students. Without the generosity of your time and trust, the QMLAC simply would not operate.

Frances Ridout
Director of the QMLAC
(Clinical Legal Education)
Statistics

“...You listened carefully to my needs. The dedication and support you offered within a week of asking for help is invaluable. You also informed me of how long things will take and met the deadlines, you set. Your service is a godsend.”

QMLAC Client

“...Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre shined a light in what had become a very dark situation dealing with an online transphobic stalker.”

QMLAC Client

2047
Client enquiries

435
Client appointments in our clinics

240
Supervisors came to the QMLAC to supervise students

Every Student Adviser attended a reflection session called Breakfast Club after their client appointment

The QMLAC has advised 4,047 client’s since it started in 2006

11
Clients were represented in the First Tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support)

£233,782
Of disability related benefits were won (plus one blue badge)

900
School students participated in one of our SPITE for Schools workshops

112
Year 5 students who participated in an I Am You workshop

446
Students engaged in a clinical legal education activity through the QMLAC
Where do our clients live?

- 60% in London
- 40% outside London

Your service has exceeded my expectations, you have taken the time to prioritise my deadline, seek to understand personal and practical issues affecting my day-to-day life and completed the Mandatory Consideration form accurately and in great detail. You even took on board my amendments and did this within hours. Team members also covered for another to make this happen. You have simply lifted my spirits and helped me see a way through this very difficult period of my life.

QMLAC Client

Where in London do our clients live?

- East: 60%
- North: 20%
- South: 10%
- West: 10%

While studying during covid was not the easiest at times, the sense of community I felt working in the QMLAC was a definite highlight of my degree.

Aldyen Taylor Krieger, QMLAC Student Adviser
The global association Talloires has over 400 universities, in 82 countries on 6 continents who all celebrate and commit to developing student leaders who are actively engaged with society. The MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship, launched in 2009, recognises exemplary university student civic engagement programs around the world. It is a key element in the MacJannet Foundation’s work to build a community of global citizens.

We were delighted that 3rd year Law Student Weronika Mazurowska won the 2021-2022 student prize for: Outstanding Contribution to the Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre. This Law Department award recognises her outstanding work on the Social Welfare Benefits Clinic as a Student Adviser this year. Congratulations to Weronika!

The Claire King and Helen Tarsh prize for improving legal education among young people this year was awarded by the Law Department to 2nd year Law student Yasmin Khalid Al-Hajdary who has consistently excelled on our SPITE for Schools project. Congratulations to Yasmin!

Although the QMLAC won the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in 2020, we were not able to collect our award until March 2022! QMLAC staff and Deputy Dean for Education, Elizabeth Gillow, proudly collected the award in the Aerospace Museum in Bristol.

The Selection Committee admired the dedication of your staff and students for the program. They were particularly impressed with the program’s focus on mutual benefits for both students and clients, natural progression in student leadership opportunities, vast reach and impact, strong community partnerships, and very well-documented quantitative evaluations to measure the impact of the program.”
Domestic Abuse Form Filling Clinic Launches

This was the first year we ran the Domestic Abuse Form Filling Clinic which supports victims of domestic abuse to take the first steps in obtaining non-molestation and occupation orders. We work in conjunction with the Royal Courts of Justice Advice (RCJ Advice), and their award winning CourtNav system. Clients are offered a free one-hour appointment where they are supported by trained Student Advisers to input the relevant information into the CourtNav form. The answers provided then generate and fill out the relevant form and the supporting statement for applications. After the appointment the forms are checked by a qualified legal adviser. If a client either does not qualify for legal aid or cannot pay to have the assistance of a local law firm; RCJ Advice will explain next steps and support them with documentation to allow them to be a litigant in person.

In February 2022 our QMLAC Projects Coordinator Meghan Mizen spoke at the LawWorks Info Exchange on Domestic Abuse. She shared information and best practice on our new collaborative clinic with Royal Courts of Justice Advice and use of the legal tech software Court Nav.

“...A very thorough service, has cleared up a lot of difficult questions and given me vital legal knowledge and confidence to take the next steps in my case.”

QMLAC Client

SPITE for Schools and I Am You projects back in-person

Our Street Law projects; SPITE for Schools and I Am You were back into schools for face to face workshops. It was fantastic to be back our in our local community facilitating interesting discussions and meeting our wonderful local school students.

“...Excellent workshop with appropriate and engaging activities. The case studies were very good and just right to help our students think through the law surrounding image based sexual abuse”

School feedback from SPITE for Schools Project

Please could you pass on thanks to all the workshop facilitators for taking the time to put together such excellent presentations. Although all 3 of them were different in style, they were all perfect for our students and very engaging. I’m sure they put in a lot of time and effort to make them so professional and I wanted to let them know that we really appreciated all of that.”

School who received a SPITE for Schools Workshop
Our Prisoner Property Project also resumed at HMP Huntercombe with students providing valuable advice on property which is lost in the prison system or unlawfully retained by the police.

The toolkits that students on the Prisoner Property Project made last year have now been translated into French. Demand has been such that copies in both English and French have had additional print runs and been posted to prisons around the country.

At HMP Manchester we were really impressed when we received copies of “How to reclaim lost property from a prison or police station”, a toolkit designed and produced by the Queen Mary School of Law, University of London. HMP Manchester has been trying to tackle issues surrounding local prisoner property management, and this toolkit not only offers an easy to understand guide for prisoners, but also a really useful reminder to staff on how we should be managing prisoner property and what we should do when we make errors. The whole document is well designed and really simple to understand, pulling together all information relevant to prisoners experiencing property issues with police and prisons.”

The team have a lovely human approach where they are prepared to come all the way out to HMP Huntercombe to meet with clients in person. They are very friendly, supportive and reassuring professionals. It makes me feel valued that this team is prepared to come and see me in person to help me solve my problem.”

Client from HMP Huntercombe

It is very rewarding to see the Peer Adviser prisoners engage in our workshops, asking questions, and wanting to learn so that they can help others. The project has been the most rewarding and hands-on pro-bono experience I have had so far as an Undergraduate. I have truly felt like my work has been meaningful and has made a difference in people’s lives”

Student Volunteer on the Prisoner Property Project

Scan to download digital copies in both languages from our website
This academic year students from QMLAC and lawyers from Mishcon de Reya have worked on a Policy Clinic around the hotly debated Online Safety Bill. The aim of this policy clinic was to use our knowledge and expertise from our SPITE project (focused on image based sexual abuse) to feed into the discussion and debate centering around this pivotal piece of legislation and as it goes through Parliament. Students initially worked to dissect the intricacies of the bill, which then allowed Mishcon de Reya and the QMLAC to publish articles reviewing the bill from the perspective of the victims of image based sexual abuse.

Data from the SPITE project was then used to feed into written submissions by QMLAC and Mishcon de Reya to the Parliamentary Public Bill Committee.

Our initial report from February 2022

A further report produced in April 2022, following a re-draft of the bill

We started the new academic year with a re-working and refurbishment of our space for staff and students. This doubled our student workspace, adding two additional client appointment rooms and improving our client waiting area. Our student cohort had the chance to vote on inspirational quotes which now embellish the walls.

We want to thank the Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre from the bottom of our hearts for your support and hard work during the case. The outcome has been really important for us and we are endlessly grateful.”

QMLAC Client
Our QMLAC Environmental Law Foundation Clinic kicked off this academic year advising clients on a range of legal issues in this complex and hugely important area of law. An individual or group seeking legal advice are welcome to contact the Centre to see if we can help. The environmental law matters that we covered this year included noise issues, pollution, land use, air quality, chemicals, transport, waste.

Supervising at the centre is varied and interesting; the students who take the lead, are hard-working, and enthusiastic. The advice evenings have an authentic, community vibe and sessions often feel much more closely connected to the client and their issues than professional practice can. The centre is tightly run and well-supported.”

Volunteer Supervising Lawyer on the Family Law Clinic

QMLAC Strategy 2022-2027

We launched our 5 year QMLAC Strategy in June. The strategy sets out a series of ambitious goals designed to keep QMLAC at the forefront of clinical legal education and the provision of pro bono services. Hard copies are available at the QMLAC and digital copies are available here:

I have already been recommending this service to others as the standard of the service was really high. The level of professionalism displayed was exemplary and the letter we received was written to a high standard as well.”

QMLAC Client
In summer 2021, following England’s Black players being subjected to horrific racial abuse after defeat in the final of Euro 2020, the QMLAC Staff Team and lawyers from Mishcon de Reya published an article considering ending anonymity on social media. You can read a full version of the article here: [Scan to read ‘Has the Time Come to End Anonymity on Social Media?’](#)

New QMLAC Instagram Account

Despite being nervous about my appointment, the Student Adviser handled my matter sensitively, professionally and made me feel immediately at ease. I found the advice invaluable, and it was set out clearly in layman’s terms.”

**QMLAC Client**

The QMLAC has launched an Instagram account (@queenmarylac)! News from the Centre is now available on Twitter (@qmlac), Facebook and LinkedIn.

Scan to read ‘Has the Time Come to End Anonymity on Social Media?’
Over 30 students participated in this year’s Queen Mary Plea in Mitigation Competition run by the Queen Mary Legal Advice Centre. Students learnt about this unique form of advocacy and participated in multiple knock-out rounds. The final was held at the Central London County Courts in front of HHJ Simon Freeland QC and HHJ Heather Baucher where first year Law student James Donkin won. Well done to all who took part and thank you to our wonderful judges in all rounds of the competition.

The competition has been the greatest experience of my first year and I only hope that many other students choose to participate in the future.”

James Donkin, Winner of the Plea in Mitigation Competition

Panel Discussion on The Promise and Perils of Algorithms in Public Administration

The event, held on 3rd February 2022, considered the way in which Artificial Intelligence is increasingly shaping the way we are governed. In particular, how these systems rely on the analysis of large amounts of personal data (and the potential (un)conscious preferences, prejudices, and priorities of the people that build them) to infer correlations and impact decision making, particularly in the context of immigration and access to social welfare.

The quality of advice I received exceeded my expectations. It was formulated throughout with utmost clarity and addressed all issues comprehensively. In expanding on my questions, it presented me with important insights, and equipped me to better understand my case. Many thanks!”

QMLAC Client
On Wednesday 17th November 2021 the QMLAC marked this important global day and which is recognised by student Law clinics around the globe. The theme for 2021 was plastic and the problem of plastic pollution. QMLAC students undertook a litter pick in Mile End park and held conversations with members of the community about what are the laws on plastic pollution and what steps they can take to reduce single use plastics. QMLAC staff and students undertook a litter pick in Mile End park and held conversations with members of the community about the laws on plastic pollution and what steps they can take to reduce single use plastics. In two hours, Queen Mary students and staff collected six bags of litter with a significant amount of plastic waste. For the second part of the day, the student group worked together using the litter collected, along with other creative tools to create a banner with the word ‘CHANGE’. Each letter incorporated facts, figures, tips to encourage individuals, organisations and officials to take action now to tackle plastic pollution.

Superb service and professional team who dealt with my matter sensitively and respectfully. I would highly recommend QMLAC to anyone needing legal advice”.

QMLAC Client

[in my graduate role] I’ve been tasked with drafting advice for clients. In this regard, I can’t stress how well the whole LAC experience has prepared me for this. The partner running the team seems to trust me when it comes to drafting advice - I’m sure my experience at the LAC must’ve contributed to this! All thanks to the LAC team.”

Dominic Wan-Ee Lee, QMLAC Alumni
This year the QMLAC continued its collaboration with the Future Leaders Programme hosting two evening workshops for our Future Leaders. The collaboration was expanded this year to include QMUL students, mentoring sixth form students and also attending joint work experience placements together. Thank you to Faheem Kham, Halima Shakoor, Judge Bruce and Prof. Alan Dignam.

Today I had my barrister shadowing. It was very insightful and enjoyable. I really appreciate the opportunity!"

QMUL Student Mentor on the Future Leaders Programme

On the 14th June 2022 we held a QMLAC Celebration event with a key note speech from Patron Sir Robin Knowles QC. The event marked the fantastic collaboration of all involved in the Centre and welcomed our community partners, volunteers, students and alumni. We were able to recognise three individuals who have given an outstanding contribution to the Centre for a significant period of time. A QMLAC Fellowship was awarded to two of our longest serving Supervisors Maria Patsalos (Mishcon de Reya) and Simon Lim (Bross Bennett), and to Nerys Evans, the Department of Law’s previous Manager who has championed the work of the QMLAC for over 16 years. Many congratulations and thank you to our Fellows.

"Excellent advice and very knowledgeable guidance."

QMLAC Client

We also launched our QMLAC Strategy 2022-2027 at the celebration. Hard copies available at the Centre or digital copies here:
Festival of Communities

On 11th June 2022 the QMLAC ran an I Am You Craft Stall at the QM Festival of Communities in Stepney Green Park. Inspired by the I Am You Project, children and families were encouraged to consider the principles and protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and to use crafts to make posters about their own identity and what made them special. The QMLAC team of students and staff spoke to our young visitors about what communities they belonged to and how diversity and inclusion can be promoted.

Pathways to Law students

It was wonderful to hold a workshop for our QMUL Pathways to Law students. We played ‘should it be a crime’ and looked at criminal sentencing. They came up with some wonderful definitions for what a crime is.

“The LAC has really been an incredible opportunity that only further motivated me to pursue work in social justice/human rights initiatives and gave me the tools needed for such a career. It is initiatives like the QMLAC that make us law students excited to learn law and that help us grow as people and professionals.”

Alumni Student Adviser at the QMLAC
Thank you

Adam Mackinnon
Adam Merrick
addi Cheng
Afua Kudom
Alex Lowry
Alex Addington
Alex Barker
Alex Dehn
Alex Pierce
Alex Shattock
Alexander Laing
Alexander Roy
Alexandra Agnew
Alexandra Whiston
Dew
Alfie Crammer
Alfred Perkins
Ali Queisi
Alice McCarthy
Alice Trotter
Alicia Chantrey
Amanda Bewley
Andrea De Biase
Andrea Jenaro
Andrew Barton
Andrew Jones
Andrew Turnbull
Anish Patel
Anna Metdjar
Anne Kearns
Annie Leonard
Antonio Suarez
Ariel Wiebe
Audrey Morgan
Aura Rancovaite
Barry O’Leary
Becca Jones
Benedict Beltrami
Benjamin Burrows
Caitlin Ferris
Cameron Storah
Caroline Bullen
Carolyn Ward-Sinclair
Caspian Heeler
Catherine Casazza
Catherine Maguire
Celia Marr
Celia Hill
Celine Collis
Charlotte Sanberg
Chloe Chatton
Chloe Szczerbiak
Chris Parrot
Christian Ayerst
Christopher Parsons
Christopher Poole
Cian Murphy
Cian O’Connor
Ciar McAndrew
Claire Butler
Claire Hall
Connor Johnston
Conor Shevlin
Dami Ewedemi
Dan Bryan
Dan Fielding
Dan Pront
Daniel Shapland
Daniele Pinto
Danile Foley
David Wylde
David Cummings
David Greenhalgh
David Kanter
Dirghayu Patel
Dr Joe Tomlinson
Ed Adase
Edward Imrie
Edward Machin
Eilidh Brown
Eleanor Howse
Elena Jarmoskaite
Elissa Dacosta
Waldman
Eliza Jones
Ella Raeburn
Ellen Allde
Ellie Sutherland
Ellie Richie
Elsa Glauert
Emily Clarke
Emily Wright
Emma Sydenham
Emma Varty
Emma Montlake
Emma Clark
Emmanuel Nibo
Erin Smart
Erin Vandzura
Liah Roberts
Liam Petch
Liana Wood
Liberty Bridge
Lily Davies
Linzi McDonald
Lisa Williams
Lisa Meller
Lisa Robertson
Liza Barrett
Lorena Gomez
Sutherland
Louis Muncey
Louise Fisk
Louise Thawley
Lowri Rutter
Lucie Betts
Lucy Isaac
Lucy Humphreys
Luisa Braig
Luke Gittos
Luke Norton
Luncinda Hawthorne
Madni Chaudhary
Magdalena Zima
Mali Rickards
Margaret Dunning
Maria Dixon
Maria Newsome
Maria Patsalos
Marina Sergides
Martha Averley
Mary Osofisan
Mary Abidakun
Mary Westcott
Masuma Khalique
Matt Harnett
Matthew Shaw
Matthew Siddaway
Matthew Burman
Max Nicolaides
Maya Grantham
Mia Harrison
Michael Skrein
Michaela Smyth
Mike Thorne
Mikhail Popov
Miriam Boston
Molly Jawange
Molly Kiely
Morgan Reardon
Nadia Macci
Nasima Ahmed
Natalia Constantine
Natalie Ahmed
Natalie Flynn
Natalie Matranga
Natasha Brown
Natasha Grande
Nath Gbipki
Nerissa Hatcher
Nerys Evans
Noah Benjamin
Stewart-Ornstein
Nora Ling
Oli Tilbrook
Olivia Kirkbride
Olivia Berry
Pasha Ramphal
Philip Salvesen
Phillipa Jenkins
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Sally Powell
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Scott Wallace
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Sean O’Beirne
Shafagh Daneshfar