

WARWICK LAW IN THE COMMUNITY

End of Year Report 2020/21



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1. About Warwick Law in the Community

Warwick Law in the Community (LinC) was launched in September 2019. We cultivate opportunities for students to gain practical experience in law and social justice while also making a meaningful contribution to our community locally, nationally, and internationally.

We seek to develop mutually beneficial long-term relationships and projects with organisations that share our values. We offer opportunities in more traditional forms of legal advice and practice, but we also look beyond these to expose students to alternative ways of doing and thinking about law.

Warwick LinC currently offers voluntary and paid opportunities across three main initiatives.

1. Immigration and Asylum Clinic

For over 10 years students from the law school have been supporting the Immigration and Asylum Clinic within Central England Law Centre. Based on a traditional clinic model, students support front-line advice services under the guidance of Rob Bircumshaw, Head of Immigration and Asylum and his team at CELC. The clinic goes from strength to strength.

2. Strategic Public Law Clinic (SPLC)

The Strategic Public Law Clinic is a joint initiative between Central England Law Centre (CELC) and Warwick LinC. It specialises in using public law strategically to address systemic disadvantage and achieve effective change. As part of SPLC, students work with the Public Law and Human Rights Team at CELC on a variety of projects that CELC would be unable to pursue without our students' support. The clinic is jointly supervised by Karen Ashton, Solicitor and Head of Public Law and Human Rights team at CELC alongside Dr Tara Mulqueen, Director of Warwick LinC.

3. Public Legal Education

This module aims to introduce students to the ideas and practice of public legal education through an experiential programme, while also providing support to our local community. Public legal education addresses legal need arising from lack of awareness of the legal system and reduced access to sources of assistance at a community level, rather than through case specific or individual legal advice. At a time when the legal sector is in flux, particularly with significant cuts to legal aid, and many communities experiencing extreme levels of exclusion from the legal system, public legal education provides a holistic and innovative way to provide support. Working with community organisations and under close supervision, student use their legal knowledge and research skills in creative ways to design and deliver PLE that addresses defined needs. This takes a variety of innovative forms, including workshops, information resources, films and social media. The module is taught by Dr Tara Mulqueen.

2. Achievements and highlights over the year

This has been a challenging second year for Warwick Law in the Community, as it has been for everyone due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have had to quickly adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and find new ways of working with students and the wider community.

However, this has also been a year of exceptional growth and development for LinC despite these challenges. We have provided more opportunities for students than ever, including expanding our offering of paid summer internships.

Our Immigration and Asylum Clinic shifted this year to focus on supporting applications for exceptional case funding, which could be done on a fully remote basis, providing students with opportunities to develop their legal research skills and participate in live cases. Our Strategic Public Law Clinic has worked across five projects and nearly doubled the number of student opportunities provided. We've worked on a diverse range of pressing issues including public awareness of judicial

review, systemic issues in universal credit, and the impact of social care easements. Our Public Legal Education students have worked with a range of local organisations to provide education and information resources on topics such as accessing information and advice for refugees and access to housing duty solicitors during the pandemic, and we produced our first-ever animated film about financial independence for youth with learning disabilities.

Our online launch event, and LinC's first public event with the Strategic Public Law Clinic 'Challenging public authorities—using law to tackle everyday unfairness', attracted participants from 34 local organisations to learn about judicial review and how it might be relevant to their work.

Looking ahead, we know that that pandemic is not yet behind us and we will need to continue to adapt our ways of working. In the next year, we hope to cultivate the public presence of our initiatives, seek out new opportunities to partner with organisations, and develop the research side of our work.

3. Facts and Figures

Warwick LinC has grown considerably over the past year in terms of the numbers of students participating and opportunities we are able to provide.

A total of 450 students attended Warwick LinC information sessions to learn more about our opportunities. We received a total of 227 applications for opportunities throughout the year. We interviewed 135 students and provided a total of 92 student opportunities.

LinC Volunteering	2019/20	2020/21
SPLC	29	52
I&A	15	12
PLE Module	15	19
Summer Internships	2	9
Total	59	92

2020-21 breakdown of recruits by year group (includes I&A and PLE). Only existing volunteers eligible to apply for internships.

SPLC Volunteers	2019/20	2020/21
First Year	7	18
Intermediate	14	26
Final Year	6	25
PG	1	8
Exchange	1	
Total	29	77

4. Immigration and Asylum Clinic

This year the clinic has focused on supporting Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) applications for legal aid. It mainly encompasses cases in which a client's human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) would be breached if they do not get funding for legal advice and representation. We aim to run the ECF clinic in a way which helps the students get a better understanding of legal aid, drafting and researching relevant legal provisions.

This year we had 12 students working with us on the clinic, significantly increasing the Law Centre's capacity to support ECF clients. The clinic had to be adapted to COVID restrictions, so all work was completed remotely using SharePoint. In total the clinic assisted 34 clients. In addition to supporting ECF applications, the students also volunteered for research tasks in respect of particular cases, and some were able to help prepare for and attend appeal hearings.

Robert held weekly or bi-weekly Friday check ins and training sessions with the students on Microsoft Teams during the first term. Training topics included Article 8 applications and family reunion, tailored to the needs of ECF clients.

Client case study 1

Client JO - this client was applying for an extension of limited leave to remain. She met the financial criteria, receiving Universal Credit and this was well explained by the students on the ECF grounds and legal help forms. The Legal Aid Agency (LAA) did not grant legal aid at first instance as they stated that as she had undertaken degree level study previously, she could apply herself without the need for legal representation. It had to be argued to the LAA that the person was not an expert in immigration law by virtue of having studied a degree in an unrelated subject and that the complexities of the law and process were such that legal aid was merited. The LAA eventually conceded and did eventually grant legal aid and the client subsequently was able to make an application with our support, which was ultimately successful.

Client case study 2

Client TN has been in the UK about 12-13 years having come to the UK as a dependent of his wife who was granted a visa to work in the UK. During his time here his marriage unfortunately failed, and he therefore attempted to make further applications 'outside' of the rules. TN worked in the UK for about 10 years with adults with physical and mental health problems. We tried to build a case in the Immigration Tribunal that the public interest would not be served by removing our client to Zimbabwe, given the contribution he has made and still wishes to make to UK society as a support worker. We tried to argue that the range of public interest factors identified by the Home Office and the government in legislation were not all encompassing and that the public interest factors that we identified should be given more or at least equal weight. To this end two of our students assisted with researching the notion of the public interest both conceptually and in practical terms (such as consideration of public attitudes towards support workers post-pandemic) to build up our case. Unfortunately, we came across a judge who was not particularly interested in our arguments and we ultimately failed to succeed. However collectively we did our best for the client who was grateful for all the work undertaken by the students involved.

5. Strategic Public Law Clinic (SPLC)

This has been a busy year for the Strategic Public Law Clinic. We have worked across five different projects this year and hosted our first public event. Building on our pilot projects from our first year, we have developed our ways of working to encourage more small group collaboration. We provided opportunities for more than 50 students to participate in our projects.

Our Projects

We have worked across five different projects this year.

1. Mental Health Services in Coventry
2. Public Awareness of Judicial Review
3. Addressing Systemic Issues in Universal Credit
4. Rights in Peril - Analysing the Impact of Care Act Easements
5. Community Equivalent Healthcare in Immigration Removal Centres

1. Mental Health Services in Coventry

Central England Law Centre is contracted to provide an independent advocacy service in Coventry to assist those who wish to make a complaint about NHS services. The advocate found that clients were raising issues about local mental health services which coalesced around some recurring themes, but the complaints investigation and resolution seemed to be solely focused on the individual case and that patient's experience of dissatisfaction. The function of complaints mechanisms in the public sector is also to use patient experience to improve service quality.

The first task of the project team was to analyse the issues raised in 10 recent complaints cases and to identify whether there were any underlying common themes. Those that emerged included complaints about failures to provide key information about diagnosis and treatment, lack of treatment choice and weaknesses in continuity of support.

The second was to develop a strategy to try and improve the use of complaints by the health organisations concerned as a quality driver, taking into account the pressure on NHS resources which tends to operate as a counter-incentive. One of the barriers identified was the tendency to characterise the complaint as a personal experience of dissatisfaction arising from the individual patient's expectation of the service. One way to try and shift this paradigm would be to benchmark the issue of which complaint was being made against relevant external quality standards in the complaint itself.

The project team researched the quality standards that have been developed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), a statutory body one of whose functions is to develop quality standards for healthcare providers. The team identified standards which had something to say about the recurring concerns raised by complainants in the cases that had been considered.

The group has produced an easy-to-use reference tool of relevant quality standards which can be used and cited by the Law Centre's complaints advocate in individual complaints. It provides verbatim text of useful NICE standards with full referencing and hyperlinks. If this tool is found to be effective, it can be expanded to deal with further issues as they are identified. The team also produced draft monitoring sheets to collate evidence of the frequency of occurrence of the various issues. Both tools are currently being trialled by the advocate and will be reviewed based on their experience. The data generated may provide other opportunities for influencing change locally.

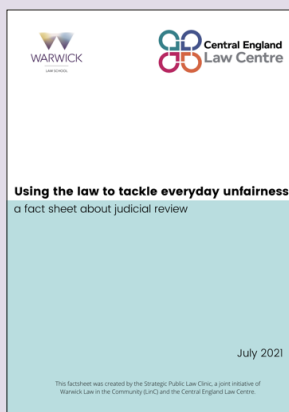
2. Public Awareness of Judicial Review

On 31 July 2020 the Government launched a review of judicial review. It established a panel of constitutional law experts to “consider whether the right balance is being struck between the rights of citizens to challenge executive decisions and the need for effective and efficient government”. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-independent-panel-to-look-at-judicial-review>.) The indications from government were that, in its view, the balance needed shifting in favour of the latter.

Judicial review is the court process which determines whether a public authority has acted lawfully. It was the process that was used to decide whether the prime minister’s decision to advise the Queen to prorogue parliament was unlawful. It is also the process that might be used to challenge the lawfulness of a local council’s decision that a disabled person is ineligible for social care services, or to close a local library.

Very few have even heard of ‘judicial review’ despite its vital role in protecting us against the abuse of power. The aim of this SPLC project was to start to tackle the very difficult task of raising public awareness in the Law Centre’s local communities, at a time when the effectiveness of judicial review is under threat.

At the core of the project’s strategy were three elements: understanding and addressing common misperceptions of judicial review; making the issue relevant to people’s everyday lives; and disseminating the information through organisations which tend to have contact with local people in connection with a range of issues where judicial review could be a useful tool.



One of the Law Centre’s former clients who had used judicial review kindly agreed to speak to some of the students to help with their understanding of the kinds of worries that deter people from seeking advice when they feel that they have been treated unfairly by a public authority. This understanding was used to create a fact sheet which not only explained what judicial review is but

focused on providing information relevant to these concerns.

We decided that the best way of making the information relevant would be for some people who have used judicial review to tell their own story: the problem they faced, the difficulties they had faced trying to resolve it themselves and their experience of the judicial review process. All of the former clients of the Law Centre who were asked if they would participate agreed to do so.

At the very end of the project, we held an online event (see below) to which we invited local organisations. Coventry and Birmingham who worked with different groups on a wide variety of issues, including women’s refuges, migrant support organisations, welfare benefits advisers. We introduced them to the fact sheet and case studies but, as importantly, were able to learn from them about the real life issues their clients faced. Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of the same issues were common across organisations and across cities. The Law Centre is planning ongoing work on those issues. Copies of the material produced by the project team can be found here <https://www.centralenglandlc.org.uk/Pages/Category/what-is-judicial-review>

3. Addressing Systemic Issues in Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) was introduced in 2012 as a new welfare benefits system which was to be administered largely online. This project looked in-depth at one aspect of the administrative process in which the Welfare Benefits Team at the Law Centre has observed irregularities with significant implications for claimants.

A benefit claimant who is assessed as being unable to engage in work-related activity, because of ill health, should be exempt from the benefit cap. The cap cuts the universal credit to which the person would otherwise be entitled to the level of the cap. It can make it difficult to pay rent or meet other living costs.

An important step in the DWP decision-making process about fitness for work is the sending out of a standard form, the UC50, to the claimant so they can give further information about their health problems. Claimants who are ill and cannot work but who do not receive a UC50 form are unlikely to know they should have done so. They will continue to receive some benefits payments. This means they are unlikely to contact the DWP to ask why they have not received the form. Many claimants do not have access to specialist advice. The Law Centre had noticed a trend in the UC50 not being issued to claimants in cases where it would have been expected. They suspected it might not be just a local problem.

The project group undertook internet research to find publicly available information, submitted Freedom of Information Act requests to the DWP and surveyed members of the National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers (NAWRA).

The DWP information told us that a UC50 form is supposed to be generated 'automatically' by a computer system once the claimant has been referred for a work

capability assessment (WCA). The evidence from NAWRA pointed to widespread pre-existing problem of non-receipt of UC50s which appears to have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Our enquiries identified a number of potential weaknesses in the administrative system which could be contributing to the problem including a lack of automation at key points; a lack of systematisation of key steps; and issues with the training materials disclosed by the DWP.

However, whilst system weaknesses should be addressed, it is probably inevitable that, whatever systems are used, they can fail. It is vital to have effective safeguards which will correct errors which will have serious consequences if they arise. We found no such corrective mechanism if the system failed at the critical point of referral for a WCA.

This has all the hallmarks of a systemic unfairness which is unlawful in public law terms. In order to be paid the level of UC to which the person is entitled, they must provide information using a particular form of which they have no knowledge and where the system itself does not enable the claimant to identify the problem if the DWP process for providing that form fails.

The project concluded by making a simple recommendation to address this. The claimant is required to enter dates of their sick notes in their UC online journal. If the system were to generate a standard letter at that point which explained the 'unfit for work' process, including the referral for a WCA and the issuing of a UC50, the claimant would know to expect to receive the UC50, and when, if they remained unfit for work.

A report on our findings and recommendation has been circulated to the adviser network to assist in their discussions with the DWP. There is hope that a simple administrative reform will help reduce unnecessary and significant hardship and erosion of rights.

4. Analysing the Impact of Care Act Easements

The Coronavirus Act 2020 removed a swathe of key rights of those in need of adult social care. The absolute obligations of local social services authorities to meet eligible needs were transformed, through guidance, into acts to be performed unless and until the authority decided it would adopt stage 3 or 4 'easements'. The idea was that these levels of easement would limit statutory obligations so that local councils were better to deal with the pandemic pressures.

Four of the eight authorities across England which decided to move into the higher easement stages were in the West Midlands and included Birmingham and Coventry. There were a number of legal challenges to the decisions and none of the authorities retained this easements 'status' for very long. However, anecdotally, it appeared that many local authorities informally operated what were, in effect, higher level easements with resulting unmet need. In addition, the lower level easements, in any event, had the potential to severely impact on adults with disabilities and their families.

There was concern that those impacts would be felt beyond the end of the pandemic and the formal reinstatement of rights. In a context of what was already a severe level of underfunding of social care and a likely increasing pressure on public

funds, reductions in social care support to individuals might not reverse automatically.

It is important that those affected, community organisations, and legal advisers are aware of the types of unlawful impact that the suspension of rights has had, directly and indirectly, and may have in the future so that these are more likely to be challenged and rectified. The aim of the project was to develop a framework to assist the Law Centre's Health and Social Care team to identify patterns of impact on rights which may need tackling strategically.

The project team was provided with training on Care Act rights and with a case study based on the experiences of those who depend on social care support during the pandemic. This was used to inform the exhaustive identification of key rights within the Care Act and its accompanying regulations, and discussions about the ways in which the pandemic may have systematically impacted on those rights.

This work has been used to develop an excel tool to assist the caseworkers in the Law Centre's Health and Social Care Team to identify and record impacts on rights. This will be used to uncover systemic and continuing issues which will help target resources as part of the Team's new Rights in Peril project.

5. Community Equivalent Healthcare in Immigration Removal Centres

We have continued work on this project which began last year. We have worked closely with Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group to explore the reasons for persistent concerns about the quality of healthcare in immigration removal centres, in particular focusing on the role of community equivalence in the inspection regime. We were supported by a group of student volunteers at the start of the year to conduct further research, and we have developed this into an extensive report detailing our findings and analysis, "The Right to Community Equivalent Healthcare in Immigration Removal Centres: a Public Law Analysis of Systemic Issues in the Inspection Regime." The report will be available in the coming months.



Launch & Judicial Review Event

We held a successful launch and engagement event for LinC and the SPLC on 25 March 2021. The event, 'Challenging public authorities—using law to tackle everyday unfairness' showcased the Public Awareness of Judicial Review clinic project and introduced our work to a wide range of local community organisations. The event attracted significant interest, with 59 registrations, 42 attendees and representatives from 34 organisations.

The programme included speakers from two national organisations (Public Law Project and Law for Life), as well as presentations from Karen Ashton and Emma Austin from CELC. The event continued CELC's work in developing partnerships with local organisations, and highlighted that a number of organisations had experienced common frequently occurring issues such as incorrect application of the habitual residence test in benefit decision-making, and difficulties in accessing support under the

Children Act. CELC is coordinating follow up work using CELC's RIPPLE and AMIF projects to explore the possibility of working with these organisations to address these issues using public law tools.

Feedback from the event was overall very positive. Given this was an open event, the feedback response rate of 24% was good.

- ▶ 90% rated the event overall as Excellent or Good
- ▶ 90% rated content covered as Excellent or Good
- ▶ 80% rated relevance of content covered as Excellent or Good

Attendees appreciated being able to hear perspectives from other organisations with similar challenges, time in breakout groups to talk through their own examples, the structure of the session and the range of speakers on the day. Attendees would have preferred more time to discuss their issues in breakout groups and more detail on the JR procedure step by step, better time management towards the end.

6. Public Legal Education

This year 19 students participated in the Public Legal Education module. They undertook five projects and placements with a range of local organisations.

▶ **Financial Independence for People with Learning Disabilities (Grapevine)**

People with learning disabilities are often victims of financial abuse, and they are often denied financial independence and the tools to achieve this. Our students worked with Grapevine to create an animated film for youth with learning disabilities about financial independence, covering issues including decision-making and welfare benefits, to help develop early awareness of their right to financial independence as they enter adulthood. We were supported in this project by the Coventry Independent Advice Service and the Central England Law Centre.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tp9Xb8lwjAU&ab_channel=WarwickLinC



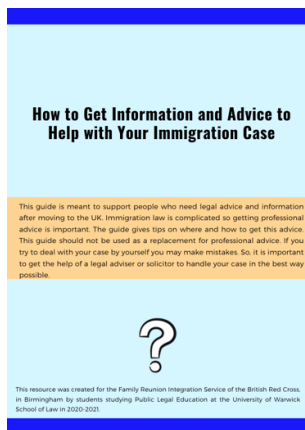
▶ **Access to Annual Health Checks during COVID-19 (The RIPPLE Project, Central England Law Centre and Grapevine)**

Health inequalities between learning disabled people and their non-learning disabled peers in the UK are significant - it is well documented that learning disabled people have a significantly lower life expectancy in the UK and this group has a high number of premature avoidable deaths. Annual Health Checks were introduced

in response to this to allow GPS to detect unmet health needs and trigger further health investigations and treatment when needed. Health inequalities have increased during the pandemic and the CQC has reported that there has been a rise in premature avoidable deaths.

Our students supported the work of the RIPPLE Project to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the provision of annual health checks. They drafted FOI questions for local GP surgeries, conducted research and developed accessible information resources about how the process had changed and what to expect.

- ▶ **Supporting Refugees to Access Legal Information and Advice (British Red Cross)**
The Family Reunion Integration Service of the British Red Cross in Birmingham reported that many of the people they support struggle to access reliable information and appropriate legal support. Our students attended their weekly social hub to learn about the experiences of



the refugees they support, developed an information resource, and delivered an informal workshop. The final version of the resource was translated into Arabic. We were also supported in this project by the Central England Law Centre.

- ▶ **Coventry Advice Awareness Campaign (Coventry Independent Advice Service)**
This year our students worked to support CIAS to develop their social media presence. We developed a legal needs survey for youth in the Coventry area to better understand their perceptions of advice services and some of the problems they most commonly face. We then created an Instagram account for CIAS and developed bespoke content on key issues affecting youth and other populations served by CIAS.

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

- ▶ **Law for Life Placement (Law for Life)**
Three students were placed with Law for Life: the Foundation for Public Legal Education to work alongside their Director of Education across a range of projects. These included conducting research into access to housing for migrants, researching and creating a guide for accessing duty solicitors during and beyond the pandemic, and creating a visual representation of the section 21 eviction process.

7. Law in the Community Internships - Summer 2021

This summer we offered 5 six-week paid part time internships to five students (June-July 2021) in partnership with CELC and Warwickshire County Council Education Entitlement team, funded by the University's Innovation Fund award and the Warwick LinC budget.

- ▶ CELC Public Law and Human Rights Team
- ▶ CELC Rights in Peril Project
- ▶ CELC Litigants in Person Evaluation
- ▶ Warwickshire County Council Education Entitlement Team and LinC School Exclusions Project Development - 2 Internships (Remote and/or in-person)

We also supported a further 4 students to continue work on a public legal education project - completing an animated film about financial independence for people with learning disabilities with Grapevine and additional support from Central England Law Centre and Coventry Independent Advice Service.

8. What Our Students Say

This year we have struggled to get students to fill out the online feedback forms despite many requests - likely due to being fully remote. Final response rates are 25% for I&A, 58% for SPLC projects and 60% for internships. The full details are included in Appendix 2

We know students have had a positive experience participating in our projects, and their reflections in discussion (e.g., during final project meetings) have been very thoughtful and constructive.

The experience with Warwick LinC and CELC has given me invaluable insight into the work and ethos of law centres. Throughout the experience, we were paired with other students and given a new case every 1-2 weeks. Some cases involved sitting in on calls with clients as the Law Centre staff were obtaining their history and details to prepare for the applications, and it was really insightful to listen to and communicate with the people who we were trying to assist. It was incredibly valuable to see the process from communicating with the client to crafting this information into a strong argument for their ECF. This time a year ago, I was completely unsure of the path I would be taking after graduation. Now, with these 9 months of experience behind me, I am confident in my decision to pursue a career as a solicitor, and I am starting my LPC this September.

I just wanted to send a quick note and thank you for your time and guidance during my time working at CELC. I really feel that I learned a lot from you and that it was really great hands-on experience that will no doubt serve me well in my future career.

I would also like to thank you both for the amazing experience of being part of this team and getting a bit more insight into the immigration process in the UK this past year. I also really enjoyed the additional projects, especially working on the PAP for client H.

I learnt more about how Human Rights functions in practice in the UK. We had no idea how the Care Act worked let alone how the pandemic would affect it. **This is the first project (I've been involved in) that has taught me the practicalities of law in context.**

Developed my thinking about the Law and Acts outside of just theory - so useful to work through the Act.

The project has **helped me to develop my communication, presentation, and critical thinking skills**, as well as my teamwork and strategic planning skills.

Working with my team has **seriously benefitted my collaboration skills**, specifically, I am now able to divide a task strategically to ensure work is complete to the highest standards in a fair and organised way.

The project was **much-needed encouragement to pursue a legal career in social welfare and legal aid**, by providing a glimpse into what this work entails and how it helps.

The project **allowed me to develop research skills, which are extremely valuable and only really come from working with real organisations.**

I enjoyed the **client interview process. It was well-conducted** and doing the follow-up write-up **helped me with my drafting skills, especially in writing less formally and more naturally.**

I have **learned first-hand how to treat client confidentiality.**

(As a result of my experience) **I've decided to do a Masters in Human Rights!**

I've decided to focus on Public Law and Human Rights rather than commercial law.

I believe that the supervision that I received was the most valuable part of my experience. There was no question that went unanswered, and the team went above and beyond to ensure I had an in-depth understanding of both employment rights issues and the importance of public legal education.

I also found attending the team meetings each week valuable as it gave me a sense of what working at the Law Centre was like by hearing about the type of work that different members of the team had been involved in which was incredibly interesting... **I am very interested in a career in public law, therefore, this internship has very much helped to get a greater feel for this type of work.**

[The Law Centre] ran a lot of interesting projects of the type **I would like to hopefully run or be involved in during my career, so seeing this in action and in more detail was brilliant.** Being able to create a work plan and think about the organisational aspect of creating a long-term project was immensely beneficial. Overall, it has certainly provided a lot of knowledge and experience that will doubtlessly benefit me in the future as my career evolves.

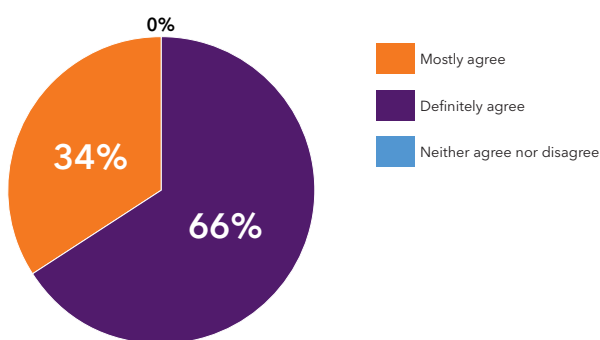
APPENDIX: End of Year Feedback

EOY Feedback - Collated from SPLC and I&A Clinic students

Response Rates:

Immigration and Asylum Clinic 25% (4 out of 12 students)
Strategic Public Law Clinic 58% (25 out of 43 students)

The application process was simple and easy



Application Process

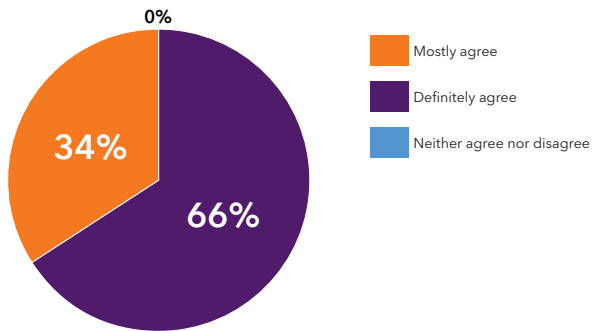
The recruitment process works well. New projects are advertised in Welcome Week or week 8 of Autumn and Spring terms with a scheduled information session to introduce LinC, the work of the clinic and projects available.

Candidates select a group interview slot to suit their availability with selection decisions communicated promptly, sometimes the same day.

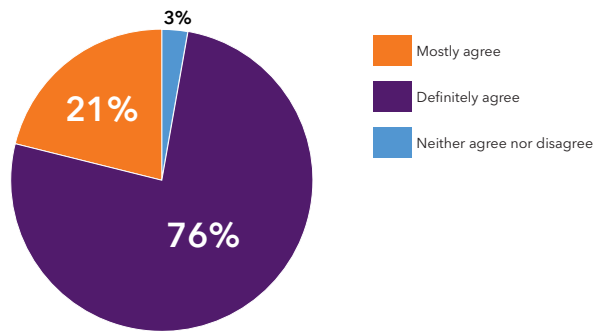
Responses by Project

Immigration and Asylum Clinic - 25%, 4 out of 12
Mental Health Services in Coventry - 33%, 3 out of 9
The everyday importance of Judicial Review: campaign and event - 50%, 5 out of 10
Addressing Systemic Issues in Universal Credit - 66%, 8 out of 12
Analysing the Impact of Care Act Easements - 75%, 9 out of 12

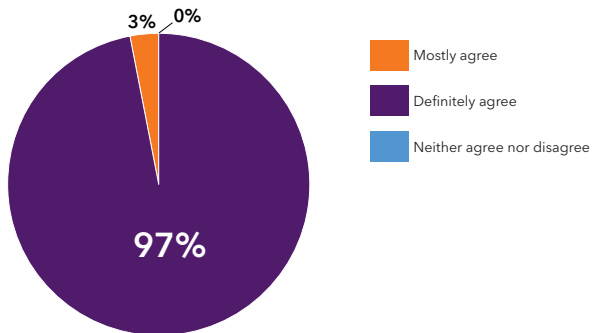
Q1. Supervisors were good at explaining things clearly



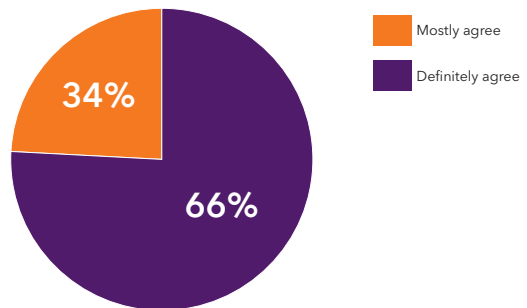
Q2. Supervisors have made the project interesting



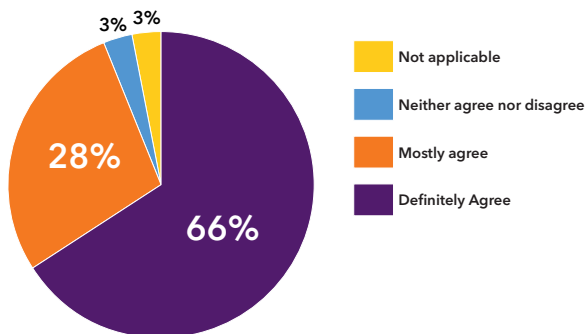
Q3. Supervisors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about public/immigration law



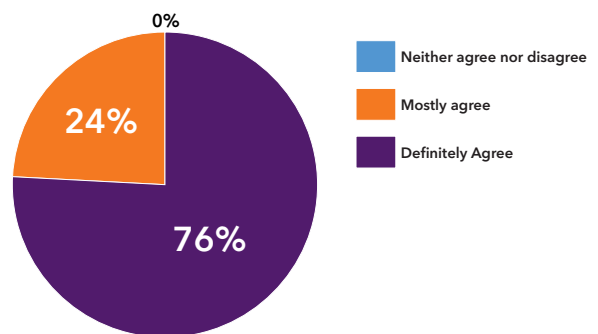
Q4. The project/placement has been useful in developing my legal skills



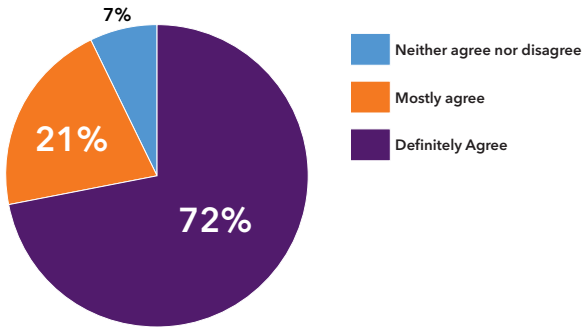
Q5. The training offered was useful and enhanced my learning



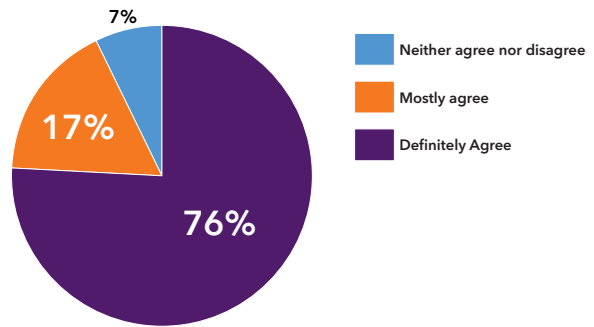
Q6. The project was well organised and ran smoothly



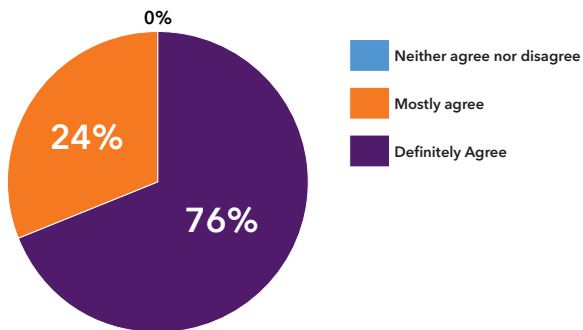
Q7. Supervisors responded to any questions I had promptly



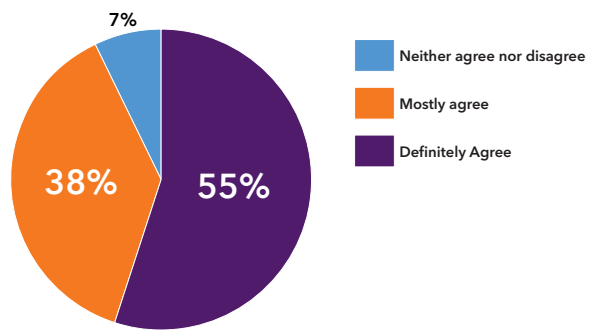
Q8. The work was pitched at the right level for my skills and experience



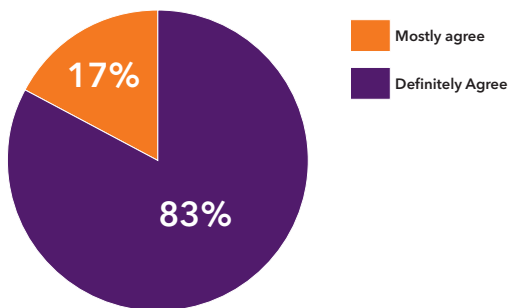
Q9. The experience has helped me to present myself with confidence



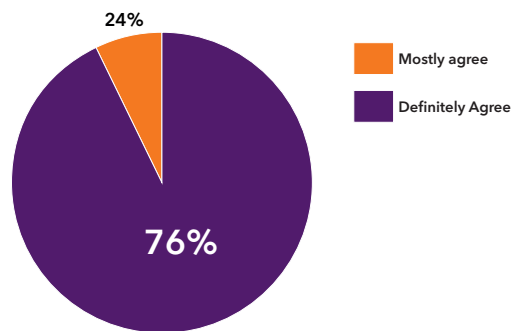
Q10. My communication skills have improved



I am satisfied with my project/placement experience



I would recommend taking part in SPLC to other students



Note: options included 'mostly disagree' and 'definitely disagree' but are not shown as they were not selected by responders

Q: What made you decide to volunteer for Strategic Public Law Clinic?

- ▶ Interested in public law, human rights and social care system (9 students)
- ▶ To get experience, and potentially pursue a career, in public law (7 students)
- ▶ Contribute to making a difference/affecting change (5 students)
- ▶ Develop and gain legal skills (3 students)
- ▶ Learn about issues (3 students)

"I volunteered for SPLC because I plan to pursue a legal career in human rights but hadn't had the opportunity to gain real practical experience in the field. The project ... sounded really interesting, challenging and unlike anything I'd ever done before so I really wanted to opportunity to be a part of it."

"I wanted to improve my legal skills and learn more about the possible impacts of the legislation on other people"

"The biggest appeal to me from a law degree is the ability to use it to affect practical change, and this was the opportunity to do so before graduating. It was very refreshing to see an academic opportunity that wasn't exclusively for people interested in Commercial Law!"

Q: What made you decide to volunteer for the Immigration and Asylum Clinic?

- ▶ After working in a refugee camp on my gap year I wanted to continue to help with immigration issues and gain more experience in this area.
- ▶ When I first saw the opportunity listed, I was very excited as I have had previous experience on advocacy projects and have frequently sought out more. I wanted to volunteer for the Immigration and Asylum Clinic in particular as it promised a very hands on, client-facing experience and the opportunity to be a part of crucial application processes.
- ▶ The nature of the work and the purposes of the project itself
- ▶ I'm interested in social justice and how the law can be used to achieve that.

Q: We try to plan each project to fit within a term but sometimes developments mean it can take longer. Thinking about the duration of your project, please tell us how it worked for you.

- ▶ The duration worked well (10 students)
- ▶ There was flexibility at busy times (6 students)
- ▶ Extending the project by a term enabled a better conclusion to the project (5 students)
- ▶ Prefer a project in term 1-2 as exams impacted on ability to contribute in term 3 (1 student)
- ▶ Would have liked a bit longer (1 student)
- ▶ Were able to make progress in the time (1 student)

"The project did not feel overbearing but struck the balance between being something I could be involved and be part of each week whilst not affected my studies in any way. Tara, Karen and Jan were very understanding if, for any reason, we were unable to attend a meeting."

"It worked really well, as there was a clear plan in place as to how we were going to finish the project within the term...Having the structure of the term was helpful, as it meant that we stayed on track and knew exactly how long we had each week to complete the tasks we were given"

Q: How has your involvement helped you develop skills which will assist in future studies and career?

Skill developed	Number of responses
Teamwork skills	7
Communication skills	5
Insight into working in public law	4
Legal knowledge in a new area	4
Research skills	4
Critical analysis skills	3
How to read and analyse legislation	3
Drafting skills/writing clearly and concisely	2
Experience of working environment	2
Strategic planning skills	2
Understanding the practical implications of the Law in unprecedented circumstances (e.g. Covid)	2
Client interviewing	1
Confidence to share ideas	1
Creative thinking skills	1
Data analysis skills	1
Experience of working on active cases	1
Importance of attention to detail	1
Organisation skills	1
Presentation skills	1
Relationship building with professionals and clients	1
Statutory interpretation skills	1
Summarising rights	1
Understanding of preparation needed for case work	1
Working remotely	1

Q: How has your participation enhanced your knowledge and understanding of public law and social justice?

- ▶ Developed knowledge of public law and social justice (7 students)
- ▶ Applying theory of public law to real cases, and the impact on people (5 students)
- ▶ Highlighted issues in the system and the importance of judicial and administrative controls (5 students)
- ▶ Project specific knowledge (5 students)
- ▶ Understanding of how social justice is affected by change (2 students)
- ▶ Power and importance of exercising rights (2 students)
- ▶ Consolidated Public Law knowledge (1 student)
- ▶ Understanding of the many areas of public law and social justice (1 student)
- ▶ Awareness of Warwick's engagement in social justice (1 student)
- ▶ Knowledge and understanding of how the Law Centre runs (1 student)
- ▶ Realised you don't need to be an expert to be able to help people (1 student)
- ▶ The influence of government on public law and social justice (1 student)

"I think public law seems quite abstract when we consider it at university because there are a lot of concepts but developing it through real-life case studies was very useful to get a full grasp of it. As someone always interested in social justice, this project enhanced my knowledge and understanding of the work of the law centre."

"As a lot of the work was contextualised by case studies and direct contact with clients, we were able to understand the impact of public law policies on the individual. It really put into perspective how essential advocacy can be and definitely enhanced our knowledge of social justice."

Q: What did you learn from the experience?

- ▶ Group work (6 students)
- ▶ Interpreting and critically analysing statutory provisions (5 students)
- ▶ Working with others online (4 students)
- ▶ Project specific knowledge (4 students)
- ▶ Attention to detail when reading legislation (3 students)
- ▶ Dealing with clients/reading cases can be sensitive and emotional experience (3 students)
- ▶ Time management (2 students)
- ▶ How to condense cases into smaller summaries (2 students)
- ▶ How rewarding public law can be (2 students)
- ▶ Creative thinking (1 student)
- ▶ How complex legislation can be (1 student)
- ▶ Challenges of the lack of information in the public domain (1 student)
- ▶ Data analysis (1 student)
- ▶ Process of Judicial review (1 student)
- ▶ Problem solving (1 student)
- ▶ Public speaking (1 student)

"I learned to manage my time better. I also learned to pay immense attention to detail when analysing documents and feedback (for example, from the FOIA response) as especially when dealing with such institutions it is important to read between the lines of the responses given. If I was given the opportunity again, I would spend more time on the project as there were many areas of interest that I had to push aside due to studying commitments."

"I learned how to work as a team remotely, which is something I hadn't had to do before the pandemic. This definitely helped me in another project I was part of in Term 2. I also learned how to come up with innovative solutions to long-term structural problems, and it was very rewarding to know that the organisation we worked with will be using the resources we produced in their work. The most challenging aspect was probably learning how to deal with reading very upsetting stories from the lives of real people. I wanted to make sure I could empathise with them as much as possible while still remaining objective about the system they were dealing with."

Q: Looking back on your project experience, are there any particular aspects that you'd like to highlight?

- ▶ I really appreciate the team working spirit of the whole group. All my groupmates are very passionate about the project and motivated, everyone is cooperative and helpful, our group meetings are always full of laughter. Supervisors are also very nice and professional to give amazing feedback advice. The working environment is very enjoyable.
- ▶ Working on the final template in the last stages of the project was probably the most exciting for me as I was able to see everyone's hard work come into fruition and it also allowed me to be more creative when playing around with the design of the template itself.
- ▶ I would like to highlight how helpful Tara, Jan, and Karen have been, they were always keen to help out and have gone above and beyond to assist my journey in Warwick and enlighten me about opportunities available in social justice.
- ▶ The analysis part was very interesting and developing. I wish we could analyse more legislation.
- ▶ I was interested in the public law legislation that was relevant and how we found a pragmatic way of understanding its impact in the context of the covid 19 pandemic.
- ▶ Tara and Karen were great and very understanding and good at explaining, thank you so much!
- ▶ The kind, understanding and insightful work environment that was fostered by Tara and Karen made the whole experience better, as well as getting to work on tricky sub-projects with peers at the clinic.
- ▶ Receiving a response to FOIA questions that we wrote collectively was a very interesting experience. Not only because it was very satisfactory to receive a response to something that we took part in but also because I was unsure of what to expect and the response was very interesting to dissect.
- ▶ Although remote learning has obvious drawbacks, being able to work on this project remotely, with people who otherwise would not have been able to participate (due to being abroad, not having the means or time to travel to Coventry each week, etc.) has definitely been a positive consequence.
- ▶ I thoroughly enjoyed analysing the email responses, the NAWRA responses and (for those that there were), the DWP responses.

- ▶ I really enjoyed taking part in the interviews with people who had experienced judicial review and then helping to create the case stories partly based on this interview. I think giving the students set questions was really helpful and a good way to introduce us to interviewing people. Overall, I really enjoyed seeing how a topic I had learned about academically impacted people every day in the community, this was definitely one of the highlights of my experience.
- ▶ Working with Karen and Tara and learning from them was amazing, as they were both so helpful when explaining what they wanted us to achieve and really understanding about the situation we were all in due to Covid-19. I particularly enjoyed having meetings with them and coming up with solutions collectively.
- ▶ Tara and Karen really made the entire process very interactive and were accessible and I think that was what really made the experience so smooth. They made everyone feel comfortable and heard and that fostered a good working atmosphere.
- ▶ I really hope that in future I will be able to volunteer in person at CELC.
- ▶ I'd like to highlight the instances where we were successful in our applications for ECF and this was fed back to us. It always put a smile on our faces and it was an amazing feeling to know that what we were doing made a difference.
- ▶ Getting to work on active tribunal cases and watching them be advocated as well as actually meeting the clients we're doing the work for.

