

Collaborative legal aid clinic on immigration law at HMP Huntercombe

Programme summary

We are looking for six students to participate in a legal aid clinic at HMP Huntercombe for the academic year 2020/ 2021. Students will be required to spend one day per month working at the clinic. Participating students will be supervised by an experienced solicitor and will receive hands-on training in immigration law and human rights and will also provide valuable legal assistance to prisoners at HMP Huntercombe.

The morning clinic will be held on Thursdays every fortnight at HMP Huntercombe under the supervision of solicitor Tom Giles of Turpin & Miller. At each clinic, two students will assist in interviewing potential clients at HMP Huntercombe. Each student will also spend a half-day a month to assist Turpin & Miller with case follow-up.

An introductory seminar will be held to give an overview of basic principles of immigration and asylum law, and provide training on interview techniques and the ethics of legal advice work in a prison. The Bonavero Institute will also provide regular opportunities for the student group to meet to share their experiences and speak about challenges.

Participants will be provided with a certificate to confirm their participation in the programme.

Context of the project

As a foreign-national only establishment, most if not all prisoners at HMP Huntercombe are likely to be deported from the UK. There is very little opportunity for prisoners to obtain immigration and asylum advice. The Bonavero Institute, Professor Mary Bosworth, Director of the Centre for Criminology, and Oxford law firm Turpin & Miller have therefore established a collaborative legal aid clinic to provide such advice and give opportunities to students who wish to develop careers in human rights and immigration law.

Each clinic provides legal advice to 10 prisoners in relation to immigration and asylum issues. Graduate students assist in taking initial instructions from potential clients and gathering information before the prisoners see the solicitor. Prisoners then have a brief interview with the solicitor who advises them of their options and further steps. We anticipate that several of the cases will result in litigation in the High Court, which will give students an opportunity to observe and assist in litigation.

Profile of participants

- **Research skills:** Graduate law and criminology students or graduate students of other disciplines with a law degree; interest in immigration law and human rights.
- **Availability:** Participants are expected to commit approx. 8 hours per month during the academic year 2020/2021. This includes a) initial training as well as termly review sessions; b) assisting in the legal aid clinics at HMP Huntercombe (half a day, once per month on a Thursday morning); c) assisting Turpin & Miller with case follow-up (half a day, once per month); d) a blog post or academic paper on an issue which arises from the clinic.

Students will also be required to attend the two introductory sessions which will be led by Professor Mary Bosworth and Tom Giles of Turpin & Miller. Both sessions will be held online, the first session on Monday, 12 October 2020, 4 to 5.30pm, the second session on Monday, 19 October, 4 to 5.30pm.

Please note that due to the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the clinics as such, the programme will take place remotely.

Application

Please send a letter setting out why you would like to participate in this programme, together with a CV to BonaveroIHR@law.ox.ac.uk.

Applications close on Wednesday, 7 October 2020, at noon. You will be notified by Friday, 9 October, as to whether you have been accepted.

