

NORTHUMBRIA LAW SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Northumbria
University
NEWCASTLE

Law School

Appointments and Accolades



Elisabeth Griffiths

Elisabeth Griffiths has been co-opted Vice-Chair of the Socio-Legal Studies Association at an Extra Ordinary Board Meeting. In addition, she will take over as Chair of the Book Prize Committee (the prizes are the Hart-SLSA Book Prize, the Hart-SLSA Book prize for early career academics and the Socio-Legal Theory and History prize and she will also become Chair of the Fundraising group.

Elisabeth has also recently been appointed as a National Teaching Fellow, reflecting a sustained record of pedagogic innovation that has impact well beyond Northumbria. Only 50 are appointed nationally each year and this is a massive achievement for Lis and achieving this during a sustained period of demanding leadership roles is particularly impressive.



Paul McKeown

Paul McKeown was awarded Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. This award recognises Paul's commitment and contribution to student learning, as well as the positive influence he has with colleagues as a strategic leader in teaching.



Jennifer Aston

Jennifer Aston won 2nd place for the SLS's Margaret Brazier Prize for Outstanding Mid-Career Scholarship. Jen was shortlisted for her book 'Deserted wives and economic divorce in 19th Century England and Wales' (Hart Publishing, 2024) in a very strong field, and in September was announced as a winner. This is a very prestigious prize and a testament to the brilliant legal history work Jen is doing.



Nicola Wake

Nicola Wake has been made President of the SLS 2027/2028. The nomination was unopposed and confirmed at the SLS AGM in September 2025. The Society of Legal Scholars (SLS) is the learned society for those who teach law in a university or similar institution or who are otherwise engaged in legal scholarship. Professor Wake has contributed to the operation and governance of the SLS for over a decade in various capacities. The SLS annual conference will be held at Northumbria University in 2028.

RESEARCH NEWS AND UPDATES



Working with Dementia Network

Lyndsey Bengtsson is the co-lead for the Working with Dementia Network (funded by the ESRC), which launched in February. They launched with an online conference that had a great turnout, including key stakeholders and those with lived experience. Their vision is to create a collaborative research network that supports and develops innovative ways to improve the working lives of people affected by dementia. Lyndsey is working alongside Professor Valerie Egdell from the Business School and Professor Arlene Astell from the Psychology Department, in collaboration with academics from the University of West Scotland, Wilfred Laurier University, Warwick University, Lancaster University, and Edinburgh Napier University on this network.

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PROBable Futures “Responsible AI Checklist for Policing”

The PROBable Futures “Responsible AI Checklist for Policing” was published by the College of Policing, alongside other College technology guidance. The checklist is a practical guide for those writing and evaluating responsible AI assessments and can be incorporated into training for those responsible for decisions around the deployment of AI

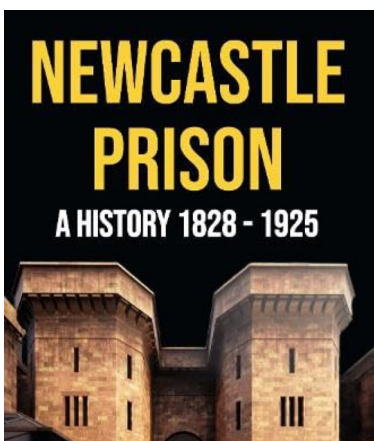
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UK Public Attitudes to National Security Data Processing

A Centre for Emerging Technology and Security report titled “UK Public Attitudes to National Security Data Processing: Assessing Human and Machine Intrusion” co-authored by Marion Oswald, was published in May. It was launched at the CETaS annual showcase on at a panel chaired by Sir Brian Leveson (the Investigatory Powers Commissioner). The findings are based on both a national survey and an in-person citizen’s panel, and draw conclusions about the public’s support for different types of national security data processing, knowledge and support for national security oversight processes, and the public’s views on human vs machine data processing.

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Newcastle Prison: A History 1828

Helen Rutherford, along with her co-authors, celebrated the launch of their book ‘Newcastle Prison: A History 1828’, marking the 100th anniversary of the demolition of the Prison. The book features stories, alongside specially commissioned 3D modelled images of the prison, offering a unique and revealing insight into the prison’s architectural and social development.

[Read more](#)

RESEARCH NEWS AND UPDATES

13 yards off the big gate and 37 yards up the West Walls



Helen Rutherford's research was quoted in 'Forensic Science in England and Wales: Pulling Out of the Graveyard Spiral'. The research carried out by Helen and Clare Sandford-Couch (Leeds Law School) "13 yards off the big gate and 37 yards up the West Walls". Crime scene investigation in mid-nineteenth century Newcastle-upon-Tyne.' was quoted in The Report of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Miscarriages of Justice- Westminster Commission on Forensic Science: Forensic Science in England and Wales: Pulling Out of the Graveyard Spiral'.

This research showed that Newcastle-upon-Tyne police in the early to mid-nineteenth century indicates a methodical, arguably scientific, approach to crime scene analysis.

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Law and Society Association Annual Conference



Ten members of the Law and Society Research Group presented at the Law and Society Association Annual Conference in Chicago. Adam Ramshaw, Lyndsey Bengtsson, Callum Thomson, Laura Graham, Ana Speed, Chris Simmonds, Laura Coapes, David Sixsmith, Chris Ashford and Jen Aston, took part, presenting across a wide range of streams, this provided a great showcase for the socio-legal research at Northumbria, and an opportunity for network and collaboration building.

The new space race

Fabio Tronchetti recently contributed to an article published on the Daily Mail online about the US plans to establish keep-out zones on the Moon. The article was released after it was revealed that Sean Duffy, the new head of NASA, is preparing to install an American nuclear reactor on the moon before 2030.

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'Not with a Bang but with a WISPER'

Dr. Lauren Napier and Dr. Kirsty Lindsay represented Northumbria University on the UK Delegation to the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS) this summer. They held a side event entitled: 'Not with a Bang but with a WISPER: Investigating the Experience and Roles of Women in the Space Sector' under Agenda Item 15: the Space2030 Agenda. This event showcased how their multi-disciplinary research on women in space is utilising the new Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit from the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA). Through their efforts they were able to bring their research to diplomats involved in space diplomacy and international space law.

EDUCATION NEWS AND UPDATES



Student Law Office report

Northumbria university recently released the SLO annual report or 2024/2025. which highlights the fantastic work and achievements of the clinic over the past year.

In the last academic year, the SLO welcomed 196 students, accepted 267 cases and donated over £308,000 worth of legal services to the local community! The statistics show the hard work and dedication from the law office staff and students, and it is expected that next year will be ever busier, with a confirmed increase in students enrolled for 2025-2026.

SLO Students Present Findings to Amnesty International

The Student Law Office Policy Clinic held a roundtable discussion, lead by Lars Waldorf, to present findings from its report for Amnesty International on “Resisting Hate: Youth and Community Resistance to the August 2024 Racist Riots in Northeast England.”. The report documents stories of students, youth, and community members in Newcastle and Middlesbrough who took part in a range of anti-racist, anti-Islamophobic, and anti-xenophobic resistance – from solidarity demonstrations to protecting at-risk youth to cleaning up after riots. The report is part of Amnesty International’s wider Civic Space Fellowship, which aims to amplify strategies to resist illiberalism and shrinking civic space around the globe.



Students pilot EduCourt sessions

In May, a group of students from the SLO piloted new information sessions, delivering information to Litigants in Person (LiPs) in the family court in Newcastle. The service offers a LiP the opportunity to attend an information session at Newcastle Civil and Family Court in advance of their court hearing. The aim is to help a LiP familiarise themselves with the court setting, understand some of the legal terminology used in court, the different roles within the court, how to conduct themselves and ensure they get the most out of the process.

Feedback from the pilot session was fantastic from attendees and the court and students really enjoyed the opportunity.



EDUCATION NEWS AND UPDATES



Space Law LLM students publish in SLSA blog

Northumbria University Space Law LLM students were given the opportunity to take over the Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA) blog, with a special series on the topic of Space Law and Policy. There are currently 9 submissions, including articles such as 'A Not-So Starry Night: The Socio-Legal Importance of a Dark Night Sky' and 'Can Maritime Law inform Space Law in addressing international commons?'

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Northumbria students share their experiences with the Lord Lieutenant



In July, the Student Law Office welcomed the Lord-Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Lucy Winskell OBE back to meet staff and students as part of her visit to receive an Honorary Degree in recognition of her outstanding achievements in strengthening regional partnerships and championing opportunity across the North-East.

Lucy was previously Pro Vice-Chancellor for Business and Engagement at Northumbria University, playing a lead role in shaping the University's contribution to regional, economic and social development. Prior to this she was a Solicitor in private practice for 24 years. She was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear in May 2022, and she carries out a wide variety of duties, working with the community and voluntary sector, business, cultural and sporting organisations as well as supporting the Armed Services and Veterans.



During her visit to the Law School, Lucy met students who had just completed their time in the SLO, as well as staff and work experience students. The students were able to share their insightful experiences from the year including working on live-client cases, advising clients, preparing cases for court, and attending court. They also talked about their aspirations for the future and how their experiences in the SLO had been beneficial to their development.

Lucy was full of praise for the clinic, and this was a great opportunity to bring her up to speed with our latest news and developments. Our thanks to Lucy for visiting and also to our wonderful students for giving up their time; for some, in their summer, and for one, on his actual graduation day!

Further Information

Further information about the law school, including other news, events, and previous newsletters please visit northumbria.ac.uk. *For comments and queries please contact law.fa@northumbria.ac.uk.*

If you are interested in visiting the Student Law Office or if you can share your expertise and experience with our students, please contact us at law.fa@northumbria.ac.uk.