**Comenius University / International Journal of Clinical Legal Education Conference**

**ENCLE - IJCLE 2019 Improving the Future: Using Clinical Legal Education to Educate Lawyers for a Just Society**

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| Title  | Mr |
| Lead Presenter First Name | Alan |
| Lead Presenter Last Name | Russell |
| Organisation of Lead Presenter | London South Bank University |
| Name/s and details of other presenters |  |
| Title of Proposal  | ‘Bridging the Justice Gap with lawtech? First results from an interdisciplinary clinical project at London South Bank University' |
| Summary of Proposal | In 2011 London South Bank University (LSBU) opened its innovative drop-in Legal Advice Clinic where students give immediate, face to face supervised social welfare law advice. Since then we have assisted nearly 3000 local people and trained nearly 300 student legal advisors. This paper will present for discussion the first results of an innovative project where law and computing students have worked collaboratively and across discipline with our Clinic to build real world practical technological applications aimed at widening access to justice and engendering social activism within the student body. |
| Abstract Proposal | In 2011 London South Bank University (LSBU) opened its innovative drop-in Legal Advice Clinic where students give immediate, face to face supervised social welfare law advice. Since 2011 we have assisted nearly 3000 local people, trained nearly 300 student legal advisors and collaborated with a large number of solicitors and advice agencies in our local legal advice network. Austerity cuts to civil legal aid provision in the UK have been carefully targeted; it is now virtually impossible for citizens to obtain early social welfare law advice from a lawyer paid for out of central public funds. This despite a wealth of research evidence demonstrating that early intervention in social welfare law problems can avoid social and economic costs down the line, whilst unresolved social welfare problems impact adversely on citizens health and well-being. Early social welfare law advice is precisely what we offer clients of our Clinic. The demand for our service is enormous and we cannot assist everyone who seeks our help.In collaboration with LSBU law and computer science students and academics, our Clinic is exploring how technology might be harnessed to bridge this justice gap. This academic year we have launched a final year undergraduate module in Law and Technology where law and computing students work collaboratively and across discipline to design and build technological applications intended to widen access to justice (and engender social activism amongst students). Teams of students work with real clients to generate the requisite technology. Clients include the anti-racism Monitoring Group and local solicitors, as well as our Clinic. The author is working with two teams of students. One team is building an app designed to assist social housing tenants facing possession proceedings for rent arrears. The other is building an app designed to provide information on basic employment rights.This paper will briefly contextualise the set up and development of our Clinic and then present for discussion the first results of the lawtech collaboration described above.The paper will be presented by the author, Alan Russell. Alan is a Senior Lecturer at LSBU and a Senior Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy. He was the founding director of the LSBU Legal Advice Clinic. Alan still regularly supervises in the LSBU Clinic. He was previously the Director of the Centre for Access to Justice at University College, London. He is also a practising housing and homelessness solicitor. |