



Paul Mckeown, Director of the Student Law Office at Northumbria, Law student volunteer Kelly Anderson, Shona Alexander, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Newcastle and volunteer law student Imogen Joy.

Mar 21, 2019 12:15 GMT

Volunteering partnership helps increase access to free legal advice

The Student Law Office at Northumbria University has launched a new project in partnership with Citizens Advice Newcastle which will see law students working with the charity to increase access to legal advice in the city.

The Student Law Office - Law in the Community project, involves more than 30 students volunteering one day a week at Citizens Advice Newcastle.

They will provide free legal advice to clients over the telephone and in face-to-face appointments on a diverse range of legal areas, including family law, debt, housing, welfare, employment law, consumer law and immigration.

Shona Alexander, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Newcastle, said: “Local strategic partnerships are essential to the work of Citizens Advice Newcastle and our services rely heavily on our specially trained and dedicated volunteers.

“The vast cuts to legal aid have left a huge gap in support for people going through the legal process in Newcastle and through launching this new partnership with Northumbria Law School, we can support more people who otherwise can’t access the legal and civil rights advice and support they need.”

Paul Mckeown, Director of the Student Law Office at Northumbria University, explains: “The aim of the project is to help increase the capacity of Citizens Advice in offering free legal assistance to members of the community whilst enabling our students to get hands-on experience in diverse areas of legal practice as they prepare for the world of work.

“Working in the community also enables our students to understand the wider context in which legal advice is provided, for example, there have been substantial cuts to legal aid in recent years which have resulted in more people relying on charities such as Citizens Advice.

“Through the partnership our law students are able to support people in their community, develop their own skills and expertise and we hope there will be longer term benefits, such as our students continuing to volunteer at Citizens Advice when their time on the project is complete.”

The Student Law Office - Law in the Community project has also received financial support from the Woon Brothers Foundation to go towards training and supervising the students.

Since 2005, Northumbria University’s Student Law Office has managed more than 7,000 enquiries, represented more than 3,000 clients and secured awards worth over £1.5 million on their behalf.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call 0191 227 4604.

Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk