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Eminent legal figure to lecture at Northumbria

The Rt Hon Lord Mackay of Clashfern, one of the UK's most respected and influential legal figures in recent times, is to give a public lecture at Northumbria University, Newcastle.

In his Lord Chancellor Eldon Lecture the former Lord Chancellor of Great Britain and Lord Advocate of Scotland will deliver a lecture entitled: "Criminal Trial on Indictment in England and Scotland: A comparative view from Hadrian's Wall". The lecture will compare and contrast some outstanding features of cases brought on indictment in the two jurisdictions. Lord Mackay

will concentrate on present law and practice and will take a topical approach.

Having practised as an Advocate from 1955, he became a QC in 1965 and was Dean of the Faculty of Advocates before being appointed Lord Advocate in 1979. Judicial office in Scotland in 1984 was followed within a year by his appointment as a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary of the House of Lords, then the UK's highest court of appeal. An already distinguished career was to become unique when, in 1987, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher invited Lord Mackay to become Lord Chancellor of Great Britain and he was to become the longest continuously serving Lord Chancellor in the 20th century. Many other honours have followed, including his appointment as a Knight of the Thistle in 1999 – equivalent to the Order of the Garter in England.

In 2007 Lord Mackay was appointed Lord Clerk Register and ex officio Keeper of the Signet, the Signet being the seal of the sovereign in Scotland. The Keeper is the ceremonial head of the Society of Writers to HM Signet, the oldest solicitor body in Scotland, dating back to the 15th century.

Lucy Winskell OBE, Pro Vice-Chancellor of Northumbria Law School, said: “It is an honour and a privilege to welcome Lord Mackay to the Law School, and there is genuine excitement at the prospect of his public lecture. His record in Office at the highest level, and his influence and reputation within the legal profession here in the UK and beyond are unsurpassed. After distinguishing himself at the Scottish bar his remarkable career has included holding the top government law office position as Lord Advocate and high judicial office as Lord Ordinary in Scotland. He has also held the top cabinet law office role of Lord Chancellor for England.

“It is perhaps fitting for this Eldon Lecture that Lord Mackay was the longest continuously serving Lord Chancellor of Great Britain in the 20th century – just as was Lord Chancellor Eldon in the nineteenth century.”

Lord Mackay's lecture is being held at Northumbria Law School on 27 October from 18:00pm. For more information and to book a place please visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/events

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