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Government's senior law officer visits Northumbria

Attorney General Dominic Grieve QC MP has met law students from Northumbria as part of a visit to the University's award-winning Student Law Office and the regional offices of legal charity LawWorks.

Launched in 2011, the LawWorks North East Pro Bono Hub operates from, and in partnership with, Northumbria Law School to broker free legal help for individuals and community groups who are unable to pay or access financial assistance such as legal aid.

Pro bono work through the Hub is undertaken by a regional network of law firms and charities, and by final year students in Northumbria Law School's Student Law Office.

During his visit, Mr Grieve was able to meet with some of these students and observe real case work in action.

His trip comes just weeks after Northumbria Law School won the 'Best Law School' category in the annual LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards 2014. The highly prized award recognises dedication to clinical legal education, exceptional degree programmes and pro bono legal assistance - and has now been won by Northumbria on three separate occasions.

It also follows the university's recent success in being awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for the outstanding work of its Student Law Office - the highest form of national recognition open to a UK academic or vocational institution.

Mr Grieve said: "LawWorks and the legal profession across the North East must be congratulated on the excellent pro bono work they carry out on behalf of local communities. I was also delighted to visit the Student Law Office here at Northumbria and was extremely impressed by the dedication, enthusiasm and quality of work. The students should be proud of their achievements and I hope that they continue to carry out pro bono as they move forward in their future legal careers."

As part of their law studies around 200 students a year undertake supervised work on real legal cases through Northumbria Law School's Student Law Office. Through casework and partnerships with charities such as LawWorks, it has represented more than 1,000 clients and secured over £1million in compensation on their behalf since 2008.

Kevin Kerrigan, Executive Dean at Northumbria Law School, said: "The Attorney General's visit here today is further recognition of the value of our clinic-based Student Law Office. As part of their degrees, the students provide vital legal services to the community while developing a deep understanding of law, justice and professionalism. The experience can give them a clear career advantage over others, and the legal assistance they provide transforms the lives of those they help."

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

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