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Negotiating success

Northumbria Law students have showcased their negotiation skills to take third place in a prestigious international competition.

Rachel Godschalk and Francesca Lilley competed against 20 teams – from 19 countries – in the International Negotiation Competition finals after winning the England and Wales Negotiation Competition earlier this year.

The International Negotiation Competition (INC) is an annual law student competition in which a team of two law students representing a client negotiates either an international transaction or the resolution of an international dispute against an opposing team.

The INC finals, held at Chapman University Law School in California, saw students from 19 countries, including Australia, Russia, Japan, India, Germany and the United States, take on complex negotiation scenarios involving disputes and deals between an international airline and suppliers of wine, and a consultancy agreement.

Each round of negotiations were scored by a panel of three judges drawn from international Law academics and experienced legal practitioners.

Rachel and Francesca's negotiating performance impressed the judges and the Northumbria team came third with 3.66 points, with the winning team from Germany receiving 3.44 points and Singapore taking second-place with 3.55 points. The competition's scoring system is based on the lowest number winning, with a score of 3 representing the best team.

Rachel, 32, from Barnard Castle, is in the second year of her Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL). She said: "This was an excellent opportunity for us both to compete at a very high level and to have made long-term friendships and to possibly have future working relationships with some of the brightest law students from across the globe."

Francesca, from Hexham, has just completed her first year as a part time GDL student. She added: "It's been very exciting to get so far in the finals. We both felt lucky to be there."

"It was quite gruelling. Each team had a different style and approach to negotiating so we had to respond to that and adapt our own technique."

Northumbria School of Law is a leading provider of the GDL for non-law graduates wishing to practise law, and the Legal Practice Course (LPC) for aspiring solicitors. The University is one of only six institutions outside of London to provide the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) and offers an unrivalled range of Master programmes via a flexible distance learning mode of study designed for busy professionals or those with personal commitments.

John Bates, Senior Lecturer in Law, said: "This was a remarkable opportunity and achievement for the students. Our team took on strong opposition from Germany, New Zealand and Japan, each with very different negotiation styles

and tactics – ranging from the technical to the ‘bullish’ – and performed very well as ambassadors for the School and University.

“We also learned a lot about different legal systems and professions, institutions and legal education, skills teaching and alternative dispute resolution, from the other students, national representatives and faculty coaches.”

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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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