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Northumbria University wins Royal approval of the highest order

Northumbria University, Newcastle has been awarded a prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for the exceptional work of its Student Law Office.

The prize is the highest form of national recognition open to a UK academic or vocational institution, and is awarded in recognition of work judged to be of outstanding excellence and with positive impact.

It has been bestowed on Northumbria University for having: "A university law

clinic making a distinctive contribution to the needs of the local community and to legal education.”

Northumbria’s [Student Law Office](#) is already an award-winning and world-leading university ‘law clinic’ in which students work with academic staff who are qualified solicitors to offer free legal services to members of the public, businesses and community groups.

As well as developing students’ professional legal skills, its work with leading charities and law firms aims to improve access to justice for the vulnerable and disadvantaged within society.

Up to 200 Student Law Office students and staff contribute many thousands of hours of pro bono advice each year. Since 2005 they have represented more than 1,200 clients, securing over £1 million on their behalf in judgements and, more importantly, ensuring that clients understand their legal rights and are able to secure access to justice.

Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: “This is a huge honour for the whole University and carries a level of prestige we can all be immensely proud of. The rigour of the selection process really does set the winners apart and is a clear reflection of the excellence delivered throughout the UK’s academic institutions. Specifically, it is also recognition for the outstanding clinic-based community legal work undertaken by the Student Law Office.”

Carol Boothby, Director of the Student Law Office, said: “This recognition confirms the internationally- renowned status of our innovative model of legal education, and is testament to the quality and dedication of our students, staff and the partners we work with. Our Student Law Office has also been successful in involving the higher education community in the UK and globally in the latest thinking about clinical legal education and what law clinics can achieve. Achieving the Queen’s Anniversary Prize can only enhance this.”

All students undertaking the Law School’s exclusive Masters-level Exempting Law Degree - which provides them with the opportunity to go straight into a law firm as a trainee solicitor - work in the Student Law Office throughout their final year. They provide full legal advice and representation to clients completely free of charge. Students from several other law programmes also

take part in the work of the Student Law Office.

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes are a biennial award scheme within the UK's national honours system. Assessment of the decision process is overseen by the Awards Council of the [Royal Anniversary Trust](#) which submits its final recommendations to the Prime Minister for advice to The Queen.

The prize will be formally presented to students and staff and representatives of the University by The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh at Buckingham Palace on 27 February 2014.

Click here for more information on [Northumbria University's Law School](#).

To view our Queen's Anniversary Prize video [click here](#).

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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

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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