



**1. About the Centre**

## 2. The Pro Bono Programme at UCL Laws

### Aims and Objectives

Oversight and management of the pro bono programme at UCL Laws is one of the key activities of the UCL Centre for Access to Justice. To this end, the CAJ has a number of aims:

- To provide Faculty level oversight and support of pro bono activities;
- To run pro bono projects and clinics for the benefit of UCL students and the wider community;
- To bring together legal volunteering at UCL Laws under one umbrella, thus making it easier for UCL law students to find out about new opportunities;
- To facilitate the development of new pro bono projects by students and/or in partnership with external organisations.

### Structure of Pro Bono

Each year, multiple pro bono projects run under the CAJ umbrella. These projects are divided into four broad streams:

1. Access to Justice
2. Widening Participation
3. Public Legal Education
4. Human Rights

Types of projects:

**Student-led projects:** for student-led projects, the CAJ's role is to provide oversight over the project and support students (for example, by assisting with recruitment, booking rooms, providing guidance, reviewing project materials or contacting potential partners, depending on project needs). Students are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the project.

**Partnership projects:** for partnership projects, the partner organisation carries out the main administration and delivery of the project. The CAJ's role for these types of projects is to make and maintain the relationship with partnership organisations, liaise with them on various matters (including bookings rooms where necessary) and to assist with the recruitment of volunteers.

**CAJ-led projects:** CAJ-led projects are projects that are wholly managed and run by the CAJ. While these projects may include partner organisations, the CAJ takes the lead on the administration and delivery of the project.

### 3. Developing New Pro Bono Projects

#### When should I approach the CAJ with a new pro bono project?

If you have an idea for a pro bono project and you want this project to be affiliated with UCL in any way, the project will either have to fall under the oversight of the CAJ Pro Bono Programme at UCL Laws or become a club or society at UCLU (UCL Union). The CAJ and UCLU have different rules that pro bono/volunteering projects will have to adhere to. You can establish projects that are independent of the CAJ or UCLU if it is not at all affiliated with UCL.

Affiliation with UCL includes:

- Using 'UCL' in the name of the project;
- Portraying the project internally and/or externally as a UCL-based project;
- Acting in your capacity as a student at UCL when managing the project and approaching external organisations.

If you are uncertain whether your project is affiliated with UCL, it is always best to check with a member of staff at the CAJ.

*\*Please note, running a project affiliated with UCL or UCL Laws without the supervision or authorisation of the CAJ and/or VSU will lead to a referral to the Director of Undergraduate or Graduate Taught Programmes and may result in disciplinary action if appropriate.*

#### What benefits do I gain from running a project under the CAJ?

As a CAJ student-led project, you will retain the leadership and management of your project. A large proportion of the CAJ's pro bono projects were established by students and remain student-led.

For student-led pro bono projects, the CAJ acts as a facilitator to ensure projects are as successful as possible, providing support and guidance where needed.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the CAJ in this context is also to provide a level of oversight to ensure that projects carrying the UCL name reflect the values of UCL as an institution and maintain high standards of quality.

There are also a number of benefits of running your pro bono project with the CAJ:

- Exposure, both within and outside UCL;
- Assistance with advertising and recruitment for projects;

### How do I approach the CAJ with my idea for a new project?

Students with ideas for new pro bono projects can submit their ideas to the CAJ by:

Filling out a **pro bono project proposal form** (annexed to this handbook), available on the CAJ website, and emailing it to [accesstojustice@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:accesstojustice@ucl.ac.uk)

When submitting the form, please ensure the subject line of the email is "New Project Proposal"

A CAJ staff member will review the form, respond with questions and, where appropriate, organise a meeting to discuss the project idea further.

When assessing pro bono project proposals, the CAJ will consider the following **selection criteria**:

Does the project address a need either in the local community or within the student experience?

To what extent will this project have a positive impact both on the public and UCL students?

How does the project fit in with the rest of the work undertaken at the CAJ?

Is the project viable (in terms of budget/funding and supervision etc.)?

- How much supervision does the project require? Is this level of supervision practical/possible/available?
- How much funding does the project require? What are the prospects that the project will be able to acquire the necessary funding?

Students can also arrange for an informal chat with the Student Pro Bono Committee or with staff at the CAJ if they wish to discuss ideas in advance of submitting a proposal.

### When will my proposal be reviewed?

Proposals will be reviewed at periodic CAJ Student Pro Bono Committee meetings.



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## 6. Volunteering for CAJ Pro Bono Projects

When volunteering for CAJ projects, you are agreeing to abide by the following:

You will act with professionalism;

You will respect confidentiality where required;

You will always act with respect towards others;

If you make a commitment, you will meet that commitment;

You will attend all sessions / activities you have committed to;

You will always be on time for volunteering activity;

You will meet any deadlines set;

You will dress appropriately for volunteering activity (for example, if working in a student law clinic, you will dress in smart attire). If you are unsure what is appropriate dress, ask your project leader/supervisor;

You will approach volunteering with a positive, proactive attitude and enthusiasm;

If, for some reason, you are no longer able to meet your commitments, you must inform the project leader with at least 24 hours' notice and an explanation of why you are no longer able to volunteer (please note that this may vary for different projects; some projects may require more notice).

Your project leader/supervisor will send you the **CAJ Student Volunteer Agreement** where necessary. You should sign this and send it to them before commencing your volunteering placement.

Please note that we do not routinely reimburse travel expenses for student volunteers. However, if you are struggling to attend your placement due to travel costs, please come and speak to us and we may be able to assist you.



## **7. Mandatory Training for Volunteers**

Students placed on a pro bono project as volunteers will be required to undertake mandatory training modules, depending on the project, this will either be provided by the partner organisation, the CAJ, or both.

The CAJ offers the following online training modules, designed to complement the tra3( )-47(m)-3(od)14(ul)6(e

## **8. Keeping in touch with us**

In order to stay updated and keep up regular communications with us, please ensure that you regularly monitor the following:

### **Teams**

## **9. UCL CAJ Social Media Policy**

Social media clearly plays a huge role in our lives, and it's important to understand how to use it responsibly. As you will be participating in pro bono activities, you must remember that you are

## 10. SQE Guidance

In September 2021, the SRA introduced a new way of qualifying as a solicitor: the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE). You can read more about the SQE in detail here; <https://www.sra.org.uk/become-solicitor/sqe/>.

Part of the qualification process for the SQE includes the completion of 2 years [Qualifying Work Experience](#) (QWE). QWE must be:

- i. Full-time equivalent for two years
- ii. 'Qualifying': grounded in legal work and which allows you to develop the SRA prescribed competencies for solicitors
- iii. Completed in a maximum of 4 institutions
- iv. Signed off by a qualified solicitor in the institution where you completed the work, or a qualified solicitor outside the organisation with direct experience of your work

More information about QWE is available on the SRA website and in the [SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations](#).

**Please read our complete guide for students on the SQE included in Appendix 4 at the end of this booklet.**

**11. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Where do I find out which pro bono opportunities are currently available?**

For information on current opportunities at the CAJ, please see our website:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/laws/accesstojustice/pro-bono-opportunities/current-opportunities>.

You can also stay up to date by following our social media pages:

UCL            Laws            Pro            Bono            2021/22            Facebook            Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/uclprobono21.22>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/uclcaj>

SPBC Instagram: @uclprobono

Information about new pro bono opportunities will also be released in the fortnightly UCL Laws newsletter, sent out to all students' UCL email addresses.

**Who do I contact if...?**

***I can't make my placement for one day***

*Please notify your supervisor at the partner organisation as soon as possible, ideally a week in advance of the day you are expected to attend placement.*

***I am struggling to manage all my commruggl\$ruggstruggert(ruggstruggert) manage all my commruggl\$ru***

If you are interested in running an event or fundraising for a legal charity, please complete the [CAJ Event Proposal Form](#) and send this to the CAJ Team, at [accesstojustice@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:accesstojustice@ucl.ac.uk)

***I am struggling to manage the emotional impact of the issues I am experiencing with casework***

We understand that taking on real life casework and dealing with certain situations can have an impact on your wellbeing, if you are struggling to cope and/or would like to speak to someone about how this may have impacted you, please do directly get in touch with Anjumon, the CAJ Projects Coordinator at [Anjumon.ali@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:Anjumon.ali@ucl.ac.uk).

You can also visit us in Room 413, Bentham House between Tuesday Thursdays, 10.00 16.00 on a weekly basis if you would like to chat in-person. Please do feel free to come and talk to us whenever you may be facing an issue (no matter how big or small) !

## Appendix A

### 1. New Pro Bono Project Proposal Form

You	
*Name(s)	
*Course	
*Year	
*UCL Email	

The Project	
*Project title:	
*Project partner(s) (if any)	
Project partner(s) contact name:	
*Description of project <i>(short description of project including background information, structure, activities)</i>	





## **APPENDIX C**

### **3. UCL CAJ Social Media Policy**

1. Social media clearly plays a huge role in our lives, and it's important to understand how to use it responsibly. As you will be participating in pro bono activities, you must remember that you are representing UCL, and have a responsibility to conduct yourself appropriately and respect the sensitivity of cases and events you may experience.
2. Please familiarise yourself with UCL's social media guide <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/social-media-ucl>

8. The clear exceptions to this policy are:
  - a. Events and fundraising activities where partner or parent organisations are specifically asking you as students to use your social media channels to raise awareness of an issue or cause.
  - b. Blog posts written for the CAJ Blog, which will have been signed off by CAJ staff
  
9. If you are in doubt about whether something should be shared on social media, the answer is most likely that it should not be. But please check with the CAJ staff if you are unsure.
  
10. Please be mindful that prospective employers may also check your social media. You should therefore consider the professional image that you present on your social media. The legal profession is by nature quite conservative and traditional .
  
11. That being said, we understand that throughout the course of your pro bono activities, you may experience events or interactions that could cause distress or frustration, or indeed great joy and satisfaction. We would ask that rather than sharing your thoughts online, you instead please contact the CAJ team at [laws.uclcaj@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:laws.uclcaj@ucl.ac.uk). We are always happy to listen, support and offer guidance. If you are volunteering with a partner organisation, you can also talk to your supervisor there.
  
12. Please note that failure to comply with this policy may result in your pro bono activity placement being terminated and being prevented from participating in further pro bono activities at UCL.
  
13. We are genuinely interested in ensuring your pro bono experience is a positive one. If



