

LSESU

ADVICE

Impartial.
Supportive.
Confidential.

SERVICE



FREE LEGAL SERVICES

A few things to note:

- In some cases only part of the services provided are free
- This list is not exhaustive. By listing these options the Students' Union is in no way endorsing or recommending any practice in particular. This is merely a list of some of the many places that are available for those seeking legal support
- The information on this document is correct as of February 2021



**LSE
STUDENTS'
UNION**

Location coverage:
The following services are accessible
across all of London*



* Most services are also accessible across the whole of England and Wales.



WE ARE ADVOCATE

🏠 weareadvocate.org.uk/
✉ enquiries@weareadvocate.org.uk
☎ 0207 092 3960 (Monday, Wednesday or Friday, 10:15am-12:45pm)

Type of support: Legal. A barrister can provide advice, draft certain documents or represent you in any court/tribunal. Barristers cannot prepare case papers, lodge documents at any court/tribunal, provide administrative support or write letters on your behalf. You remain responsible for your case at all times.

Areas covered: They can assist with any area of law.

Process:

- Their services are only accessible if you have been referred on by either a Citizens Advice Bureau, law centre, advice agency, practising solicitor/barrister or a local MP.
- An application form (which can be found on their website) must be completed and received at least three weeks before a hearing date or deadline.
- They do not assist individuals who are entitled to legal aid or can access legal help through a union, insurance policy, no win no fee arrangement or can reasonably be expected to pay privately. These options should be explored first before applying.
- Once an application form has been received they will respond within seven days to explain the next stage. Once ready, an application is sent to be reviewed by a senior barrister. If accepted, they try to find a volunteer barrister to assist. More help can be asked for after a piece of work has been completed.

NOTE: As they are a charity that relies on volunteer barristers, they cannot assist in all cases. It sometimes happens that even after accepting a case they are unable to find a volunteer barrister.

BPP PRO BONO CENTRE

🏠 probono.bppuniversity.ac.uk
✉ probono@bpp.com

Type of support:

Legal advice. Generally, the BPPs projects are limited to the provision of advice, and do not extend to representation.

Areas covered:

Employment law, debt, benefit law, family law and housing law issues, which fall outside the scope of legal aid (probably not suitable for urgent matters).

Process:

Students can call to access the BPPs services. Telephone numbers are both location and service specific and can be found on the BPP pro bono website. Drop in clinics are provided at different levels of case support, further details on drop-ins are available on the BPP website.

CIVIL LEGAL ADVICE (CLA)

🏠 gov.uk/civil-legal-advice
☎ 0345 345 4 345 (Monday-Friday, 9am-8pm; Saturday, 9am-12.30pm) Text: 'legal aid' + YOUR NAME to 80010 for a call

Type of support:

CLA is government scheme that allows people to get free and confidential legal advice in England and Wales if eligible for legal aid.

Areas covered:

- debt, if your home is at risk
- housing,
- if you're homeless or at risk of being evicted
- domestic abuse
- separating from an abusive partner, when you're making arrangements for children or
- sorting out money and property
- a child being taken into care
- special education needs
- discrimination
- some child abduction cases

Process:

You should first go to <https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid> to access the legal aid checker which will take you through a series of questions that assesses your eligibility for legal aid to pay for help and advice. If eligible, you should then contact the CLA.

EQUALITY ADVISORY SERVICE

🏠 equalityadvisoryservice.com
✉️ equalityadvisoryservice.com/app/ask
☎️ 0808 800 0082 (Mon - Fri 9am - 7pm, Sat 10am - 2pm)

Type of support: Non-legal. They are able to provide free advice and information about the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, and how to raise a complaint if an individual's rights have been breached. EASS aim to support an individual to resolve their issue using alternative informal dispute resolution, as opposed to issuing a claim in a county court or an employment tribunal. Where a claim is the only option they may write to a service provider on behalf of a client in order to initiate a resolution.

Areas covered: Issues relating to equality and human rights.

Process: Phone, email, live chat or letter in the first instance.

FREE REPRESENTATION UNIT (FRU)

🏠 thefru.org.uk
✉️ thefru.org.uk/contact-us#query
☎️ 0207 611 9555

Type of support: Legal representation.

Areas covered: FRU offers representation in:

- Employment tribunals (and the Employment Appeal Tribunal)
- Social Security Hearings;
- Criminal injury compensation cases in the first-tier tribunal (and Upper Tribunal)

Process: Cases must be referred to the FRU by one of their referral agencies, which can be found on their website. Some are already listed in this document. They can't usually take referrals directly from a member of the public. For cases to be considered, a hearing date at a tribunal in London and the South East (or Nottingham) must have already been set.

LSBU LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE

🏠 lsbu.ac.uk/schools/law-and-social-sciences/subjects/law/legal-advice-clinic
✉️ legaladvice@lsbu.ac.uk
☎️ 0207 815 5450

Type of support: Legal advice. The LSBU Legal Advice Clinic is open to the public for free legal advice on a drop-in session basis. The clinic is staffed by LSBU law students, working under the supervision of practising solicitors.

Areas covered: NB: The clinic is only open during term time. They provide:

- Basic information on any topic;
- Generalist advice in any social welfare law matters (except immigration);
- Specialist legal advice in family, housing and employment (on a Thursday evening assessment)

Process: Call: Mon-Fri 10am - 10.30am for an appointment the same morning from 10:30am to 12pm + Wed 3pm to 3.30pm for an appointment the same afternoon from 3:30pm to 5:00pm.

Drop-in sessions can get quite busy and usually around six clients per session can be seen so it is advisable to arrive early. The clinic is only open during term time.

MARY WARD LEGAL CENTRE

🏠 marywardlegal.org.uk
☎️ 0207 831 7079

Type of support: Legal advice. They provide free, independent advice to people who live and work in London to help them access their legal rights and entitlements.

Areas covered: Predominantly debt, housing and welfare benefits. They also offer employment advice via their special pro bono clinics and additionally run free advice clinics with the support of volunteer lawyers for people with problems that fall outside of their traditional casework including small claims, tax, consumer and contract law.

Process: This varies depending on the area. Some areas require appointments, whilst others can be accessed through a drop-in service. See website for more details.

SUPPORT THROUGH COURT

🏠 <https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/>
☎ National Helpline Service 03000 810 006
(Monday to Friday 9:30am to 4:30pm)

Type of support: Practical and emotional support to people representing themselves in court. Their volunteers assist with things like accompanying people to court, giving simple guidance with court forms, and helping people find their way around court buildings. They do not give legal advice or represent clients in court.

Areas covered: Various, mostly family, cases, welfare of children, housing

Process: This varies, Call the National Helpline 0300 081 0006 to talk with volunteered ask questions about your case, or book a volunteer to go with you to your hearing. It is best to get in touch with them at least two weeks before your hearing.

RICHMOND LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE (RLAS)

🏠 rlas.org.uk
✉ rlas@rlas.org.uk
☎ 0208 891 2105

Type of support: Legal advice.

Process: RLAS runs a weekly advice session each Wednesday evening between 8pm and 9pm in central Richmond (location details can be found at the RLAS website). No appointment is needed. If you are not attending the drop in session, students should email the service.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN

🏠 rightsofwomen.org.uk
✉ info@row.org.uk

Type of support: Legal advice. They provide free and confidential legal advice to women over the phone. They do not provide legal representation, but do publish a number of free legal guides, which can be helpful.

Areas covered: Family law, criminal law, immigration and asylum law.

Process: Call them (different numbers for different areas of law - see rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/)

RCJ ADVICE (FORMERLY ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE ADVICE BUREAU)

🏠 rcjadvice.org.uk
✉ admin@rcjadvice.org.uk
☎ 0203 475 4373 (Monday to Friday, 9:30 - 13:00)

Type of support: Procedural legal advice. The RCJ is a good first port of call when it looks like court is imminent (they would advise people to try a local Citizens Advice Bureau as a good first option if the matter has not reached court stage). They can give procedural advice in appointment and can refer to the Bar Pro Bono Unit where substantive free advice/ representation from a barrister is needed.

Areas covered: Any type of civil, family or debt case, but not criminal. Civil & Housing Cases: Free legal advice if you cannot afford a solicitor and have a case in a County Court, High Court or Court of Appeal. Representation can be provided in some courts. Family Cases: Legal advice and representation in some family matters. Debt & Bankruptcy Cases: Client should call 02037458921 (between 09:30 and 16:30, daily) or email debt@rcjadvice.org.uk

Process: To be triaged for an appointment, students should telephone between 9.30am and 4.30pm.

QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, LEGAL ADVICE CENTRE

🏠 lac.qmul.ac.uk
✉ lac@qmul.ac.uk
☎ 0207 882 3931

Type of support: Legal advice.

Areas covered: Various - potential clients are advised to get in touch to see if they are able to help.

Process: NB: This service is only available during University of London term time. Go to <http://www.lac.qmul.ac.uk/> for more information on accessing the service when open.

START-ED PRO BONO LEGAL CLINIC

🏠 experience.city.ac.uk/activity/start-ed-probono-legal-clinic

✉️ start-ed@city.ac.uk

☎️ 0207 404 5787

Type of support: Business and legal advice, run by law students from The City Law School and supervised by local professionals – Start-Ed is a free walk-in centre offering assistance for small businesses and technology start-ups.

Areas covered: Business structure and incorporation; contractual agreements – key issues in contracts; intellectual property issues – copyright/trademarks/patents; preparation for an investment; recruiting students across a range of subject areas including IT, Business, Law or Journalism/Social Media through Careers Hub.

Process: No booking is required, operates on first come first service basis

TOYNBEE HALL LEGAL ADVICE CENTRE

🏠 toynbeehall.org.uk/legal-advice

✉️ advice@toynbeehall.org.uk (new clients)

☎️ flac@toynbeehall.org.uk (returning clients)

☎️ 0207 392 2953

Type of support: Legal advice. While they do not represent clients or carry out casework, they might be able to draft a letter to a third party or fill in court papers as a part of their advisory service.

Areas covered: Employment, housing, debt, consumer law, women's only advice, immigration, and Macmillan benefits advice.

Process: New clients should either attend their drop-in service (Monday - Friday, 10am - 1pm and 2 - 4pm) or email to make an initial assessment of the issue/case. Returning clients should contact the service via telephone.

THE CITY LAW SCHOOL

🏠 <https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/law/careers/free-legal-advice-clinic>

✉️ citylegaladvice@city.ac.uk

☎️ 0207 040 0353 or 0207 040 0391

Type of support: Legal advice. Sessions are led by qualified lawyers, who are supported by postgraduate law students.

Areas covered: Civil law (including personal injury); Housing, Landlord and Tenant disputes, Sale of Goods, Debt, Neighbour disputes (nuisance), Clinical Negligence. Employment; Consumer rights; The Service does not include immigration. The matter should not be too complex and no court proceeding should have been issued.

Process: Call to book an appointment. You will receive a one-off piece of preliminary written or verbal advice. Session dates are available on The City Law School Website.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LAW

🏠 www.law.ac.uk/about/legal-advice-for-the-public

✉️ ssadvicecentre@law.ac.uk

☎️ 01483 216528

Type of support: Legal advice; a mixture of preliminary legal advice either in writing or by telephone, depending on the service and the centre.

Areas covered: Basic housing, welfare benefits and employment legal advice; employment and family telephone advice (at London Bloomsbury Centre)

Process: Depending on the advice needed, clients should either email or call in the first instance.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER STUDENT LAW CLINIC

🏠 www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/faculties/law/about-westminster-law-school/facilities/student-lawclinic

✉️ lawclinic@westminster.ac.uk

☎️ 020 3506 9626

Type of support: Legal advice.

Areas covered: Family law advice (children, divorce, and finances). Employment law advice (dismissals, pay queries, procedures, and discrimination in the workplace). Immigration law, Housing law. Please note that they cannot advise in very urgent situations.

Process: Phone or email in the first instance.

Location coverage:

The following services are accessible only in some specific parts of London*



* These cover services that offer free legal representation across specific boroughs or areas in London. This list is by no means exhaustive and students seeking free legal advice in their borough should check local Citizens Advice Bureaus, council websites or lawworks.org.uk for more information.

BRIXTON ADVICE CENTRE

🏠 brixtonadvice.org.uk
☎ 0207 733 7554

Type of support: Generalist and specialist legal advice on housing (possessions, evictions, disrepair, etc.), debt and welfare benefits.

Areas covered: Housing, debt and welfare benefit. . A Legal Advice drop in service is available on alternating Thursday evenings between 18:30 and 19:30. Please be aware these sessions become busy and are on a first-come, first-served basis (session dates available on the Brixton Advice Centre website)

Process: Clients can attend drop-in sessions (10am to 3pm Monday to Thursday)

CITIZENS ADVICE ENFIELD

🏠 citizensadviceenfield.org.uk
✉ info@citizensadviceenfield.org.uk
☎ 0300 330 1167

Type of support: Generalist advice. Can refer students to solicitors that may be able to give some free legal advice (it is more difficult to get free representation).

Areas covered: Most issues, including welfare benefits, debt and money problems, employment, housing, immigration, family and personal issues.

Process: Come to the drop in Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday (it is advised that you arrive before 09:30 as the service gets very busy) or call (Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm). Clients must be residents of Enfield.

NOTE: This is one of many different local Citizens Advice Bureaus – used as an example (different ones will offer different services).
If you live in another borough then go to <http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> to find your nearest one.

THE LAW CENTRES NETWORK

🏠 lawcentres.org.uk
(Several different locations)

Type of support: Legal advice to local residents. All Law Centres offer face-to-face legal advice to local residents, and some run a telephone advice line. There are 22 different Law Centres in London, and more outside, each one covering a different geographical area. The London ones are:

- Camden Community Law Centre
- Cambridge House Law Centre (Vauxhall)
- Croydon Law Centre
- Ealing Law Centre
- Hackney Community Law Centre
- Hammersmith and Fulham Community Law Centre
- Haringey Law Centre
- Harrow Law Centre
- Hillingdon Law Centre
- Islington Law Centre
- Kingston and Richmond Law Centre
- Merton and Sutton Law Centre
- North Kensington Law Centre
- Paddington Law Centre
- Plumstead Law Centre
- Public Interest Law Centre
- Southwark Law Centre
- Springfield Law Centre
- Tower Hamlets Law Centre
- Vauxhall Community Law and Community Information Centre
- Wandsworth Law Centre

Areas covered: This varies from Law Centre to Law Centre, but all specialise in social welfare law, covering some or all of the following areas:

- Welfare rights
- Disability rights
- Immigration and asylum
- Housing and homelessness
- Employment rights
- Community care
- Discrimination
- Debt

Other areas of work might include:

- Public law
- Mental health
- Family law
- Education rights
- Young people and children's rights

Process: Check relevant local Law Centre website for process information.

LEGAL ADVICE CENTRE - UNIVERSITY HOUSE (BETHNAL GREEN)

🏠 legaladvicecentre.london
✉ admin@legaladvicecentre.london
☎ 0208 980 4205

Type of support: Legal advice and legal representation (in very limited circumstances, see below). Available to those who live or work in Tower Hamlets and South Hackney.

Areas covered: Legal expenses insurance; employment law (advice and casework); welfare benefits appeals (they might be able to offer representation at your Welfare Benefit First Tier Tribunal hearing); Education (SEN & Discrimination) and debt. A Housing Clinic and Family Clinic are also available.

Process: Call or email in the first instance.

THE RIVER HOUSE LAW CLINIC

🏠 riverhouseuk.org
✉ info@riverhouseuk.org
☎ 020 8753 5190

Type of support: The River House Law Clinic provides legal advice for people living with HIV in Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Ealing, Westminster and Hounslow.

Areas covered: Housing and immigration.

Process: Call in the first instance. Solicitor consultations take place on Thursday afternoon at Hammersmith & Fulham Community Law Centre premises but appointments may be offered on other days if Thursdays are not possible for clients.

ST. HILDA'S LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE

🏠 sthildas.org.uk/advice/legal-advice-service
✉ mail@sthildas.org.uk
☎ 020 7739 8066

Type of support: Legal advice for residents of Tower Hamlets and neighbouring areas.

Areas covered: Legal advice for issues such as housing matters, welfare benefits and consumer problems, debt – as well as a range of other subjects – is provided. They cannot give any advice on immigration, employment or criminal matters. They cannot represent you at court.

Process: Drop-in sessions are available on Wednesdays from 6.30 - 8.30pm at Sonali Gardens in Shadwell.

For help finding a solicitor, including those whose services are not free, the Law Society's website is a good place to start: <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/>

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If you have further questions, please contact us:

Telephone: 020 7955 7158
Student Hub: studenthub.lse.ac.uk/channel/4271
Twitter: twitter.com/LSESU_Advice
Website: lseu.com/support/advice/
Email: su.advice@lse.ac.uk