

130 Years of Law at the University of Liverpool

Timeline

1883

Maitland and Liverpool

Professor Frederick William Maitland gives a law lecture at University College, Liverpool. This was earlier commemorated in 1966 when the (then) new law building was opened by Lord Justice Sellers. This early connection with Mainland and the Liverpool law school was recognised with a gift from the Fellows of Downing College, Cambridge. In 1966, they donated one of Maitland's manuscripts 'Maitland Ms'. The inscription on the first leaf read: 'This manuscript of Frederic William Maitland was presented by the Master and Fellows of Downing College on the occasion of the opening of the New Law School of the University of Liverpool, A.D. 1966'.

1885

Sir John Astbury Delivers Law Lecture

Sir John Astbury, as he became when elevated to the High Court, gives a law lecture at University College, Liverpool (as it then was) in 1885 when he was at the Bar.

1886

Law Studies Formalised

The Board of Legal Studies (independent local practitioners with 3 college representatives) arranges three courses a year to assist students preparing for professional examination. A full-time professor and two lecturers are appointed (cost of £550 per annum).

1892

Professor Edward Jenks Joins Liverpool

In November 1892, Jenks resigned his post in Melbourne to return to England where he was elected to a Chair at University College Liverpool.

At the same time the Law Department is created within the college. The curriculum is widened to include the Victoria University LLB.

Queen Victoria Chair Established

Queen Victoria presents £2000 to the College on the opening of the Victoria Buildings. This is annexed to support the Queen Victoria Chair in Law. Further subscriptions from the local legal profession were required. Our University Archive contains a Letter of the Clerk of the

Council, Duchy of Lancaster, to the Principal. The letter announces, "the Queen's approval of a gift of £2000 to the College for such educational purposes as the College desires and the Queen approves, 20 Dec. 1892."

1896

First Student Graduates

Edward Carey is the first student graduate with an LL.B. from the University of Liverpool.

New Queen Victoria Chair

Professor George Henry Emmott is appointed to the Queen Victoria Chair and holds the office for 20 years.

1903

Faculty of Law Formally Constituted

Alfred Patten Thomas, a former Liverpool student, is appointed in October 1903 to the Chair in Commercial Law. This brings the new Law Faculty to two Chairs.

1904

Lord Chancellor Haldane given Honorary Doctorate

The University awards an LL.D. to The Right Honourable Richard Burdon Haldane KC MP – later 1st Viscount Haldane of Cloan – sometime Lord Chancellor.

1907

Lord Justice Lynskey gets his LLB

Lord Justice Lynskey (as he became) is awarded his LL.B. Alfred Patten Thomas resigns his chair and is appointed a County Court Judge (Honorary Chair from 1910).

1910

First Mock Trial

Liverpool Law Students' Association host one of their first Mock Trials with the case of General Lee Hardupp versus Herr Robinson Caruso. The case focused on a noise complaint between General Lee, the plaintiff, and Herr Robinson, a 'noisy' music teacher.

Lyon Blease First Appointed

W Lyon Blease joins Liverpool as a Lecturer. He is appointed as a Professor of Law in 1919.

1910

Law Professor Publishes 'The Emancipation of English Women'

Professor Walter Lyon Blease published his 'Emancipation of English Women' in 1910. The publication of the book coincided with a series of nationwide talks in support of the suffragette movement given by Professor Lyon Blease.

1912

Commercial Law Lectures Begin

As early as 1912, we began delivering a lecture series on commercial law. This reflected the long commercial activity in the city of Liverpool. The topic is still taught today in 2023 as a third-year elective module, albeit with an updated syllabus!

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1914

First Female Graduate

First female graduates with First-Class Honours (Mary Selina Jones).

Admiralty Law and Ecclesiastical Lectures

The Faculty of Law runs a series of lectures on Admiralty Law and Ecclesiastical Law dating from 1914 that Professor W.J. Sparrow delivered. These are both important topics in the history of the city of Liverpool.

1918

Student Numbers Rise Following First World War

Following the First World War, enrolment began to climb from zero students in 1918-19 to 168 in 1934-35.

1919

First Law Professor Releases 'The State and the Nation'

Liverpool's first law professor was Professor Edward Jenks. By 1919 he had moved on to Oxford and then the Law Society's law school in London. He would shortly take up the first law chair at the LSE. He was a prolific author and his many books included this work of 1919 on the State and the Nation.

Francis Raleigh Batt appointed Chair in Commercial Law at Liverpool

Francis Raleigh Batt (previously University of Sheffield) is made the Chair in Commercial Law at Liverpool.

Lyon Blease Appointed to the Queen Victoria Chair

Lyon Blease is made the Queen Victoria Chair at Liverpool.

1922

Honorary Doctorate for Master of the Rolls

The University awards an LLD. to the Right Honourable William Pickford, 1st Baron Sterndale, Lord Justice and Master of the Rolls.

1927

Shawcross takes up Lectureship

Sir Hartley Shawcross (later Lord Shawcross QC), Attorney-General of England and Wales in Attlee's Labour Government and Nuremberg prosecutor, is appointed as a lecturer in jurisprudence on a part-time basis.

1930

KC for Lynskey

Mr Justice Lynskey takes silk (KC).

Honorary Doctorate for High Court Judge

The University awards an LLD. to the Right Honourable Sir Frederick Arthur Greer, later 1st Baron Fairfield, a High Court Judge.

1935

Honorary Doctorate for High Court Judge

The University awards an LLD. to Sir Rigby Phillip Watson Swift, a High Court Judge.

1937

Law Professor Appointed Vice-Chancellor

Lord McNair becomes Vice-Chancellor of University of Liverpool. McNair had been the Whewell Chair in International Law at Cambridge. McNair went on to become Judge of the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

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1939

Honorary Doctorate for Law Lord

The University awards an LL.D. to The Right Honourable James Richard Atkin, Baron Atkin of Aberdovey, the Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.

1942

Law School Reforms

The Law School Review Committee appointed by Vice-Chancellor Lord McNair reports. They have three recommendations: The University should terminate the agreement made in 1904 with the Liverpool Law Society, under which the Board of Legal Studies, on which the University had only minority representation, had effective control of the work of the Faculty; that at least part of the teaching work should be transferred to the University precinct; and that the curriculum for the degree course should be more liberal in character.

1944

Lynskey Made High Court Judge

Mr Justice Lynskey is appointed a High Court judge of the King's Bench Division. His ODNB notes: "Lynskey, locally schooled and from a redbrick university, with a large practice but almost exclusively in Lancashire and very rarely appearing in the law courts in London and not generally known there, did not have the background of normal High Court appointments at that time".

1945

Law Faculty Moves

Entire Law Faculty moves to the University Precinct (first in the Victoria Building then, 16 Abercromby Square).

1946

Seaborne Davis Appointed to the Chair of Common Law

David Seaborne Davies appointed to the Chair of Common Law.

Previous Vice-Chancellor given LLD.

The University awards an LLD. to Arnold Duncan McNair KC, 1st Baron McNair of Gleniffer, a previous Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool, ICJ Judge, and Law Professor.

1947

Honorary Doctorate for Lord Chancellor

The University awards an LLD. to David Maxwell Fyfe, 1st Earl of Kilmuir, Lord Chancellor of England.

1949

New Queen Victoria Chair Appointed

Joseph Turner is appointed as the Queen Victoria Chair in English Law.

Honorary Doctorates for Leading Lawyers

The University awards an LLD. to The Right Honourable Sir John Edward Singleton (1885–1957), a judge of the High Court, and an LLD. to the famous advocate The Right Honourable Sir Richard Stafford Cripps KC MP.

Honorary Doctorate for War Time Prime Minister

The University awards an LLD. to war time leader The Right Honourable Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill OM CH FRS MP.

1950

Professor Raleigh Batt publishes last edition of 'The Law of Master and Servant'

Professor Francis Raleigh Batt (later His Honour Judge Batt) published the last edition of his book on the Law of Master and Servant under his own hand in 1950. He would then pass editorial duties to former Liverpool colleague Mr Crossley Vaines for all subsequent editions of the book.

1956

Law Lord Graduates

Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead (as he became when appointed a Law Lord) commences his legal studies at Liverpool. His ODNB entry notes: "Between 1953 and 1956, his parents having reconsidered their earlier opposition to his attending university, he read for an intermediate LLB degree at Liverpool University, where the faculty was led by Seaborne Davies. He still lived at home and supported himself with a variety of vacation jobs. A

multiple prize- and scholarship-winner, he graduated with first-class honours. In 1987, he received an honorary doctorate from the same institution."

Honorary Doctorate for High Court Judge

The University awards an LLD. to The Right Honourable Sir Frederic Aked Sellers MC PC.

1957

Honorary Doctorate for Local Judge

The University awards an LLD. to Neville Jonas Laski, Crown Court Judge, and Recorder of Liverpool.

1959

Liverpool Graduate and Bankruptcy Judge Shot by Bankrupt

In 1959, Col J. Graeme Bryson, an early Liverpool LL.B. graduate, was then Senior District Registrar of the High Court of Liverpool. He also sat as a Judge of the Bankruptcy Court. In 1959, whilst presiding over the Bankruptcy Court he was shot at and narrowly missed by the bankrupt. As a result of this incident, Mr Registrar Bryson received the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct.

1960

Professor Seaborne Davies is President of the Society of Public Teachers of Law

In 1960, Professor David Seaborne Davies held the office of President of the Society of Public Teachers of Law. This learned society is now called the Society of Legal Scholars. It is one of the two leading learned societies for law academics in the UK, the other being the Socio-Legal Studies Association.

1961

Noted Advocate Receives LLD

The University awards an LLD. to Sir William Norman Birkett, 1st Baron Birkett of Ulverston.

1966

Law School Moves into New Building

Lord Justice Sellers (a Liverpool graduate) opened the 90 Chatham Street Building. Guests were welcomed by the Dean, Professor Seaborne Davies. The University history (Thomas Kelly) notes that this was a welcome change "from long habitation in mean, dingy, and restrictive surroundings".

Law Lord receives Honorary Doctorate

The University awards an LLD. to John William Morris, Baron Morris of Borth-y-Gest, CH, CBE, MC, PC, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.

1968

Hamlyn Lecturers Delivered in Liverpool

Professor Harry Street (University of Manchester) delivers the Hamlyn Lectures at the University of Liverpool. These were published as 'Justice in the Welfare State' (2nd edn, 1975).

1969

Honorary Doctorate for Graduate and War Crimes Prosecutor

The University awards an LLD. to The Right and Honourable Hartley William Shawcross, Baron Shawcross of Friston.

1970

Law Lord receives Honorary Doctorate

The University awards an LLD. to Patrick Arthur Devlin, Baron Devlin of West Wick, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.

Equity Lawyer Appointed the Queen Victoria Chair in English Law

The University appoints David Berkeley Parker to the Queen Victoria Chair in English Law. He was the author of the famous work on equity and trusts (Parker & Mellows).

1972

Alumna Becomes First Female to sit at the Old Bailey

Liverpool Law School alumna Dame Rose Heilbron DBE QC becomes the first female to sit at the Old Bailey.

1975

Honorary Doctorate for Female High Court Judge

The University awards an LLD. to Dame Rose Heilbron, High Court Judge.

1976

Honorary Doctorate for famous solicitor fixer

The University awards an LL.D. to Arnold Abraham Goodman, Baron Goodman of the City of Westminster, a famous solicitor and political fixer.

1982

The Cayman Islands Law School Established

The Cayman Islands Law School was established, an affiliation between the government of the Cayman Islands and the Liverpool Law School, where students receive University of Liverpool (LLB) degree programmes.

First Conkerton Lecture

The first Conkerton lecture in memory of John & Mary Conkerton, law lecturers at the University, was delivered in February 1982. Lord Scarman delivers the first Conkerton memorial lecture in the Mountford Hall. The lecture was attended by over 600 law students and practitioners.

1987

Honorary Doctorate for Law Lord Graduate

The University awards an LL.D. to Liverpool Law graduate Sir Donald James Nicholls, Baron Nicholls of Birkenhead, a Lord Appeal in Ordinary.

1988

Alsop Wilkinson Chair Endowment

Professor Avrom Sherr is appointed to the newly endowed Alsop Wilkinson Chair in Law. Professor Sherr's research focused on professional law and practice.

1992

Law Professor Appointed as Vice-Chancellor

In 1992, our second law Professor Vice-Chancellor was appointed. Professor Philip Noel Love was Vice-Chancellor for a decade until 2002.

1993

Honorary Doctorate for Lord Chief Justice

Malaysian High Court Judge, The Hon. Justice Wan Muhammad Amin Bin Wan Yahya, graduated with his LL.B. from the University of Liverpool Faculty of Law in 1995. The Hon. Justice Wan Muhammad Amin Bin Wan Yahya was appointed to be a High Court Judge of Kuala Lumpur (NCC 3) on the 17th January 2023. Previously his Lordship was appointed as a Judicial Commissioner on the 10th July 2020.

1998

Honorary Doctorate for Supreme Court Judge

In 1998, the University awards an LLD. to Dame Mary Arden who was then a Judge of the Court of Appeal. She subsequently went on to become a Supreme Court Justice.

2001

Honorary Doctorate for Yoko Ono

Honorary degree (Doctor of Laws) conferred upon Yoko Ono, artist, and founder of the University's John Lennon Memorial Scholarship.

Honorary Doctorate for Court of Appeal Judge

The University awards an LLD. to The Right Honourable Dame (Ann) Elizabeth (Oldfield) Butler-Sloss, a Court of Appeal Judge.

2002

Previous Vice-Chancellor and Law Professor given an Honorary Doctorate

The University awards an LLD. to Professor Philip Noel Love, sometime Liverpool Vice-Chancellor and law professor.

2003

Honorary Doctorate for Liverpool born QC

The University awards an LLD. to Cherie Booth QC, advocate.

High Court Judge awarded Honorary Doctorate

The University awards an LLD. to High Court Judge Sir Mark Hedley.

2007

Law Clinic Opens

The Liverpool Law Clinic, a pro-bono centre at the University offering free legal advice to the public, opens October 2007. At the opening, Baroness Hale of Richmond said: "It was truly visionary of the University of Liverpool to open the Liverpool Law Clinic. Providing such a facility will help to secure access to justice for some of the most vulnerable people who would not otherwise have it, and provides valuable legal experience for students. I am not sure that six years ago, anyone could have foreseen quite what has happened to the publicly funded legal services sector and how acute the need would be for clinics like this."

2014

Students Win Award for Helping Hillsborough Lawyers

Students at the University's Liverpool Law Clinic, who analysed more than 20,000 documents to support lawyers representing the families of victims of the Hillsborough disaster, win an award at the LawWorks and Attorney General Law Awards 2014 for their work. The students played an essential part in preparing for the new inquest that began in 2014 into the deaths of 96 Liverpool fans who died in the Hillsborough Stadium disaster on 15 April 1989. Local firm Broudie Jackson Canter, under the leadership of Elkan Abrahamson, was instructed by 20 families bereaved in the disaster and entered into a partnership with the Clinic in December 2013.

Partnership with University of Law

Strategic partnership agreement with the University of Law to offer joining and dual programmes in Law with Business and Management Educations, the first major collaboration of its kind in the UK.

2015

Student-led online legal journal launched

The first volume of the annual University of Liverpool Law Review (UoLLR) was launched in May 2015. The UoLLR is a student-run organisation whose primary purpose is to publish web-journals, showcasing the high quality academic work produced by students of the University of Liverpool. It provides a platform for students to get their work published, participate in research outside the boundaries of the University's curriculum, and engage students with the wider academic community.

2016

Prof Michael Dougan Receives Wide Acclaim for his Public Education Work Relating to Brexit

Professor Michael Dougan, Professor in European Union law, gave a speech backing Remain, which went viral with more than two million views on Facebook.

2017

Charity Law and Policy Unit Shape Charity Law

Professor Debra Morris and Professor Warren Barr, through the Charity Law and Policy Unit, set about shaping law and shaping policy and practice in order to better support charities in times of austerity. The researchers shaped the law to extend the ambit of Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Conversion) Regulations 2017 to all charities.

Honorary Doctorate Awarded to Hillsborough Lawyer

The University awards an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws to Elkan Abrahamson, a human rights lawyer who represented 20 of the Hillsborough families in the recent inquest. He is one of Liverpool's foremost advocates of social justice, having worked as a lawyer for over 30 years, representing some of the most vulnerable and marginalised clients in a number of high profile cases for Broudie Jackson Canter.

Liverpool Law Clinic Celebrates 10th Anniversary

The Liverpool Law Clinic celebrates 10 years serving the community. The clinic has afforded students the opportunity to work on many high-profile cases, including the Hillsborough inquests.

2020

New School of Law and Social Justice Building

The School of Law and Social Justice relocated into the £25 million newly refurbished building on Chatham Street.

2021

ESCR Grant Awarded to Lead Project on Impact of Covid on Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers

Professor Helen Stalford, in collaboration with researchers at University of Southampton and University College London, secure £283k from the Economic Social Research Council for the 'Lives on Hold: Our Stories Told (LOHST)' research project. The research investigated

the legal and social impact of Covid-19 on young unaccompanied asylum seekers in the UK, as part of UK Research and Innovation's rapid response to Covid-19.

Senior Law Lecturer's Book Wins the SLSA Early-career Book Prize

Dr Seán Columb wins the Hart-SLSA Prize for Early Career Academics 2021 for his book: *Trading Life: Organ Trafficking, Illicit Networks, and Exploitation* (Stanford University Press). The groundbreaking book investigates the emergence and evolution of the organ trade across North Africa and Europe.

2022

Law School becomes an Institutional Member of the ELI

The School of Law and Social Justice accepted as an Institutional Member of the European Law Institute (ELI). The ELI aims to improve the quality of European law, understood in the broadest sense. It seeks to initiate, conduct and facilitate research, to make recommendations, and to provide practical guidance in the field of European legal development.

Official Opening of New School of Law and Social Justice Building

The brand-new School of Law and Social Justice Building was officially opened two years on from being brought into use, after the Covid-19 pandemic forced the delay of the official ceremony. The building provides a location for all school staff, both academic and professional services, as well as providing students with a fantastic facility to pursue their studies.

The Feminist Legal Research and Action Network (FRAN) Launches

A group of legal scholars collectively take an intersection approach to feminist research, teaching, and scholarship. The research cluster produces research and co-ordinates events to promote dialogue across a multitude of research areas.

2023

Senior Lecturer in Law Elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council

Dr Vassilis Tzevelekos, Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Liverpool, appointed to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee has been established to serve as the think tank for the Human Rights Council, which is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Law Clinic Highly Commended at Prestigious Student Pro Bono Awards

The Liverpool Law Clinic Family Advice Project was highly commended in the 'Best Contribution by a Team of Students' category at the LawWorks Student Pro Bono Awards

2023. The awards celebrate the best Pro Bono activities undertaken by law students and law schools from across the UK.

Law Researchers Awarded National Impact Prize

Dr James Organ and Dr Jennifer Sigafoos (Liverpool Law School), alongside Dr Sophie Wickham (Institute of Population Health), were awarded the 1st Annual Impact Prize for establishing Liverpool's Access to Advice Network, at the Socio-Legal Studies Association's (SLSA) Annual Conference 2023. The Annual Impact Prize recognises and celebrates excellence in non-academic impact arising from socio-legal research.

Liverpool Law School Today

Today, the Liverpool Law School boasts a thriving and diverse body of over 1500 undergraduate and master's postgraduate students, and over 50 PhD students from across the globe. We have over 90 academic staff from 13 different countries, delivering cutting edge teaching on a wide range of modules from international human rights law, welfare rights, asylum and immigration, family law, and medical law, to commercial law, Banking law, World Trade and Investment law.