

Visiting Scholars: Further information

Updated October 2017

Introduction

Durham Law School welcomes applications to its Visiting Scholars Programme. The School is widely-acknowledged to be one of the leading Law Schools in the UK and is a recognised centre of international excellence in legal scholarship and research. It has particular research strengths in the following areas: human rights; commercial law; criminal law and justice; European Union law; gender and legal theory; medical law and bioethics as supported by the numerous research centres and groups.

Visiting Scholars will be based at Durham for a period from a week to a year. We give preference to applications for visits of up to three months, though we will consider applications for longer stays in order to allow Scholars to engage in research with academics working in related fields. Scholars are expected to pursue a specific research project while within the School and both to deliver and participate in research seminars.

The School does not provide financial support for travel, accommodation or subsistence. Scholars are responsible for ensuring that they have the correct travel documentation, including visas.

Admissions

Because of the large number of applications we receive each year, Durham Law School is unable to accommodate all those who express interest in visiting for research purposes. Prospective visiting scholars must identify a possible sponsor in his / her area of research and contact them prior to submitting an application to be a visiting scholar at the Law School. Once that sponsor has been identified, applications should ask the sponsor for a brief statement of support.

Policy and procedure

1. Introduction

Durham Law School welcomes applications from academics and practitioners to its Visiting Scholars Programme. The School is widely acknowledged to be one of the leading Law Schools in the United Kingdom and is a recognised centre of international excellence in legal scholarship and research. It has particular research strengths in the following areas: human rights; commercial law; criminal law and justice; European Union law; gender and legal theory; public international law, in particular conflict and global security; and medical law and bioethics, as supported by the numerous research centres and groups.

Visitors will have the opportunity to be involved in some of the activities within the Law School and are encouraged to contribute to the School's research environment. Amongst the benefits, the visitor will be entitled to make use of the University's research facilities and libraries, in addition to attending seminars, lectures and other academic gatherings ordinarily closed to the general public.

2. Visitor Programme Objectives

We would like the Academic Visitor Programme to contribute positively to the overall research and learning environment of the Faculty. The aims of the Visitor Programme are to:

- offer external academics and interested professionals the opportunity to carry out research with a view to publishing their work;
- enhance the research community at Durham Law School through the active participation of visiting scholars in academic life at Durham, for example through the delivery of guest lectures or through their participation in the various projects and centres;
- further develop and promote external research links with other universities, institutions and practitioners in the United Kingdom and overseas;
- provide the Law School staff and research students with the opportunity to work with and learn from academics from outside Durham.

3. Provision of Resources

The academic visitor will receive:

- A University Card;
- The sponsorship of a Durham Law School staff member, who will meet with the visitor and provide guidance and advice when the visitor first arrives in Durham. It should be noted that it is up to the individual visitor to arrange this initial meeting with their sponsor;
- Full access to the Durham University Library and all other University Library Services;
- Access to electronic holdings, databases and journals;
- Permission to attend lectures and seminars run by the Law School (by arrangement);
- Permission to join in the activities of the various discussion groups that are active during term time (by arrangement);
- The visitor's email address will be added to the graduate mailing list, so that he or she is notified of any Law School events that may be of interest or relevance;
- The visitor is also welcome to attend other Law School talks, lectures and events as appropriate.
- Visiting scholars may identify themselves as 'Visiting Scholar, Durham Law School' during their period at the School. Prospective visitors who wish to identify as Visiting Professors at Durham should consult the University's webpages on the conferment of honorary or visiting titles.

Unfortunately, the Law School is usually unable to offer office space to Visitors. However, the Law School building is next door to the Bill Bryson library with over 1200 study spaces. Durham University also provides wireless access points throughout the centre of Durham, to which visitors will have access. Academic visitors are therefore welcome to bring their own laptops with them, but must be aware that all laptops must have suitable and regularly updated anti-virus software, and must have up-to-date critical updates for Windows. Macintosh computers are also supported by the University's IT department.

An induction to using the law library can be arranged by prior arrangement. It is also possible to arrange to have an introduction to the library's electronic databases for case law, legislation, journals etc, and some guidelines about using them.

4. Visitor Contribution

Depending on the length of their visit and the nature of their research, visitors are expected to contribute actively to academic life in the School, in particular through participating in research seminars relevant to their research. The following is a list of other ways in which a visitor can make this contribution:

- Invite or organise a reciprocal visit to your own institution for a member/members of the School or graduate students;
- Participate in the organisation of an event (seminar, workshop, conference) within the Law School;
- Contribute to teaching through the provision of a special seminar, specified modules or similar activity (by arrangement with the Module Leader of that module or seminar);
- Participate actively in one of the research groups (by arrangement with the Convener of that research cluster). For a list of research groups, see <https://www.dur.ac.uk/law/research/centres/>.

5. Duration

Visiting Scholars may be based at Durham for a period from a week to a year. We give preference to applications for visits of up to three months, though we will consider applications for longer stays in order to allow Scholars to engage in research with academics working in related fields. Applicants are strongly encouraged to plan their stay to cover at least part of an academic term, in order to maximise their exposure to the research community at the Law School. Members of the Law School may be less available outside of these dates for sponsorship.

6. Sponsorship

Although the academic visitor will be independent and responsible for his or her own research activities and work agenda whilst in Durham, the Law School considers it a priority that visiting scholars be welcomed into our research community and be integrated as much as practicable in the work of the Law School. The expectation that visiting scholars contribute actively to the research environment at Durham is met through the provision of a sponsor.

Prospective visiting scholars must identify a possible sponsor and contact them prior to submitting an application to be a visiting scholar at the Law School. Once that sponsor has been identified, applications should ask the sponsor for a brief statement of support (no more than one A4 page or about 250 words). The sponsor should indicate clearly that they are familiar with the applicant's work and support the application, and that they undertake to act as the applicant's sponsor during their research stay. Sponsors should also indicate how they might promote the active participation of the visiting scholar at Durham.

The statement of support from the academic sponsor should be included with the application. It is up to the applicant to identify a prospective sponsor and to enter into contact with that person, to request a statement of support. No application will be considered without a statement of support from a Durham Law School staff member indicating his or her willingness to support their application.

Upon arrival at Durham, the visiting scholar's sponsor will introduce the scholar to other members of the research community at Durham who work in similar areas of research, will invite visiting scholars to any research clusters or other events being organised by the Law School, and will otherwise be available to provide some assistance to visiting scholars. The sponsor should also facilitate the visiting scholar's active contribution to research at Durham Law School (see Section 4, 'Visitor's Contribution', above).

It may come to pass that a sponsor may not be present for the duration of a scholar's research stay. In such situations, the sponsor and the academic visitor will be responsible for approaching and identifying a second academic sponsor who might continue to provide support in their absence.

7. Financing

Visitors are not charged to cover the costs of the administration involved with the visit. However, Durham Law School does not provide a salary or other payments to visitors. Visitors should apply for research funding schemes through their own home institution or equivalent. The academic visitor will be responsible for his/her own travel, accommodation and maintenance costs. Scholars are responsible for ensuring that they have the correct travel documentation, including visas.

8. Accommodation

It is the responsibility of the Visiting Scholar to ensure that they have somewhere to stay during their time in Durham. Unfortunately, the Law Department can not assist in any way in helping a Visitor to find somewhere to stay. Please be advised that accommodation in Durham city centre can be very expensive and is in high demand especially during the summer months.

Short term accommodation:

It is sometimes possible to book accommodation in one of the University Colleges ([accommodation database here](#)).

Alternatively, [Durham City Tourism Information](#) has details of local B&Bs, as well as hotels.

Longer term accommodation:

The website of the [University Accommodation Office](#) provides information about longer-term accommodation in Durham.

Visiting scholars should budget to pay approximately £500-600 month for one/two bed privately rented accommodation.

9. Visas and Work Permits

Durham Law School can supply an official letter confirming acceptance as an Academic Visitor that can be used to support any application that made, but unfortunately the Law School cannot assist the applicant with an application for a visa or work permit for the purpose of the visit.

10. Application Procedure

Applications will be accepted at any point during the year and will not be restricted to University term time.

The following documents will be required in the application:

1. A completed 'Visiting Scholars Application form';
2. Letter of Support from the Law School Contact Person and the name(s) of any members of the School's staff with whom you have previously had academic contact. The letter of support must indicate how the visiting scholar will contribute to research in the Law School (see Section 6, 'Sponsorship', above);

3. A curriculum vitae, including a list of publications; and
4. A statement to the effect that the visiting scholar has sufficient fluency and command of oral English to enable them to participate actively in individual and group discussions throughout the period of their stay.

The completed application form and accompanying documents must be sent by post or email to the following address:

Research Officer, Durham Law School, Palatine Centre, Stockton Road, Durham DH1 3LE, UK

Email: law.researchofficer@durham.ac.uk

Application does not guarantee acceptance, and we can only offer places within the Law School to visitors under the sponsorship of a staff member. It is important to note that there are times during the academic year when there may not be a suitable member available to act as sponsor, and therefore we may have to refuse such an application.

Approved applicants will be informed in writing of their visiting status, along with confirmation of the dates of the visit and information with regard to practical elements of being an academic visitor.