

## Summer Human Rights Law Clinic

### ABOUT JUSTICE CENTRE HONG KONG

**Justice Centre Hong Kong** is a non-profit human rights organisation working to protect the rights of Hong Kong's most vulnerable: refugees, other people seeking protection, and survivors of torture, human trafficking and forced labour.

Each year, thousands of people from all over the world claim protection in Hong Kong. Fleeing war, torture, persecution, and other serious human rights violations; they hope to find safety in Hong Kong. They are met with minimal welfare assistance,<sup>1</sup> a lack of legal support,<sup>2</sup> an extremely high refusal rate,<sup>3</sup> and no durable solution- even if their claims are accepted, they are not granted legal status in Hong Kong.

Justice Centre is the only NGO in Hong Kong providing holistic assistance to forced migrants. We do this through our core work which includes: (i) legal and psychological support, (ii) research, and (iii) amplifying community voices to raise awareness with key stakeholders. Our work aims to increase access to justice and strengthen the rule of law in Hong Kong.

Justice Centre has assisted over

**1 in 3**

of all those whose claims for protection have been accepted in Hong Kong

We are a founding member of the **Refugee Concern Network**, and have made three appearances before the United Nations



For more details of our work, please see [our website](#).

### HUMAN RIGHTS LAW CLINIC

The Summer Human Rights Law Clinic (the Clinic) is a three-week programme which offers university students a unique opportunity to engage in our work. Students are trained and empowered to make a difference to the lives of people seeking asylum in Hong Kong.

#### Hands-on experience of real cases

- **Work directly on claims** for protection in Hong Kong.
- **Develop skills** required to become a lawyer.
- Supervision by our **internationally qualified lawyers**.

#### Projects which make a long-term impact

- **Make a difference** to the lives of people seeking protection in Hong Kong.
- Strengthen the **legal and social welfare** sector.
- Pursue your **passions**.

#### Programme developed for University of Cambridge, HKU and CUHK

- Summer clinical legal education programme **run annually** with a range of **international universities**.
- Programme **developed in 2012** with top tier local law schools.
- Adapted to include a **remote programme** in 2020 to facilitate ongoing engagement with our international education partners.

<sup>1</sup> A monthly allowance of HK\$1,500 towards rent (HK\$750 for an eligible child), HK\$300 towards utilities, HK\$1,200 towards food, petty cash for essential travel, donations of essential toiletries and baby items.

<sup>2</sup> Over 91% are not legally represented at appeal.

<sup>3</sup> Less than 1% of claims are successful.

## ABOUT THE CLINIC

The Clinic is offered to all law students based in Hong Kong. This three-week intensive Clinic allows students to:

- Engage with the **theory and practice of non-refoulement law** in Hong Kong and internationally.
- Develop **professional skills and judgement** in a real legal practice setting, by diligently and ethically **directly assisting claimants**.
- **Critically analyse** the law, policies, and systems to **identify challenges** and propose **creative strategies** and solutions.
- Engage with **complex legal/ factual research and analysis** to support awareness-raising initiatives and legal cases.
- Engage with **other charities** in the sector and our commercial **law firm pro-bono partners**.<sup>4</sup>
- Understand how to engage with the public **policymaking process** and key government stakeholders.
- Learn how to take a **human rights-based approach** to legal work and cultivate a long-term commitment to public service.



*I am grateful for the flexibility of the programme in which I was able to pursue my own interests through various personal projects. In addition, we worked on a number of casework that allowed us to utilise the information we obtained from training sessions during the first week of the clinic. The range of work assignments created a great opportunity to build upon practical legal and non-legal skills such as drafting documents, legal research, and conducting client interviews. This is an extremely valuable opportunity for anyone interested in human rights law and I would highly recommend students to take the opportunity to work with the Justice Centre Hong Kong.*

– Agnes, 2020 Summer Clinic

*The Human Rights Law Clinic Programme is the most rewarding internship I have ever participated in. I have been able to obtain deep knowledge in the field of non-refoulement protection law through extensive training provided by Justice Centre; I have also been able to put this knowledge into practice: as a participant, I was not being tasked with repetitive administrative work, but actual meaningful work that created impact to non-refoulement protection claimants. However, what was most impressive about the Programme, is that Justice Centre is very welcoming of new ideas, even if these new ideas come from a clinic participant. As such during the Clinic Programme, I was able to make proposals to Justice Centre on schemes to better serve Non-refoulement protection claimants; and Justice Centre was very eager to support me beyond the clinic Programme to make the proposal a reality. Therefore, the Human Rights Law Clinic Programme is the most rewarding internship I have ever participated in; I strongly urge all law students who have creative ideas and who want to learn about how their legal knowledge can be used to better society to join the programme.*

– Ben, 2020 Summer Clinic

<sup>4</sup> Davis Polk & Wardwell, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Linklaters, Bryan Cave BLP, King & Wood Mallesons, Kirkland & Ellis, Latham & Watkins.

## CLINIC STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The Clinic is **run within our in-house legal team**, under the supervision of Jessica Alam, a UK qualified lawyer with international legal experience, who is responsible for our development programmes. Students will also **support our research and policy team** in their work to bring about change in the area of refugee and human trafficking policy in Hong Kong.

The work undertaken during the Clinic will vary, depending on the needs of Justice Centre and our clients. We will also take into account students' objectives and interests when allocating tasks. Here are some **examples of the type of work** students may be involved with:

| Training outline   | Legal services and policy tasks  | Current projects  |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be provided an <b>online resource manual</b> to read before the start of the Clinic.</li> <li>The following <b>training</b> will be delivered at the start of the Clinic:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to the relevant international and domestic human rights laws that protect refugees, victims of torture and other serious human rights violations.</li> <li>The process of claiming protection in Hong Kong and the procedures involved.</li> <li>The use of evidence in claims for protection.</li> <li>Legal and factual research to support claims for protection.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist with conducting screening interviews and assessments of protection claimants.</li> <li>Undertake country of origin research and producing packages of information to support refugee and torture claims.</li> <li>Conduct legal research into complex areas of international refugee and human rights law.</li> <li>Identify experts, write letters of instruction and review reports.</li> <li>Review decisions of the courts and identify legal arguments to challenge them.</li> <li>Research and present successful human rights campaigns.</li> <li>Quantitative research tasks to support our ongoing research projects.</li> <li>Literature reviews and background research for advocacy reports and briefings.</li> <li>Contribute to our communications and outreach strategy.</li> </ul> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Justice           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create clear, accessible guidance to explain how to prepare a claim for protection in Hong Kong and delivering that through workshops (training) and online (website content).</li> </ul> </li> <li>Unlawful detention           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a toolkit to equip those in immigration detention with information about how to enforce their rights.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Trafficking screening           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of international best practice and guidance from relevant national and international bodies on reliable indicators of trafficking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>COVID-19 Special Measures in Courts &amp; Tribunals           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the current international policies and procedures for processing protection claims in light of COVID-19 across jurisdictions.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Supervision and feedback</b></p>   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A clear <b>development plan</b> will be set at the start of the Clinic to identify students' goals and agree objectives.</li> <li><b>Weekly supervision</b> sessions will provide the opportunity for students to receive feedback.</li> <li><b>Team collaboration</b> sessions will allow students to connect and review their progress.</li> </ul>  |  |   |

## WHO CAN APPLY?

The Clinic is open to undergraduate or postgraduate law students at any university, who are based in Hong Kong over the summer.

It is aimed at students **interested in a career in law, human rights, politics, public policy, or NGO management**. Applicants will be required to demonstrate enthusiasm for human rights law, public law, refugee rights and/or social policy.

This is a competitive programme and a **maximum of 6 students** will be selected to participate.

### Essential skills and attributes

- Currently studying an undergraduate or postgraduate law degree at any university.
- Valid visa for Hong Kong throughout the period of the Clinic.
- Commitment to human rights and an interest in asylum and forced migration law and policy.
- Excellent organisational skills and time-management.
- Good written and verbal communication skills – communicate with a range of individuals (including highly vulnerable people) and agencies, in a professional and respectful manner.
- Multicultural sensitivity and ability to work with people from different cultural backgrounds and across varying language barriers.
- Ability to work independently whilst being a good team-player.
- Willingness to learn and develop new skills.
- Demonstrated literacy in Microsoft Office, basic data entry and Outlook.
- Fluency in verbal and written English.

### Desirable skills and attributes

- Direct personal experience and/or a detailed understanding of the immigration system.
- Experience of working with vulnerable people in a professional setting.
- Fluency in Cantonese.
- Fluency in another language, such as French, Arabic, Somali, Urdu, Sinhala or Bangla.

## COST

The total cost of the Clinic is **HK\$5,000 per student**.

Your contribution will allow us to dedicate staff time and resources to run the Clinic. Any further proceeds will contribute towards our vital services for people seeking protection.

We are happy to offer any necessary assistance if you wish to apply for a grant, bursary, or scholarship from your university. Alternatively, we may consider requests for an extension of time to pay the fees in instalments if you would like to fundraise to cover the cost of your Clinic place.

## APPLICATION PROCESS AND KEY DATES

The Clinic will run for **3 weeks** from 28 June – 16 July.

To apply, please send your **CV and a cover letter** of no more than one page to Jessica Alam at [jessica.alam@justicecentre.org.hk](mailto:jessica.alam@justicecentre.org.hk). Your cover letter should explain why you would like to participate in the Clinic and how you have developed the skills and attributes required.

Applications will be **considered on a rolling basis**; we strongly recommend that you submit your application as soon as possible due to the high level of interest and limited spaces available.

The key dates in the application process are:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 14 May:           | Deadline to submit applications                 |
| 24 May:           | Applicants contacted to arrange an interview    |
| 31 May – 4 June:  | Interviews                                      |
| 11 June:          | Successful applicants will be offered the roles |
| 18 June:          | Transfer of non-refundable deposit              |
| 28 June – 6 July: | Clinic  |

