

Michael Widdowson

PHD CANDIDATE AT THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE IN FLORENCE

CONTACT INFORMATION

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PROFILE SUMMARY

PhD candidate at the European University Institute in Florence in Comparative Trusts Law. Law graduate at the University of Kent and University of Edinburgh. Currently seeking academic exchange opportunities to improve the quality of my PhD research and gain greater long-term cultural awareness of the world.

EDUCATION

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE- PhD in Law (2022-2026)
Currently working on the thesis project entitled 'Are Trusts Transplantable? An Analysis of the Rise of Trusts in the French Legal Tradition' under the supervision of Professor Mathias Siems.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH- LLM Comparative and European Private Law- Merit (2021-2022)
Modules include: Child Law in Comparative Perspectives, Comparative Property Law, Fundamentals of Comparative Private Law, Advanced Comparative Constitutional law, Economic and Social Rights, Comparative and International Trust Law, Dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF KENT- LLB English & French Law with a year abroad at Aix-Marseille Université - 1st (2017-2021)
Modules include: English Legal Systems & Skills (80%); French Language B1 (65%); Public Law 1 (71%) & Public Law 2 (69%); Critical introduction to Law (65%); Introduction to Obligations (65%); Foundations of Property (70%); Human Rights & English Law (70%); Droit Français (61%); EU Law (73%); Law of Contract (70%); Law of Tort (62%) Comparative Law (73%); Clinical Option (70%); Land Law (68%); Equity & Trusts (71%); Criminal Law (66%); Mooting (P); Mock trial advocacy (P)

CENTRE NATIONAL D'ENSEIGNEMENT À DISTANCE – Distance learning: French language C1 (2020)
PRIOR PURSGLOVE COLLEGE GUISBOROUGH - A levels: Politics A, French B, Law B (2017)

LEGAL & ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

Editor-in-Chief - European Journal of Legal Studies, Florence, Italy (2023-)

- Promoted to lead the European Journal of Legal Studies in the position of Editor-in-Chief
- Exercise leadership skills by managing a team of 10 Executive Board members
- Correspond with established and new academics throughout the world by managing the EJLS email account
- Further improved communications by adding Heads of Section to the Executive Board group chat

Executive Editor - European Journal of Legal Studies, Florence, Italy (2023)

- Elected to be one out of 5 members of the European Journal of Legal Studies editorial board.
- Edited Journal submissions at their final stage before publication using track and trace software in Microsoft word.
- Performed checks on spelling, punctuation, grammar, and formatting on 62% of submissions to issue 15(1).
- Presented training sessions on the European Journal of Legal Studies to reviewers.
- Marketed the European Journal of Legal studies to 1st year researchers.
- Improved email communication by establishing a dedicated mailing list for first year researchers.

Legal Intern - Tees Valley Combined Authority, Stockton-on-Tees (2021)

- Worked in both the Legal and Procurement departments of Tees Valley Combined Authority and Teesworks.
- Reviewed procurement contracts and invitation to tender documents.
- Researched framework agreements.

- Performed legal research in procurement challenges, Bus Service Improvement Plans and Enhanced Partnerships.
- Sat in procurement, legal and transport meetings to gain experience.
- Contributed to the £373 million Teesworks site redevelopment and to greatly improved bus services in the Tees Valley.

Case Worker- Kent Law Clinic, Canterbury

(2020-2021)

- Assigned to assist clients unable to afford legal fees in family and immigration law under the supervision of solicitors.
- Interviewed clients, performed on the job legal research on relevant areas of law and prepared a wide variety of cases.
- Summarised legalese to clients through writing advice letters and position statements.

Receptionist - Kent Law Clinic, Canterbury

(2017-2018)

- Acted as the first point of call for potential clients.
- Exercised secretarial skills through noting down the client's enquiries.
- Carefully utilised telephone communication skills through assisting disressted clients over the phone.
- Gained real world experience of legal issues through attending advice sessions under the supervision of a solicitor.

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Presenter and Researcher - KMTV, Chatham

(2021)

- Worked as presenter and researcher on the KMTV television Programme Critical Law TV.
- Researched building safety and land-law related issues in relation to the Building Safety Bill.
- Interviewed in-studio guests and presented on Legal issues on television to the Kent area.
- Developed necessary skills to present complex legal information to a wider audience.
- Contributed to the renewal of Critical Law TV for a second series.

President – UKC Yoga Society, University of Kent, Canterbury

(2020-2021)

- Elected as the first male President of the UKC Yoga society.
- Responsibilities entailed, leadership, project management and teamwork.
- Invested in new equipment, recruited new instructors, established online: classes, booking and payment during COVID-19.

SKILLS

Languages: Fluent in English, have full professional proficiency in French at C1 of the CEFR and currently Italian studying B1 classes.

IT: Microsoft Office, Westlaw Basic certification, Lexis, Practical Law, and Canva on Windows and OSX.

Communication skills: Improved written communication channels at the European Journal of Legal studies through the establishment of a dedicated mailing list to promote the journal to first-year researchers as well as managing the email inbox. Exercised good oral communication skills through interviewing clients in emotionally challenging situations at the Kent Law Clinic.

Events Planning and management: Co-organised a large aperitivo for up to 20 attendees to promote the European Journal of Legal Studies. Established special online collaborative events as President of the UKC Yoga Society during COVID-19 with sexual assault awareness society Respect the NO, mindfulness society Rise and Recover and the UKC Psychology Society.

Advocacy and public speaking: Partook in the mock trial advocacy extracurricular module as a witness and barrister to gain further advocacy skills in Crown Court trials. Partook in National Speed Mooting Winter Cup competition and internal mooting at the University of Kent. Hosted the local television show Critical Law TV on KMTV and performed in the play "Waiting for the Citizens" in front of an audience of over 700 people in Palazzo Vecchio at the annual State of the Union conference. Participant of the Chaucer Speakers Club in Canterbury.

Legal research and academic writing: Was nominated for the Sir Terence Etherton Mr Prize for an outstanding essay in Equity and Trusts. This essay argued in favour of Doctor's being subject to equitable fiduciary obligations to patients. Successfully defended the first part of my PhD thesis in May 2023 without the need to resubmit.

Journal Editing: Gained necessary academic journal editorial skills in correcting formatting, SPAG, references and content as Executive Editor and Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal of Legal Studies.

Team building and Leadership: Built and led a team of six dedicated committee members in the UKC yoga society during COVID-19 and 10 Executive board members as Editor-in-Chief at the European Journal of Legal Studies.