



Marginalised Young People and Legal Education

Steven Barrett,

Chair of Big Voice London & Barrister at Radcliffe Chambers

Big Voice London

A legal engagement and social mobility charity

Charity no: 1169238

The current legal education landscape



There is limited/no legal education in schools:

At present law is taught to a limited extent during “Personal, Social, Health and Economic” (PSHE) classes – although this is not a compulsory part of the curriculum and so not all young people benefit from it. As such, many young people across the country leave education with little or no understanding of:

- the law
- the legal system, and
- the legal profession.

Why is legal education important?

- The law affects everyone at some point in their lives, for example: during a rent dispute, during divorce, when an individual is a victim or perpetrator of a crime, during an employment dispute etc. Without a basic understanding of the law, access to justice is severely hampered
- A limited understanding of the law creates a barrier to access to the legal profession, which has a serious impact upon diversity and social mobility

How does Big Voice London improve legal education for marginalised young people?



We run events for students aged 16-18 years old from non-fee paying schools, with the aim of:

1. engaging the students in the law and legal policy, and
2. in turn improving access to the legal profession.



Our students

- We offer our opportunities to students at around 250 non-fee paying schools across London and Greater London.
- We do not have any grade requirements, as we recognise that the students who would benefit from our projects most, may not have straight As at GCSE or A-Level



Our projects

We run the following projects for our students each year, namely:



- 1. A Mooting Competition**, with the Supreme Court
- 2. An Introduction to the Legal System project**, also in association with the Supreme Court
- 3. A Summer School**, in association with Linklaters
- 4. The country's only Model Law Commission**
- 5. Guest Lectures with Middle Temple**
- 6. A Student Barrister Experience**, piloted with Radcliffe Chambers this year

The areas of law our students have engaged with

- Cohabitation
- Revenge porn
- Privacy law
- Sexual assault and consent
- Prison law
- Divorce law
- The gig economy
- The right to be forgotten
- Fracking
- Fake online reviews
- Hate crime
- Surrogacy
- Consumer law
- Electoral law
- Insanity law
- Social media and the law
- Domestic violence
- Prostitution
- Extradition
- And many many more...



How do the opportunities benefit our students?



Benefits include:

- **Understanding of and engagement with the law:** *“This project was amazing as I got the chance to get to grips with a kind of law that I had no awareness of. During the project I managed to acquire a substantial amount of knowledge that will most certainly be of assistance when I go onto higher education.”*
- **Improvement in confidence:** *“Attending the projects gave me confidence to not only deliver arguments in a persuasive and effective way but also improved my ability to research, communicate and prioritise.”*
- **Increased ambition:** *“My insight into the Bar really did inspire me to pursue a career as a barrister and Big Voice London has given me the confidence to embark on this career path.”*
- **Advice and guidance:** *“From being able to obtain feedback from reputable barristers to learning more about legal study from current undergraduates, I have been able to learn so much. Big Voice London has undoubtedly allowed me to be confident and well informed in my approach to becoming a lawyer.”*
- **An enjoyable experience:** *“It was not only about learning and doing things people do in the legal profession but it was also about having fun doing something you enjoy and are intrigued about. ”*



Any questions?

For more information about Big Voice London, please go to www.bigvoicelondon.co.uk, or get in touch on info@bigvoicelondon.co.uk