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IALS INSTITUTE OF
ADVANCED
LEGAL STUDIES

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IALS: Transforming the UK's international centre for legal research

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The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

In 1895, the then Lord Chief Justice, Lord Russell of Killowen, delivered a speech at Lincoln's Inn calling for the establishment of a national institute which would promote and facilitate research in law at an advanced level, both nationally and internationally.

37 years later, an expert committee on legal education under Lord Atkin was created to consider not only the organisation of legal education, but also "further provision for advanced research in legal studies." Its report emphasised the need for an institution "which would be the headquarters for academic research and would promote the advancement of knowledge of the law in the most general terms."

These ideas were realised with the founding of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) by the University of London in 1947, with the purpose of promoting advanced research in legal studies in the UK and internationally. Originally located at 25 Russell Square, in 1976 the Institute moved into its current premises, Charles Clore House, a dedicated centre that has enabled IALS to achieve its reputation as the UK's international centre for legal education and research.

Over the past 70 years, we have brought together academic researchers, students, judges, and legal practitioners from diverse backgrounds, to share in research and the exchange of knowledge.

Our community continues to benefit from the intellectual and physical resources at IALS; not only the Library – the jewel in the Institute's crown – but also a strong, collaborative network of alumni, Fellows, legal professionals and other research institutes.



Right: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother greets donor Sir Charles Clore at the opening of Charles Clore House on 1 April 1976.

An iconic building

Located in the heart of London's Knowledge Quarter, IALS has existed as the UK's home for legal research for over four decades.

In its first stages, the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies occupied a terraced house at 25 Russell Square in London's Bloomsbury. It met a profound need even in those early years of pioneering academic legal scholarship, but soon outgrew the building. The weight of the growing Library necessitated the incorporation of an adjoining house in 1954, after substantial reinforcement works.

After 30 years, IALS had fully outgrown these original premises, and in 1976 moved to a new building at 17 Russell Square, Charles Clore House. Designed by celebrated British architect Sir Denys Lasdun, this Grade II* listed building enabled IALS to meet the demands placed on it by its growing community of legal scholars, postgraduate students and researchers.

Named after its benefactor, Sir Charles Clore, the building's Brutalist style has meant that IALS' iconic home has become part of the fabric of London and a recognised meeting place for legal researchers and scholarly legal organisations.



The Institute is proud to be the original occupant of this landmark Lasdun building. Purposefully built, it was consciously designed for flexible use and for 40 years has met the Institute's needs, whilst remaining highly revered by the legal community.

Below: IALS Construction Site, c. 1970.



IALS today

Part of the School of Advanced Study at the University of London, the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies has developed a unique position as an international hub of legal scholarship.

Library

With extensive resources spread over five floors, the IALS Library is regarded as one of the world's great legal research libraries, attracting up to 700 visitors per day and 6,000 readers each year. Through a bilateral agreement with the British Library, it provides and retains in perpetuity the national legal research collections in foreign, comparative and international law, and holds unique collections, for example, those deposited by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

The Library also provides premium information services to over 100 leading legal institutions, including law firms, barristers, chambers, Inns of Court, judiciary and government departments.

Public engagement

The Institute provides a busy programme of engaging conferences, symposia, public lectures, seminars and training events throughout the year. Attended by practitioners, the judiciary, government departments, students, alumni and the wider community, these provide a forum for discussing thought-provoking topics and offering the public insights into law.

“A remarkable experience of sharing knowledge, learning new things, cultivating friendships and, above all, having a feeling that we can become a useful tool in the evolution of law.”

IALS Student



IALS Digital

Through its pioneering initiative IALS Digital, the Institute delivers specialist legal research tools and services, as well as niche digital resources, to provide open access to legal information and research for academics and the public.

The British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII), based at IALS, is a free-to-access database of case law covering Britain and Ireland, as well as other jurisdictions such as the EU. Widely used by researchers, law students, the legal profession and pro bono, legal assistance and human rights organisations, BAILII is hosted by IALS as part of its commitment to the Free Access to Law Movement. In 2017, it had over 58 million website hits.

Overseas impact

IALS enhances its international reach through collaboration, research and training. It has helped to establish sister institutes in Ghana and Nigeria, and supported the South African Constitutional Court Library.

Right: In June 2015, the Director of IALS attended the opening ceremony of the new headquarters of the Ghana Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.



“IALS has acquired the status of a towering centre of legal education and research throughout the entire Commonwealth”

Dr Samuel K.B. Asante, Chairman of the Ghana Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

Research

The Institute plays a leading role in shaping and stimulating innovative thinking. It attracts a network of over 60 Visiting and Research Fellows per year, drawn from both academic and practitioner communities. They make significant contributions to the breadth and depth of the Institute’s research output, and to its influence on the study and practice of law in a variety of areas, such as international economic crime and comparative law.

IALS is home to two outstanding research centres. **The Sir William Dale Centre for Legislative Studies** specialises in teaching and research in the fields of legislative drafting, law reform, and law and language, providing services to governments, NGOs and charities around the world. **The Information Law & Policy Centre** produces, promotes and facilitates research about all aspects of our digital lives. It brings together the information industry and legal professionals to consider issues such as the use/misuse of data, internet and social media regulation, data privacy and freedom of information.

Right: IALS supporter and former Advisory Council member Professor Sir Roy Goode QC speaking at the Institute’s 70th anniversary celebrations.

People

IALS is home to a thriving international community of researchers, fellows and students. Our postgraduate cohort numbers around 60 PhD students and 15 LLM students on highly specialised courses. Moreover, IALS also supports around 1900 LLM students a year from the exceptional law schools of the member institutions of the University of London, as well as supporting academic staff and PhD students from universities worldwide. The Institute maintains strong links to the legal profession; the IALS Advisory Council includes representatives from the Law Commission, Treasury Solicitor’s Department, Foreign Commonwealth Office and the Supreme Court.



IALS in numbers



312,000
volumes in the IALS
Library (compared to
13,500 in 1948).
This equates to
14,735 metres,
weighing **332**
metric tonnes

86 conferences,
workshops and
seminars held in
2016/17, attended
by **4,000**
people



5,800 Library users
in 2016/17
(compared
to 112 in 1948)



78 research training
events held in 2016/17,
attracting **2,050**
participants from
all over the world



Library users
represented
125 countries and
52 UK universities
in 2016/17



The future

As we approach the 80th anniversary of IALS in 2027, we will continue to deliver academic excellence, provide access to and understanding of legal resources, and promote the value of legal scholarship in society.

Development and growth

Since IALS moved into Charles Clore House, there has been a tremendous growth in legal scholarship, in the scale and scope of legal studies, and in the reach of law itself. Along with an increase in the international mobility of scholars and the numbers of postgraduate law students, these external forces have placed increased demands on the Institute and its home, particularly its Library.

Moreover, the methodology of legal research has changed, and the expectations of legal researchers have increased. Visiting scholars now travel internationally more frequently and stay for longer, intensifying demands on the study accommodation provided for them in the Library's carrels. An increase in collaborative and group working means that researchers require flexible, collegial spaces. The expansion of digital legal scholarship requires the Library to increase provision for electronic resources, whilst balancing this with provision for print, which it needs to maintain as a national archive.

With this changing landscape, the Institute must adapt to provide the facilities and environment



needed to meet the expectations of a global legal research community in the 21st century.

Left: A growing legal research community has placed increased demands on the IALS Library.

The need for change

From a position where IALS once provided modern facilities and an attractive choice, it now offers dated and unsuitable spaces and a poor working environment. Annual surveys reveal that – whilst the Institute offers first class services, expertise and collections – the inadequate conditions of the building, such as excessive heat and lack of ventilation, are deterring users. Some state that they no longer use IALS as a base because of these issues. The working environment also affects the ability of the Institute to attract and retain specialist staff.

To maintain its reputation and serve the needs of its community, the Institute must transform the building to incorporate modern research methods and enhance the researcher experience to match other centres for legal research around the world. Indeed, many international competitors to IALS, such as the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg, along with the major US law schools, have all upgraded their accommodation in recent years.

A significant and much-needed transformation will restore and safeguard the building's original purpose to provide a state-of-the-art home for a leading legal research institute.

The University is now embarking on a major capital development program to ensure that IALS continues to be the pre-eminent forum for legal education and research in the UK.

Building a home for legal research

Beginning in summer 2018, the project will transform our Grade II* listed home to make it fit for 21st century scholarship.

Through the refurbishment, the Institute will gain:

- 50 additional reader work spaces in the Library and an extra 20 private study carrels to accommodate a growing number of students and researchers
- An open plan knowledge exchange space to encourage collaborative and group working amongst students, academic staff and Fellows
- A dedicated study room for the Institute's community of more than 60 PhD students
- Flexible academic space throughout the building that caters for the Institute's research centres
- Larger rooms with updated audio visual equipment, enabling IALS to deliver research skills training to a greater number of people
- Increased space for events, meetings and conferences, to further IALS' objective of fostering public engagement and discourse



Above: A new external lift will improve access and the entrance will see improvements to the front door, signage and lighting.

The project will improve the building's thermal stability and reduce its carbon footprint, whilst upgrading the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems to provide a high quality work environment for its users.

The transformation will preserve the architectural integrity of this well-regarded Lasdun building, whilst ensuring that it continues to meet the needs of a dynamic and prestigious organisation serving the legal world.



Above: The light and spacious library enquiries area will provide visitor assistance and meeting rooms.

We aim to provide an invaluable centre for the legal academic community, a place for intellectual exchange and a supportive environment for the next generation of legal thinkers.



Above: The arrival area will incorporate catalogue searching and private study carrels.

Below: Open plan space to encourage collaborative working, with private areas for individual study.





17 Russell Square

Invitation to give

The University of London has committed a significant amount from its reserves to the £15 million cost of the transformation of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. In order to realise our plans fully, the University is now seeking philanthropic contributions which will provide transformative support towards this project.

Why now?

The transformation of Charles Clore House is crucial to the realisation of the IALS' vision.

The future success of the Institute is fundamentally reliant on its ability to meet the needs and expectations of its community, and to attract leading figures and organisations to contribute to its mission.

By supporting the project, you will have a unique opportunity to position IALS at the forefront of legal scholarship nationally and internationally, and to ensure that this iconic Lasdun building remains an important national asset. The transformed building will play a significant role in shaping and stimulating innovative thinking and collaborations in legal research, as well as supporting the students and researchers of tomorrow.

Above all, the building will allow IALS to continue its mission to support access to law and promote law's relevance to society. 40 years ago, IALS was able to move into purpose-built premises through a generous donation from Sir Charles Clore. We invite you to join us on this journey to ensure that IALS remains both iconic and prestigious, and at the forefront of developments in law.

If you would like further information or to discuss how you could support the project, please contact:

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“The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies is an invaluable resource for the entire legal community, through its superb Library, world-class research, and outstanding support for law students.

I encourage you to support this important transformation project, which will ensure IALS remains a resource for future generations of participants in the field of law.”



Lord Carnwath of Notting Hill, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom and Chair of the IALS Advisory Board

Image © UK Supreme Court / Kevin Leighton

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