



QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST

INSTITUTE OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
LEGAL STUDIES

# CRIMINAL LAW

VULNERABLE WITNESSES  
AND DEFENDANTS

SHAPING  
A BETTER  
WORLD  
SINCE 1845

# CRIMINAL LAW

VULNERABLE WITNESSES  
AND DEFENDANTS

The Recommendations of the Gillen Review require advocates in criminal proceedings to act appropriately when dealing with vulnerability. Difficulties arise first from the failure to recognise vulnerability and, secondly, to understand the barriers to communication caused by vulnerability ranging from age, background to physical or mental health or other developmental issues. Thirdly, advocates need to comply with the Protocols for Vulnerable Witnesses and Defendants.

This short course is designed to ensure that those working in the criminal justice system gain an understanding of vulnerability and the treatment of vulnerable persons, whether witness or defendant, when questioning them. Attendees will benefit from a number of short lectures and participate in workshops which will deepen their understanding and enhance their skills, thus ensuring best practice when dealing with the vulnerable in a criminal setting.

## WE WILL COVER THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Recognising and Understanding Vulnerability
- Barriers to Communication including learning disability, autism, ADHD and trauma
- Judicial Perspective on dealing with Vulnerable Witnesses and Defendants
- Practitioner Perspective on dealing with Vulnerable Witnesses and Defendants
- The Role of the Registered Intermediary
- Registered Intermediary Reports and how to deal with them
- Protocol on Vulnerable Witnesses and how to comply
- Ground Rules Hearings - Preparation and Advocacy Workshops
- Witness Handling – Cross-examination Workshops – playing within the rules
- Case Law Update

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The course will appeal to solicitors and barristers in practice who work in the criminal courts and who wish to understand how to achieve best practice when dealing with cases which involve vulnerable witnesses and/or defendants.

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## Course Details

### VENUE

Institute of Professional Legal Studies Queen's University Belfast, 10 Lennoxvale, Belfast, BT9 5BY

### DATES

Monday 19th September 2022

Monday 3rd October 2022

Monday 17th October 2022

Each night the sessions will be from 6pm-8.00pm with refreshments available from 5.30pm.

### CPD

Time spent by solicitors and barristers attending lectures and workshops in person or completing these via e-learning as part of this course can be claimed towards your annual CPD requirement. Preparation of materials for and attendance at this course will cover 12 hours of CPD.

### FEES and REGISTRATION

£300

Applicants will be considered on a first-come first-served basis. Spaces are limited on the course and therefore you should register and pay as soon as possible by visiting our website at <https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/InstituteofProfessionalLegalStudies/CPDCourses/>



## SPEAKERS

### Her Honour Judge Smyth

Judge Patricia Smyth was appointed a County Court Judge in February 2010 and is currently assigned to Antrim Division. Between 2011-2014, she served as the first Principal County Court Family judge. She was appointed an Extradition Judge in 2014.

As a Crown Court Judge she presides over a variety of cases including sexual offences trials. She was part of the Advisory Panel to the Gillen Review of the Law and Procedure in sexual offence trials, and the Gillen Review of Family Law. Judge Smyth has devised and led induction training for judges and contributed to ongoing judicial training and the advocacy training of Bar students and solicitors (N.I.T.A.) In 2018, she was the first County Court judge appointed a Deputy High Court Judge.

Prior to her appointment as a County Court judge, she was Vice-President of the Industrial and Fair Employment Tribunal from 2008-2010. She was called to the Bar in 1986.

### Joanne Morrison



After graduating from QUB with a Masters in social work in 2001, Joanne spent a year working in a leprosy hospital in Nepal. On returning to Northern Ireland she worked until 2017 for the Positive Futures charity, where she specialised in supporting and advocating for children and adults with learning disabilities. Joanne is in her final year of a PhD at the Tizard Centre, University of Kent, researching communication for people with learning disabilities when giving evidence in court. She has published two papers in relation to these studies. Joanne has a particular interest in the needs of vulnerable people in the criminal justice process. She has been a registered intermediary in Northern Ireland since 2014 specialising in assessing communication needs of vulnerable children and adults with neurodevelopmental disorders and learning disabilities. In addition, she has been a lay magistrate in family and youth courts since 2005. Joanne currently lectures on communication needs of people with learning disabilities at University of Kent.

### Jenny Humphreys



Jenny Humphreys MRCSLT HCPC (Reg) obtained a BSc in Speech and Language Pathology in 2000 and worked for the National Health Service until 2016. Her work included the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of children and adults with communication difficulties and/or impaired swallow function, in both the acute and community settings. Having been trained by the Department of Justice and qualified as a Registered Intermediary in 2016, Jenny has worked as a full-time RI since then. Within her role, Jenny assesses both children and adults with various diagnoses e.g. learning disability, head injury, hearing impairment, language disorders, ADHD, mental health issues, young age, all of which potentially impact upon their ability to communicate coherently.

### Diane Nixon



Diane Nixon is the Director of Education at IPLS. She was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 1997. She practised full-time as a barrister until she returned to Northern Ireland in 2008 when she combined teaching with professional practice at the Bar. She was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 2008. In 2013 Diane qualified as a police station representative (Cardiff University) under the Solicitors Regulation Authority and Legal Aid Agency scheme regulations for England and Wales. She is also "duty-qualified" for England and Wales. Diane was appointed Chief Examiner (Professional Ethics) to the Bar Standards Board for the Bar Professional Training Course in 2019, having held the post of Assistant Chief Examiner since 2014. She is a member of the Central Examinations Board of the Bar Standards Board and the Curriculum and Assessment Review Group convened by the Bar Standards Board. Diane is an approved trainer for the Middle Temple Pupillage Advocacy Programme. At IPLS she is responsible for the Bar Advocacy and Criminal Litigation modules as well as Mooting. She has been involved in the delivery of Vulnerable Witness training since 2019.

[www.qub.ac.uk/schools/InstituteofProfessionalLegalStudies/](https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/InstituteofProfessionalLegalStudies/)



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## How to get more information

Visit our website for the latest availability, dates and fees:

[www.qub.ac.uk/schools/InstituteofProfessionalLegalStudies/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/InstituteofProfessionalLegalStudies/) or contact us on **028 9097 5699**

or e-mail: **Claire Armstrong** on [c.a.armstrong@qub.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.armstrong@qub.ac.uk)

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