



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

School of Law

**QUB / NORTHERN IRELAND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE PhD RESEARCH
STUDENTSHIP**

The School of Law is delighted to announce a PhD studentship, funded as a Collaborative Studentship by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and the Department of Justice (DoJ). The successful candidate will research the topic of 'Sexual History Evidence in Northern Ireland Trials: Prevalence, Impact and Reform', spending part of their time on placement at DoJ as an integral part of their research.

WHAT THE STUDENTSHIP WILL COVER:

- The funded studentship may cover UK tuition fees, plus an enhanced DfE stipend, for a maximum of three years. For further details re eligibility criteria (including academic, citizenship and residency criteria) please click on the [DfE Research Eligibility Guidance Notes](#).
- The researcher will, alongside the normal facilities available in the School of Law and the Graduate School, have access to desk space at the DoJ, engagement with staff from the Gillen Review Implementation Team (the Team responsible for taking forward the 253 recommendations in the 2019 high profile review into sexual offence trials in Northern Ireland led by Sir John Gillen), and direct access to the criminal justice system and its partners. They will have access to sensitive criminal case information and work alongside a statistician within the DoJ to analyse the data.

To apply, please complete an application form on the Queen's University [Postgraduate Applications Portal](#) including a curriculum vitae (CV) and a proposal of up to 1000 words (including references but excluding bibliography). In the proposal, applicants should demonstrate their understanding of key concepts and literature regarding the law governing sexual history evidence and the recommendations made in the 2019 Gillen Review in respect of this specific evidential issue, commenting on the research approaches and methods they would wish to use if awarded this studentship.

The closing date for applications is Monday 31st May 2021 at 4pm.

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed (online) during June at a time and date to be arranged.

Candidates will be notified by the end of June/beginning of July of the outcome of their application.

Please insert the code **LAWDOJ into the Funding section within your application form.**

ELIGIBILITY

- UK residents: fees plus stipend.
- Other EU residents: fees only.
- Please note this studentship is not available to international students.

For further details re eligibility criteria (including academic, citizenship and residency criteria) please click on the [DfE Research Eligibility Guidance Notes](#)

- Study can only be undertaken on a full-time basis.
- Qualifications:
 - An Upper Second or First Class Honours degree (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) in law or another relevant discipline, plus a Master's degree (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) with an average above 60%.
 - Applicants with an Upper Second or First Class Honours degree (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) in law or another relevant discipline who are currently studying a Master's degree (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) will also be considered.
 - Applicants with an Upper Second or First Class Honours degree (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) in law or another relevant discipline plus evidence of ability to conduct independent and original research will be considered on a case by case basis.
- For further details re eligibility criteria (including academic, citizenship and residency criteria) please see the [DfE Research Eligibility Guidance Notes](#).

RESEARCH PROJECT

Title: A Critical Evaluation of the Admission of Sexual History Evidence in Northern Ireland Trials: Prevalence, Impact and Reform

Summary: This research project has been co-designed with the Gillen Review Implementation Team. The project focuses on the recommendations in the 2019 Gillen Review relating to the admission of sexual history evidence in sexual offence trials, as governed by Article 28 of the Criminal Evidence (NI) order 1999. It seeks to address the lack of evidence-based research on this matter in NI through an analysis of case files.

The research will be guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What are the key controversies and debates as described in the literature to date on the law surrounding the admission of sexual history evidence?
- 2) What is the extent of article 28 applications regarding the admission of previous sexual experience in trials in NI?
- 3) To what extent is evidence of previous sexual history admitted in the absence of an article 28 application and how is such evidence handled within the trial context?
- 4) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the reforms to law and policy in respect of sexual history evidence as set out in the 2019 Gillen Review?
- 5) In light of the empirical data, are further reforms needed in this area?

Requirements: The researcher should have sufficient knowledge of the social, legal and policy issues in relation to the law governing sexual history evidence and the 2019 Gillen Review, as well as experience of or knowledge of both qualitative and quantitative research methods; this may emerge out of prior studies of or practice in law, but could similarly be demonstrated through study or work in other relevant fields.

Further information: Contact Dr Eithne Dowds (e.dowds@qub.ac.uk)