



Zehrah Hasan

YEAR OF CALL: 2016



Zehrah practises in immigration, asylum, education, and public law, with particular expertise in LGBTQI+ asylum, human rights cases, detention challenges, and representing survivors of torture, gender-based violence, trafficking, and exploitation.

Zehrah has previously worked at several leading non-profit organisations in the sector, including as the Advocacy Director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), as a Consultant Lawyer at Rainbow Migration, and in legal, policy, and campaigning roles at Liberty and Southall Black Sisters.

She has subsequently worked and advised on many strategic legal challenges, both as counsel and in NGOs, including on immigration detention, asylum accommodation and migrant workers' rights.

She is also a founding Director of Black Protest Legal Support, was the Coordinator for the trade union Legal Sector Workers United, and served as Vice-Chair of the Human Rights

Lawyers Association. Zehrah is an experienced media spokesperson and has appeared on Newsnight, Sky News, BBC News and LBC.

"Zehrah Hasan... is the full package. She is an eloquent advocate with excellent client and solicitor rapport. She is willing to put up a fight and knows how to manage all parties expectations in a professional way."

SOLICITOR CLIENT

"She [is] diligent, extremely engaged and fired up by the injustice at the heart of these systems. She is an extremely clear, effective and efficient communicator and... a pleasure to work with."

SOLICITOR CLIENT

"Zehrah was very professional in dealing with my hearing. She communicated with me in advance and was very helpful. She addressed my concerns to the judge. She got to the point of everything we discussed and was very responsive, explaining everything clearly. I really do recommend Zehrah Hasan. A very articulate, knowledgeable and helpful barrister."

NATIONAL PRO BONO CENTRE CLIENT

"It has been a genuine pleasure every time I have instructed Zehrah. She is invariably immaculately prepared and... her understanding of the law and its application is very strong. Zehrah is also very generous with her time and has been only too happy to answer questions about the law that do not necessarily relate to a case she is instructed on."

SOLICITOR CLIENT

"It has become apparent from my time working with Zehrah... how sincerely she cares for the wellbeing of our clients, and clients have mentioned to me how she is able to instill confidence in them help their understanding of issues."

SOLICITOR CLIENT

"I found Zehrah extremely supportive and pleasant in supporting me on my case. Her excellent interpersonal skills puts me at ease in a way that supports my mental health...Zehrah is very dedicated ... [and] patient when providing advice and answering questions to give her client a better understanding... She worked considerably hard in a short time to deliver legal preparation and I felt fully supported."

NATIONAL PRO BONO CENTRE CLIENT

If you would like to get in touch with Zehrah please contact the clerking team:

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You can also contact Zehrah directly:

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IMMIGRATION: ASYLUM & HUMAN RIGHTS

Zehrah has extensive experience appearing in the First-tier and Upper Tribunals in relation to a range of immigration matters, including asylum, human rights, deportation, entry clearance, family reunion, and EU Settlement. She has particular expertise in representing LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum, and has assisted Rainbow Migration's legal team as a Consultant Lawyer, where she advised on individual claims, worked on strategic litigation, and policy interventions.

Zehrah is well-suited to accepting instructions in cases where lay clients have particularly complex needs or vulnerabilities, including survivors of trafficking, modern slavery and exploitation, and those with severe psychological conditions where capacity issues may be engaged.

IMMIGRATION: PERSONAL AND BUSINESS

Zehrah accepts instructions related to settlement applications, British citizenship and naturalisation applications and other visas, including visit visas, family life applications, and those relating to the Points Based System. She has extensive experience in partnership applications and family reunion.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

Zehrah accepts instructions on a variety of public law matters relating to asylum and immigration, including unlawful detention, certification and inadmissibility challenges, delay cases and trafficking decisions.

She has also worked with several leading NGOs in the migration sector on high-profile public law cases. In 2023, whilst working as a Consultant Lawyer for Rainbow Migration, she contributed to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's legal challenge against the Illegal Migration Act 2023, which was successful in the High Court in Belfast.

In 2022, Zehrah was instructed as junior counsel for Detention Action (Intervenors), in a challenge concerning the children of the Jamaica 50. In 2023, she was also instructed to advise JCWI on a matter concerning 'hostile environment' policies in the workplace and the duties of public authorities.

Zehrah also accepts instructions on wider public law matters concerning education law, protest rights, and prison law, and in particular where these issues intersect with migrants' rights.

COMMUNITY CARE LAW

Zehrah accepts instructions in asylum accommodation challenges. She has worked extensively on these issues in legal, policy, and campaigning roles, and is experienced in challenging accommodation transfers to unsuitable accommodation, particularly for queer and trans people, and other vulnerable groups.

CLIMATE JUSTICE

Zehrah accepts instructions in cases concerning climate justice and migration. Whilst working at JCWI, she co-developed legal and policy frameworks around climate and migration, and has a particular interest in running strategic cases for people seeking protection or settlement in the UK as a result of climate breakdown in the Global South.

EDUCATION LAW

Zehrah accepts instructions in a range of education law matters. She has particular expertise in education matters concerning racial injustice, LGBTQI+ rights, and protest law. Zehrah has previously worked with young people, their families, and grassroots community groups to challenge school exclusion and disciplinary decisions, including a high-profile campaign arising from student protests against racially discriminatory school policies. Zehrah therefore welcomes instructions on matters where students' protest rights are concerned.

Further, given Zehrah's extensive experience in immigration law, she is especially suited to education matters where immigration issues arise and clients require interdisciplinary expertise. Similarly, she has experience in youth justice work and challenging the criminalisation of racialised young people in the UK - both as a former criminal defence practitioner and having previously undertaken consultancy work for the Youth Justice Legal Centre and Just for Kids Law.

Consequently, Zehrah situates her education law practice within a wider framework of trying to dismantle the school to prison pipeline and the ways in which structural issues, such as racism, ableism, and transphobia, impact the lives of children and young people in educational settings. Zehrah is able to compassionately, sensitively and expertly work with children, young people and their families - and has previously supported organising work led by groups such as No More Exclusions and Kids of Colour.

BACKGROUND

Prior to pupillage, Zehrah worked on the Policy and Campaigns team at human rights advocacy group – Liberty. There she led parliamentary and public-facing interventions on issues including domestic abuse, abortion rights and LGBTQIA+ equality. She also worked on campaigns challenging immigration detention, the Government's 'hostile environment' policies, and police use of surveillance technologies.

Zehrah spearheaded Liberty's policy and advocacy work to secure legal protections for migrant survivors of domestic abuse, as part of the Step Up Migrant Women coalition. Owing to her in-depth knowledge in this area, she gave oral evidence in Parliament as an expert witness to the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill, briefed the Joint Committee on Human Rights, and drafted submissions for the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture.

In addition, she worked on campaign strategies and briefed parliamentarians on abortion rights in Northern Ireland, reforms to the Gender Recognition Act 2004, and ending indefinite immigration detention. She was also the UK focal point for the Religious Freedoms and Equal Treatment group of the International Network

for Civil Liberties Organisations.

Zehrah previously specialised in assisting migrant and black, Asian and minoritised ethnic (BAME) survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence. As Legal, Policy and Campaigns Officer at Southall Black Sisters, she managed complex casework and strategic litigation for vulnerable clients and worked with the Director on the organisation's legal intervention in *HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills v The Interim Executive Board of Al-Hijrah School* [2017] EWCA Civ 1426 – where they successfully challenged gender segregation in co-educational faith schools.

Prior to this, she worked as part of the legal team at the London Black Women's Project, advising women of their rights and options when fleeing domestic abuse. This included providing legal and practical advice to clients on housing, immigration, family and welfare benefits law.

During her pupillage year, Zehrah was awarded [The Atkin Senior Scholarship](#) and [The Ann Felicity Goddard Scholarship](#).

PUBLICATIONS

The Socialist Lawyer: [Legislating Violence – the Nationality and Borders Bill](#) (2022)

Gal-Dem: [The Gal-Dem Guide To Stopping A Deportation Flight](#) (August 2022)

Huck: [Representation In Politics Doesn't Mean Progress](#) (July 2022)

Novara Media: [The Tories' Anti-Protest Clampdown Will Hit Black and Brown People Hardest](#) (March 2021)

The Justice Gap: [Tier 4 And The Criminal Courts: Business As Usual](#) (December 2020)

Liberty (Blog): [UN Poverty Report: Five Ways the UK Can Clean Up Its Human Rights Record](#) (May 2019)

Huffington Post: [The Domestic Abuse Bill Fails Migrant and BAME Women](#) (March 2019)

Liberty (Blog): [Liberty's Christmas Wishlist](#) (December 2018)

Gal Dem: [The UK's Gender Recognition Act needs reforming: let's act now](#) (October 2018)

Unlocking Detention: [How to: Help indefinite detention](#) (October 2018)

Liberty (Blog): [New Domestic Abuse Laws Cannot Become A Missed Opportunity](#) (October 2018)

Liberty (Blog): [Safety, Security And Support - Transforming The Response To Domestic Abuse](#) (June 2018)

Guardian (Interview): [Lewis Ewu: 'Every single person has a unique, inherent worth'](#) (April 2016)

Guardian: ['I've seen how debating skills win the argument for rehabilitation in jail'](#) (August 2015)

Institute of Art & Law: [Rauschenberg Trustees await verdict on \\$60 million claim](#) (August 2014)

Institute of Art & Law: [Power struggle between Coram and Foundling Museum ends in settlement](#) (August

2014)

The Justice Gap: [GCHQ legal challenge: 'You can't use national security as trump card'](#) (October 2013)

TRAINING AND SEMINARS

2024

'The Time Is Now: Power, Accountability, and the Fight for Migrant Justice, JCWI, 25 April 2024

2022

'What comes after we abolish borders?', Verso, 29 November 2022

'Refugees and migration – law, reality & hope', The James Kennedy Podcast, July 2022

['The master's tools – legislative updates'](#), LEFT/OVER, June 2022

2021

['Weekly Economics Podcast: The Police Bill'](#), New Economics Foundation, 18 June 2021

2019

Chair- 'A Representative Legal Profession', Human Rights Lawyers' Association, Goldsmiths, University of London

Chair- 'Gender Recognition and Human Rights – Reforms to the Gender Recognition Act 2004', Human Rights Lawyers' Association, Garden Court Chambers

Panellist- 'Abortion Rights in the UK', INCLO, Irish Council for Civil Liberties, Lawyers for Choice and University of Birmingham, Dublin

Chair- 'Equality, Dignity and Safety – migrant women and the Domestic Abuse Bill', Human Rights Lawyers' Association, 11 King's Bench Walk

Panellist- 'Campaigning to End Indefinite Detention', Young Lawyers Making Change, Public Law Project, the Legal Education Foundation and Young Legal Aid Lawyers, BPP Waterloo

Panellist- 'No Recourse, No Safety', Raising Women's Voices, House of Lords

Panellist- 'The draft Domestic Abuse Bill – ensuring it works for all', APPG on Domestic Violence and Abuse, House of Commons

2018

Panellist- 'The Hostile Environment for migrants – how is it affecting our communities?', Barnfield Education Project, Greenwich Diversity Conference

Panellist- 'Challenging Indefinite Immigration Detention', Deport Deprive Extradite, Rich Mix

Panellist- 'State Violence and Our Communities – Dismantling the Hostile Environment', NUS Black Students' Conference, Bradford

AWARDS

The Atkin Senior Scholarship (2020)

The Ann Felicity Goddard Scholarship (2020)

HRLA Bursary Award, Human Rights Lawyers' Association (2016)

Overseas Internship Scholarship, the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn (2016)

Treasurer's Award, the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn (2016)

Residential Scholarship, the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn (2015-2016)

Richard Yorke Scholarship, the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn (2015)

Vocalise Award, the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn (2015)

CPE Award, the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn (2014)

PRO BONO WORK

In 2016, Zehrah completed an internship with the Women's Legal Centre in Cape Town, South Africa – which was funded by scholarships from the Human Rights Lawyers' Association and Gray's Inn. There she worked on the Centre's 'health and human rights' stream, for which she drafted submissions on HIV discrimination for the Kenyan High Court, an amicus curiae brief on trans prisoners' rights for the South African Equality Court, and led an investigation with the Commission for Gender Equality on coerced sterilisations. She also helped grassroots advocates give legal advice to sex workers across Cape Town.

Alongside studying, Zehrah spent a year as Director of Vocalise – a student-led initiative that runs debating programmes in prisons - where she worked with both adult and youth offenders in over 5 prisons in and near London. She also volunteered with the Migrants' Law Project, assisting with their judicial reviews, and worked as a Legal Assistant for the late Professor Norman Palmer QC CBE - on art, cultural heritage and international human rights law.

EDUCATION

City Law School, Bar Professional Training Course

City University London, Graduate Diploma in Law

University College London, BA (Hons) History

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Liberty

Human Rights Lawyers' Association

Immigration Lawyers Practitioners Association

NEON Spokespersons Network

LANGUAGES

French (Working proficiency)

Spanish (Conversational)

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