Get Involved

Judicial independence and accountability are neglected issues in the UK. Our project hopes to stimulate further research and to publicise work already taking place. We hope that this website will become a forum not only to showcase our own results but to disseminate the work of others. So if you are doing work in this or related fields, and would like your work or event publicised, please contact us. If you want to comment on a recent development, post a comment on our blog. If you just have an interest in judicial independence and accountability, and want to go on our emailing list to be sent updates sign up to our mailing list.

- Read the Project blog (hosted by the Constitution Unit blog)
- Read our original project proposal (pdf)
- Sign up to our mailing list
- Contact us

Wider Research Agenda

Our own research team will pursue the core research questions listed in our proposal. But we cannot do justice to all the issues raised. So we welcome contributions from others, in terms of related research, working papers, published papers, bibliographies. We plan as part of our project gradually to build up a library of resource materials. These will come as much from outsiders as from ourselves. We will publish these resources (or links to them) on our project web page and we hope to leave them as an archive at the end of the project.

Our research project focuses mainly on judicial independence and accountability in the UK, so we particularly welcome contributions on judicial independence in other countries. Our main interest is in comparable democracies in Europe and the common law world. We set out below the sorts of issues on which we are hoping to do work, but welcome contributions from others. We welcome applications from those interested in pursuing PhD research that relates to the Project.

Judges & Parliament

- Dialogue theory: can there be meaningful dialogue between judges, government and Parliament?
- Judicial accountability to Parliament: annual reports; evidence to Select Committees
- Parliament's attitude to the judiciary. Reference to judges in parliamentary debates, and Select Committee reports. Sub judice rule.
- Judges and parliamentary privilege. Anderson; Chaytor; justiciability of parliamentary proceedings.
- Judicial contributions to the work of the House of Lords. What has been lost with the departure of the law lords?

Funding of the Courts

- Determining budget of the Courts Service, Tribunals and Supreme Court
- Roles of Treasury, Ministry of Justice, Chief Executives, Justice Select Committee, Estimates procedure
- Value for money, performance measures, Accounting Officers
- Determination of court funding in other jurisdictions
- Judicial salaries and pensions
Judicial Independence & Accountability in the rest of the UK and the rest of the world

- Relationship between Scottish Government, Parliament and Scottish judiciary
- Relationship between Northern Ireland Executive, Assembly and judiciary of Northern Ireland
- Relationship between Welsh Assembly Government, Assembly and judiciary of England and Wales
- Judicial independence and accountability in the common law world: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, USA, South Africa, India
- Judicial Independence in Europe: the Council of Europe, Venice Commission, France, Germany, etc
- Judicial independence and accountability in developing countries
- Role of international judicial networks

Judicial Leadership & Management

- Internal governance of the judiciary since 2005
- Judicial leadership: representation to government, Parliament, media, public
- Relationship between the Supreme Court and Lord Chief Justice
- Judicial appointments
- Judicial complaints and discipline
- Judicial careers: promotion, postings, extra-judicial appointments

Proper Limits to Judicial Independence

- Judicial speeches since the relaxation of the Kilmuir rules
- Public inquiries and the judiciary
- Extra-judicial functions performed by judges: public inquiries; Parole Board; Parliamentary Boundary Commissions; supervising control orders; Intelligence Services Commissioner

Judges, the Media & the Public

- Portrayal of judges and judicial decisions by the media
- Press and PR strategies of Supreme Court and Lord Chief Justice
- Public opinion about the judiciary

Policy case studies highlighting judicial independence and accountability

- Criminal justice and sentencing policy
- Anti-terrorism legislation
- Prisoners' voting rights
- Family justice review