

LEGAL TECH SEMINAR

BEYOND THE HYPE: AI IN LEGAL PRACTICE

THURSDAY 15TH OCTOBER 4PM - 6PM

Join us for an afternoon exploring the practical realities of legal technology and AI, and what they mean for practitioners today. With contributions from legal technology specialists, a practising barrister and the judiciary, this seminar will look beyond the hype to consider how AI can be used effectively, responsibly and safely within legal practice.



PROGRAMME

4:00pm – Arrival and light refreshments

4:15pm – Welcome by **Lesley Fairclough**, Partner Built Environment & Head of Housing at Ward Hadaway & President, The Newcastle and North of England Law Society

4:20pm – Introduction from **David Dewar**, Associate Director – Head of Contested Litigation, Winn Solicitors and Society Lead on Legal Tech

4:25pm – **Akber Datoo**, Founder & CEO, D2 Legal Technology, Co-Chair of the Technology and Law Committee of the Law Society
Presentation: AI Adoption: Pick a Lane, and Build the Appropriate Guardrails

4:45pm – **Lee Fish**, Barrister, New Park Court Chambers
Presentation: Practical and Regulatory Issues Arising from the Use of AI: A Bar Perspective

5:05pm – **Urfaan Azhar**, Head of Cloud and AI, Jungle IT
Presentation: Making Better Use of the AI Technology You Already Have

5:25pm – Short Refreshment Break

5:35pm – Panel Discussion & Q&A
Chaired by David Dewar, bringing together Akber Datoo, Lee Fish, Urfaan Azhar and His Honour Judge Thomas.

The panel will explore the practical questions facing the profession as AI becomes increasingly embedded in legal work, including professional responsibility, confidentiality, client use of AI, the impact on litigation and the judiciary, and how firms can make informed decisions about adopting new technology.



Venue

Ward Hadaway
Sandgate House, 102 Quayside
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3DX

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LEGAL TECH SEMINAR PRESENTERS

Akber Datoo, Founder & CEO, D2 Legal Technology

Akber Datoo is Founder and CEO of D2LT, an award-winning global legal change consultancy advising investment banks, trade associations and law firms on AI strategy, data and transformation. With a background spanning technology and legal practice, Akber is also Co-Chair of the Technology and Law Committee of the Law Society of England and Wales and sits on the Law Society Council.

Presentation: AI Adoption: Pick a Lane, and Build the Appropriate Guardrails

Akber will explore the different approaches firms can take to AI adoption, from specialist legal AI platforms and open-source models to AI embedded within existing systems and the Microsoft stack. Rather than treating this as a simple product comparison, he will consider how firms can identify the approach that best fits their use cases, technology, risk appetite and operating model, and how to cut through vendor claims to identify genuine value. He will also consider how AI can be adopted safely and translated into practical value while remaining aligned with professional responsibilities.

Lee Fish, Barrister, New Park Court Chambers

Lee Fish is an experienced barrister specialising in serious crime, regulatory and environmental law. He is recommended in leading legal directories and has been appointed to the CPS Serious Crime, Specialist Fraud and Rape and Serious Sexual Offence panels. He is also a Specialist Regulatory Advocate in Health & Safety and Environmental Law.

Presentation: Practical and Regulatory Issues Arising from the Use of AI: A Bar Perspective

Lee will explore the practical and regulatory issues arising from the use of AI from a barrister's perspective. Drawing on his experience of complex and sensitive cases, he will consider the risks practitioners need to be alive to, the changing professional landscape and the responsibilities that arise when AI is used in legal practice.

Urfaan Azhar, Head of Cloud and AI, Jungle IT

A Cloud, AI & Digital Strategy leader with nearly 20 years of experience helping organisations maximise technology investments, simplify operations and align IT with business outcomes. Urfaan focuses on turning technology into a practical business enabler, having led cloud, security and AI transformation initiatives across growing and mid-market organisations. With expertise across Microsoft technologies, AI adoption and strategic consultancy, he helps organisations create practical technology roadmaps that improve productivity, efficiency and collaboration while supporting innovation, growth and long-term success.

Presentation: Making Better Use of the AI Technology You Already Have

Urfaan Azhar will explore how practitioners can make better use of the technology and AI capabilities they may already have access to through existing software, Microsoft 365 licensing and their current technology estate.

The session will focus on practical opportunities to use existing technology more effectively, without necessarily requiring significant new investment, while considering the safeguards and considerations needed when introducing AI into day-to-day legal work.

The Panel Discussion

The seminar will conclude with a panel discussion chaired by David Dewar, bringing together Akber Datoo, Lee Fish, Urfaan Azhar and His Honour Judge Thomas.