

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Artificial Intelligence

Evidence Meeting 7 – Next Steps

Monday, 5 November 2018 | 5:30-7:00 PM - Committee Room 4A, House of Lords



Christina Blacklaws, President, The Law Society

Christina is the 174th president of the Law Society of England and Wales and the fifth woman to hold this office. During the presidential year 2018/19, Christina's main priorities are: (a) Diversity and inclusion - focusing on social mobility and women in leadership in the law, (b) The future of the profession - including legal technology and leading the LawTech Policy Commission, (c) Promoting access to justice for all, and (d) Mental health and wellbeing in the legal profession.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

The Law Society of England and Wales have launched our Technology and the Law Policy Commission to examine the ethical implications of artificial intelligence (AI).

The Commission is an ongoing exploration of the impact of technology and data on human rights and the justice system, examining the future use of algorithms in the justice system of England and Wales, and the implications of the use of algorithms on human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

The issues raised by witnesses at this stage can be crystallised into three points:

1. **Impact:** The use of algorithms in the justice system can have enormous benefits or devastating consequences, depending on how they are coded, the data they use, the situations and circumstances they are used in, the knowledgeability of the users, and the perceived fairness and legitimacy of the algorithms.
2. **Fairness:** The key question is how can we ensure that algorithms are used in the right areas/spheres, using the right datasets, in a way that is fair, non discriminatory, and that there is proper human oversight and remedies for the users and those on the receiving end of decisions.
3. **Expert approval:** There are various models that can be used to achieve those aims, but so far we have heard a lot of experts suggesting we need a multi-disciplinary panel of experts from various sectors that would approve, or do an accreditation, of specific algorithms for use in specific circumstances, according to specific set of criteria, both ethical and practical.

We will publish our final report next year on the findings of the Commission.