



Dr S Chelvan

Year of Call: 1999

Practice Summary

Dr S Chelvan ('Chelvan') is an award-recognised Advocate (Called to the Bar 1999, Inner Temple (Major Scholar)), Academic (Adjunct Professor, Research Centre for International Law and Globalisation, Southampton Law School 1/9/22 to 31/7/29), and Activist (Society Section, The Guardian, The Times and The Times Lawyer of the Week, 12/12/24).

Chelvan has been ranked as a Leading Junior in Immigration at the London Bar since October 2006 and in 2026 is ranked in both Tier One by Legal 500 and Band One by Chambers UK Bar. He is peer-reviewed as "an innovative leader... pushing the boundaries of the law..." and "at the top of his game".

Chelvan was awarded a First from the University of Southampton (BSc Soc Sci Politics and Law, ranked 1 in department of 70 ('98)), a Masters (LL.M) from Harvard Law School ('01) (Kennedy Memorial Trust Scholar ('00)), and a PhD in Law from King's College London ('19), gained whilst practising full-time at the Bar. In November 2024, Chelvan was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Open University (DUniv) in recognition of his national and international impact in law, specifically with respect to education of the underprivileged and commitment to the rule of law and social justice.

His awards in recognition of his professional achievements include Legal Aid Barrister of the Year ('14), Attitude Magazine Pride Award ('18), LGBTQ Trailblazer, Attitude Magazine ('22), and the Lifetime Achievement Award, (inaugural) Vice-Chancellor's Outstanding Alumni Awards, University of Southampton ('22).

Chelvan's contribution to Refugee Status Determination over the past 25 years ranges from credibility assessment, including UNHCR Guidance Note No. 9 ('12) and the DSSH model ('11), described as "a simple starting point that cuts across borders" (Newsweek Europe '14).

His work also includes country background material, including as ICI SOGIE Thematic Reviewer ('20), case commentary including Put Your Hands Up If You Feel Love and Voice for the Silenced: Aderonke Apata, and Diary of a Strategic Litigation Lawyer ('26). His work has also received Parliamentary recognition, including at the European Parliament ('11) and in the House of Lords, Hansard col. 1791, 10 May 2023.

Chelvan is a regular legal commentator on refugee, migration and human rights issues both nationally and internationally. For over 20 years, he has delivered lectures and training on a wide range of topics linked to refugees and migration. In 2026, Chelvan delivered a keynote speech in Sweden on the Misapplication of the DSSH Model at the May 2026 Uppsala University 'LGBTQ Refugees in the Welfare State: Research, policy and practitioners in dialogue', and will be part of the immigration panel for the inaugural ELLA (European LGBTQ+ Lawyers' Association) Conference held in London on 16–18 September 2026. On 4 November, he will deliver a keynote speech on LGBTQ+ Refugees at the Queer World International Conference ('Intersectionality and Migration') in Oslo, Norway, and training Norwegian asylum decision-makers on 5 November 2026. Chelvan has also accepted an invitation from the Swiss Department of Justice to provide further training in 2027, having previously provided training for Swiss asylum decision-makers in March 2016.

Since August 2021, Chelvan has provided legal commentary to media outlets both domestically in the UK, including the BBC, Good Morning Britain, Sky News, Channel 4 News, LBC, Channel 5 News, BBC Radio 5 Live, Times Radio and Talk TV, as well as internationally through the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

In July 2026, Chelvan was invited to discuss the Government's plans to change legislation in relation to the deportation of the Rotherham Grooming Gang leader, including on Channel 5 and Talk TV. He additionally discussed on BBC News how the UK deals with deporting those convicted of serious crimes before they arrive in the UK.

From 2025, points of law arising in cases Chelvan has been instructed on have contributed to the UK Government lobbying to amend Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights ('ECHR'), and His Majesty's Opposition party committing to leaving the ECHR (Secretary of State for the Home Department v RC (the 'Zimbabwe case')).

Asylum

"I am deeply grateful for Dr. S Chelvan's exceptional guidance and support during my case. His passion for human rights and dedication to humanity were evident throughout my journey. He treats every client with fairness and respect, regardless of background or status, valuing honesty and hard work above all. Courageous, principled, compassionate, dedicated, he always reminded me "Knowledge is power" "Thank you, Dr. Chelvan for your unwavering support and for making a meaningful difference."

Z, Gay Pakistani Student, Direct Public Access Client, March 2026 Home Office Grant of Refugee Status following Interview.

Having practiced in the field of LGBT+ ("Queer") refugee and human rights law since 2001, Chelvan has been recognised as the leading legal expert by the UK's Legal Directories since 2006, spearheading some of the leading cases since 2005 (Tier 1 in Immigration Legal 500 since 2017). Since 2010, Chelvan has been consulted as an internationally recognised expert by the United Nations, the IOM, national governmental departments, lawyers and NGOs.

Chelvan's Difference, Stigma, Shame and Harm ('DSSH') model, was created by Chelvan in 2011 as a positive tool to determine an LGBT+ asylum claim. The model is used globally, and has been endorsed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees since 2012 [62], EASO, the IOM, the IARLJ and used by various governments, including the UK's Home Office since 2015 (see CREDO2, 2015, Chapter XI). Newsweek Europe in 2014 described the model as 'a simple starting point that cuts across borders'.

In supporting his 2018 Attitude Magazine Pride award, the Nigerian lesbian activist Aderonke Apata, who successfully gained asylum after a 13 year battle after Chelvan was instructed, commented, 'the way that he fought .. and they [the Home Office] gave me asylum, that's magical to me'. Danila Stepin, another of Chelvan's clients who feared persecution in Russia said, 'Chelvan is really an admirable man, he saves peoples lives'.

In October 2019, Chelvan was appointed by the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information ('IAGCI') as the Independent Reviewer on Home Office Country of Information Report on Sexual orientation and Gender identity or Expression. His 400 page review of 31 COI reports was filed on 10 February 2020, and reviewed by the IAGCI on 31 March 2020. The Independent Chief Inspector on Borders and Immigration filed his report addressing the review and its recommendations on 13 October 2020. Both the ICI report (with Chelvan's report at Annex C), and the Home Office's response to the report, were published on 8 December 2020. Out of Chelvan's 10 recommendations, the Home Office fully accepted six, and partially accepted two (see pages 6 to 7 of main report).

For over 20 years Chelvan has delivered lectures and training on a wide range of topics linked to refugees and migration. In 2026, Chelvan delivered a keynote speech in Sweden on the Misapplication of the DSSH Model at the May 2026 Uppsala University 'LGBTQ Refugees in the Welfare State: Research, policy and practitioners in dialogue', and will be part of the immigration panel for the Inaugural ELLA (European LGBTQ+ Lawyers' Association) Conference held in London on 17-18 September 2026. On 4 November, he will be delivering a keynote speech on LGBTQ+ Refugees at the 'Queer World International Conference' ('Intersectionality and Migration') this year held in Oslo, Norway, and training Norwegian asylum decision-makers on 5 November 2026. Chelvan has additionally accepted an invitation from the Swiss Department of Justice to provide further training in 2027, having previously provided training for Swiss asylum decision-makers in March 2016 (date tbc).

From 2025, points of law arising in cases Chelvan has been instructed on have contributed to the UK government lobbying to amend Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights ('ECHR'), and His Majesty's Opposition party committing to leaving the ECHR (Secretary of State for the Home Department v RC ('the Zimbabwe' case)).

Key Cases:

A: EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS:

MI v Switzerland 12 NOVEMBER 2024 (COMMUNICATED AS FINAL JUDGMENT 14 FEBRUARY 2025):
JUDGMENT - GRANTED APPLICATION ON ARTICLE 3 ECHR GROUNDS -REAL-RISK TO GAY MAN FROM IRAN - PROCEDURAL APPROACH OF SWISS GOVERNMENT (ARTICLES 8, 13, AND 14 ECHR) WAS NOT SUBSTANTIVELY ADDRESSED

(INSTRUCTED ON BEHALF OF INTERVENORS - Leading Haydee Dijkstal)

Application: (M.I v Switzerland -Application no.56390/21) .(21 October 2022 written submissions (Intervenor)

African Rainbow Family and Stonewall were the UK-based gay and refugee charities who were granted permission to intervene.

Jaqueline McKenzie, Partner and Head of Immigration at Leigh Day and Co, instructed Dr S Chelvan, Head of Immigration and Public Law, leading Haydee Dijkstal, Head of International Law, to draft the intervention submissions. Dr Chelvan's pupil (2022-23), Holly Armstrong, assisted.

The Times Lawyer of the Week (12 December 2024) "S Chelvan on acting for gay and refugee charities"

H.A. v the United Kingdom (Application no. 30919/20) - Leading Haydee Dijkstal, Head of International Law.

5 DECEMBER 2023 - ARTICLE 3 ECHR FUTURE RISK TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEE FROM LEBANON

UNRWA REFUGEE CAMP - ACCEPTED RISK OF FORCED RECRUITMENT FROM EXTREMIST ARMED GROUPS (Judgment - 5 December 2023: Admissibility Granted, No Violation of Article 3 ECHR - only one of two judgments in 2023 where the United Kingdom was the respondent Convention party state).

Stateless Palestinian refugee from UNRWA camp in Lebanon – whether domestic Courts in refusing asylum under Article 1D of the 1951 Refugee Convention erred in not addressing future risk on return under Article 3 ECHR. Case communicated to the UK on 28 October 2020, published on 16 November 2020, UK Observations by 25 May 2021, and Applicant Reply to UK Observations lodged on 9 August 2021 (instructed by Vanessa Delgado, Duncan Lewis Solicitors).

Led Aqsa Hussain for written application stage (July 2020).

SEXUAL IDENTITY ASYLUM CLAIMS (Lead Counsel for Interventions for International Human Rights Non-Governmental NGOs):

(2014) A.E v Finland (Application no: 30953/11) (Instructed as sole Counsel by ECRE, FHRL, FIDH, ILGA-Europe) co-ordinated joint submissions with AIRE Centre/INTERIGHTS/UKLGIG - gay man from Iran (written comments submitted on 19 March 2014, proceedings struck out on the 22nd of September 2015 following positive grant of refugee status by Finland).

(2013) M. E. v SWEDEN, (application no. 71398/12) (written comments dated 9 April 2013 and December 2013). Instructed by FIDH (Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de

l'Homme), ICJ (International Commission of Jurists) and ILGA-Europe (European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association).

Case of gay man from Libya challenging expulsion from Sweden. First case to substantively address risk to gay applicants since earlier 2004 Strasbourg decisions - "Article 3 of the Convention does not permit a Council of Europe member state to expel (even temporarily) a gay man who is genuinely married to a man, or a lesbian who is genuinely married to a woman, if the expelled individual would face a real risk of treatment violating Article 3 in their country of origin if they were to speak publicly (or otherwise be open) about their sexual orientation and their same-sex marriage. The genuineness of the marriage can be determined in the Council of Europe member state, without expelling the individual to their country of origin" [Section 26 of written comments]. Proceedings before the Grand Chamber struck out following positive grant of refugee status by Sweden on 8 April 2015. The only Strasbourg judgment to actually find an article 3 ECHR real risk on return in an asylum claim based on sexual identity is the 17 November 2020 judgment in *B and C v Switzerland* (gay man from the Gambia).

B: SUPREME COURT

FAMILY & ASYLUM LAW:

Interplay between Family Court (Hague convention child abduction cases) and Asylum law (Refugee claims):

G v G [2021] UKSC 9 (19 March 2021) and *G (A Child : Child Abduction)* [2020] EWCA Civ 1185 (15 September 2020) – instructed as asylum expert for Southall Black Sisters (Fourth intervenor, written submissions only). Protection claim made on entry to the UK by South African lesbian abducting mother with child as dependant. Returning father applies for return of child to South Africa pursuant to the 1980 Hague Convention. Procedure and practice guidance provided by the Court of Appeal. Supreme Court allowed ground of appeal affirming a dependent child is an applicant for asylum, where objectively the raise a claim for asylum and therefore the application and/or appeal acts as a bar to removal and implementation of the Hague return order (consistent position of SBS before the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court). See the news article on SBS website (29 March 2021). Instructed by Janet Broadley of Goodman Ray Solicitors, with Charlotte Baker and led by Sam King QC (CoA), and Alex Verdan QC (SCt) (written submissions only).

C: COURT OF APPEAL:

SEXUAL IDENTITY ASYLUM CLAIMS:

Secretary of State for the Home Department v. PG [2025] EWCA Civ. 133 LJJ Bean, Asplin and Baker (Vice-President KBD) Leading Simon Ridding. Home Office appeal against Upper Tribunal Determination (PG) allowing deportation appeal on Article 3 ECHR grounds allowed, by way of remittal back to the Upper Tribunal.

LC (Albania) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2017] EWCA Civ. 351; [2017] 1 W.L.R 4173

(permission granted by Lindblom LJ on 20th October 2016 following 2 earlier adjourned hearings before Lindblom LJ (25 November 2015) and King LJ in February 2016)).

Leading Jessica Smeaton. 2 grounds of appeal (1) FTT and UT's reliance on Country Guidance case of MK (lesbians) Albania [2009] UKAIT 00036 unlawful as set aside by Consent by the Court of Appeal Order in September 2011; and (2) Conduct on return no longer to be followed following MSM (Somalia) [2015] UKUT 00413 and/or contrary to EU law (2004 Minimum Standards Qualification Directive – discretion is not a standard contained in the Directive and is clearly not a more favourable standard) – HJ (Iran) was accordingly wrongly decided. Following DD (see below) – SSHD concedes the first ground of appeal. CA dismissed second ground of appeal finding HJ (Iran) is compatible with the Directive. Case attracted international media attention – see the Guardian, and Pink News.

R (Apatha) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2016] EWCA Civ. 802

Challenge to assessment of actual and/or imputed sexual identity of lesbian internationally recognised activist from Nigeria. Appeal dismissed as material should have been submitted as a fresh claim. Court of Appeal in this unusual case granted a stay on removal pending submission of fresh claim to the Respondent by early August 2016 (including a DSSH model statement). Respondent subsequently treats material as a fresh claim and grants the Appellant an in-country right of appeal. On 1 August 2017, following notification 11 witnesses will be attending hearing to support appellant's evidence she is a lesbian (including Baroness Barker and Peter Tatchell), the SSHD grants the appellant refugee status 13 year battle for status – see article in The Guardian. Chelvan has contributed a chapter on this case in the forthcoming book "The Queer Outside in Law" (eds. Senthoran Raj and Peter Dunne, "Chapter Four: Aderonke Apatha: the Voice of the Silenced", 11 February 2021).

SB (India) and CB (India) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2016] EWCA Civ. 451; [2016] 4 W.L.R. 103; [2016] 2 F.C.R. 221; Times 25 May 2016

Moore-Bick, Gloster and Richards LJ (permission granted by Elias LJ [2014] EWCA Civ. 501 - on 26 March 2014) – Flagrant breach of Article 8 (family life rights) ECHR to remove a married lesbian couple to India where there is no legal recognition and protection of same-sex unions. In first case in a decade to address same-sex relationships in the immigration context, the Court of Appeal recognised the development of Strasbourg jurisprudence recognising right to legal recognition and protection of same-sex couples within Article 8 ECHR (family life) (see Schalk and Kopf (2010) and Oliari (2015)). Appeal dismissed due to lack of flagrant breach. (Junior Victoria Hutton following grant of permission - Public Access and CFA agreement). Case attracted national and international media attention, e.g. articles in The Guardian, Pink News; and The Times of India. Negative findings of fact by the Court of Appeal in 2016 displaced by approach of the Indian Supreme Court on 6 September 2018 in Johar and ors v India. The Delhi High Court are to hear a case on right to same-sex marriage in India in January 2021. The Indian Supreme Court on 17 October 2023 (Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty and anor) dismissed the 'queer marriage' case, but did list the number of fundamental rights denied to same-sex couples due to lack of legal recognition of same-sex relationships. The judgment of the Indian Supreme Court is currently awaiting permission to petition (November 2023)

REVOCATION OF REFUGEE STATUS:

RY (Sri Lanka) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2016] EWCA Civ. 81

Two points of law (1) Excluding from refugee status without proceeding via the Immigration rules and cessation; and (2) Negative finding on rehabilitation when having passed rehabilitation criteria pursuant to statutory guidance (Road Traffic Act). Dismissed on both grounds. Instructed a week prior to the substantive hearing.

INTERNAL RELOCATION:

MS (Afghanistan) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2013] EWCA Civ. 7

Court of Appeal introduces 'new test' for internal relocation alternative, by focussing on lack of risk in place of relocation to be dispositive of asylum claim in circumstances where the Court finds no finding of fact with respect to risk in home area, contrary to what had been the position of both parties to the litigation and the accepted approach prior to this judgment.

COUNTRY POLICY:

GN (South Africa) v SSHD [2012] EWCA Civ 1930 (17th December 2012) – White Gay Man from South Africa - following permission hearing, asylum appeal allowed by Consent in 2013 (see Annex E of 2020 report, pages 428 to 436). Same legal pathway adopted for a successful appeal before the First-tier Tribunal in 2017 (with full costs against the SSHD).

White gay man from South Africa, granted permission to appeal by Laws LJ against Upper Tribunal determination which dismissed his asylum claim, on the basis of effective state protection in South Africa. Upper Tribunal was not provided by the SSHD, prior to the promulgation of the determination, a copy of her own Operational Guidance Note of February 2012, which conceded that there is a lack of effective state protection in South Africa. Permission granted on the basis that it was arguable that the SSHD had a duty to disclose this document to the Upper Tribunal which undermined the basis of her appeal. Appellant successful on asylum and human rights grounds before First-tier Tribunal (IAC) as per HJ/HT Supreme Court guidelines. Chelvan instructed following Upper Tribunal determination.

INTERNAL RELOCATION:

NP (Sri Lanka) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2012] EWCA Civ. 906

The lack of reference to internal relocation in a refusal letter refusing asylum, and/or the lack of reliance on internal relocation either at the First-tier Tribunal (IAC) or in a Rule 24 response to grounds of appeal to the Upper Tribunal, or in written submissions pursuant to specific directions, do not prevent the Upper Tribunal (IAC) from addressing this ground of appeal at a hearing. Article 8 (2) of the 2004 Qualification Directive (internal relocation, if relied upon, to be addressed in the decision on the asylum application), and the SSHD's published Asylum Policy Instruction on Internal Relocation (internal relocation to be raised as a ground in the refusal letter), do not aid the Appellant. Only where there is an unfairness to the opposing party, should there be an adjournment granted, preventing a procedural unfairness. There is no lack of jurisdiction.

DISCRIMINATION AMOUNTING TO PERSECUTION:

OO (Sudan) and JM (Uganda) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2009] EWCA Civ. 1432; [2010] All ER (D) 17 Jun.

Definition of persecution does not arise from unenforced criminal legislation relating to same-sex conduct. However, SSHD concedes that article 8 ECHR violations may amount to persecution [21]. Concession relied on as a gateway into Human Rights prism for Refugee Convention status determination.

SEXUAL IDENTITY CLAIMS:

NR (Jamaica) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2009] EWCA Civ 856, [2009] INLR 169

Appeal allowed on basis that sexual identity is current sexual identity, and is not predicated on teenage sexual experimentation. Concessions relating to risk in Jamaica, and then acceptance of lesbian sexual identity, which were made, and then subsequently withdrawn by the SSHD were lawfully withdrawn. Appeal allowed on remittal to Upper Tribunal (IAC) finding that NR is 'exclusively' a lesbian and there is a real risk of persecution to her in Jamaica even on the basis of a perceived sexual identity- August 2010. Point of law incorporated into SSHD's Asylum Policy Instruction on Sexual Orientation Issues in the Asylum Claim (2010, updated 2011). Case attracted Press attention in both the Daily Mail and the Daily Telegraph

HJ (Iran) and HT (Cameroon) v SSHD [2009] EWCA Civ 172; [2009] Imm A.R. 600

Led by Raza Hussain for HT (challenge to Tribunal's finding that discretion will be reasonably tolerable where there had been a positive finding of past-persecution by state and non-state agents on the grounds of sexual identity as a gay man). This 'reasonable tolerability' test was overturned by the Supreme Court - HJ (Iran) [2010] UKSC 31; [2011] 1 AC 596 - instructed by HT (Cameroon) to deal with national and international media enquiries following judgment - HT granted refugee status in November 2010.

RG (Colombia) v SSHD [2006] EWCA Civ 57; [2006] Imm AR 297

Finding that as the Appellant had been able to be discrete without coming to the attention of vigilante death squads whilst in Colombia, the Tribunal's finding that he can be returned to Colombia was not unlawful - successful fresh claim litigation followed judgment, abandoned before Upper Tribunal only due to grant by SSHD of ILR under legacy in 2011, following indication by UT that would succeed in his article 8 ECHR appeal. Court of Appeal judgment referred to as a 'troubling case' by Counsel for HJ (Iran) in 2010 proceedings before the Supreme Court. Instructed as Sole Counsel.

D: HIGH COURT (FAMILY DIVISION AND ADMINISTRATIVE COURT):

Interplay between Family Court (Hague convention child abduction cases) and Asylum law (Refugee claims):

K (A Child) (Stay of Return Order: Asylum Application) (Contact to a Parent in Self-Isolation) [2020] EWHC 2394 (Fam) (4 September 2020) asylum claim made after exhaustion of Hague proceedings and just prior to enforcement of return order prevents removal. Instructed on behalf of returning mother to the Russian Federation with respect to issues relating to asylum.

R (otao SB (Uganda)) v SSHD [2010] EWHC 338 (Admin) (Hickinbottom J)

Successful judicial review of refusal of fresh claim of a lesbian from Uganda and unlawful detention claim - highlighted that JM (Uganda) CG [2008] UKAIT 00065 -(Chelvan instructed) was distinguished on the facts, and on the basis of post-CG evidence. The First Tier Tribunal allowed SB's substantive asylum claim - determination promulgated July 2010.

GENDER IDENTITY CLAIMS:

AB (Pakistan) (Admin) (unreported) (July 2009, Mark Ockelton sitting as a Deputy High Court Judge)

SSHD concedes fresh claim of trans man from Pakistan during the judicial review substantive hearing (Express news article) – initial claim as a lesbian a year prior to the hearing. SSHD grants refugee status in February 2011, whilst Country Guidance proceedings on first gender identity case to be reported by the Upper Tribunal are being case managed. SSHD also grants refugee status for gay man from Pakistan thereby conceding country evidence of risk to LGBTIs from Pakistan.

E: UPPER TRIBUNAL (IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM CHAMBER):

14 JANUARY 2025: Secretary of State for the Home Department v RC (Upper Tribunal determination dismissing SSHD's appeal against FtT determination in deportation proceedings allowing appeal on basis he will face Article 3 ECHR treatment on return. SSHD PTA to the Court of Appeal refused 5 November 2025 (Lewis LJ).

11 OCTOBER 2024: Secretary of State for the Home Department v KR Upper Tribunal grants SSHD's appeal against positive FtT determination allowing protection (asylum and Article 3 ECHR) and Article 8 ECHR appeal). PTA to the Court of Appeal refused. Application before ECtHR.

DISABILITY/GENDER DOUBLE-BIND - APPROACH TO INTERSECTIONAL ASYLUM CLAIMS:

Jl dismissed 19 April 2022, permission to appeal to the Court of Appeal refused 17 November 2023 – Leading Jake Rylatt – where appeal already successful (with grant of LTR) on 'very significant obstacles' (Article 8 ECHR, paragraph 276 ADE (vi)) whether in a protection claim based on disability, discrimination amounts to persecution and/or persecution based on a gender/disability crosses risk threshold?

REVOCATION OF REFUGEE STATUS - TRAFFICKED YOUNG MAN FROM ALBANIA -ALLOWED APPEAL BY WAY OF REMITTAL:

AA (unreported) (Albanian Trafficking protection claim of young man, revocation of refugee status proceedings) (Upper Tribunal Judge Lesley Smith, leading Dr Austen Morgan) (4 April 2023)

Error of Law (granted), remittal back to the First-tier Tribunal. Successful Error of Law determination against a 81-page First-tier Tribunal determination. Concession preserved, appellant's dependant on mother's successful refugee appeal, with positive findings of past-persecution of this trafficked male appellant, rendered him a refugee in 2015 (G v G applied, see below).

BANGLADESH – CHALLENGE TO THE HOME OFFICE COUNTRY POLICY - LESBIANS NOT AT RISK:

AN (2021) (UJ Sheridan) – Leading Dr Tariq Mahmood – protection claim from lesbian from Bangladesh - remitted back by the Court of Appeal – to address second limb of HJ (Iran) and whether open lesbians have a well-founded fear of persecution in Bangladesh. Substantive hearing before 2-Judge Panel of the UT addressing procedure for when the Home Office rely on the April 2020 Bangladesh SOGIE CPIN as the starting point for risk assessment (inserted in the Court of Appeal Consent Order), but refuse to tender the report author to be cross-examined. Home Office conceded the substantive appeal in September 2021, accepting grant of refugee status to Appellant's girlfriend resulted in Home Office litigation and policy position impermissible (link).

DEPORTATION – JAMAICA – ARTICLE 3 ECHR – GAY MAN:

COB (16 February 2021) (UJ Pitts) appeal dismissed (Leading Shanthi Sivakumaran for pre-hearing written submissions). Chelvan instructed in earlier proceedings in 2008. Deportation proceedings – section 72 certificate upheld by FTT – no error of law. Upper Tribunal holds at paragraph 37, no Article 3 ECHR risk of gay man from Jamaica, where he 'chose to live a discrete gay life in Jamaica previously and that he did so in a manner he found tolerable'.

SUR PLACE ACTIVITY AND FORCED MODIFICATION:

AK - (19 November 2020) (UJ Keith) appeal allowed and remitted - accepted FTT materially erred in finding it could dismiss protection appeal of Iranian Kurdish national, on basis he could evade persecution by deleting Facebook posts of attendance at UK demonstrations prior to return to Iran, in order to evade persecution. The real risk approach has recently been addressed as a positive risk by the Upper Tribunal (see XX (PJAK - sur place activities - Facebook) Iran CG [2022] UKUT 23 (IAC)).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

DD (Albania) (unreported) (November 2019) (leading Jake Rylatt in 2019 stage of proceedings)- asylum claim of Albanian woman subjected to domestic violence allowed accepting on internal relocation to Tirana, the discrimination she will face as a single woman with a child amounts to [13] 'suffering treatment which would, cumulatively, be so serious as to amount to persecution for a Refugee Convention reason.'

INTERNAL RELOCATION:

MB (Internal relocation - burden of proof) Albania [2019] UKUT 392 (IAC) - [24] 'burden of proof rests with the appellant, where the respondent has identified the location'.

DISCRETION TEST:

MA (Cart JR: effect on UT processes) Pakistan [2019] UKUT 353 (IAC) – procedure for amending grounds before the Upper Tribunal following Cart JR remittal. Importantly addresses the 'discretion test' noting the inability of gay man with paranoid schizophrenia to be discreet due to his mental condition [60].

COUNTRY GUIDANCE:

BF (Gay men – Tirana) Albania CG [2019] UKUT 93 (IAC) – Leading Jessica Smeaton. In general a gay man can live openly and freely in Tirana. Permission to appeal refused by the Court of Appeal

([2019] EWCA Civ. 1781).

UNLAWFUL FORCED MODIFICATION:

MSM (journalists – political opinion – risk) Somalia [2015] UKUT 00251 (IAC)

Guideline case prohibiting forced modification of employment when profession linked to actual political opinion (Leading Counsel to Victoria Hutton (stage 1) and Jessica Smeaton (stage 2)).

COUNTRY GUIDANCE CASES:

SW (Lesbians – HJ and HT applied) Jamaica CG [2011] UKUT 00251 - (accepted risk of persecution to lesbians and straight women who cannot 'prove' straight from Jamaica - both cases are still in force as applicable Country Guidance determinations.

TK (LP updated) Sri Lanka CG [2009] UKAIT 00049

Tribunal accepted that risk categories in December 2009 have not diminished since the May 2009 cessation of hostilities. Appeal dismissed on facts with respect to internal relocation alternative – SSHD grants TK Indefinite Leave to Remain prior to oral permission application to appeal to the Court of Appeal. Case superseded by later CG cases.

DW (Homosexuals – Persecution – Sufficiency of Protection) Jamaica CG [2005] UKAIT 000168 (accepted risk of persecution to gay men (and perceived gay men) from Jamaica

SECTION 8 ADVERSE CREDIBILITY FINDINGS:

MM (Section 8: commencement) Iran [2005] UKAIT 0015; [2005] Imm A.R. 666

Section 8 of the 2004 Act (statutory adverse credibility findings) are retrospective to the coming into force of the Act.

F: FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL (IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM CHAMBER):

KENYA - LGBT+ ASYLUM CLAIM - KENNETH MACHARIA:

(Unreported, June 2021) - Significant national and international media attention (eg, The Guardian, Sky Sports, The Evening Standard, Nairobi News, AllAfrica.com), with respect to allowed appeal by the First-tier Tribunal of a gay rugby player from Kenya. Tribunal accepted the Home Office country policy guidance did not accurately reflect the real risk of persecution of gay men in Kenya (link) .Chelvan had been instructed from 2019, in the initial successful challenge to the Home Office decision not to treat Kenneth's further submissions as amounting to a fresh asylum and human rights claim as being unlawful in light of the May 2019 Kenyan High Court judgment upholding the constitutionality of the Criminal Code criminalising same-sex conduct.

Immigration

"We had the absolute honour of having Dr S Chelvan represent our adopted twin daughters citizenship case in 2022/2023. Our family were in exceptionally difficult circumstances, fighting against numerous home office errors, whilst unable to return home to the UK. Dr S Chelvan was not only an incredible barrister through the entirety of our case, but he was a pillar of strength and

support for us. His knowledge was second to none, he was meticulous in compiling our cases, he left no stone unturned and this resulted in our case being won without a single question. Working on our case with him was an honour. Our daughters lives are forever transformed because of Dr S Chelvan, and because of his support and wisdom my husband and I grew more than we ever knew possible."

Lisa and Dash, Direct Public Access client parents of twin daughters - post non-Hague Sri Lankan adoption route, granted British nationality in April 2023.

Dr Chelvan's immigration practice is primarily focussed on deportation cases, procedure and human rights challenges (family life and private life). He has known as forensic in his approach to litigation, and has also developed a reputation in developing the law with respect to costs applications against the SSHD.

I - Recent, Current or Future Significant Cases:

UPPER TRIBUNAL (IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM CHAMBER):

DEPORTATION & COSTS AGAINST THE SSHD:

TDS (March 2020 and August 2020) – Leading David Gardiner – SSHD concedes deportation appeal under article 8 ECHR Immigration Rules, prior to final disposal hearing. Prior to Error of Law hearing the Home Office had become aware the appellant, born in the UK to a Jamaican mother was not a Jamaican national (had not applied for Jamaican citizenship where birth did not confer automatic nationality). SSHD now accepts TDS has no nationality. Upper Tribunal dismiss costs application but accept costs on an indemnity basis against SSHD is available in a statutory appeal before the UT.

II - Significant Cases:

A: SUPREME COURT.

DE-FACTO ADOPTIONS:

AA (Somalia) v Entry Clearance Officer (Addis Ababa) [2013] UKSC 81; [2014] 1 W.L.R. 43 - Led by Manjit Gill QC. Paragraph 352D of the Immigration Rules relating to family reunion of children with parents who have been granted refugee status in the UK covers biological children and de-facto adoptive children who comply with paragraph 309A. The Somali child who has been accepted to have been recognised to have undergone a kafaala under Islamic law, as a result of her father's death and mother's disappearance as a result of persecution arising out of civil war do not come under 352D. Appellant's success under article 8 of the ECHR at first instance provides alternative route for entry to the UK. Supreme Court recommends amendment of Immigration Rules to allow for recognition of parental transfer under kafaala.

B: COURT OF APPEAL:

POINTS-BASED SYSTEM

Kousar and ors v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2018] EWCA Civ. 2462 (Lindblom, Irwin and Baker)

Leading Alex Cisneros for the Appellant – Court of Appeal held no material error of law in rejecting application of Basnet principle where the error has been in the completion of the application form by the Appellant.

CHILDREN:

AM (Pakistan) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2017] EWCA Civ. 180

Leading Junior for Respondent in SSHD's challenge on reliance of parent on 7-year presence of minor children in the United Kingdom as preventing removal (non-deportation proceedings). SSHD's application for extension-of-time and substantive hearing heard as a rolled-up hearing on 15 March 2017, relying on MM (Uganda) and MA (Pakistan). (Junior: Varsha Jagadesham). Secretary of State's application for extension-of-time and appeal allowed. Following KO (Nigeria) and ors v SSHD [2018] UKSC 53 (24 October 2018), SSHD's reliance on MM (Uganda) and MA (Pakistan) was held to be unlawful.

R (on the application of AA (Afghanistan)) v SSHD [2012] EWCA Civ 1643; [2011] EWHC 3820 (Admin)

SSHD's policy addressing 'loss of chance' where there has been an incorrect age assessment leading to denial of grant of LTR under the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children policy ruled unlawful. Unpublished policy was held to be contrary to section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 (for those over 17 years and 6 months but under 18), and to the direction and guidance of the Court of Appeal in AA (Afghanistan) v SSHD [2007] EWCA Civ 12. Claimant's relief on the additional point that he should have been granted refugee status during the period he was accepted to be 18 dismissed (the LQ (age) and DS Afghanistan point). Claimant's grant of 3 years DL overturned by Court of Appeal and remitted to SSHD to decide grant of leave. Court of Appeal additionally directed the SSHD to review the asylum claim on the basis that he is still a child (displacing Ravichandran principle).

DEPORTATION & SETTLED MIGRANTS:

MW (DRC) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2011] EWCA Civ. 1240

Led by Geoffrey Robertson QC – Upper Tribunal (IAC) materially erred in law in not applying the "very serious reasons" requirement of Maslov in determining the deportation of a settled migrant who had been in the UK since he was a young child. SSHD's stated case that he was a member of a criminal gang and was involved in drugs and fire arms was rejected by First-tier Tribunal (see case of V above). However, the First-tier Tribunal held that he knowingly associated" with those involved in gangs. Prior to substantive appeal hearing before the Upper Tribunal SSHD withdrew immigration decision and reinstated Indefinite Leave to Remain.

C: DIVISIONAL COURT:

BREXIT – SINGLE MARKET:

R (WLTB) v Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union [2017] EWHC 629 (Admin) (Anonymity) and [2017] EWHC 630 (substantive application) (3 February 2016)

Acted for 4 migrants (as the Second Claimants in the litigation), who are EU, EEA, dual-National or non-EEA who sought a declaration from the Divisional Court regarding an Act of Parliament authorising exit from the Single Market (Article 127 of the European Economic Area Agreement 1994 and the EEA Act 1993). He was instructed as Sole Counsel for initial hearing on anonymity on 17 January (made final on 3 February 2017 – led by Ramby de Mello). This judgment creates a legal precedent following death threats to Gina Miller in the Brexit litigation and the Article 127/single market litigation led to Orders for Anonymity being granted despite opposition from the media. The case involved submission of evidence of a death threat made on social media to Chelvan, coupled with the threats to Gina Miller, established real risk to safety to the 4 Claimants based on evidence of risk to third parties – this creates a legal precedent with respect to the law on ‘open justice’. Case got reported from the lodging of the application by the Guardian on 29 December 2016 citing Chelvan’s specific involvement. (17 January 2017 anonymity hearing before Sir Ross Cranston): Application for Anonymity Order for four migrant claimants in Brexit 2 application (addressing lack of Parliamentary approval for exiting the Single Market) – attracted national press coverage – press became aware of the proceedings and interjected on basis of public interest – successfully obtained interim relief pending final disposal at the substantive permission application hearing on 3 February 2017 (see above)).

D: HIGH COURT

DUBLIN REGULATIONS:

R (RH and DY) v SSHD [2013] EWHC3295 (Admin) (Lewis J).

Judicial review challenge to decision to transfer Eritrean Claimants to Belgium under Dublin II transfer regime, as the First Claimant was outside the territory for more than 3 months, prior to her re-entry (Article 16 (3) of the Regulations). The Second Claimant has never been to Belgium, and was born following departure. Belgium initially refused transfer request. The substantive hearing considered whether the decision was compliant with duties under Dublin II regulations and sustainable to public law challenges pursuant to irrationality and unfairness. Prior to 9 July 2014 oral permission hearing before the Court of Appeal, the SSHD grants refugee status to both Appellants in June 2014.

RESTITUTION:

R (V) v SSHD [2013] EWHC 765 (Admin) (14th March 2013) Clive Lewis QC (sitting as a Deputy High Court Judge (preceded by earlier litigation: R (V) v AIT [2010] EWCA Civ 491 and [2009] EWHC 1902 (Admin))).

Successful substantive judicial review challenge of SSHD’s failure to grant settlement under 14-year long residence rule, due to character and conduct findings based on allegations of membership of a criminal gang and assertions linking to criminal conduct which did not lead to charges and/or convictions in a criminal court. SSHD conceded that reliance on allegations which had not been proved by a fact finding Tribunal, and relying on spent convictions, were unlawful. The issue to be finally determined was how far back should settlement be back-dated to? SSHD insisted back-dating could only go back to decision under challenge (March 2011). Claimant submitted that ILR be backdated to at the time of the withdrawal of the earlier deportation immigration decision in late July 2010 (based on a negative advice on the merits by her Counsel). Administrative Court held that SSHD’s stance was irrational, and that the guidance of the Court in R

(K) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2010] EWHC 1528 (Admin), when applied in these proceedings, would see a backdating to somewhere within a month of the withdrawal of the earlier decision. Following 2013 judgment, SSHD back-dated grant of ILR to 1 August 2010, i.e. 8 days following withdrawal of earlier immigration decision, which was preceded by 2010 and 2009 litigation. 2009-2010 litigation: Led by Geoffrey Robertson QC - judicial review challenge to Tribunal's preliminary decision allowing SSHD to rely on redacted evidence, and other hearsay evidence, from anonymous witnesses in a deportation hearing where this evidence did not lead to conviction in criminal proceedings. SSHD 10 days prior to substantive appeal before the Tribunal scheduled for August 2010 withdrew her deportation decision. Strasbourg application was about to be lodged to stay proceedings before the domestic Tribunal. V eventually granted 3 years DL pursuant to article 8 in March 2011, following second set of judicial review proceedings commenced to challenge delay in determining outstanding 2005 application. This leads to further challenge and ultimately the successful March 2013 proceedings.

POLICY CHALLENGES:

R (otao Razai and ors) v SSHD [2010] EWHC 3151 (Admin)

Instructed on a pro-bono basis by Allen and Overy LLP on behalf of Bail for Immigration Detainees as intervener – challenging SSHD's new policy in providing section 4 accommodation through pre-bail hearing assessment.

E: UPPER TRIBUNAL (IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM CHAMBER):

APPEAL GROUNDS AND PROCEDURE:

Mahmud (S. 85 NIAA 2002 - 'new matters') [2017] UKUT 488 (IAC); [2018] Imm A.R. 274

Guidance case on raising a new matter on appeal – pursuant to section 85 (6) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (as amended by the 2014 Act). Appeal dismissed on point of law with respect to new relationship pursuant to article 8 ECHR grounds raised post-decision. Appeal allowed on protection grounds only (remittal back to the FTT). Leading Counsel to Jennifer Blair. Currently awaiting PTA decision from the Court of Appeal.

AS (Appeals raising Articles 3 and 8) Iran [2006] UKAIT 00037

An appeal on article 3 ECHR grounds is not precluded on the basis that the appeal has already been allowed at first instance on article 8 ECHR grounds.

Business Immigration

Dr Chelvan represents clients at all levels of Tribunal and appellate Courts adopting a forensic and client focussed approach to litigation. He is specifically parachuted into appellate litigation in the Higher Courts where matters previously have been unsuccessfully litigated.

Dr Chelvan is particularly sought after for Direct Access work for clients who wishes to ensure any application is thoroughly prepared with an eye for detail. He is a sought after public speaker and trainer both here in the UK, and internationally.

International Human Rights

Dr Chelvan has established a strong academic record in International Human Rights Law and since 2023 contributes to the LL.M seminar teaching module in 'International Law, Globalisation and the Individual ' at Southampton Law School, where he is also an Adjunct Professor and member of the Research Centre for International Law and Globalisation. He also contributes to the teaching on the LL.M seminar on 'Contemporary Issues in International Refugee Law'

(24 September 2024) "International Legal Team for British National Welcomes Client's Return to the UK" (link) Joined legal team led by Haydee Dijkstal in June 2023. 10 September 2024 UK return of British client who had been subject to prolonged detention and unfair trial proceedings in Saudi Arabia, leading to a five-year travel ban. Liaised with legal team in Saudi Arabia, addressing legal obligations of governments of the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia.

(2023) Afghan nationals stranded in Pakistan Leading Carl Buckley, instructed via UK-based NGO 'Free From Fear' - working with Spanish representative to draft representations for Afghan nationals stranded in Pakistan post-2021 fall of Kabul, seeking sanctuary via Spanish and/or UK resettlement schemes. September 2024 update, post-instructions, one client family resettled in the United States.

(2022) Warsaw 23 (with LSE Justice Centre) (2021) (instructed by Vanessa Delgado, Duncan Lewis Solicitors) Leading Haydee Dijkstal and Stephen Tawiah - initial advice with respect to 23 Afghan nationals stranded in Poland following forced departure from Afghanistan following August 2021 Taliban takeover of Kabul.

(March 2016) Calais Camps - UN Human Rights Council - With Ramby De Mello and Jessica Smeaton - liaising with French legal team and L'Auberge des Migrants and 'Care4Calais' - application filed with Geneva to apply for relief to address dismantling of refugee camps in the Calais Jungle (interim measures under rule 92 and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 1, 2, 7, 12, 17, 21 and 22).

Family

A. SURROGACY:

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS:

H v the United Kingdom (Application no. 32185/20). Article 8 ECHR right of a child to have her biological father (in a same-sex relationship) named on her birth certificate, rather than the husband of her surrogate mother pursuant to sections 35 and 38 of the Human Fertilization and Embryology Act 2008. Application lodged with the Court in July 2020. Leading Deborah Seitler (Head of Family) and Haydee Dijkstal (Head of International Law). Instructed by Colin Rogerson of BLM following communication with the UK. See Chelvan's Insight "Who Is My Father?" (22 March 2021) (link). Strasbourg decision: inadmissible (23 June 2022) (link to Insight).

B: INTERPLAY BETWEEN HAGUE CONVENTION AND ASYLUM LAW:

SUPREME COURT & COURT OF APPEAL:

G v G [2021] UKSC 9 (19 March 2021), and G (A Child : Child Abduction) [2020] EWCA Civ 1185 (15 September 2020). Instructed as asylum expert for Southall Black Sisters (Fourth intervenor, written submissions only). Protection claim made on entry to the UK by South African lesbian

abducting mother with child as dependant. Returning father applies for return of child to South Africa pursuant to the 1980 Hague Convention. Procedure and practice guidance provided by the Court of Appeal. Supreme Court allowed ground of appeal affirming a dependent child is an applicant for asylum, where objectively they raise a claim for asylum. On this basis there is a bar to implementation of the Hague return order during the application and/or appeal process in order to prevent re-foulment. Instructed by Janet Broadley of Goodman Ray Solicitors.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (Family Division):

K (A Child) (Stay of Return Order: Asylum Application) (Contact to a Parent in Self-Isolation) [2020] EWHC 2394 (Fam) (4 September 2020) - asylum claim made after exhaustion of Hague proceedings and just prior to enforcement of return order prevents removal. Instructed on behalf of returning mother to the Russian Federation with respect to issues relating to asylum.

C: TEST-CASE LITIGATION - PUBLIC LAW/FAMILY LAW:

Chelvan is noted for his forensic approach to test-case litigation, specifically where there is a Public/Family Law element. He specifically advises on the approach to adopted prior to the application giving rise to the decision under challenge, notably where there are sought declarations of incompatibility of domestic legislation with human rights. In *H v UK* (see first entry in this section) Chelvan was instructed from the pre-decision stage as Junior, up to and including the Administrative Court hearing, and was then instructed as Case Leader from the Court of Appeal application (leading one Junior), to the proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights (leading two Juniors).

D: IMMIGRATION ISSUES:

Chelvan has additionally been instructed by those involved in Family proceedings (i.e. parties to the litigation including those representing a child, and those representing Local Authorities) to provide expert reports with respect to immigration or refugee protection issues arising in proceedings both in the UK (including the Supreme Court, *G v G*), and the United States (New York) (Hague Convention).

Court of Protection

Dr Chelvan has been instructed on various matters before the Court of Protection by the Office of the Public Guardian. He uses his background in public law, and strategic litigation, to ensure the best interests of 'P' are fully protected.

Dr Chelvan is also instructed by Local Authorities, in proceedings relating to Deprivation of Liberty.

Direct Access

"I am deeply grateful for Dr. S Chelvan's exceptional guidance and support during my case. His passion for human rights and dedication to humanity were evident throughout my journey. He treats every client with fairness and respect, regardless of background or status, valuing honesty and hard work above all. Courageous, principled, compassionate, dedicated, he always reminded me "Knowledge is power" "Thank you, Dr. Chelvan for your unwavering support and for making a meaningful difference."

Z, Gay Pakistani Student, Direct Public Access Client, March 2026 Home Office Grant of Refugee Status following Interview.

(February 2024 review):

Thandanani Gumede. Former South African Direct Public Access client, Refugee application granted November 2023.

Farrah Luqman, Direct Public Access client, Asylum application granted in November 2023.

"We had the absolute honour of having Dr S Chelvan represent our adopted twin daughters citizenship case in 2022/2023. Our family were in exceptionally difficult circumstances, fighting against numerous home office errors, whilst unable to return home to the UK. Dr S Chelvan was not only an incredible barrister through the entirety of our case, but he was a pillar of strength and support for us. His knowledge was second to none, he was meticulous in compiling our cases, he left no stone unturned and this resulted in our case being won without a single question. Working on our case with him was an honour. Our daughters lives are forever transformed because of Dr S Chelvan, and because of his support and wisdom my husband and I grew more than we ever knew possible."

Lisa and Dash, Direct Public Access client parents of twin daughters who post non-Hague Sri Lankan adoption route, were granted British nationality in April 2023.

Dr Chelvan is registered to accept instructions under the Bar Council Direct Access Scheme (also known as the Direct Public Access Scheme), where suitable.

In the first instance, please contact his clerk Emily Martin via email (emartin@4-5.co.uk) or call his clerks on 020 7404 5252

Chelvan specialises in assisting those who are in the United Kingdom and wish to claim asylum or human rights protection. Chelvan advises in all stages from registering their claim with the Home Office, to the decision stage on the protection or human rights claim, including attending the substantive asylum interview.

Chelvan also accepts instructions, where suitable, on other initial immigration applications, fresh claims, statutory appeals (including the Court of Appeal (e.g. SB and CB (India) (2016)) and judicial review proceedings.

(June 2022), JR (Venezuela), Refugee settlement (2022) following earlier successful Refugee appeal (2017)

"I've worked with Chelvan on two of my cases and I can honestly say, he's been absolutely amazing as my representative. I felt he hit the nail on the head every single time and encouraged me to not give up. He always knew exactly what I needed to do to make my case smooth as possible. He worked alongside me throughout and I felt he understood me, my background and story to great detail. I highly suggest working with him as he's been an absolute saviour. I couldn't thank him enough".

(February 2022), JS, Refugee appeal before the First-tier Tribunal

"My partner and I reached out to Chelvan having seen inspirational and empowering videos online regarding his work for refugees and the LGBTQ+ community. It was clear to see from this Chelvan's passion and unrivalled understanding in this area, and relating to myself in particular, of Sri Lankans seeking refuge in the UK as part of this community. At a time when I needed help, guidance and representation for my asylum claim, Chelvan was there and I felt entirely trusting in his hands. My partner describes him as the Dumbledore of LGBTQ+ asylum cases in the UK, and this feels most apt.

Throughout he held excellent communication with me, so that I felt ownership of this and fully understood how we were to present our case to the court. Chelvan did more than we could even have imagined to help us, which all came to reward when I was granted a positive asylum appeal in the court. I can wholeheartedly say thank you to Chelvan for all his work and support and know that both myself and partner, who I can now remain with in the UK, will be eternally grateful. I feel as though I can now finally concentrate on healing myself mentally and look forward to a bright future."

(June 2021) Kira Brenner (Further Leave to Remain, Five-Year Partner Route)

"Chelvan was absolutely invaluable in my visa application. His depth of knowledge of the immigration system was hugely helpful, and his attention to detail is unparalleled. He caught things about my and my partner's lives that we had missed and made sure that they were appropriately addressed in our application.

We applied for our visa during Covid, which made the process and the waiting even more stressful. Chelvan was always there to reassure us with his detailed knowledge, and many, many kind words. He made the process much less stressful, and we always felt better after speaking with him".

(March 2021) Hammad Akbar - EU Settlement Application:

"[The] level of granular detail Dr Chelvan went to get everything right was absolutely great. He covered every single loophole that could possibly cause the Home Office to reject my application or give me an unfavorable result.

As I have already stated, I had already consulted with other legal experts prior to getting Dr Chelvan onboard. No-one comes close compared to his level of detail, experience and in-depth knowledge of immigration rules."

Qualifications

(1 June 2019) PhD (Law), King's College London.

PhD Thesis 'At the End of the Rainbow: Where Next for the Queer Refugee? Understanding Queer Refugees' Lives: Moving From Sexual Conduct to Identity in Sexual Orientation/Identity Asylum Cases in England and Wales'.

(2001) LL.M, Harvard Law School. Specialising in International Human Rights law and the Lesbian and Gay Liberation Movement.

(1999) Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Legal Studies (BVC), City University. Grade: Very Competent.

(1998) BSc (SocSci) Politics and Law (First class), University of Southampton. Ranked 1 in departmental year-group of 70.

(September 2020) Certificate, Oxford Executive Leadership Programme, Said Business School (University of Oxford). Grade: 97%.

Awards & Prizes

(22 November 2024) Doctor of the University (Honorary Doctorate) Open University (awarded for national and global impact, commitment to the educationally underprivileged, social justice and rule of law)

(2022) Lifetime Achievement Award, Vice Chancellor's (Inaugural) Outstanding Alumni Awards, University of Southampton (July 2022)

(2022) LGBTQ+ 2022 Trailblazer - Attitude Magazine - Banking, Finance and Legal Sector (only practising lawyer listed in this category) (December 2021)

(2018) Attitude Magazine Pride Award.

(2014) Barrister of the Year, Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards (LAPG) (see Society Guardian article). On the Judging panel for the awards 2015-2020.

(2000-2001) Kennedy Memorial Trust Scholar (UK-equivalent of the Rhodes scholarship). (Non-Trustee) Member of the Interview panel 2018-2023.

(2000) Summer 2000 award, Visiting Research Fellow, Centre for International Human Rights Law, Northwestern University, Chicago.

(1998), Major scholarship and Duke of Edinburgh exhibition award, Inner Temple.

Shortlisted Finalist and Visibility:

(2021): Top 10 Outstanding Contributors to LGBT Life - British LGBT Awards. (2022, appointed to the Judging Panel)

(2020 and 2021) Chambers UK Bar awards, Outstanding Contribution to Diversity and Inclusion (finalist).

(2017) Barrister of the Year, the Lawyer magazine awards (only non-QC shortlisted).

(2015) Civil lawyer of the Year, Society of Asian Lawyers awards.

(2015) Powerlist – Black Law Directory – ranked in top 34 BAME lawyers in the Directory's Powerlist;

(2015) Legal Hero - #LegalPride 2015 – the Law Society/Bar Council/CILEX; and

(2015) Independent of Sunday Rainbow List – the 101 most influential LGBTI people in the UK – highest ranked lawyer at number 43 (new entry):

'Chelvan, a barrister and LGBTI activist, has an international reputation in LGBTI asylum law. He developed a model based on recognising difference, stigma, shame and harm, which is now used

routinely in LGBTI asylum cases. It is globally recognised by the UNHCR, governments, NGOs and lawyers'.

Appointments

(since 26 May 2023): Trustee, Albany Trust;

(1 September 2022 to 31 July 2025, extended to 1 August 2026, further extended to 31 July 2029): Adjunct Professor, University of Southampton (Centre for International Law and Globalisation, Southampton Law School) Part-time Lecturer (1 October 2023 for 2023/24 Academic year) and Associate Lecturer (since 17 October 2024) (International Law, the Individual and Globalisation (2023/24 and 2024/25 LL.M Program: Semester One), and Contemporary Issues in International Refugee Law ((2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 LL.M Program Semester Two);

(January 2022, re-elected 2023, and 2024): Inaugural Chair of the Executive Committee and Senior Member of the Advisory Committee, Association of British Tamil Lawyers;

(12 December 2022 to 9 November 2023): Inaugural President, Inner Temple LGBTQ+ Society;

(September 2021- 23 November 2022): Human Rights Advisor to the Memorandum of Understanding (2) Coalition Against Conversion Therapy;

(April 2021): Stonewall - Panel Member, Strategic Litigation Project;

(April 2021): Member, Ayos/ARC Steering Committee on Disability;

(January- December 2021): Inner Temple Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Sub-Committee (co-opted);

(since 27 November 2020): Advisory Group, Scottish Just Law Centre;

(2020): Member of the Judging panel, National Mediation Awards 2020 (re-appointed for 2022);

(October 2019-March 2020): Independent reviewer (SOGIE), Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (report published 8 December 2020 - 6 out of 10 recommendations fully accepted by the Home Office, 2 partially accepted);

(March 2019-March 2021): Member of the Government Equalities Office LGBT Advisory Panel;

(since March 2018): International Rights Officer – UK Black Pride;

(February 2017-September 2022): Trustee, FREEBAR, Founding Member (2017);

(since 2017): ADVOCATE (formerly Bar Pro Bono Unit) reviewer (Immigration). Panel member since 2004;

(2015-2020): Member of Judging panel of the Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards (Legal Aid Practitioners' Group);

(since 2015): Home Office, National Asylum Stakeholders' Forum, Equality Sub-group;

(2014-15): Home Office, LGBT Training Committee, Founding member;

(2010-2011): UK Country Expert and Expert Advisory Panel, Fleeing Homophobia project (Vu University, Amsterdam); and

(2008- January 2022): Committee member of the Equality Diversity and Social Mobility Committee of the Bar Council.

Testimonials

"Chelvan is an innovative leader in this area of law. he has an unmatched work ethic and drive to get the best results for his clients while pushing the boundaries of the law"(Legal 500 2026, Immigration, London Bar, (Tier 1 since 2017) ranked 2007-2010, and since 2014).

"I cannot rate Dr Chelvan highly enough - he's a superb advocate for his clients . his knowledge of the law is second to none and he is able to present his cases expertly" ... "In Immigration and asylum, Dr Chelvan is at the top of his game." .. "he has so much experience in the sector" (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Immigration, London Bar, Band 1 ranked last 20 years, (Band 1 since 2026 edn.)

"A leading authority in the area of immigration and asylum claims. He approaches his cases with empathy, and is known for his strategic and academic approach to addressing complex and novel questions on the law."(Legal 500 2025, Immigration, London Bar, (Tier 1 since 2017) ranked 2007-2010, and since 2014).

"Dr Chelvan has an encyclopedic knowledge of cases and statute but uses it accurately and relevantly." (Chambers UK Bar 2025, Immigration, London Bar, Band 2, ranked last 19 years, (Band 2 since 2023 edn.)

"An excellent oral advocate who is never stumped for an answer in court" (Chambers UK Bar 2024)

"His expertise in sexual identity related asylum claims is world-renowned, and it is clear from just a perusal of Chelvan's reported cases that his knowledge and experience is not limited to asylum law. He is ground breaking in the arguments he makes." (Legal 500 2024, Immigration, LondonBar, Tier 1)

"A genius. The go-to barrister for complex immigration and human rights work" (Chambers UK Bar 2023, Immigration, London Bar, Band 2).

(March 2026 Review):

"I am deeply grateful for Dr. S Chelvan's exceptional guidance and support during my case. His passion for human rights and dedication to humanity were evident throughout my journey. He treats every client with fairness and respect, regardless of background or status, valuing honesty and hard work above all. Courageous, principled, compassionate, dedicated, he always reminded me "Knowledge is power"Thank you, Dr. Chelvan for your unwavering support and for making a meaningful difference."

Z, Gay Pakistani Student, Direct Public Access Client, March 2026 Home Office Grant of Refugee Status following Interview.

023 Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP Diwali Exhibition (6-15 November 2023):

(26 November 2024) Guest speaker.

South Asians that have Lit Up the Legal Industry (exhibition included five other South Asian Lawyers):

On behalf of the South Asians in Law Network at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP, Rhea Ava Patel explains, "The display seeks to showcase inspiring South Asians who have broken down barriers in the legal profession. These individuals have lit up a pathway for other aspiring South Asians to follow in their footsteps and break down even more."

Lifetime Achievement Award, Inaugural Outstanding Alumni Awards:

University of Southampton, July 2022)

"The Lifetime Achievement Award honours an alumnus who has made an outstanding contribution to society over an extended period of time and who is highly regarded in their chosen career field. This award was presented to Dr S Chelvan (BSc Politics and Law, 1998) for tireless work in the field of human rights law and exceptional professional attainment at the very highest level.

Chelvan practices as an immigration and asylum barrister, attracting national and international acclaim. He is well known for his prominent and policy-oriented advocacy for minority and, particularly, LGBTQ+ rights. He is considered the leading legal expert in the UK on LGBTQ+ asylum law."

European Union Asylum Agency, Expert Panel on Credibility Assessment on SOGIE Asylum Claims:

12 October 2022

Nicolas Jacobs, Head of the EUAA Courts and Tribunals Sector.

"Dr S Chelvan's participation in the EUAA Expert Panel on Evidence and Credibility Assessment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression-based Claims offered over a hundred members of courts and tribunals from across the EU a great opportunity to learn more on the emotional journey, the non-conformity and the imputed convention pathway for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers. His expertise is complemented by a most charismatic way of reaching his audience and imparting his extensive knowledge and experience on the topic."

British LGBT Awards 2021 - Top 10 Contributor to LGBT Life:

(nominated, August 2021)

(Judging Panel, 2022).

'Immigration Lawyer Fighting for Queer Refugees

Legal expert on refugee and human rights, Dr Chelvan has been present in the field of LGBT+ asylum specifically for 20 years, consulting for the UN, national government departments and

NGOs. His PhD in Law culminated with a thesis titled 'At the End of the Rainbow: Where Next for the Queer Refugee?' Chelvan's work has illuminated issues on the experience of LGBT+ asylum seekers, and the difficulties they go through in order to receive asylum.'

Attitude Magazine Pride Award 2018:

"The winner of this next Attitude award is a radiant example of the best of humanity. His work has helped change the way LGBT+ people's asylum cases are assessed in the Home Office – got to the core of this matter. His work has even been noted by the United Nations."

Naga Munchetty, BBC Breakfast, introducing Dr Chelvan's Attitude Magazine Pride Award 2018, 6 July 2018.

Legal 500:

"Chelvan is an innovative leader in this area of law. he has an unmatched work ethic and drive to get the best results for his clients while pushing the boundaries of the law"(Legal 500 2026, Immigration, London Bar, (Tier 1 since 2017) ranked 2007-2010, and since 2014).

"A leading authority in the area of immigration and asylum claims. He approaches his cases with empathy, and is known for his strategic and academic approach to addressing complex and novel questions on the law." (2025, Tier 1) "His expertise in sexual identity related asylum claims is world-renowned, and it is clear from just a perusal of Chelvan's reported cases that his knowledge and experience is not limited to asylum law. He is ground-breaking in the arguments he makes" (2024, Tier 1) "Very good on strategic litigation and very intelligent. His expertise in sexual-identity-related asylum claims is world-renowned" (2023) (Tier 1) "His expertise in sexual identity-related asylum claims is world-renowned." (2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022) (Tier 1) "An established reputation as a leading practitioner in immigration human rights cases" (2018) (Tier 1) "Highly regarded for his asylum expertise." (2017) (Tier 1) "An unsurpassed reputation for work with LGBT clients" (2015) (Tier 2) "Committed to forwarding the rights of migrants." (2014). S. Chelvan is a "tenacious battler who fights with vigour and commitment" (2010). Chelvan "is renowned for his expertise in gender identity and sexual orientation cases" (2009/10). S. Chelvan's (with others) record cases with a strong human rights element (2007/08), his "immigration experience" in successful "sexual and gender identity" claims (2008/09)

Chambers UK Bar:

"Dr Chelvan is an esteemed and highly respected immigration barrister who is particularly recognised for his LGBT rights work. His work is international in its scope, while his diverse client base includes many individuals who are fleeing persecution. He has advised and represented academics, governments and activists, as well as individual applicants."

"I cannot rate Dr Chelvan highly enough - he's a superb advocate for his clients . his knowledge of the law is second to none and he is able to present his cases expertly" ... "In Immigration and asylum, Dr Chelvan is at the top of his game." .. "he has so much experience in the sector" (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Immigration, London Bar, Band 1 ranked last 20 years, (Band 1 since 2006 edn.)

"I rate Dr Chelvan's ability to handle complex and sophisticated matters very highly" "He is exceptional in all matters" "Dr Chelvan has an encyclopaedic knowledge of cases and statute but

uses it accurately and relevantly." (2025, Band 2) "An excellent oral advocate who is never stumped for an answer in court." "He does some real impressive work on same-sex issues in immigration law." (2024, Band 2) "A genius. The go-to barrister for complex immigration and human rights work. ...He's incredibly approachable and very smart. He offers nuanced legal approaches, but remains collaborative at the same time... A very thoughtful combination of academic and activist, particularly with matters concerning LGBT clients. ... An incredibly bright and ferocious practitioner in the immigration and public law field." (2023, Band 2) "He is extremely dedicated to achieving the best possible outcome for clients. He is passionate in his use of the law and is hands-on in identifying strategic points." (2022, Band 3) "Dr Chelvan is a guru of the immigration Bar - he changes the direction of the law for migrants and refugees. He is second to none in his preparation for appeals." "He has a special interest in LGBT rights in the immigration context and always looks for a creative way through case law." (2021) "A very knowledgeable and passionate lawyer who will give you a straight answer, and who isn't afraid to speak his mind. He's quite a force in this area." "He is a master of his subject. He makes powerful and creative submissions, and his advocacy skills are very impressive and persuasive." (2020). "An absolutely outstanding immigration lawyer who also deserves recognition as an LGBT campaigner." (2019) (Band 3) "An esteemed and highly respected immigration barrister who is particularly recognised for his LGBTQ rights work. His work is international in its scope, while his diverse client base includes many individuals who are fleeing persecution." (2018) (Band 2) "An esteemed and highly respected immigration barrister who is particularly recognised for his LGBTQ rights work. He is extremely well regarded for his work in LGBTQ asylum seeker cases." "He is very committed and knows everything there is to know about same-sex asylum seeker cases. Always pushes to get the best results for his clients." (2017) (Band 2) "One of the UK's foremost LGBTI rights activists, acting on behalf of those fleeing persecution on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. "He has majorly contributed to the big change in the attitude of the tribunals to LGBTI cases" "He excels in High Court work, he is very passionate ..." (2016) (Band 2) "Very intelligent, hard-working, and imaginative in his approach to cases" (2015) (Band 3) "He has great client skills, as well as court skills. He is a very eloquent speaker and is very watchable in court." "He has probably become the leading practitioner in the UK for political asylum claims on sexuality" (2014) "The 'very impressive' S Chelvan of the same set is praised for his academic appreciation of the underpinnings of human rights law and his ground-breaking work on asylum claims based on gender or sexual identity" (2013, Immigration, Band 2). Chelvan's "strong advocacy and dedication to clients." He is known as a doyen of immigration cases involving issues of sexual identity. (2012). [A]t the forefront of ground-breaking cases in the area. Sources say that he is "extremely committed" and "a particularly effective advocate." (2011). Chelvan has "immense expertise" and, "the very welcome knack of putting vulnerable clients at ease." (2010). "You can rely on him to work exceptionally hard and more importantly, highly effectively." (2009). "Lawyers agree that he is 'leading the way' in relation to [sexual orientation and gender identity] claims in this area (2008). Chelvan is referred to as having an "expansive knowledge of the law" and being "an extremely principled man", who "always demands and strives for the highest standards of fairness and goes that extra mile for the client" (2007) (Band 3).

Publications

I - Recent and Pending Publications:

In February 2026, Dr. Chelvan's chapter "Diary of a Strategic Litigation Lawyer: HJ (Iran) and HT (Cameroon) years [2010] Beacon of Hope, or Template for Exclusion" is published as part of the collection on "Landmark Cases in International Refugee Protection" (eds Kirsten McConnachie and Sarah Singer, Hart Bloomsbury Publishing).

'The Transgender Issue' (Shon Faye) Contributed interview on UK approach trans asylum claims in the UK (September 2021).

'Transgender In Law' (Robin White and Nichola Newbegin). Chelvan acted as contributing legal consultant to 'Chapter 20: Asylum' (May 2021).

'The Queer Outside in Law' (eds. Senthoran Raj and Peter Dunne) - 'Chapter Four: The DSSH Model: The Voice of the Silenced - Aderonke Apata' Dr Chelvan, Palgrave (published 2 December 2020).

'Removing the Mask: Locating 'The Martyr': Reviewing UK Home Office Country of Origin Information relating to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression ('SOGIE') Protection Claims. (approx. 400 page review of 31 COI reports) (10 February 2020, IAGCI reviewed 31 March 2020, Independent Chief Inspector report passed to Home Secretary on 13 October 2020. Both the ICI's report (Chelvan's report at Annex C), and the Home Office response to the report were published by the Home Secretary on 8 December 2020. Out of Chelvan's 10 recommendations, six were fully accepted by the Home Office and two were partially accepted (see pages 6 to 7 of main report). The ICI, when publishing the report, stated:

"The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) and I are grateful to Dr Chelvan for his painstaking thematic review of the Home Office's Country of Origin (COI) products dealing with sexual orientation and gender identity or expression covering 30 countries.

...

The Home Secretary has referred to fixing the "broken" asylum system. While the production and use of COI is not broken, any review of the system must ensure that it is as good as it can be in supporting efficient and effective decision making."

II - Books:

"Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity" - co-author - Chapter XI in Volume 2 of "Credibility Assessment in Asylum Procedures" (CREDO project, Hungarian Helsinki Project and the UNHCR, May 2015).

(co-author with Mark Harper and ors): 'Same Sex Marriage and Civil Partnership: The New Law' (Chapter 9: Immigration and Asylum), (Jordans, May 2014).

'Chapter 9 addresses the law relating to immigration and asylum in impressive detail and engages extensively with the key authorities and procedural issues' (Helen James, 2015 The Law Teacher Vol 49, No 1, 130-140) - "Often viewed as an incompressible area of the law, in this chapter ... the key points are delivered in digestible chunks" (Andrew Powell, 2015, Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law, 37.2, 285-287).

III - Articles/Blogs:

“Put Your Hands up (If You Feel Love)” (JIANL 2011), “How does a lesbian come out at 13?” (Women’s Asylum News October 2011); and “Queer Cases, Great Law”, (Opino Juris, March 2012); “From Silence to Safety” (Counsel Magazine: May 2013); “Case Comment, X, Y and Z” European Human Rights Law Review (2014) (1), pp. 49-58 (also see ein, 8 November 2013). Westlaw Insight: (January 2014) “Asylum: Basic grounds for claiming asylum” (March 2014) Lexis “How uncertain is the future for free standing article 8 claims?”; “From ABC to DSSH: How to prove that you are a Gay Refugee?” (Free Movement blog, 23 July 2014); “The Last Legal Aid Barrister of the Year?” (Counsel Magazine: February 2015) “Are refugees from Syria really refugees?” (Free Movement blog, 9 September 2015); “New Home Office API on Gay Asylum Claims: Not Fit For Purpose” (Free Movement blog, 8th August 2016); “Comment: Sexual orientation statistics are good news” (Free Movement blog, 4 January 2018); “Avoiding the Naughty Step in Cart judicial review cases” (Free Movement blog, 9 December 2019); “Case Note: Gay Hairdressers Can Safely Relocate in Algeria Court of Appeal Holds” (Free Movement Blog, 17 December 2020); and (Book review) (International Journal of Refugee Law, forthcoming 2024).

Media

Legal Commentary - Since 2021, Dr Chelvan has been invited to share his knowledge and opinions on the law with national and international media outlets ranging from. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation:BBC World News ,BBC News The Context, Sky News,, Channel Four News, Good Morning Britain, ,BBC Radio 5 Live ,The Times,The Law Gazette,Times Radio, andTalk TV, with over 30 broadcast or published interviews since 20 August 2025.

For example in July 2026, Chelvan was invited to discuss the Government's plans to change legislation in order to deport the Rotherham Grooming Gang leader, see Channel 5 and Talk TV interviews, and additionally discuss on BBC News how the UK deals with deporting those who have been convicted of serious crimes before they arrive in the UK (2 July 2026, 11:40 am, 1:35pm and 4pm).

Dr Chelvan was interviewed on Times Radio Drivetime and on 27 August 2026, Chelvan was interviewed by Tom Swarbuck on LBC's Breakfast show on 'Migrant Crime'.

National/Global Campaigns:

'Queer Joy - words of resilient wisdom from one generation to the next' - Albert Kennedy Trust/British LGBT+ Awards (June 2023);

'Great Love'- Great Britain and Northern Ireland Campaign' (UK Government, global LGBT+ Pride campaign) 'Great Love is Invincible' (January 2023);

'The Identity Project - Portrait of a Community' @chrisjepson (2020); and

'I am an Immigrant Campaign' (one of the faces of the campaign to humanise the debate, 2015) – appearances ranging from ITV and various print journals.

Podcast Interviews with Dr Chelvan:

- (a) The Activist Lawyer podcast "For those who know the words, but have no voice" 23 May 2025;
- (b) 20 years since Section 28 Mishcon de Reya LLP "The Academy" (chaired by Hannah Meyer, Co-Chair Pride Network) 15 November 2023;
- (c) Rebel Justice - Changing the way you see Justice: Refugee Series, Episode Number 3, (interviewed by Trystan Kent) 28 December 2022;
- (d) Gatehouse Chambers, LGBTQIA History Month 23 February 2022;
- (e) Celebrating Diversity at the Bar - Race and the Legal Profession 7 December 2021 Inner Temple (recorded in August 2021, interviewed by Amelia Smithers);
- (f) Family Law Weekly Podcast 8 August 2021 Series 6 Episode 3, Surrogacy Week - interviewed by Rachel Mary Cooper;
- (g) Chambers Student Guide Podcast -Episode 19 - Interview with Sal Morton - 7 April 2021;
- (h) Busy Being Black (with Josh Rivers) - Saturday 26 November 2020; and
- (i) Breaking Legal Glass Ceilings (with David Locke, QC) - Tuesday 1 December 2020.

TV/radio/media – selection of:

BBC WORLD NEWS with Lucy Grey, 15 November 2023, "UK government loses Supreme Court Rwanda ruling", and with Lucy Hockings, 12 December 2023 "Rishi Sunak trying to get MPs to back Rwanda plans", and 6 February 2025, with Catherine Byaruhanga "Conservatives suggests toughest stance on citizenship";

BBC WORLD NEWS, The Context with Christian Fraser - 40,000 people cross the Channel in small boats" (1 November 2022) "Prime Minister's 5-point plan for Albania" (13 December 2022), 29 March 2023 "UK asylum housing plans", 20 April 2023 "UK attempts to amend Illegal Migration Bill", 29 June 2023 "UK-Rwanda asylum plan ruled unlawful", 7 August 2023 "UK starts housing migrants on barge", 10 August 2023 "Migrants moved off barge due to Legionella", 26 September 2023 "Braverman: being gay not sufficient for asylum", 17 November 2023 "UK revises plans for send illegal migrants to Rwanda". 5 December 2023 "UK-Rwanda sign new asylum treaty", 12 December 2023 "Government wins Rwanda asylum vote", 13 May 2024 "Judge rules Rwanda law does not apply in N Ireland", 13 February 2025 "New rules for migrants entering UK illegally", and 15 May 2025 (World Today) "UK Government planning return hubs".

CHANNEL FOUR NEWS (20 August 2025), and (26 August 2025),

SKY NEWS - Urgent Need for Legal Reform in Prisons - Emma Birchley (13 October 2022), 5 December 2023 with Mark Austin "Home Secretary signs new Rwanda asylum treaty, and

Henry Vaughan, "Shamima Begum: What happens next for east London schoolgirl stripped of British nationality?" (23 February 2024); and "Asylum-seeker hotels" (26 August 2025)

GOOD MORNING BRITAIN (18 September 2025) "Migrant Flights: Are Our Laws Being Made a Mockery Of?" Panel with Christian Calgie, Political Editor, the Daily Express (Presenters Susanah Reid and Richard Madeley).

LBC with Sangita Myska, " 'Rwanda not safe for refugees' says top human rights lawyer" (18 November 2023), and "Why was the Clapham attack suspect granted asylum for conversion to Christianity?" (3 February 2024), Matthew Wright (Ireland and Migration) (13 June 2026), 27 August 2026, Chelvan was interviewed by Tom Swarbrick on LBC's Breakfast show on 'Migrant Crime';

SKY NEWS - Urgent Need for Legal Reform in Prisons - Emma Birchley (13 October 2022), 5 December 2023 with Mark Austin "Home Secretary signs new Rwanda asylum treaty, and Henry Vaughan, "Shamima Begum: What happens next for east London schoolgirl stripped of British nationality?" (23 February 2024);

ITV NEWS, "Can people really claim asylum for 'simply being gay?" (Anushka Asthana, Deputy Political Editor) (1 October 2023);

CHANNEL 5 NEWS - Rwanda Removal Flight (14 June 2022);

BBC RADIO 5 LIVE with Stephen Nolan (17 November 2023), 5 December and 7 December 2023 with Nihal Arthanayake (Rwanda Treaty and Rwanda), 5 February 2024 (Clapham attack suspect and Christian conversion asylum claim), and 12 December 2023 with Nicky Campbell's Breakfast show;

TIMES RADIO - Breakfast Show with Stig Abbel, 28 January 2025, "Role of the European Convention on Human Rights on Deportation and Times Radio Drivetime and on 27 August 2026;

TALK TV - Julia Hartley-Brewer (26 November 2021) "Safe Passage for Refugees" , (12 October 2022) "Channel Migrants Put Up in Top Hotels", 10 May 2025 "Migrant Crisis: Refugee Returns to Afghanistan", 17 May 2025 "Refugee returns to Syria"; Kevin O'Sullivan (15 June 2022) "Rwanda Flight Grounded", Peter Cardwell (27 October 2022) "Migrant Crossings Reach 38,000, Ian Collins (12 November 2021) "Refugee Crisis and Migrant Channel Crossing" , 3 February 2022 ("cost of housing asylum seekers), (5 April 2022) "Government Immigration Plan Suffers House of Lords Defeat", (9 June 2022) "Bids to Ground First Rwanda Flight", 2 August 2022 ("Rwanda Migration Plan"), 24 November 2022 ("UK Net Migration Hits All-Time Record of 504,000"), 16 November 2023 "Immigration lawyer Clashes with ex-UKIP leader"; 8 December 2023 "Sunak scrambles to keep control and Rwanda Backlash", Kevin O'Sullivan and Daisey McAndrew, Vanessa Feltz's Drive Time 19 December 2022 ("Impact of Rwanda Plan Division Court judgment"); "Britain Not Working - Braverman Says UK is too reliant on Foreign Labour" (15 May 2023), "Migration Strain - Numbers Arriving in the UK Hit Record High Last Year" (25 May 2023), 31 August 2023 "Migration Nation: Over 20,000 People Have Crossed The Channel This Year", 26 September 2023 "Small Boats Crackdown: Braverman: Being Gay Isn't Enough to Claim Asylum"; 15 December 2023 "Barrister alleges

Government created "Hostile Environment" for Refugees in UK", and Jake Berry MP 17 November 2023 "Rwanda Scheme Will Fail" (from 45 minutes), Petrie Hoskins (10 June 2026), Peter Cardwell (11 June 2026); and

BBC Expert Voices training (Glasgow, 2015);

Channel 4 News – (Delhi High Court ruling, June 2009) and (Home Office handling of LGB Asylum cases, 28 March 2014);

Asylum/Immigration matters: BBC, BBC Radio 4 Today, Attitude magazine, Huffington Post, ZDT, The Guardian, Pink News, Daily Mail and Daily Express; and

ITV London: CHOGM (April 2018).

Profiled by:

Mary O' Hara (Society Guardian, July 2014); Fiona Baldwin (Legal Action Group, September 2014); Catherine Baksi (Legal Hackette, January 2016); Sue James (Legal Action Group, September 2018); Kevin Poulter, Season 2, Episode 16, The Hearing Podcast (November 2018), and Catherine Baski, Law Section The Times (29 June 2023).

2027:

w/c 13 September 2027 - Training Swiss decision-makers (tbc).

2026:

5 November 2026 - Training Norwegian asylum decision-makers, Oslo, Norway (tbc).

4 November 2026 - Keynote speech on LGBTQ+ Refugees at the 'Queer World International Conference' ('Intersectionality and Migration') , Oslo, Norway.

16-18 September 2026 Inaugural ELLA (European LGBTQ+ Lawyers' Association) Conference held in London, 17 September 2026, Immigration panel panellist, Lincoln's Inn.

21 and 22 May 2026 Uppsala University 'LGBTQ Refugees in the Welfare State: Research, policy and practitioners in dialogue' (22 May 2026) Keynote Speaker 'Misapplication of the DSSH model'

2025:

10 December 2025 - World Human Rights Day - University of Southampton - Beyond Borders - panel speaker.

29 November 2025 - University of Warwick - STAR conference - panel speaker.

27 November 2025 - University of Southampton - Lawyers Without Borders.

3 November 2025 - Keynote paper at a Global Summit on Feminist and LGBTQ+ Studies hosted in Vancouver, Canada.

28 June 2025 - Human Rights Forum panel speaker - Pride in London.

26 June 2025 - Pride@Saul - Saul Ewing LLP (Philadelphia, remote seminar to be broadcast throughout the US offices of the firm)

11 June 2025 - Bloomberg (London) - "Power of Action: Nobody Left Behind" Panel discussion "Navigating Social Attitudes and Intersecting Realities"

29 April 2025 - Leigh Day Immigration Summit - Panel discussion on Credibility in Asylum Claims.

2024:

26 November 2024, BCLP SAIL Network Event, Guest Speaker

22 August 2024, African Rainbow Family 10 year anniversary conference, Manchester, Panel event 'LGBTIQ+ Discrimination within the UK Asylum System'

23 April 2024, English Sexual Health and HIV Commissioners Group 'Creating a Safe Space for HIV+ migrants' ([link](#))

2023 :

20 June 2023, World Refugee Day, "Lost Homes, New Horizons", University of Southampton.

10 May 2023, iCASH Conference, Keynote Speaker "Intersectional Asylum Claims.

27 April 2023, Inaugural Lecture for the launch of the Centre for International Law and Globalisation, "Refugee Law in 2023: An Activist Lawyer's Perspective", University of Southampton.

28 January 2023, TUC Migrant Conference, Keynote speaker for Migrants Conference.

2022:

8 and 9 December 2022, European Union Asylum Agency, Malta, 2022 Annual Meeting of the EUAA Pool of Judicial Experts, 'Judicial skills specific to international protection judges' - "The Safe SPACE model" (Safety, Person, Asylum Claim, Control, and Evidence) - enabling Judges to create a Safe Space for Refugee Applicants (from a SOGIE perspective);

12 October 2022 European Union Asylum Agency, "Evidence and Credibility Assessment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression-based Claims" (one of three-expert panellists, training to over 100 EU Refugee Law Judges).(Next training session on vulnerable clients, 9 December 2022).

27 January 2022 Family Law Seminar, "From Hague Convention to the Home Office - Top Tips for Family Practitioners"

2021:

16 September 2021, Law Friends Society, Immigration Conference, "Crossing the Legal Frontiers; Asylum Law Update";

15 June 2021, Dods Diversity Conference, "Intersectionality at work: appreciating individuality and recognising each staff member as unique";

9 June 2021: Frank Field, "Pathways to Sanctuary, the LGBT+ Refugee Story - an Activist Lawyer's Story?"

17 March 2021 City University Law Review, "Intersectionality: The Changing Face of Law" (with Sara Hossain (Barrister) and Sunita Chawla (Solicitor)).

26 February 2021, ELSA UK Conference, "At the End of the Rainbow: Where Next for the Queer Refugee?";

2020 (selection of):

18 and 25 November 2020 (UNHCR Hong Kong and University of Hong Kong) 'Refugee Protection and the Emotional Journey: Why Difference, Stigma, Shame and Harm provide the potential building blocks for the refugee to tell their story';

30 October 2020 'LGBTQ at the Bar' (Inner Temple, Panel event (Chair) with Robin White and Andrew Powell);

22 September 2020, 'LGBT+ Asylum: Applying the DSSH model' (Migrant Law Clinic, No5 Chambers webinar, 132 delegates from 12 countries);

19 July 2020, 'How Do I prove Gay?: Refugees' Emotional Journeys' (Research Futures series, University of Portsmouth);

8 July 2020, SOGICA Conference Panel event on Credibility 2: LGBT asylum; and

5 February 2020, (LGBT Leaders' Summit, Government Equalities Unit) Keynote speech.

Areas of Expertise

- Human Rights Equalities