

Michael Widdowson

PhD Researcher at European University Institute

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Websites: [Linkedin](#), [Personal website](#), [ORCID](#)

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Law

European University Institute, Fiesole (IT)

- Title: Are Trusts Transplantable? An Analysis of the Rise of Trusts in the French Legal Tradition. Supervisor: Prof Mathias Siems.

08/2022 –
(expected
completion 2026)

LLM in Comparative, European and International Laws

European University Institute, Fiesole (IT)

- Awarded as part of the PhD program (*ungraded and unranked master*).

08/2022 – 05/2023

LLM in Comparative and European Private Law

The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh (UK)

- Award: with Merit

09/2021 – 08/2022

LLB in English and French Law

University of Kent (UK)

- Award: *1st*.

09/2017 – 06/2021

ACADEMIC POSITIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Visiting positions

Visiting PhD researcher

Sciences Po, Paris, France

01/2025 – 04/2025

Erasmus Exchange

Aix-Marseille Université, Aix-en-Provence, France

08/2019 – 06/2020

Editorial and review experience

Research Assistant

European University Institute, Florence (IT)

- Supported professors in the publication of research paper ‘The Superiority of the Consumer Welfare Standard’

12/2024

Internal Reviewer

European Journal of Legal Studies, Florence (IT)

- Provided expert peer review on articles in comparative law, insolvency and the law of equity and trusts

Since 10/2024

Editor-in-Chief

European Journal of Legal Studies, Florence (IT)

- Promoted to lead the European Journal of Legal Studies
- Exercised leadership skills by managing a team of 10 Executive Board members
- Collaborated with European Society of International Law to publish special issue on Law and Technology
- Opened up the possibility for external reviews to join the EJLS through statute reform

11/2023 – 11/2024

Executive Editor

European Journal of Legal Studies, Florence (IT)

- Edited 62% of submissions at their final stage to issue 15(1).

Coordinator of Brexit action Working Group

European University Institute, Florence (IT)

Since 10/2022

- Campaigned with Researchers Union, Secretary General and UK politicians for UK to rejoin the European University Institute

NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Legal Intern

Tees Valley Combined Authority, Stockton (UK)

08/2021

- Performed legal research in procurement challenges, Bus Service Improvement Plans and Enhanced Partnerships.
- Reviewed and researched procurement contracts, invitation to tender documents and framework agreements
- Contributed to the £373 million Teesworks site redevelopment and to greatly improved bus services in the Tees Valley.

Presenter and Researcher

KMTV, Chatham (UK)

01/2021 – 04/2021

- Hosted local television show Critical Law TV on KMTV
- Researched building safety and land-law- and interviewed in-studio guests
- Developed skills to present legalese to a wider audience

Caseworker

Kent Law Clinic, Canterbury (UK)

09/2020–05/2021

- Contributed to Clinical Legal Education by volunteering on cases in family and immigration law
- Interviewed clients, performed on-the-job legal research and summarised legalese to clients through writing advice letters and position statements.

TEACHING

Certificates

Certificate 'Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education'

European University Institute (26 hours)

11/2025

Teaching Experience

Editing a Law Journal

Session in PhD course European University Institute, Florence (IT)

02/2024

04/2025

Conflict of Laws and Cross Border Mitigation

Session as a moot panel member for LLM Course Sciences Po, Paris (FR)

RESEARCH FUNDING AND AWARDS

PhD fellowship at the European University Institute (monthly grant, insurance and travel expenses)	2022 – 2025
Awarded on a competitive basis and funded by the UK Department of Education.	
Scholarship for visiting PhD research stay at SciencePo	2025
Awarded on a competitive basis and funded by the Erasmus+ Programme.	
Sir Terence Etherton Prize for an Essay in Equity & Trusts	2021
Nominated for award a competitive basis and sponsored by the University of Kent. - LLB in English and French law at the University of Kent.	

PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapters

Michael Widdowson ‘The transformation of the trust in a era of globalisation’ in Nick Piška and Johanna Jacques (eds) ‘A Research Agenda for Critical Trust Law’ (Edward Elgar 2026 forthcoming).

Editorials

Michael Widdowson and Dimitris Panousos, ‘Top Three Elements of Successful Peer Review’ (2025) 16 European Journal of Legal Studies 1-8.

Michael Widdowson, ‘The “gift” of Feedback’, (2024) 16 European Journal of Legal Studies 1-8.

Helga-Molbaek-Steensig and Michael Widdowson, ‘Publish, Perish, or (Self)-Plagiarise’ (2024) 15 European Journal of Legal Studies 1-10.

Work in Progress

Michael Widdowson ‘How to compare the Trust? Unpacking the Irreducible Core of Trusts in Comparative Law’ in preparation for submission to a UK law journal

Michael Widdowson ‘Ownership of Virtual in-game Assets: How Locke Can Help’ in preparation for submission to a UK law journal

SELECTED PANELS AND CONFERENCES

The Transformation of the Trust in an Era of Globalisation	09/2025
Workshop A Research Agenda for Critical Trust Law, Durham, (UK)	
Tracing Transplanted Trusts: How Historical Trust Devices Shine Light on 21st Century Trust Devices in the Civil Law Legal Tradition	05/2025
Business History Working Group, Symposium: Continuities and Changes in Property Management (1600-1950s), Florence, (IT)	
Are Trusts Transplantable? Unpacking the Irreducible Core of Trusts in the French Legal Tradition	05/2024
British Association of Comparative Law, Annual Postgraduate Workshop, Oxford, (UK)	
Exploring Authority and Trust	05/2024
Private Law Working Group, Florence, (IT)	

SUMMER SCHOOLS

Re-enactments of the Ongwen Trial 06/2024
Academy of European Law, Summer Course on Human rights, Florence, (IT)

AI and Law Summer School 07/2023
European University Institute, Florence, (IT)

AFFILIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Member of Equity and Trusts Research Network Since 09/2025

LANGUAGES

English	French	Italian
Native	C1	B2
