

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Investigating deaths in custody

Last year, 31 people died in police custody in England and Wales, with a further 189 deaths occurring in prisons.*

The serious issues of deaths in custody will be investigated at a panel discussion organised by The Human Rights and Social Justice Research Institute (HRSJ) and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at London Metropolitan University.

The public event, 'Investigating Deaths in Custody' will be held at 6pm on Thursday 26 April at London Met's Holloway campus.

Speakers include Deborah Coles, Co-Director of the charity INQUEST and Leslie Thomas, a barrister at Garden Court Chambers.

Professor Philip Leach, Director of HRSJ, will chair the discussion.

He said: "The purpose of this discussion is to explore the ways in which deaths in custody are investigated in this country, including the many problems and gaps in the process that have been identified."

"Both the speakers have extensive, real experience in this area and it's an excellent opportunity to hear from people who are working on the front line of this important issue."

-Ends-

NB: *Statistics from INQUEST, a charity that provides a free advice service to bereaved families and their lawyers on contentious deaths and their investigation with a particular focus on deaths in custody. Casework also informs our research, parliamentary, campaigning and policy work.

www.inquest.org.uk

Notes to editors:**Event details:**

Investigating Deaths in Custody
Thursday 26 April, 6.00 – 7:45pm
Tower Building
London Metropolitan University
166-220 Holloway Road
London N7 8DB

The event is free of charge and open to all. To register please go to:

<http://deathsincustody.eventbrite.com>

About the speakers:

Deborah Coles has been a Co-Director of INQUEST, the charity which helps families of those who have died in custody, for 20 years. She is the co-author of *'In the Care of the State: Child Deaths in Penal Custody in England and Wales'* (2005).

Leslie Thomas has extensive experience of working on deaths in custody cases. He specialises in human rights and public law, with particular emphasis on civil actions against the police and inquests.

The Human Rights and Social Justice Research Institute (HRSJ) is one of the leading research institutes in the country in the areas of policy analysis, training, teaching and consultancy. HRSJ was established in 2003 to explore the connections between human rights and social justice, both within and outside the UK. HRSJ is based in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at London Met, www.londonmet.ac.uk/research-units/hrsj

The Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities was formed by a merger of the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Languages and Education in August 2011. Building on excellent QAA scores for high quality teaching, the new faculty embeds practice, theory and employability into all of its courses. www.londonmet.ac.uk/depts/fssh

London Metropolitan University has been providing affordable quality education in London since 1848. The average starting salary of London Met graduates is now well above the UK average (DLHE, 2011). London Met has been ranked among the best universities in the country in terms of giving students the best “added-value” in helping them to secure well-paid jobs. (Parthenon 2011)

www.londonmet.ac.uk

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