

INTRODUCTORY CLIENT CARE LETTER



(NAME OF INNOCENCE PROJECT)
ADDRESS

DATE

CLIENT'S NAME AND, IF PRISONER, HIS/HER PRISON NUMBER
ADDRESS:

Dear (NAME OF CLIENT),

Innocence Network UK (INUK)/University of Bristol Innocence Project

As you know, your case has been referred to us by the INUK. This is to introduce ourselves and to outline what you can expect from our Innocence Project. INUK has given us your case details, including your Preliminary Questionnaire and other documents you have supplied.

The University of Bristol Innocence Project will allocate a team of students to your case who will look more closely at the information and/or case materials you have supplied. We may also ask for clarification of the details you have provided and more information to assist the students' investigation of your case. We will notify you once this is arranged. Also, we will write to you shortly with the name of the solicitor or barrister who is working with our students. You can also contact Dr Michael Naughton at our university about any queries that you may have. If you already have a solicitor working on your behalf towards making an application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC), then we can only work on your case with that solicitor's permission, as well as yours.

For your information, the University of Bristol Innocence Project undertakes the casework for the Innocence Network UK (INUK). As such, we will work according to INUK's casework protocols, which were sent to you when your case was allocated to us. They may be periodically reviewed and we will keep you informed of any changes that occur.

It is important to us that our students learn from their work with you, and they will be working on a voluntary basis outside their normal lesson timetable. You may find that their investigation of your case may take longer than would be ideal. However, we will

write to you at least twice a term to update you on our progress, including at the beginning and the end of each term.

The University of Bristol Innocence Project operates during term time only. Therefore, if you contact us outside of term time you may not receive confirmation of your correspondence until the new term begins. However, if you have any urgent queries at any time, then these should be addressed to the staff director, Dr Naughton.

It is important to note that innocence projects do not replace the role of practising solicitors and barristers, and that our innocence project **CANNOT** give you any legal advice. Any letters you receive from us will be to seek instructions from you on a particular point, or to update you, and you must **NOT** treat these as legal advice. Any legal advice will come from the lawyers working with the innocence project. We do not currently have the same rights to write to you confidentially under Rule 39a as practising lawyers do, but the practising lawyer will be able to send our letters to you on that basis.

The University of Bristol Innocence Project is a pro bono (“free”) legal clinic and participating lawyers will make no charges for their legal advice and services under the project. However, if at some point you may be eligible for legal aid, it will be dealt with by the relevant participating lawyer.

Lastly, the same duty of confidentiality will apply to staff and students on the University of Bristol Innocence Project as applies to practising lawyers – we will not discuss your case details with anyone outside our project and INUK without your permission.

You are free at any time to terminate our assistance. However, the University of Bristol Innocence Project reserves the right to terminate our investigation of your case if, at any point, we have good reason to believe that you are not factually innocent of the crime for which you have been convicted, or in the event of any circumstances that may cause our continued investigation of your case to be inappropriate.

Please sign the enclosed copy of this letter to confirm that you have received this letter and have read and understood its content. A stamped addressed envelope is enclosed for its return.

Yours sincerely

University of Bristol Innocence Project

Signature	
I, _____ (name), confirm that I have received a copy of the above letter and have read and understood its content.	
..... Signature Date