

# BRUNEI'S HAZEL EYES JUSTCITE

Glad of the chance to let his quill and ink lie fallow, **Alistair King** snapped up **Hazel Ho Ming Yeh's** offer to write about JustCite. A BVC-qualified Masters student at BPP Law School, Hazel will soon return to her native Brunei to pursue a career as a government lawyer. But her ambitions include a possible stint at the English Bar, where she predicts she'd also rely on JustCite. Despite her enthusiasm for innovation, Hazel only recently became acquainted with the citator. Here she fills us in on how it's helped with her research and ties in with her multinational plans.



*Called to the Utter Bar*

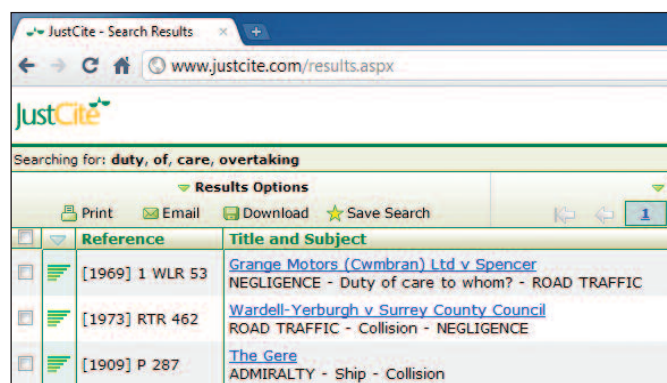
On the 22nd of July 2010, I was greeted by a warm burst of sunlight as I waltzed out of Middle Temple Hall with a ridiculous grin on my face.

I had just been called to the Degree of the Utter Bar by my Inn, something I will always regard as one of my finest moments. Never mind that it had taken at least three attempts before anyone could enunciate my full name during the ceremony or the fact that I had been in a silent battle with myself the whole time as I fought off the urge to scratch an itch that had manifested itself beneath my wig. As far as I was concerned, none of that mattered for all I could feel was a surge of pride and joy of having become a barrister – a massive

feat for someone from a miniscule Bruneian town where the local Magistrates' Court had once taken the form of a wooden longhouse on weathered stilts.

Rewind to ten months ago when I first stepped through the doors of BPP Law School in Holborn. I had just graduated with a Law degree from Durham University and was eager to finish the last leg of my journey in qualifying for a government post in Brunei, which I had acquired through a scholarship with the Ministry of Defence.

The BVC, now known as the BPTC, was refreshing in contrast



*The results page for duty of care and overtaking*

to the familiar world of academia. It involved a new methodology of legal research which could prove extremely time-consuming without the right resources.

I initially found myself reverting to old habits of scouring one textbook after another in the library and opening as many legal search engines as I could access online in order to gather as much information as possible on one topic. This was perfectly fine if one was preparing to write a ten thousand-word thesis within three months, but for a typical BPP student on the night before an Advocacy class, it was an overwhelming process which frequently resulted in sheer hysteria.

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It was the fear of not knowing what others knew which terrorised our minds, be it in the form of a random but very relevant article left lying around in the library or a group of colleagues whispering to each other in the hallway. Indeed, more often than not, I would be hunched

over a book in the library only to be interrupted by another student in a tattered suit, frantically asking, "Can I borrow that book?" as I leaned protectively over it. And more often than not,



At home in Brunei

that frantic student would be me.

That is not to say I didn't have sufficient legal resources at the tip of my fingers. As a BPP student, I had access to a vast number of legal services, most of which I had already familiarised myself with during my undergraduate years. It was simply a matter of adjusting to a different line of research: more practice-based, less academic.

Retrospectively, I believe I could have sped up that whole process if I had had access to more legal services aimed at assisting practitioners rather than Law students. During the BVC, I would occasionally find myself searching for these legal services online after having just frustrated other websites, along with myself. That's when I thankfully stumbled upon JustCite.

As a provider-neutral citator with extensive cross-references and deep-links to full-text cases, legislation and journal articles, I knew immediately that JustCite was not your ordinary legal search engine.

In a single search, I was able to view all relevant cross-references and links at a glance together with the current status of judgments and laws. I would then click on a link and instantly uncover material that revolved around the topic in question rather than a piece that merely flagged up solitary search words without any relevant context.

In doing so, I would be redirected to pages from both free and subscription-based publishers in the UK, Ireland and other common law jurisdictions. This meant that I no longer had to open several legal search engines at a time and start a new search on every occasion. Why should I when JustCite could simply present me with the exact link from other services which I would otherwise spend hours searching for?

It was the perfect launch pad for any legal research without the hassle of having to sift through open-ended results to actually get results.

For any student training to become a barrister, JustCite is an essential research tool that could make the difference between a long bumpy ride and a sleek acceleration towards success.

I recall preparing for a Negotiation class concerning a road collision case whereby I intended to show that the duty of care in overtaking rested on the driver receiving a signal to overtake as opposed to the driver who gave the signal. Using the Quick Search on JustCite, which handily suggests searches as they are typed in, I inserted "duty of care and overtaking" into the search box and watched as *Grange Motors Ltd v Spencer* [1969] 1 WLR 53 appeared at the top of the results list – a case that would form the crux of my argument.

I instantly identified it as a pertinent case by skimming over its concise summary and categorised subject matters provided by JustCite. I was also able to see which cases had judicially considered it, as well as any subsequent decisions which may have affected its authority. Remarkably, all of this information was neatly contained in a single page – the kind that would sit nicely on your screen rather than one that required miles of scrolling.

As a result, I was able to speed through the legal research part of my preparation without doubting whether I had missed out anything essential. I therefore had more time to focus on forming my arguments and to work on my presentation, which left me feeling more confident than ever by the time I sat down in front of my opponent in class.

With its versatility and ever-expanding common law coverage from numerous jurisdictions, I believe that JustCite is invaluable not only for students but also for practitioners from around the world.

Personally, I was thrilled to discover that the Singapore Law Reports have now been indexed on JustCite as a result of them being made available on JustCite's sister service, the full-text online legal library, Justis.

With access to new legal material relating to Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei, JustCite has become an even bigger asset for me given that I will be working as an in-house lawyer for the Ministry of Defence in Brunei. This forthcoming line of work will revolve not only around company law issues but also commercial and

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Winning precedent: section of a JustCite document

contractual matters such as the procurement of military equipment and weaponry.

On another spectrum, I will also be expected to get to grips with certain aspects of public international law such as dealing with memorandums of understanding. Although a little overwhelming at first, I have now grown to accustom myself to the impending demands of this job, drawing in assurance from the skills which I have attained from the Bar.

But working in-house and practising as a barrister are two very different fields, both of which I would very much like to explore. Indeed, the prospect of working in chambers here in the UK will always remain an option for me, as for many others who have trained here and learned to respect the English legal system. It would certainly be the cherry on top for me to be able to practise in a city like London and to live out everything that I have always envisaged a barrister to be.

Something to put on hold for now, but if it were to ever come to fruition, JustCite would no doubt be one of my first ports of

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call, as it is for many practitioners today working in top chambers and law firms that have subscribed to JustCite.

As for now, I don't intend to use any of my intellect just yet – or whatever's left post-BVC – whilst I take a well-deserved break. All I need to do is think of a way to end this rather tangential piece of writing. So after having thought inexplicably long and hard, I leave you with this (and possibly with lots of regret for my not having thought longer and harder): next time your tutor, supervisor or pupil master throws you any work, don't just do it – JustCite it.

## *JustCite could help you too*

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to obtain instant sign-in details. And if your university has yet to sign up, ask your librarian to visit [www.justcite.com](http://www.justcite.com) or call **020 7284 8080**.

# JustCite

## take the law into your own hands.

### What is JustCite?

JustCite searches across cases, legislation and journal articles from all major online legal publishers - including Justis, LexisNexis and Westlaw - and links you straight to their content.

### Why is JustCite so useful for legal research?

For any given case, JustCite clearly displays how other cases and legislation have been considered and applied, along with subsequent cases and related articles. Extensive cross-referencing of multiple material types and publishers means you can be confident that you have left no stone unturned.

**Speak to your law librarian for more information.**

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