



John Williams

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John joined 4 New Square in October 2018 following the successful completion of his pupillage, and is developing a broad commercial practice.

John has worked with other counsel on a wide range of contentious and advisory matters, across chambers' core areas of work. These have included:

- High value professional negligence claims against accountants, auditors, legal professionals, and others.
- A number of commercial arbitrations, under the ICC, LCIA and CIMAR rules.
- Claims with a multi-jurisdictional element, involving issues of private international law.
- A range of pre-action and interim applications, and complex settlement negotiations.

John has also been instructed as sole counsel on a variety of matters. He regularly appears at interim and final hearings in the County Court, settles pleadings across a number of areas of practice, and has advised on various issues of commercial law – including in relation to disputes involving company and insolvency law.

John was called to the bar by the Middle Temple, and received a Queen Mother Scholarship – the Inn's most prestigious major award. John was also awarded a Harmsworth Entrance Exhibition, and a BPTC Excellence Award.

Before coming to the bar, John graduated with a first in law from University College London, following a degree in classical archaeology and ancient history at the University of Oxford. He went on to read for the Bachelor of Civil Law at Oxford, achieving a Distinction in all of his papers.

Prior to pupillage, John worked at the Law Commission as a research assistant, where he was involved in preparing the Commission's proposal for a goods mortgages bill, to replace the Bills of Sale Acts.

Privacy Policy

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Areas of Expertise



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General Commercial

John is frequently instructed (as junior counsel, or alone) in commercial disputes. These have included:

- In practice and during pupillage, high value professional negligence claims against accountants and auditors.
- Claims involving allegations of fraud and conspiracy.
- Claims against a variety of professionals. In particular, John is regularly instructed in disputes involving allegations of professional negligence against lawyers: recent cases have included claims against a firm of solicitors for the negligent conduct of settlement negotiations, and disputes arising out of property work and advice.
- Claims against IT professionals for breach of contract. John has recently been instructed as sole and junior counsel in disputes concerning website design (both back and front end), data migration, and the integration and implementation of third party software.
- A variety of contractual claims – both between business, and those involving issues of consumer law.
- More generally, claims involving specialist areas of contract, tort and property law, and the law of unjust enrichment.

John also appears regularly in a range of interim hearings. Recent work (as sole counsel) has included applications for pre-action disclosure, allocation hearings, applications to amend, strike out/summary judgment applications, and applications to set aside default judgment. He is also commonly instructed to appear at Case and Costs Management Conferences in substantial claims: and is familiar with issues arising out of the costs budgeting process. John also has experience of appearing at judge-led mediations in the County Court.

John has advised on the merits of appeals – and has drafted grounds of appeal. During pupillage, John also observed and assisted in preparations for a hearing before the Court of Appeal.

Professional Liability

John is frequently instructed (as junior counsel, and alone) in a range of disputes involving allegations of professional negligence. These have included:

- In pupillage and in practice, high value claims for professional negligence against accountants and auditors.
- Claims against legal professionals.
- Claims against a variety of other professionals: including IT professionals, recruitment consultants, architects, interior designers, and others.

John has also advised on ancillary matters – including pre-action conduct in professional negligence claims, and elements of the cause of action in negligence: in particular principles of causation, loss, and “loss of a chance”.

Insurance

John is frequently instructed on behalf of insurers: both to appear at trial and in interim hearings, and to settle pleadings and give written advice.

John has also had experience of a variety of disputes involving insurance law: including where the relevant insured is insolvent, and claims against insurance brokers. Recent work has included giving advice as to the effect of the Third Parties (Rights Against Insurers) Act 2010.

Costs

John is frequently instructed to appear at Costs and Case Management Conferences, and is familiar with the principle applicable to the costs budgeting and costs management process: including applications to revise costs budgets.

During pupillage, John assisted in preparing for detailed assessment hearings, and as sole counsel, John has been instructed to advise on disputes involving issues relating to solicitors bills of costs, and the statutory assessment process.



Arbitration

John has been instructed in relation to arbitral proceedings under the LCIA, ICC and CIMAR rules (as junior counsel, and acting alone).

These have included:

- A contractual dispute between a number of commercial entities relating to the interpretation of a commercial contract.
- Disputes arising out of the provision of services under an IT contract.
- The appeal of an arbitral award arising out of allegedly defective building works under section 69 of the Arbitration Act.

Company Law and Insolvency

John has been instructed as sole counsel to appear in winding up petitions in the Companies List. He has also acted in a number of disputes involving company law issues. This has included advising (as sole counsel) on complex matters of company and insolvency law, arising out of allegations of professional negligence against a firm of solicitors.

Insights

Avoidance for Material Non-Disclosure: Niramax Group Limited v Zurich Insurance Plc [2020] EWHC 535 (Comm)

18 May 2020

In *Niramax Group Limited v Zurich Insurance Plc* [2020] EWHC 535 (Comm) the High Court considered the principles applicable to cases of avoidance for material non-disclosure, in a claim by a policyholder against its insurers. All counsel were from 4 New Square. The insured was represented by Ben Elkington QC and Ben Smiley, and insurers were represented by Graham Eklund QC and Carl Troman. The Court's decision is considered by John Williams of 4 New Square.

Recent Developments in Quasi-Partnerships

8 July 2019

Applying the same set of legal rules to all companies, regardless of their individual circumstances and characteristics, can lead to injustice. The concept of “quasi-partnership” encourages a more nuanced approach and allows courts to recognise and enforce equitable obligations which may have arisen between members of a company. In this article, Thomas Ogden and John Williams of 4 New Square review key elements of the law in this area, and consider a number of important recent decisions.

Introduction to “Demystifying Shareholder Disputes”, a series of articles by 4 New Square

2 July 2019

Throughout July 2019, 4 New Square will present a series of articles from specialist contributors on shareholder disputes.

Criminalizing Speech to Protect Religious Peace?

28 November 2018

Can Yeginsu and John Williams analyse the recent decision of the European Court of Human Rights in *E.S. v. Austrian* an article for Just Security.

Big Brother Watch and others v. the UK

16 October 2018

Big Brother Watch and Others v. the UK: the ECtHR ruled last week that aspects of the UK's mass surveillance programmes violate various Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights. Ian McDonald and John Williams consider the ECtHR's decision, in which Can Yeginsu and Anthony Jones acted as counsel for Center for Democracy & Technology and PEN America.