



## James Ayliffe QC

Call: 1987

QC: 2008

jayliffe@wilberforce.co.uk

### Clerks' details

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### Qualifications and Appointments

- First in Philosophy Politics & Economics  
New College, Oxford
- Distinction in Diploma of Law.  
City University, London

*“Simply outstanding: a persuasive advocate who provides measured and balanced advice.”*

Chambers & Partners 2020

## Memberships

- Chancery Bar Association
- COMBAR
- Commercial Fraud Lawyers Association
- Professional Negligence Bar Association
- Property Bar Association
- Member of the Bar of the British Virgin Islands

## Publications

- [Transaction Avoidance in Insolvencies](#), OUP (2012)
- [Hill and Redman's Law of Landlord and Tenant](#) (2016) Specialist Editor

## Practice Overview

James is an experienced QC providing advice and advocacy services across a wide range of commercial fields, including business and financial contracts, banking, company, insolvency, financial services, civil fraud, professional negligence, real estate and contentious trust matters.

Disputes and issues arising, directly or indirectly, from the ownership or exploitation of real property assets feature particularly prominently in James's work.

Much of James's work has an international dimension with cases involving jurisdictions as diverse as BVI, Cayman Islands, Channel Islands, Cyprus, South Africa, Netherlands, Isle of Man, Gibraltar, New York and Ukraine.

James is currently ranked in the legal directories (Chambers & Partners, Chambers Global and/or Legal 500) in the following fields:

- Commercial (Chancery)
- Financial Services
- Real Estate Litigation
- Professional Liability
- International & Offshore.

Recent editions of the directories describe him as: "a very good, strong QC. He's shown himself to be pretty adept at handling the commercial strategy as well as the law". He's simply outstanding; he's very bright and user-friendly. He provides measured and balanced advice and is a persuasive advocate." (Chambers & Partners 2020); "A great QC to have in a crisis, and is more than willing to roll up his sleeves and get stuck in". He "understands the need to bring the client along with him in the direction of his advice." (Legal 500 2020). He is "very, very good to work with", "very user-friendly", "extremely good in court", "very good at reading judges and anticipating what they will say", "a fantastic mind", "very knowledgeable", "good strategically", and giving "concise advice which saves time and instils confidence" (Chambers & Partners 2019); "great with clients", "strong strategically", having an "excellent advocacy style", "very commercial", and "pro-active and hardworking" (Legal 500 2019).



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## Practice Overview continued

Comments in past directories include: "excellent"; "exceptionally intelligent" with a "brilliant ability to analyse contractual situations", providing "very balanced and measured advice"; "the epitome of the modern QC"; "an excellent legal brain"; "a real team player" who "works alongside everyone to achieve the right result"; "always adopts a practical commercial approach"; "superb at anything", "excellent", "a fine barrister with a charming manner", "very good with clients", "a first rate intellect with a user-friendly manner that engenders confidence", "has the ability to digest information and advise coherently on the most complex of legal arguments", "an excellent communicator who provides supremely intelligent advice", "very confident in implementing the advice he gives", "a real specialist", "his advocacy is fantastic and he is able to sway the judge's mind", "a great guy to work with", "fantastic", "dynamic", "level-headed and focused", "easy to deal with", "always on top of his cases", "a splendid understated style", "held in high regard", "widely respected", "meriting the most notable compliments", "intellectually tough", "will stand up to anyone", and "a star of the commercial Bar".

James also acts as an arbitrator, mediator and expert.

## Civil Fraud

James has experience of claims involving:

- deceit, breach of fiduciary duty, knowing receipt/assistance, unlawful means conspiracy claims;
- asset tracing;
- setting aside 'sham' transactions and arrangements;
- avoidance of transactions defrauding creditors; and
- freezing injunctions and other interim relief.

Some representative cases include:

- representing Russian joint venture partner defending claim for fraudulent misrepresentation in connection with establishment of BVI joint venture vehicle;
- acting for shareholder in property investment company on claim for fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, and conspiracy against other shareholders/directors in connection with sale of company assets to themselves at a substantial undervalue;
- acting for tax authorities of foreign state seeking to set aside fraudulent transactions entered into by tax debtor in efforts to prevent enforcement of £200m tax debt;
- acting for defendant to £50m claim arising out of the operation of a corporate Ponzi scheme;
- representing City trader in defence of claim for the recovery of £20m of AIM-listed company shares allegedly misappropriated by him;
- acting for European car parts distributor in claim against former directors/ employees for fraud and unlawful means conspiracy;
- setting aside "sham" trust established by Hong Kong businessman to shield his assets and prejudice creditors.