



James Ayliffe QC

Call: 1987

QC: 2008

jayliffe@wilberforce.co.uk

Clerks' details

+44 (0)20 7306 0102

practicemanagers@wilberforce.co.uk

Qualifications and Appointments

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

“Simply excellent. He’s hugely intelligent, hard-working and a master tactician. Superb on his feet, hugely persuasive and always a real pleasure to work with.” Chambers & Partners 2022

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.

The 2022 edition of Chambers and Partners describes James as *“simply excellent. He’s hugely intelligent, hard-working and a master tactician. Superb on his feet, hugely persuasive and always a real pleasure to work with.”* He’s *“a very calm barrister who wears his intelligence lightly,”* with *“a fantastic mind. He brings together the financial and real estate worlds seamlessly.”* *“He is a superb, technically outstanding barrister.”*

While Legal 500 2021 describes him as *“hardworking. An excellent team player. Cautious but proactive, with strategic ideas and suggestions. Paperwork is very clear and precise, and work is produced on time.”* *“James has good broad commercial practice and is highly experienced.”*



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.