



James Ayliffe QC

Call: 1987

QC: 2008

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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 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.

Company

James has experience of a wide range of company law matters such as:

- disputes arising from share/asset sale agreements;
- claims for breach of directors' duties;
- interpretation and enforcement of shareholder agreements;
- unfair prejudice and just and equitable winding up disputes;
- issues as to validity and enforcement of company charges;
- miscellaneous Companies Act issues;
- corporate insolvency issues.

Some representative cases include:

- acting for a firm of solicitors alleged to be liable pursuant to s 36C Companies Act 2006 for a £20m property contract entered into by company which had not yet been incorporated (*Royal Mail Estates v Maples Teesdale* [2016] 1 WLR 942);
- advising regarding restoration to register of dissolved company holding £15m property asset;
- acting for a 50% shareholder in dispute with US partner over control of vertical transportation services company;
- acting for defendant to £200m claim arising out of the takeover of a listed company involving issues regarding stock exchange rules, the takeover code, and the duties of professionals involved in advising on takeovers;
- acting for former chairman of Chestertons estate agency in multi-million pound shareholder dispute (*Jafari-Fini v Skillglass*);
- acting for director of property investment company accused of complicity in setting up "poison pill" to deter company takeover (*Criterion Properties plc v Stratford UK Properties LLC*);
- acting for purchaser of paint manufacturing company on multi-million pound claim for breach of warranty in share sale agreement;
- advising directors of well-known healthcare company in administration;
- acting for company providing support services to private equity industry in successful opposition to claim for rectification of its share register;
- acting for creditors on successful application to restore company to register to enable pursuit of indemnity rights (*Stanhope Pension Trust Ltd v Registrar of Companies*).