



John Wardell QC

Call: 1979

QC: 2002

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Clerks' Details

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Qualifications and Appointments

- LLB (Hons) Exon
- M. Phil (Cantab)
- Called to the Bar of the British Virgin Islands
- Called (ad hoc) to the Bar of the Turks and Caicos Islands
- Called (ad hoc) to the Bar of the Cayman Islands
- Called (ad hoc) to the Bar of Singapore

“He has all the qualities you would want in a QC.”

Chambers & Partners, 2018

Memberships

- Chancery Bar Association
- Commercial Bar Association
- Professional Negligence Bar Association

Practice Overview

John is ranked as a 'leading silk' in the Commercial and Chancery Commercial categories in Chambers Global 2019, in Chancery Commercial, Civil Fraud, Commercial Dispute Resolution and Professional Negligence in Chambers & Partners UK 2019, and in Commercial Litigation, Company, Civil Fraud, Offshore and Professional Negligence in The Legal 500 UK 2019.

The Chambers & Partners 2019 edition describes him as *"a real team player who is formidable on his feet and has an almost unbelievable grasp of the detail in a case"*. *"John is a very clever tactician and an excellent advocate who is good with the client."* It is also noted that *"he has very good judgement"* along with being *"a ferocious cross-examiner. He is robust and incisive and has a very good instinct as a litigator"*.

The Legal 500 2019 edition notes that *"he is extremely approachable to clients and is not afraid of doing tasks that silks normally would not"*. John is also described as someone who *"has an incisive mind and fights his clients' corner tenaciously"* as he *"really grasps the detail of a case"*.

John has an extremely broad and varied commercial disputes practice. Most of his cases are heard in the High Court and International Arbitral Tribunals. John also regularly appears in offshore jurisdictions (including BVI, Grand Cayman, Turks and Caicos, Singapore, Hong Kong and many European countries).

In the last five years, he has spent an increasing amount of time on complex fraud claims, many of which involve company law issues.

Many of John's commercial cases involve claims for breach of trust and breach of fiduciary duty.

John also undertakes professional negligence and indemnity work for both claimants and defendants. He has acted for and against a wide range of professionals, including solicitors, barristers, surveyors, financial advisers, accountants and actuaries.

John immerses himself in all aspects of his cases. He easily assumes the role of a leader prepared to back his own judgment, but is also a collaborative team player. John is an extremely good advocate, adept at modifying his tone and approach to the tribunal and at sensing how a Judge is seeing the case. He consistently impresses with thorough preparation and focussed and effective cross-examination. He is rock solid on the law, reliable on paperwork and is described by solicitors as a joy to work with. What most impresses is his unwavering commitment to his cases, and to his clients.



International Arbitration

John has conducted arbitrations under the ICC, LCIA and UNCITRAL Rules in Geneva, London, Paris, Singapore, Vienna and Warsaw. Most of his cases are document heavy and involve analysis of complex contracts.

Recent and ongoing cases include:

- Acting on a claim for breach of a performance guarantee relating to multiple contracts for the supply of natural gas and mazut (a heavy low quality fuel oil) This involves consideration of multiple contracts between numerous parties dating back 20 years.
- Acting for an oil company seeking to recover substantial compensation for the fraudulent supply of cargoes of oil to Romania.
- Acting for the applicant in an international arbitration in Vienna who successfully sought substantial compensation for breach of a share purchase agreement relating to the acquisition of a controlling interest in a steel plant in Macedonia. This required an in-depth analysis of the Macedonian privatisation laws and the contracts that were generated following their enactment.
- Acting in an international arbitration in Paris where the claimant sought multi-million pound compensation for breach of a joint venture relating to the provision of mining services for a bauxite mine in Saudi Arabia
- Acting in an international arbitration in Warsaw arising out of a joint venture for the construction of the A4 motorway in Poland.
- Acting for the former head of an investment bank who was seeking approximately £30m by way of reasonable remuneration for his services.

In addition, as part of his commercial litigation practice, John has been involved in heavy contractual disputes relating to oil interests in Kazakhstan, gold mines in Azerbaijan and an oil and gas conglomerate in Ukraine.