
MARTIN PALMER

Call: 2003



Practice Overview

Martin Palmer is a barrister with an acknowledged reputation for a commercial and pragmatic approach towards the law. He was a solicitor for almost ten years before being called to the Bar in 2003. Since that time, he has built a leading practice in employment and discrimination law, sports law and commercial litigation. He is recorded in the legal directories as being a leading practitioner in employment and discrimination law (Chambers and Partners) and an expert in sports and media law (Legal 500).

During his time at the Bar, Martin considers himself to have been privileged to have acted for a variety of employees from FTSE 100 chief executives to local authority manual workers. He represents large corporate employers (particularly those based in the City of London, professional services firms and international corporations) as well as trade unions, educational institutions and other public sector organisations.

He frequently lectures and provides training on those areas in which he practises.

Martin was educated at King Edward VI School, Birmingham and studied Jurisprudence at Exeter College, Oxford University. He qualified as a solicitor in 1994. He previously worked as a solicitor for Freshfields and Allen & Overy.

Commercial

Owing to his experience as a solicitor, Martin is steeped in an understanding of the practical steps involved for lay clients and solicitors in pursuing disputes before the Courts. He is happy to be actively involved with solicitors from the outset in the litigation process and to adopt a 'hands on' approach to the work to be undertaken.

Martin has wide experience of disputes between commercial parties. He is frequently instructed in applications for interim injunctions including search orders and freezing injunctions.

The majority of Martin's work in this area relates to the protection of confidential information and other business interests in the High Court on behalf of employers and defendant individuals. He is very experienced in relation to applications for interim relief in cases involving post-termination of employment restrictive covenants.

Recent examples of his work include his acting for the former technical director of the McLaren Formula One team in the so-called Spygate litigation; acting for a leading insurance brokerage in defence of claims of inducing breach of contract following their employment of various insurance brokers; search order and recovery of sensitive confidential information for a defence contractor and a contested High Court bonus claim.

Martin's background as a solicitor has led to him acting for firm and individual or teams of partners in disputes affecting partnerships and limited liability partnership entities. He has also been instructed to carry out internal investigations for leading professional service firms.

Employment

Martin has appeared as an advocate in employment cases in the Employment Tribunal, Employment Appeal Tribunal and the Court of Appeal. He successfully appeared at first instance and in the EAT for the transferor in the leading case of Kimberley Homes concerning TUPE outsourcing as well as a number of other leading appeal cases.

Over the years, Chambers and Partners have made mention of Martin's approach to employment litigation as being "thorough" and "forensic"; his written work as being as carefully crafted as an "art installation" and his commitment to working as a "team player".

Martin has come to specialise in representing clients who are defending complex discrimination claims often featuring multiple complaints under various heads of discrimination law. Those cases are often lengthy and may involve claimants in person. He is regarded by those who instruct him as adopting a collegiate approach in which he is committed to involvement in every stage of case preparation and at being skilled in simplifying often difficult concepts for lay clients whilst equally being capable of dealing with the highly demanding circumstances which are often part and parcel of such litigation.

Over recent years, Martin has acted extensively for law firms, their partners and employees in employment and discrimination disputes.

In addition to discrimination law, Martin has a strong TUPE practice. Perhaps uniquely for a barrister, Martin is well versed in how TUPE disputes actually emerge from his time acting as a solicitor advising in commercial transactions. He is fortunate in consequence of that background now to advise solicitors and commercial clients as to the potential application of TUPE before any dispute has emerged.

He has an extensive background in advising clients as collective consultation, union recognition and other employee representation issues as well as the bringing of injunction proceedings under TULRCA.

Martin separately has conducted grievance and disciplinary investigation/hearings for employers. He is used by an international charity to conduct final appeal hearings.

Mediation

Martin frequently represents employers and employees in mediations.

Examples of recent mediations include his acting for a GP partner upon her leaving her former partnership; a 'magic circle' City of London law firm in a dispute with a recently elected partner; and a leading City of London institution in a multi-million pound bonus dispute with an extremely high-earning trader.

Sports Law

For the last 14 years, Martin has acted for leading Formula One teams, drivers and highly skilled technical staff. He acted twice in relation to employment moves concerning perhaps the most highly regarded current designer of F1 cars. He was instructed on behalf of the former McLaren technical director during the Spygate litigation in the High Court and FIA. Martin is regularly called upon to advise teams in relation to contractual issues and particularly the effect of post-termination restraints upon their ability to employ persons. He has advised F1 drivers on contractual issues including two winners of the F1 world championship.

Martin has also acted widely for professional football clubs in relation to disputes with managers and players. He has advised Premiership football clubs upon issues of corporate governance and the role of their directors within the prevailing regulatory regimes.

Martin has represented individual figures from professional football, rugby, cricket, cycling and motorsport.

The Legal 500 directory records him as being an expert in Sports and media law.