

## Georgina Leadbetter

Call: 2013

### Barrister

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Georgina is a highly-regarded trial and appellate advocate specialising in employment and commercial litigation. She has been commended by Chambers & Partners as *“a superb barrister”* and by Legal 500 as *“a star of the future, who is exceptionally bright but personable”*. This year, at under 10 years’ call, Georgina has been nominated by Legal 500 as Employment Junior of the Year 2022.

Georgina has a busy High Court practice primarily focused around business protection litigation (including cases concerning restrictive covenants, confidential information, fiduciary duties, and conspiracy claims). She appears in such disputes frequently, either as sole counsel or as junior to a QC, and is experienced in the full life cycle of such cases from the earliest stages to interim applications and through to trial.

Georgina also has considerable experience of appellate litigation for her call. She regularly appears as sole counsel in the EAT, and as junior counsel has recently appeared (led by David Reade QC) in two landmark employment cases in the Supreme Court: ***Royal Mencap Society v Tomlinson-Blake [2021] I.C.R. 758*** (the application of National Minimum Wage legislation to sleep-in shifts) and ***Royal Mail Group Ltd v Efofi [2021] 1 W.L.R. 3863*** (the burden of proof under the Equality Act 2010).

Georgina’s tribunal practice often features disputes with concurrent High Court and employment tribunal elements. She acts across the full range of statutory employment matters and frequently appears in complex discrimination and whistleblowing cases.

Georgina is featured in Chambers & Partners as ‘Up and Coming’ and in Legal 500 as a ‘Rising Star’:

- *“A star of the future, who is exceptionally bright but personable. Fantastic client skills, while at the same time being able to produce high-quality work, particularly written submissions.”* (Legal 500 2022, Employment)
- *“Her written submissions are very detailed and very impressive.”* (Chambers & Partners 2022, Employment)
- *“A superb barrister”* with *“very sharp intellect and excellent drafting skills”* (Chambers & Partners 2021, Employment)
- *“Accomplished junior who is able to boast wide expertise in substantial employment cases up to the Supreme Court”*(Chambers & Partners 2021, Employment)
- *“Reliable, very popular with clients and strong on whistleblowing cases. Her advice is clear and her advocacy impressive”*(Legal 500 2021, Employment)

## AREAS OF LAW

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### Employment and Discrimination

Georgina is an experienced employment junior with an unusual degree of appellate experience for her level of call.

She is regularly instructed as sole counsel in complex multi-day proceedings including whistleblowing, discrimination, unfair dismissal, TUPE, and employment status disputes. Georgina also has experience of discrimination claims in the county court, in particular in the education sector.

Georgina's cases frequently involve issues of particular sensitivity, such as claims brought by or against senior executives, allegations with potential regulatory implications, cases involving claimants with severe disabilities, and tribunal claims brought in the context of High Court or criminal proceedings.

Cases include:

- ***Royal Mail Group Ltd v Efobi* [2021] 1 W.L.R. 3863** (led by David Reade QC and David Flood): Represented the successful Respondent in Supreme Court appeal confirming that the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 did not fundamentally change the operation of the burden of proof in discrimination claims.
- ***Royal Mencap Society v Tomlinson-Blake* [2021] I.C.R. 758** (led by David Reade QC and Niran de Silva): Represented the successful Respondent in Supreme Court appeal regarding the applicability of the national minimum wage regime to sleep-in shifts. This appeal was a landmark case for the care sector and was one of The Lawyer's Top Appeals of 2020
- Acting for a partner in a law firm bringing sex discrimination and whistleblowing proceedings against the firm (2020).
- Representing a CEO dismissed for alleged financial mismanagement in unfair dismissal claim (2018, sole counsel against a silk).
- ***Egbayelo v Ocado***: Representing the successful Respondent in the Employment Appeal Tribunal in an appeal concerning contractual variation (2019, sole counsel).
- Acting for a regulator in proceedings relating to a number of discrimination claims in the employment tribunal and Employment Appeal Tribunal (2018, sole counsel).
- ***Vigo v London Underground Ltd***: Obtained reinstatement for Claimant, a tube driver (2018, sole counsel, against counsel of 2004 call).
- Acted for the Respondents in two claims brought by Claimants with schizophrenia, relating to perceived campaigns of surveillance and discrimination (2018, sole counsel).
- ***Boath v Barclays***: Whistleblowing and bonus claims relating to events of 2008 and SFO investigation (see coverage [here](#)) (2016, led by Jonathan Cohen QC).
- ***Department of Work and Pensions v Mughal* UKEAT/0343/15/JOJ**: Represented the Claimant in full hearing before the Employment Appeal Tribunal concerning reinstatement and contributory fault (2016, sole counsel).
- ***McAlinden v Lazarov and others***: Represented the successful Respondent in the first case on whether fringe theatre actors in a profit share production are workers. This case generated national interest and was reported by the [BBC](#), [The Independent](#) and [The Stage](#) (2015, sole counsel).

Georgina is a reviewer of employment cases for Advocate, and a member of the ELAAS pro bono scheme at the Employment Appeal Tribunal.

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### High Court Employment and Business Protection

Georgina has experience of High Court employment litigation beyond her year of call, and frequently acts in disputes regarding restrictive covenants, duties of confidentiality, and team moves. She is regularly instructed to prepare and resist urgent applications for interim injunctive relief.

Having acted in employee competition disputes both as counsel and from a solicitor perspective (while on secondment to a leading City law firm), Georgina is well placed to advise on each stage of the process, from discovery of breach through to injunction application and expedited trial.

Georgina's experience includes:

- Acted for a recruitment agency seeking to enforce restrictive covenants against departing employees (2020).
- Instructed by the Claimant in a restrictive covenant dispute regarding whether covenants were entered into at all, involving expert evidence from a handwriting expert (2019, sole counsel).
- Led by Adam Solomon QC, acted for the Claimant in insurance industry claim relating to breach of non-compete and confidentiality restrictions (2019).
- Led by Gavin Mansfield QC in employee competition matter, seeking injunction to enforce restrictive covenants (2017).
- **Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Ltd and others v Aston Scott Group Ltd and others** [2016] EWHC QB: Resisting insurance industry team move conspiracy injunction (led by Gavin Mansfield QC).

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## Commercial

Georgina frequently acts in commercial disputes (both as a junior and as sole counsel), including those raising questions of contractual construction and rectification, partnership, and fiduciary and directors' duties. She has particular experience of anti-suit injunctions.

Georgina brings to her practice the experience of large-scale commercial litigation she gained whilst at WeirFoulds LLP (Toronto), where she assisted on matters including a Competition Bureau investigation into criminal bid-rigging, a Privy Council appeal, and a class action against General Motors Canada Limited.

Georgina's recent and current work includes:

- Instructed in dispute regarding sum due under TUPE indemnity (led by Adam Solomon).
- Instructed to seek relief from sanctions in a music industry dispute.
- Assisted with successful application for freezing injunction arising from non-payment of a significant business loan.
- Assisted BT with large-scale litigation relating to the entitlement of utility companies to recover the costs of repairing negligent damage to their networks.
- Represented the Defendant in a dispute arising from alleged breach of a software license contract (sole counsel).
- Successfully defended county court proceedings brought in breach of a settlement agreement (sole counsel).
- Assisted with partnership disputes, including drafting particulars of claim in an accountancy firm dispute and advising on a claim arising from a merger of firms of solicitors (sole counsel).

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## Regulatory / Disciplinary

Georgina has experience of acting for regulators, professional bodies and regulated individuals in disciplinary proceedings, tribunal claims and High Court litigation. Recent and current work includes:

- **Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors v Rushton** [2017] EWCA Civ 1995: Successfully upheld injunction protecting employees of RICS from harassment and resisted application for permission to appeal to Court of Appeal (led by Adam Solomon).
- Assisted with preparation of Rule 5 statement stating charges against solicitor (acting for Solicitors Regulation Authority).
- Georgina has experience of representing doctors bringing tribunal claims against their former medical practices, including cases involving allegations of professional misconduct.

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## Education and Memberships

Scholarships and Prizes

- Harold G Fox Scholarship (2013-2014) (working in litigation department of WeirFoulds LLP, with secondment to the Court of Appeal for Ontario)
- Evan Ashfield Memorial Prize (2012-2013)
- Inner Temple Major Scholarship (2012-2013)

- Inner Temple Duke of Edinburgh Entrance Award (2012-2013)
- Winner, Inner Temple Pepperdine Moot (2012)
- Finalist, Inner Temple Lawson Moot (2013)
- Inner Temple Exhibition Award (2011-2012)
- City University/11 King's Bench Walk Prize for Public Law (2011-2012)

#### Education

- 2012-2013 Bar Professional Training Course (Outstanding)
- 2011-2012 Graduate Diploma in Law (Commendation)
- 2008-2011 BA English, University of Cambridge

#### Professional Memberships

- Employment Lawyers Association (ELA)
  - Employment Law Bar Association (ELBA)
  - Industrial Law Society (ILS)
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