



Christopher Adams

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Christopher has a commercial and common law practice with a particular focus on commercial and insurance disputes, product liability & mass tort group actions, health & safety and property. He is on the committee of the Health and Safety Lawyers' Association, and is also an accredited mediator. He speaks German and has a working knowledge of French and Italian.

Christopher graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge with a Double First in English before studying at the Royal Academy of Music and the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne and working for several years as a classical singer. He was placed first in his year for the CPE in Legal Studies at London South Bank University.

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Commercial, Insurance & Arbitration

Christopher has extensive experience of commercial litigation and arbitration, frequently with an international dimension. He acts in a range of commercial disputes involving contractual interpretation, misrepresentation, economic torts, conversion, unjust enrichment, conflict of laws, jurisdiction and foreign law. He has advised and represented clients in disputes and proceedings in the County Court and the High Court relating to insolvency, bankruptcy, construction, company law and insurance coverage, and has experience of enforcement proceedings includes applications for third party debt orders and equitable and legal charges over property.

In 2019 he co-authored an article in the Journal of International Arbitration on compelling evidence from witnesses located abroad in support of arbitration proceedings seated in London. The article can be found [here](#).

Relevant instructions include:

Litigation

- Acting for three claimants in a claim for deceit, under s.2(1) of the Misrepresentation Act 1967, breach of contract and unjust enrichment arising from investments in a business marketing and supplying a novel form of air conditioning technology
- Acting for a corporate vendor of secondhand commercial vehicles defending a claim for alleged conversion of goods
- Acting for the corporate freeholder of a block of flats in a claim for breach of contract and unjust enrichment against a corporate managing agent and its director arising from a failure to pass on rental payments.
- Acting for a highways authority in negligence claims against insurers arising from damage to highway infrastructure
- Acting for the claimant insurers against a corporate supplier of poultry litter in a subrogated negligence claim arising from a fire at a farm
- Advising and drafting pleadings in proceedings involving a Russian bank arising from breach of a settlement agreement (as a junior, details confidential)
- Advising as to the jurisdiction of the English courts in respect of a tortious claim for pure financial loss pursuant to the Rome II Regulation involving companies registered in both EU Member States and non-Member States (details confidential)
- Advising defendants resident in the USA and Spain as to validity of service of English proceedings
- Advising a haulage company and two of its directors in relation to a claim for breach of an agreement for financing traffic management software

Arbitration

- Acting in a £23m LCIA arbitration on behalf of 4 corporate carry vehicles registered in Jersey in a contractual dispute with a bank, including applications to compel German witnesses to give evidence pursuant to the Arbitration Act 1996 and the Taking of Evidence Regulation and attending hearings in Germany, and advising in relation to the admissibility of foreign evidence of previous convictions in civil claims (as a junior, details confidential).

Insurance

- Advising an insurer on a £17 million dispute arising from a voluntary food recall in the USA and Canada (as a junior)
- Advising an insurer whether a workplace personal injury incident in a stationary vehicle fell within the employer's liability insurance policy or motor insurance policy
- Advising an insurer as to the effect in UK domestic law of the CJEU ruling in *Vnuk v Zavarovalnica Triglav D.D.* (C-162/13)
- Advising a local authority as to the nature and level of extrinsic evidence required to prove the existence of insurance coverage in relation to an asbestos claim dating from the 1970s

Insolvency and company

- Acting for the joint liquidator of a travel company in defending a claim brought under rule 14.8 of the Insolvency Rules 2016

- Acting on behalf of a company seeking an account from a former director arising from breaches of director's duties
- Applying to restore a dissolved company to the company register in order to transfer real property

Interim applications, appeals and enforcement

- Applications for interim freezing injunctions, third party disclosure and third party debt orders

Representative Cases

- *Little v Bloomsbury Law Solicitors [2022] 11 WLUK 351*

Acting for a firm of solicitors opposing an application to set aside an unless order, or alternatively an application for relief from sanctions, in the context of an appeal in the Chancery Division of the High Court against an order made by a Master

Product Liability & Mass Tort Group Actions

Christopher is regularly instructed as a junior on behalf of major international companies in a wide range of multi-party product liability and mass torts claims. He has extensive experience of issues relating to service out of the jurisdiction, challenges to the jurisdiction of the English courts and conflict of laws.

He acted for a German distributor of medical devices defending claims under the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and in negligence (led by Geraint Webb KC).

He was led by Charles Gibson KC and Geraint Webb KC in the Supreme Court in *Vedanta Resources Plc & another v Lungowe & others* [2019] UKSC 20, a landmark decision on parent company liability in the context of mass tort claims arising from the operation of a mine in Zambia.

In 2020-2021, led by Geraint Webb KC and Adam Heppinstall (now KC), and instructed by a team led by Heather Gagen and Stephanie Lee at Travers Smith, Christopher acted for Camellia plc and two of its English subsidiaries in defending parent company/human rights claims brought by Leigh Day arising from farming operations carried out by subsidiaries in Kenya and Malawi. The claims were settled: the public announcement of the settlements are [here](#).

Christopher also acted (as a junior to Charles Gibson KC, Prashant Popat KC and Geraint Webb KC) as part of the team representing the defendants in the Volkswagen NOx Emissions Group Litigation. The claims were settled in May 2022.

Representative Cases

- *Vedanta Resources Plc & another v Lungowe & others* [2019] UKSC 20

Appearing in the Supreme Court (as a junior to Charles Gibson KC and Geraint Webb KC) on a jurisdictional appeal relating to a mass torts claim against an English parent company arising from the operations of a Zambian copper mine

Health and Safety & Inquests

Christopher has a wide breadth of experience in health & safety matters including representing corporate defendants in the Magistrates' and Crown Courts, advising in relation to post-incident investigations and on prospects of success, and drafting written submissions in lieu of PACE interviews. Having previously worked as a paralegal at an international firm of solicitors, he has advised companies on all aspects of the health & safety investigation and trial process, including clients from the education, restaurant, nightclub, transport, port, healthcare, yacht manufacturing and construction sectors. In his previous role, Christopher supported clients in interviews with the HSE and local authorities.

He also acts for public authorities and private companies in inquest proceedings.

Instructions include:

- Representing a defendant private healthcare provider in pre-trial hearings in the Magistrates' and Crown courts relating to a HSWA prosecution following a fatal incident involving an item of kitchen equipment
- Assisting Malcolm Sheehan QC in 2021 in carrying out an independent review of the regulation of BetIndex by the Gambling Commission and the FCA on behalf of DCMS.

Christopher is on the committee of the Health and Safety Lawyers' Association.

Representative Cases

- *HSE v Fairline Yachts Limited (2021)*
Sentencing hearing of a manufacturer of luxury yachts following a lifting operations incident.
- *R v Hawkins, Dixon & MPM (Northwest) Limited (2021)*
Acting for the corporate defendant during a 9-week manslaughter and HSWA trial (with Prashant Popat KC and Oliver Campbell KC representing the individual co-defendants) arising from an incident at Eastbourne Pier.
- *Re France (2021)*
Representing a Clinical Commissioning Group in inquest proceedings following the death of a trans teenager
- *ORR v Renown (2020)*
5-week HSWA trial (led by Prashant Popat KC) arising from a fatal incident involving workplace fatigue, including an application to dispute the ORR's jurisdiction and an appeal to the Court of Appeal Criminal Division
- *Re Taylor (2020)*
Inquest following the death of a former care home resident
- *HSE v Wates Construction Limited & R J Fitters (2017)*
Sentencing hearing of a construction firm following the removal and bricking up of a live gas flue

Property

Christopher is regularly instructed in a range of landlord & tenant and real property disputes. He has acted in proceedings before the courts and the First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) involving breach of covenant, rights of way, boundary disputes, adverse possession and variation of leases. He has also appeared in Magistrates' Courts on behalf of parties to statutory nuisance proceedings under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 arising from neighbour disputes.

Instructions include:

- Acting on behalf of 13 leaseholder respondents to applications made by their corporate landlord to the FTT (Property Chamber) to determine their liability to pay service charges, vary their leases and dispense with consultation requirements under the Landlord and Tenant Acts 1985 and 1987, in connection with proposed fire safety works to the balconies of a block of 119 flats
- Acting for a freehold management company in a claim against a former director for breach of statutory duties arising from misappropriation of company assets and failure to permit inspection of company records
- Acting for a commercial tenant in an application for the grant of a new tenancy pursuant to s.24(1)(b) and Part II of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954
- Acting for a claimant property developer in a contractual claim against the purchasers of two properties for funds due upon completion of the building works
- Acting for the tenants of a residential property in a claim against the landlord pursuant to s.214 of the Housing Act 2004 for breach of the landlord's duty to deal with the tenancy deposit in accordance with an authorised scheme.
- Advising the owners of a residential property in relation to a possible claim against the property developer arising from breach of building regulations relating to fire safety.
- Advising in relation to health & safety duties, building regulations and breach of freehold covenants in a dispute over the obstruction of a supermarket's fire escape route over a neighbouring property.
- Acting in claims for possession of residential and commercial properties.
- Applying to restore a dissolved company to the company register in order to transfer real property.
- Advising a leaseholder in relation to a claim against the freeholder for unreasonably withheld consent to assignment of the property and mismanagement.
- Acting for a party to a boundary dispute involving registered and non-registered land, including a claim for adverse possession
- Acting for the purchasers of a residential property in a claim against the sellers for misrepresentation and breach of contract arising from a failure to declare the presence of Japanese Knotweed.
- Acting on behalf of an applicant seeking an interim freezing injunction to restrain transfer of the proceeds of sale of a property outside the jurisdiction

Consumer

Christopher is regularly instructed to advise and litigate across a range of consumer law matters. Clients include financial institutions and individuals involved in transactions relating to credit cards, loans and hire purchase agreements. He is a contributor to Butterworths Journal of International Banking and Financial Law.

Representative instructions include:

- Acting for a creditor defending a claim brought in relation to the repossession of a vehicle subject to a hire purchase agreement
- Acting for a corporate lender seeking possession of a commercial property under the terms of a guarantee
- Acting for creditors defending claims brought under the unfair relationships provisions of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 and alleging the payment of secret and half-secret commissions and breaches of statutory duty pursuant to s.138D of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000
- Acting on behalf of creditors defending claims brought pursuant to s.75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974
- Representing the defendant creditor in a claim for breach of a merchant services agreement involving issues under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
- Acting for banks in claims for unpaid credit card debts
- Advising in respect of non-commercial agreements.

Personal Injury

Christopher regularly advises and represents claimants and defendants in personal injury and fatal accident claims. Many of the mass torts and product liability proceedings in which he has been involved include claims for personal injury. He has particular experience of acting for German and Austrian defendants, including reviewing documents in German and liaising with experts on foreign law.

Representative instructions include:

- Acting on behalf of National Highways (as a junior to Prashant Popat KC) in defending a fatal accident claim arising from an incident on a smart motorway
- Acting on behalf of a car manufacturer defending a claim brought under the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and in negligence alleging defective power steering
- Acting on behalf of Camellia plc and two of its English subsidiaries (as a junior to Geraint Webb KC) defending mass claims arising from the operations of farms in Kenya and Malawi
- Acting on behalf of a German supplier of medical devices (as a junior to Geraint Webb KC) defending multiple claims
- Advising a claimant in relation to quantum as a result of the 2015 rollercoaster accident at Alton Towers
- Acting for one of several defendants in proceedings arising from Beth Tweddle's ski-jumping accident on the third series of *The Jump* in 2016
- Representing a former senior nurse in a claim against an NHS Trust for psychiatric injury as a result of bullying and harassment by his line manager
- Representing a claimant in a claim against a local authority following an accident at a crematorium

Professional Negligence

Instructions include

- Acting on behalf of a supplier of pharmacovigilance services in a dispute involving issues of breach of contract and a counterclaim for alleged professional negligence.
- Acting for a car dealership defending a claim for breach of contract and negligence arising from the theft of a vehicle in which a tracker had not been activated
- Acting for a defendant damp proofing company in a professional negligence claim involving alleged damage to property
- Acting on behalf of a provider of agronomy services defending a claim for breach of contract and/or professional negligence and/or fiduciary duty (as a junior)
- Advising and drafting pleadings on behalf of a claimant in a professional negligence claim against a firm of solicitors arising from a personal injury claim
- Advising a claimant on the merits of a professional negligence claim against a firm of solicitors arising from a second legal charge over the claimant's property held on trust for the claimant's parents as beneficiaries

EU, Competition & Human Rights

Christopher has been instructed as a junior to Alan Dashwood KC on a range of EU, competition and human rights law matters.

Instructions include:

- Advising on the effects of the CJEU decision in *Slovak Republic v Achmea BV* on the enforceability of ICSID awards made pursuant to intra-EU arbitrations arising under the Energy Charter Treaty.
- Advising an EU Member State on the alleged anti-competitive effects under EU law of an exclusive purchasing obligation in a contract for the supply of biofuel.
- Advising on the scope and jurisdictional reach of the European Arrest Warrant system and Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA on the application of the principle of mutual recognition for judgments imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty.
- Advising a foreign high net worth individual in relation to an application to the European Court of Human rights arising from infringement of his Article 6 rights during a criminal trial in Romania.

Mediation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

Christopher has appeared as junior counsel in international arbitration proceedings under the LCIA rules. He has also represented parties at a number of mediations, achieving successful settlement of disputes in areas ranging from pharmacovigilance to exclusions from school and discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. He is also an accredited mediator.

Appointments

- Accredited Mediator
- Committee Member of the Health & Safety Lawyers' Association

Publications

- Author of the Confined Spaces chapter of Tolley's Health & Safety at Work Handbook, 2022
- Report of the Independent Review of the Regulation of BetIndex Limited, September 2021
- Contributor to the Journal of International Arbitration May 2019
- Contributor to Butterworths Journal of International Banking and Financial Law, March 2017
- Contributor to Safety & Health Practitioner, August 2015 (co-authored)
- Contributor to Safety & Health Practitioner, July 2015 (co-authored)

Memberships

- Commercial Bar Association
- Health & Safety Lawyers' Association
- Administrative Law Bar Association

Education

- BA in English, Trinity College, Cambridge (Double First)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Singing, Distinction and DipRAM, Royal Academy of Music
- KA Gesang (Singing), Distinction, Hochschule für Musik, Köln
- CPE in Legal Studies, Distinction (1st in Year), London South Bank University
- BPTC, BPP Law School
- ADR Group Accredited Civil & Commercial Mediator