

Catherine Brown

Call: 1990
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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Personal Injury, Industrial Disease, Clinical Negligence, Public Authority Liability, Abuse, Employment & Discrimination, Health & Safety, Inquests, Costs & Litigation Funding, Arbitration

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

Recorder: 2008



Catherine is a specialist personal injury barrister. She is recognised as a leading junior in both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500. She is known, in particular, for her expertise in occupational stress and occupiers' liability claims. However, she is experienced in all fields of personal injury and industrial disease (including fatal claims). She also undertakes clinical negligence cases.

Catherine is regularly instructed in public authority liability cases. In addition to personal injury claims, her public authority practice includes human rights law, social work and educational negligence, misuse of private information, property damage, and disability discrimination.

Catherine also has a strong defendant health and safety practice, she is regularly instructed at high profile inquests, and she has an expanding practice in the field of costs.

Catherine has been a Recorder since 2008 and she sits in the criminal (including serious sexual offences) and civil jurisdictions (Wales Circuit).

When not working, Catherine is often to be found walking her retired racing greyhound (or watching her run around the local park).

Employment & Discrimination

Catherine has a niche practice in non-employment discrimination claims, in particular, disability discrimination. Catherine is able to advise on civil claims arising in the context of education, services provision and premises (including physical access issues) pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 (and the predecessor legislation), such as those concerning whether reasonable adjustments have been made.

Claimant's occupational stress practice includes many civil claims in which allegations of discrimination are made in the guise of negligence and / or harassment allegations. She is particularly experienced in advising on the interface between ET and civil court jurisdictions, and on consequential issues such as abuse of process and estoppel.

Catherine's cases in this field include:-

- *Manda v UBS AG*, Central London County Court (2016) Lawtel 20/7/2016 – stress claim struck out on basis of res judicata as a result of earlier withdrawn / dismissed ET claim in which discrimination and breach of contract

- allegations were made against the same defendant (D)
- *El-Sayed v Exeter City Council* (discontinued 2015) – stress claim including allegations of racial discrimination against employer (D)
 - *Oates (deceased) v 2 others & West Suffolk College* (settled 2015) – fatal claim by mother of student who committed suicide alleging disability discrimination (in addition to breach of human rights and negligence) (D3)
 - *Peaurl v Darlington College* (2013) – disability discrimination claim against FE College by a childcare student who was unable to undertake a work placement at a nursery due the risk assessment undertaken as to the effect of her disability on the safety of children in her care (claim discontinued shortly before trial) (D)
 - *Morgan v University of Plymouth* (2009) – claim by disabled student for alleged failure by a university to make reasonable adjustments (D)

Qualifications

- University of Birmingham: B Com (Hons)
- Polytechnic of Central London (now University of Westminster): Diploma in Law

Appointments & Memberships

Recorder: 2008 (Wales Circuit – Crime, including Serious Sexual Offences, and Civil)

Barrister Member of Bar Standards Board Professional Conduct Committee 2009 – 2015 (continuing role as a retired pool member)

Previously Faculty Member, SE Circuit International Advocacy Course, Keble College, Oxford (Advocacy and Ethics trainer)

Personal Injuries Bar Association

Professional Negligence Bar Association

Association of Women Barristers

South Eastern Circuit

Middle Temple

Directories

Chambers & Partners 2017 says that she is widely recognised for her broad expertise and delicate handling of psychiatric injury, stress at work and sexual abuse claims. “She very quickly picks out the key details from vast swathes of information.” “She’s excellent, a joy to work with.”

Legal 500 2016 says “She has a wonderful knack for putting difficult legal concepts into plain language”.

Chambers & Partners 2016 said “She provides very authoritative and clear advice and she has the ability to assimilate a large amount of documentation very quickly. She is an expert in stress and harassment cases”.

Legal 500 2015 said “Her intellect is immense and solicitors trust her judgement implicitly”

Earlier editions of the directories included the following:

“The “decisive and robust,” Catherine Brown is a skilled negotiator who is “able to explain complex issues in straightforward terms” and put clients at ease.” She has “sound judgment and focus” and was commended for having

skills associated with a far more senior advocate. She is respected for her “detailed and comprehensive” approach and the fact that she was “ever-prepared to make hard decisions. “Catherine “is widely held out as one of the leading personal injury juniors on the circuit” who is well known for her “tenacious cross-examination.” Fellow barristers note that she is “tough but sensible – she will hold her line but never if it is a foolish one.”

She has also been described as “clued up” and “regularly briefed on important personal injury cases”. The entry continued by saying that she was “a tenacious trial lawyer and a formidable opponent who is outstanding on large stress claims”. Clients have described Catherine as an “exceptional cross-examiner” and “always extremely supportive of her clients”.