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King's Bench Walk

James Pickering



Call: 2013
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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Personal Injury, Industrial Disease, International & Travel, Abuse, Insurance, Military Claims, Group Litigation

James is a leading junior specialising in personal injury, international, and group litigation. He acts for both claimants and defendants in complex and high-value cases at the cutting edge of his areas of practice. He is instructed in some of the largest group claims brought in the English courts.

James leads 12KBW's Band 1-ranked International & Travel Team. He has been recognised for many years by Chambers UK and The Legal 500, where he has been described as "really excellent", "very, very intelligent", and "a brilliant lawyer" who "cuts through all issues and understands the client's needs."

His cases include:

- **Military Deafness Litigation**: Trial Counsel for the successful Claimants in one of The Lawyer's Top 20 Cases of 2025.
- **Leicester City Helicopter Crash**: Advising bereaved families on cross-border issues in a successful claim against the helicopter manufacturer.
- **Rugby Concussion Litigation**: Defending the Rugby Football League in high-profile head injury litigation brought by over 1,000 rugby league and union players.
- **Harrods Abuse Claims**: Representing the survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by former Harrods owner Mohamed Al Fayed.
- **Fundão Dam Collapse Litigation**: Acting for the Claimants in the early stages of one of the largest ever civil actions in the English courts arising from an environmental disaster.

The legal directories rank him as a leading junior in five practice areas: Group Litigation, Personal Injury, Industrial Disease, Travel, and Motor Insurance Fraud.

He edits the leading practitioner textbooks in his fields of practice: *Butterworths Personal Injury Litigation Service (Various Chapters) (LexisNexis UK), Occupational Illness Litigation (Sweet & Maxwell),* and *Asbestos: Law & Litigation (Sweet & Maxwell).*

Personal Injury & Industrial Disease

Personal Injury

James has extensive expertise across the full spectrum of personal injury litigation, from group litigation involving thousands of claimants to catastrophic claims valued at tens of millions of pounds. He specialises in military claims and has secured millions of pounds on behalf of injured members of HM Armed Forces, including several of the highest ever settlements for losses of military careers.

Industrial Disease

James is a highly experienced industrial disease lawyer and edits both of the leading practitioner textbooks in industrial disease law. He is known for his skill and sensitivity when representing bereaved and terminally ill clients in asbestos-related disease claims, with the legal directories describing him as “extremely good in conference when advising clients on highly sensitive and emotive subjects.”

Sexual Abuse

James regularly acts in claims arising from sexual abuse, advising on complex issues including limitation, consent, vicarious liability, non-delegable duties, causation, and evidential matters. He represents the survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by former Harrods owner Mohamed Al Fayed.

Fraud

James also has a counter-fraud specialism, acting in claims involving exaggeration, phantom passengers, staged accidents, and low velocity impact (LVI). He writes the chapter on “Dishonest and Unlawful Claims” for *Butterworths Personal Injury Litigation Service (LexisNexis UK)*.

Motor Indemnity

James regularly acts for motor insurers in policy and coverage disputes, with expertise in the Road Traffic Act 1988, Article 75 of the MIB’s Articles of Association, the Uninsured Drivers Agreement, and the Untraced Drivers Agreement.

Group Litigation

James is a leading junior in group litigation, with instructions in some of the largest group actions brought before the

English courts.

Many of these claims involve thousands of claimants and difficult procedural challenges, such as *Adams v Ministry of Defence* [2024] EWHC 1966 (KB): an important authority on the use of group Claim Forms in large-scale personal injury litigation.

According to the legal directories, “James stands out for his intellectual rigour and his ability to master technically complex material at pace. In large-scale, expert-heavy litigation he demonstrates exceptional analytical clarity, strategic awareness beyond his call, measured and effective advocacy, and a strong collaborative approach.”

He has acted in major multi-party claims including:

- **Military Deafness Litigation**: Trial Counsel for the successful Claimants in one of The Lawyer’s Top 20 Cases of 2025.
- **Military Cold Injuries Litigation**: Recovering millions for injured veterans following the settlement of generic issues.
- **Rugby Concussion Litigation**: Defending the Rugby Football League in high-profile head injury litigation brought by over 1,000 rugby league and union players and former players.
- **Harrods Abuse Claims**: Representing the survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by former Harrods owner Mohamed Al Fayed.
- **Police Data Breach Claims**: Representing a large number of police officers in psychiatric injury claims arising from the unlawful disclosure of sensitive personal data.
- **Fundão Dam Collapse Litigation**: Acting for the Claimants in the early stages of one of the largest ever civil actions in the English courts arising from an environmental disaster.

International & Travel

James leads 12KBW’s Band 1-ranked International & Travel Team and is widely recognised for his expertise in complex cross-border personal injury litigation.

According to the legal directories, “James really stands out and is excellent at international law issues.”

He advises on the full range of jurisdictional and procedural issues arising in international claims, including service of process and the conflict of laws. He represents seriously injured claimants as well as tour operators, airlines, cruise ship operators, and insurers in high-value and technically complex disputes.

James was instructed by bereaved families in litigation against the helicopter manufacturer arising from the 2018 Leicester City Helicopter Crash, proceedings which ultimately settled in Italy.

He successfully secured damages and penalty interest on behalf of the Claimant in *DHV v MIB* [2025] EWHC 2002 (KB), following a 14-day High Court trial conducted under Spanish law.

He is regularly invited to speak at international and cross-border conferences, including those organised by APIL, the Pan-European Organisation of Personal Injury Lawyers, and the Turin Bar Association.

James writes the chapter on “Accidents Abroad” for *Butterworths Personal Injury Litigation Service (LexisNexis UK)*.

Cases

Military Deafness Litigation: Trial Counsel for the successful Claimants in one of The Lawyer’s Top 20 Cases of 2025.

Military Cold Injuries Litigation: Recovering millions for injured veterans following the settlement of generic issues,

including the highest ever settlement of a claim for cold injuries.

Leicester City Helicopter Crash: Advising bereaved families on cross-border issues in a successful high-profile claim against the helicopter manufacturer.

Rugby Concussion Litigation: Defending the Rugby Football League in high-profile head injury litigation brought by over 1,000 rugby league and union players and former players.

Harrods Abuse Claims: Representing the survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by former Harrods owner Mohamed Al Fayed.

Police Data Breach Claims: Representing a large number of police officers in psychiatric injury claims arising from the unlawful disclosure of sensitive personal data.

Fundão Dam Collapse Litigation: Acting for the Claimants in the early stages of one of the largest ever civil actions in the English courts arising from an environmental disaster.

DHV v Motor Insurers' Bureau: Successful claim for a severely brain injured client following a 14-day High Court trial under Spanish law.

Adams v Ministry of Defence: Leading authority on group Claim Forms in large-scale personal injury litigation.

Woodward v Mapfre Espana Compania de Seguros y Reaseguros: Case on recoverability of Spanish "penalty interest", eventually appealed to the Court of Appeal.

Qualifications & Awards

BCL (Distinction), Exeter College, University of Oxford
BPTC, City, University of London
BA Jurisprudence, Saint Peter's College, University of Oxford

Inner Temple Pegasus Scholarship
London Common Law & Commercial Bar Association Essay Prize
Law Faculty Prize for Criminal Justice and Human Rights
Ralph Chiles Award for Comparative Human Rights
Middle Temple Colombos Law Prize
Exeter College Tobias Prize in Law
Times Law Awards, 2nd Prize
Oxford Postgraduate Internship Award
Exeter College Internship Grant
Saint Peter's College Law Essay Prize

Publications

Occupational Illness Litigation (Sweet & Maxwell) (Editor)

Asbestos: Law & Litigation (Sweet & Maxwell) (Editor)

Butterworths Personal Injury Litigation Service (Various Chapters) (LexisNexis UK) (Editor)

'Asbestos Product Litigation', Journal of Personal Injury Law (2021, 1, pp. 17-24)

Directories

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James really stands out and is excellent at international law issues. He really thinks through his answers, asks considerate questions, cuts through all issues and understands the client's needs. He has delivered real insight and expertise – Chambers and Partners 2027

James stands out for his intellectual rigour and his ability to master technically complex material at pace. In large-scale, expert-heavy litigation he demonstrates exceptional analytical clarity, strategic awareness beyond his call, measured and effective advocacy, and a strong collaborative approach – Chambers and Partners 2027

James is a brilliant lawyer – Chambers & Partners, 2026

I'm always amazed by his level of expertise and technical knowledge on cross-border matters – Chambers & Partners, 2026

His tactics and strategy always result in favourable outcomes. – Chambers & Partners, 2026

James has a Rolls-Royce brain and eye for detail – Chambers & Partners, 2026

He is thoughtful, thorough and extremely good in conference when advising clients on highly sensitive and emotive subjects. – Chambers & Partners, 2026

James is a super junior with a massive future. He is incredibly bright, meticulous and approachable – Chambers & Partners, 2025.

James is really excellent – Chambers & Partners, 2025

Quietly understated due to his modesty, James nonetheless possesses a towering intellect and is able to master the law in a wide range of areas from international law to English procedural law before deploying it with lethal effect. – Legal 500, 2025