

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 serious injury, international, and group litigation. He is instructed by both claimants and defendants in complex, high-value cases at the cutting edge of his practice.

He is particularly recognised for his work in large-scale group actions, catastrophic injury litigation, and technically demanding cross-border disputes involving novel legal issues.

James leads 12KBW's Band 1-ranked International & Travel Team.

He has been recognised for many years by Chambers UK and The Legal 500, which describe him as “really excellent” and “a brilliant lawyer” whose “tactics and strategy always result in favourable outcomes.”

James is ranked as a leading junior in:

- Group Litigation
- Personal Injury
- Industrial Disease
- International Personal Injury
- Motor Insurance Fraud

He represented the Claimants in the Military Deafness Litigation, one of The Lawyer's Top 20 Cases of 2025, and has also represented the Defendants in the Rugby Concussion Litigation.

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

James has extensive expertise across the full spectrum of personal injury and industrial disease litigation, including

catastrophic claims valued at tens of millions of pounds.

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 is an experienced negotiator, particularly recognised for his strength in resolving complex and high-value quantum disputes. He has secured millions of pounds on behalf of injured members of HM Armed Forces, including some of the highest ever settlements for losses of military careers.

James edits 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.”

He 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)*.

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 experience in some of the largest group actions brought before the English courts. Many of these claims involve thousands of claimants and novel procedural challenges.

He has acted in major multi-party claims including:

- Representing thousands of military veterans in claims against the Ministry of Defence arising from service-related injuries.
- Defending the Rugby Football League and the British Amateur Rugby League Association in the Rugby Concussion Litigation.
- Representing thousands of police officers in psychiatric injury claims arising from the unlawful disclosure of sensitive personal data.

James also acted in *Adams v Ministry of Defence* [2024] EWHC 1966 (KB), the leading authority on the use of group Claim Forms in large-scale personal injury litigation.

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.

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

The Military Deafness Litigation (*Abbott & Ors v Ministry of Defence* [2026] EWHC 941 (KB)): Junior Counsel for the successful Claimants in one of The Lawyer's Top 20 Cases of 2025.

Dutton v MOD (2026): Recovered £1,600,000 for a former Royal Navy Diver in the highest ever settlement of a claim for military cold injuries.

DHV v Motor Insurers' Bureau (No. 2) [2025] EWHC 2038 (KB): Successful claim for Spanish penalty interest.

DHV v Motor Insurers' Bureau (No. 1) [2025] EWHC 2002 (KB): Successful claim for a severely brain injured client following a 14-day High Court trial under Spanish law.

Adams v Ministry of Defence [2024] EWHC 1966 (KB): Leading authority on group Claim Forms in large-scale personal injury litigation.

Woodward v Mapfre Espana Compania de Seguros y Reaseguros [2022] Lexis Citation 1433: Case concerning 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

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