



Adrian Hughes KC

Year of call: 1984 | Silk: 2006

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Adrian Hughes KC acts as counsel and arbitrator with a broad international and UK construction and commercial practice. He focuses on complex contract disputes spanning a wide range of sectors, including construction and engineering, energy and natural resources, international trade, shipbuilding, transport and infrastructure, investment and public international law, information and communication technology and commercial disputes including agency, insurance and joint venture cases.

Whilst his domestic practice centres on the Technology & Construction Court and the Commercial Court, the majority of his work involves international arbitration and associated court proceedings. He regularly conducts commercial and construction arbitration work as counsel in many different jurisdictions. Recent cases have included major international arbitrations arising from power and infrastructure projects in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia, with seats in London, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Dubai and China.

Adrian increasingly sits as arbitrator in international disputes, as president, party nominated arbitrator or sole arbitrator, appointed by all the main international institutions. He also acts as chairperson and member of dispute boards for international construction projects as well as mediator and adjudicator.

He has a leading practice relating to China and regularly conducts advocacy and advisory work involving Chinese parties. Recent cases have included a number of prominent international arbitration and court cases in, and related to, China. He is instructed as expert to the Great Britain China Centre / Foreign Office on UK / China Arbitration and Dispute Resolution, and is on the advisory board of the Oxford University Belt and Road Institute directed at the impact of China's outbound investment policy. He acts as expert witness on English law issues and was the first English barrister to act in this capacity in Chinese commercial court proceedings.

His early practice included extensive Supreme Court and Commercial Court proceedings arising from the collapse of the International Tin Council, involving issues of public and private international law relating to the enforceability of arbitration awards against an international organisation and its Member States. This experience carries through to public and private international law issues arising in his current work.

He sits as a part time judge, having for a number of years acted as Recorder and Examiner of the Court, and has recently been appointed to the Court of Appeal of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. He is a past Chair of the UK Society of Construction Law (SCL), the country's leading multi-disciplinary construction law association.

Areas of expertise

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Commercial
Construction, Engineering and Infrastructure
China Related Practice
Information Technology
Professional Negligence
Energy and Natural Resources

Professional Negligence

Adrian maintains a wide-ranging and substantial professional liability practice. He acts for and against accountants, auditors, valuers, architects, engineers and surveyors and IT professionals.

Experience includes:

- Acting for the developer in professional negligence claims against engineer and architect arising from a facade collapse during an iconic reconstruction project in Bradford City Centre. The case involved complex liability and causation issues, together with previously untested damages and valuation issues.
- Acting on behalf of a well-known architect in long running adjudication and multiple court proceedings arising from the design and redevelopment of a historic estate in Herefordshire.
- Acting for structural engineers in relation to the design and foundations of a large warehouse in the Port of Tilbury in London, involving technical design issues as well as the extent of the duty to supervise construction.
- Acting for one of the professional defendants in a widely publicised matter concerning a local authority leisure centre in Hackney, London. The dispute arose from a £20m claim by the local authority for damages arising from the design and construction of a landmark leisure centre.
- Representing valuers in a £40m negligence claim arising from Enterprise Zone Trust investments which raised complex issues of reliance and existence of loss.
- Acting for the employer against architects in relation to a large riverside housing development in the north east of England.
- Acting for investigative accountants in connection with a report prepared for company investors, involving issues of performance, reliance and quantum.

Appointments

- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Justice of the Court of Appeal of the Falkland Islands [2017 to present]
- Recorder [2001-2016] Court Examiner [2001 to 2016]
- Bencher of the Middle Temple
- Dispute Board Member of the Singapore Infrastructure Dispute-Management Protocol Panel, Singapore Mediation Centre [2019-2021]
- Chairman of the Society of Construction Law [2010-2011]
- Chairman of the China Law Council Legal expert to the Great Britain China Centre on UK China Dispute Resolution
- Advisory Board, Oxford University Belt and Road Institute
- Chairman, UK-Azerbaijan Law Association

Memberships

- ICCA
- LCIA
- Society of Construction Arbitrators
- Society of Construction Law
- COMBAR
- TECBAR

Recommendations

Adrian is consistently recommended in both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500, in particular for the practice areas of International Arbitrator, International Arbitration Counsel, Construction and Engineering, Energy and Professional Negligence. He appears in the Legal 500 Arbitration 2023 Powerlist for both the UK and for China and in the International Arbitration Spotlight section for Chambers Global 2023.

Recent quotes include:

*'Extremely user-friendly and a star in international arbitration'... "He shows great attention to detail, determination and commercial sense"*The Legal 500

*'A very able counsel with excellent advocacy skills, and a great team player too' ... "He is an excellent lawyer, with strength across the board" ... "He has become a major player in international arbitration' and in particular has 'very good strength in depth in construction arbitration"*The Legal 500 Asia Pacific

*"Extremely personable and handles clients brilliantly" ... "excellent to work with and his work product was second to none"*Chambers and Partners

*"He delivers highly innovative and persuasive submissions'... 'He builds a strong personal rapport with clients'... 'An extremely hands-on and user-friendly silk."*The Legal 500

*"Has vast experience in international commercial arbitrations"*and is further acclaimed as *"a class act"*and *"one of the best construction specialists"*in the international arbitration field

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