



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

Information Technology

Adrian has substantial experience in IT disputes. His work includes disputes arising from hardware and software contracts and licensing agreements. He regularly acts for employers, suppliers and designers in providing advice during the course of projects and in representing clients in court and arbitration proceedings.

Experience includes:

- Acting for a high profile national football club against a designer/supplier in relation to a contract for a new computerised ticketing system for the club; case gave rise to issues of contract interpretation, fitness for purpose and performance.
- Acting for a leading company providing integrated networks in an action brought by a software designer and supplier in the Birmingham TCC in connection with the design and provision of a state of the art data management system.
- Acting in two large international arbitrations which involved issues as to the extent to which the employer could develop the software specification during the course of the project.
- Acting for contractor in relation to contract for the design and supply of automated car production system involving complex software issues.
- Acting for licensee in an international dispute over alleged breaches of a software licensing and distribution agreement.
- Instructed by IT supplier in relation to a dispute over a contract for the provision of online learning for an educational provider. Also acting for the employer in a dispute with designer and supplier of computerised administration and information database for a national teachers association.
- Acting for the designer and supplier in claim for damages for termination of software contract for digital television access equipment.

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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