



Jess Connors

Year of call: 2000

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"She brings great attention to detail and a very user-friendly and commercial approach." The Legal 500

Jess specialises in substantial and complex commercial and construction disputes. She regularly appears before the English Commercial Court, the Technology and Construction Court (TCC), and in international arbitrations (including LCIA, UNCITRAL and ICC), both as sole counsel and as part of a larger counsel team. Jess is a highly skilled, persuasive and experienced advocate, known for her effective and robust cross-examination.

She has particular experience and expertise in:

- Construction and infrastructure disputes, including offshore, on JCT, NEC, FIDIC and bespoke contracts, and related professional negligence disputes
- Private finance initiative (PFI) contract disputes
- Energy disputes, including nuclear, renewables, waste, bulk electricity supply, rig hire and pipeline construction. Oil and gas disputes, including joint operating agreements (JOAs), production sharing contracts (PSCs), back-in disputes and equity determinations
- Insurance, bonds and guarantees

Jess speaks good Japanese and fluent French.

Areas of expertise

Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

Energy

Property Damage

International Arbitration

Construction and Engineering

Insurance

Commercial

Financial Services

Construction and Engineering

Jess has extensive experience in the litigation and arbitration of large construction disputes arising out of the major UK and international forms of contract and in various sectors.

- Acting for the purchasers of biomass plants in an ICC arbitration arising out of termination disputes valued at £100m.
- Advising in relation to a dispute about aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding, the Building Regulations 2000 and 2010 and various versions of the guidance in Approved Document B.
- Acting for the claimant in a substantial damages claim for breach of a development agreement and deed of collateral warranty, arising out of defective workmanship/design.
- Acting for the UK-based claimant in an architect's fees claim against two German companies for work done on a hospital in Ghana, including dealing with questions of forum and applicable law.
- Acting for the defendant employer in a TCC claim concerning the inter-relationship of various interim applications for payment and interim certificates.
- Acting in relation to a dispute under a JCT 98 With Contractor's Design contract, in relation to a block of affordable housing units.
- Advising the employer in relation to a FIDIC contract for the construction of a hospital in Tobago.
- Advising in relation to the proper construction of an NEC contract, in the context of a dispute arising out of a substantial infrastructure project.
- Advising in relation to a dispute in connection with heads of terms for a contract for the design and construction of a power plant in South Africa.
- Acting for mechanical and electrical subcontractors in a dispute concerning the non-payment of contractual sums.
- Acting for the Department for Transport in relation to a claim for damages arising out of a bridge strike which disrupted a highway maintenance contract.
- Representing employers and contractors in various multi-track domestic building disputes concerning allegations of defective design and workmanship.
- Representing a local authority in relation to a dispute arising out of the construction of a leisure complex.
- Representing the defendant to a claim for professional negligence in the provision of geotechnical consulting services.
- Advising an NHS trust in relation to a claim for rescission of a sale of land, and a claim for breach of fiduciary duty.
- Representing a developer in proceedings arising out of the dismissal of a planning application.

Cases

Reported Cases

- Shell UK v Revenue & Customs Commissioners (Sp Comm) 2 August 2007 Lawtel 28 August 2007.
- RWE Nukem Ltd v AEA Technology Plc (CA) 20 October 2005 [2005] EWCA Civ 1192.
- Seymour and Seymour v Caroline Ockwell & Co and Zurich IFA Limited 13 May 2005 [2005] EWHC 1137 (QB).
- Oxford City Council v First Secretary of State and J A Pye (Oxford) Ltd (QBD) 12 January 2010 [2004] EWHC 2447 (Admin); [2005] JPL 847.

- Legal Services Commission v Mohammed Rasool (CA) 5 March 2008 [2008] EWCA Civ 154; [2008] 3 All ER 381.
- Solvent Resource Management Ltd v Environment Agency; OSS Group Ltd v Environment Agency (QBD) 30 November 2006 [2006] EWHC 3023 (Admin).
- The Maersk Co Ltd v Wilson (CA) [2004] EWCA Civ 313.

Recommendations

Jess is recommended in Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500.

"Her in-depth knowledge of the subject matter is phenomenal." "Very good at detail and financially complex claims." Chambers and Partners 2020

"An exceptional barrister, very clever and commercially orientated." The Legal 500 2020

"Great clarity of thought and the ability to absorb huge amounts of information and apply legal principles to awkward facts." The Legal 500 2020

"Always on my radar as a possible person to instruct." The Legal 500 2020

"Extremely hard-working, bright and thorough. She likes to really delve into the facts of a matter." Chambers and Partners 2018

"Meticulous." Chambers and Partners 2018

"She works ferociously hard and has an excellent grasp of quantum and figures." The Legal 500 2017

"Incredibly hardworking, responsive and thoroughly knowledgeable." The Legal 500 2017

"A tenacious barrister." The Legal 500 2017

"An exceptional junior with a terrific ability to immerse herself in the minutiae of a case." The Legal 500 2016

"You won't meet a human being who works harder; she leaves no stone unturned." Chambers and Partners 2016

"She brings great attention to detail and a very user-friendly and commercial approach." The Legal 500 2015

"Covers every angle and is very client-friendly." The Legal 500 2015

"One of the most hard-working barristers you could come across, she is incredibly thorough." Chambers and Partners 2015

"Possibly the most thorough barrister I know." Chambers and Partners 2014

"She rolls up her sleeves and gets stuck in." Chambers and Partners 2014

"Tenacious." The Legal 500

"Obvious legal ability and highly pragmatic approach." Chambers and Partners 2012

"Thorough and user-friendly manner." Chambers and Partners 2012

"realistic and clear advice' goes down well." Chambers and Partners 2010

"A source of clear, practical advice' who is widely bruted as having a bright future ahead of her." Chambers and Partners 2009

Appointments

- 2006 – 2012: HM Attorney General's panel counsel.

Memberships

- TECBAR
- The Commercial Bar Association
- The Society of Construction Lawyers
- The Professional Negligence Bar Association
- The Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers
- The London Common Law and Commercial Bar Association

Qualifications

- BA (Hons), Oxford University: 1995
- Securities & Futures Authority Registered Representative: 1996
- Securities Institute, Diploma (Interpretation of Financial Statements): 1997
- Postgraduate Diploma in Law, City University: 1999
- Wolfson and Hardwicke scholarships, Lincoln's Inn: 1999 – 2000

Additional Information

Publications

Jess contributed to Energy Arbitration, OUP pending, writing, jointly with Peter Rees QC, a chapter on Disputes Relating to Energy Construction and Infrastructure Projects. Construction Contracts: Law and Practice. Richard Wilmot-Smith QC, 2nd Edition (Contributor) OUP 2010 and Nabarro Nathanson Local Authority Procurement (Butterworths, 2002).

Jess has a finance background. Before coming to the Bar, she was an equity analyst with Credit Suisse First Boston and Citigroup in Paris and London.

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