+44 (0)20 7544 2600
clerks@keatingchambers.com

Richard Coplin KC

Call: **1997** Silk: **2025**



"Richard's service levels are exceptional and he always gives pragmatic, commercial advice. His ability to read a situation and deliver exactly what is needed is second to none."

Legal 500 2024

Clerk Details

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Practice Overview

Richard Coplin KC is a qualified engineer and spent several years in the energy industry before becoming a barrister. He specialises in dispute resolution in the construction, engineering, energy and technology sectors. Richard acts for clients on claims in the English courts, particularly the Technology and Construction Court (TCC), but he also has extensive experience of adjudication having acted on numerous adjudication claims over the years along with matters of enforcement. He is particularly well regarded for his work on professional negligence claims relating to architects, engineers, surveyors and valuers.

Arbitration in the UK and abroad is another important element of Richard’s practice, having worked on several multi-million pound arbitration claims in recent years relating to large infrastructure and stadium projects in the UK and ICC arbitrations in the Caribbean, Europe and the Middle East, including DIAC arbitrations under UAE law.

Richard has particular strengths in understanding and advising in respect of legal issues arising out of complex engineering matters, particularly in the fields of mechanical and structural engineering and in areas such as offshore construction, energy and power, acoustics, manufacturing, materials science, corrosion and transportation.

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Richard's extensive experience of complex construction contracts has seen his career develop into related commercial fields, successfully arguing cases as diverse as the proper construction of election rules for an unincorporated association, the effects of promises not to sue, and the application of the Football League and Football Association Rules to a transfer dispute before an FA tribunal.

Practice Areas

Construction & Engineering

- Acted in the UAE on behalf of a main contractor in relation to an AED 50,000,000 dispute under the DIAC arbitration rules and UAE law regarding termination of a sub-contract following the cancellation of a large government infrastructure project.
- Acted on behalf of the geotechnical engineers in relation to a surcharging scheme in defeating a substantial multi-million pound claims for delay, disruption and other losses based on settlements between the main contractor and sub-contractor.
- Acted on behalf of a sub-contractor in recovering interim payments through Part 8 proceedings.
- Acted on behalf of a funder in striking out a substantial claim for loss of profit arising out of the alleged negligence of contractors.
- Acted on behalf of an insurer and successfully resisting the appeal in the Court of Appeal in relation to the proper construction of a compromise agreement.
- Acted on behalf of a residential occupier in obtaining a significant payout for a crane over sailing the resident's property.
- Acting on behalf of contractors in an arbitration where significant losses were claimed by a developer/employer relating to the alleged substantial devaluation of its property.
- Acted for the main contractor joint venture in multi-million pound ad hoc arbitration proceedings relating to the construction of a new runway at an international airport in Western Europe.
- Acted for the employer in ICC arbitration proceedings relating to the construction of a shopping complex in Poland.
- Instructed and advised in relation to the development of luxury properties in Barbados.
- Represented a residential developer in a two-week trial relating to alleged defects in the construction of a large residential property.
- Represented the main contractor in the TCC courts on a claim relating to a profit sharing agreement.
- Acting for the employer on several High Court actions relating to the construction of two floating production storage and off loading (FPSO) Vessels.
- Advised on claims arising from power station boiler corrosion.

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Sports Stadiums

- Instructed by a major international architectural practice in an arbitration of a £2.5 million dispute relating to alleged professional negligence in the provision of a grandstand at a world famous racecourse.
- Acted on behalf of structural engineers and advised extensively in relation to a dispute regarding a national football stadium. This case involved highly complex and technical structural engineering matters and the interfaces between various engineers' scopes of responsibility leading to the successful mediation of a multi-party dispute.
- Instructed in relation to a dispute relating to the design of a training facility for a well known football club.

Professional Negligence

- Instructed by Architects in relation to waterproofing issues at Britain's only natural thermal spa facility.
- Acted for a major supermarket chain in TCC proceedings relating to claims arising from subsidence of the main floor slab at a new supermarket development.
- Defending Surveyors against claim of negligence relating to commercial property valuations.
- Defending engineers against claims of alleged negligence relating to the failure of a commercial property's foundations.
- Defending various consulting (mechanical, structural, geotechnical, civil and electrical) engineers in proceedings relating to alleged negligence.
- Representing various claimant main contractors on claims of negligence against consulting engineers.
- Defending various surveyors, quantity surveyors, architects, valuers in various types of proceedings (court, arbitration, adjudication).

Reported Cases

- CIP Properties v Galliford Try Infrastructure Ltd [2015] EWHC 481 (TCC)
- West v Ian Finlay & Associates [2013] EWHC 868 (TCC), [2014] BLR 324
- Liberty Mercian Ltd v Cuddy Civil Engineering Ltd EWHC 2688 (TCC)
- Leander Construction Ltd v Mulalley& Company Limited PNLR 12 (TCC) and [2011] EWHC 3449 (TCC)
- Tinseltime Limited v Eryl Roberts and others BLR 515 (TCC) and [2011] EWHC 1199 (TCC)
- Priory Caring Services Limited v Capita Property Services Limited 129 Con LR 81 (CA), and [2010] EWCA Civ 226
- Priory Caring Services v Capita Property Services EWCA Civ 226, 129 Con LR 81
- Pierce Design International Ltd v Johnson 115 Con LR 110
- London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority v Halcrow Gilbert Associates Ltd EWHC 2456 (TCC)

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- Mersey Docks Property Holdings v Birse Construction Ltd 99 Con LR 122 TCC
- Outwing Construction Ltd v H. Randall and Sons Ltd BLR 156

Other information

Education & Professional Career

- Keating Chambers, 1998
- Pupillage, Keating Chambers, 1997-98
- Called to the Bar (Middle Temple), 1997
- Diploma in Law, City University, 1996
- MA in Engineering Science, Exeter College, Oxford 1989

Additional Information

Richard plays football regularly and follows West Ham United. He enjoys climbing and walking in the countryside.

Memberships

- Commercial Bar Association (COMBAR)
- Society of Construction Law

Seminars & Publications

- Contributor, Keating on Offshore Construction & Marine Engineering Contracts – First Edition (2015)
- Contributor, Keating on Construction Contracts – Ninth Edition (2012)
- Contributor, Keating on Construction Contracts – Eighth Edition (2006)
- The Engineer's Dispute Resolution Handbook

Recommendations

"Richard's engineering background means he has a particular strength in reviewing and highlighting strengths and/or issues with expert evidence. He is also very good at stepping back and highlighting the key points which will win (or lose) the case."

Construction, Legal 500 UK Bar 2026

"He is very pragmatic and really good on technical issues."

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Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"He is very good at law, great with clients and has a strong engineering background."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Richard Coplin has a terrific manner with lawyers and lay clients alike. He is responsive and produces an excellent quality of advice."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Richard is fantastic; he is technically first-class and his engineering background adds a useful dimension. He is approachable and responsive."

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"He is committed and engaged."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Richard cares about getting the right results for the client."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Richard Coplin's advice and approach are always first class, as is his strategic input."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Richard is a great barrister. He is bright and incisive. He also has the calm demeanour and good humour required to work on complex demanding cases."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 2025

"Richard is one of the best in the business. He totally gets it and is an absolute pleasure to work with. He is client friendly and always provides sound advice."

Construction, Legal 500 2025

"Richard is a barrister I would want on my team."

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"He is friendly, creative and sensible - a go-to on construction."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 2024

"Richard's service levels are exceptional and always gives pragmatic, commercial advice. His ability to read a situation and deliver exactly what is needed is second to none."

Construction, Legal 500 2024

"Richard Coplin is user-friendly, creative and sensible." "He is very good to work with on difficult professional negligence claims."

Professional Negligence, Chambers UK Bar 2024

"He's excellent - experienced, really strong on his feet and really pleasant to work with."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2024

"He turns work around very quickly and is very good at drafting and strategy."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2024

“He is one of the best. He engages with issues and clients to provide clear robust advice on complex issues."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 2023

“Richard is a particularly creative and collaborative problem solver - very user friendly and practical."

Construction, Legal 500 2023

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"He assists to narrow the issues in dispute exceedingly well and works to achieve the best commercial outcome for the client, identifying the strengths and weaknesses in a case with a strategy for it all."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2022

"He is excellent on his feet as an advocate, with a good sense of the room."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2022

"He is technically brilliant, commercial and user friendly. Provides strong advice on legal issues and also excellent guidance on commercial and strategic considerations."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 2021

"Richard is a very talented advocate. His ability to quickly get to grips with complicated and highly technical issues leads to well-constructed and thought-out arguments."

Construction, Legal 500 2021

"A logical and creative problem solver." "Has excellent technical knowledge."

Professional Negligence, Chambers UK Bar 2021

"He is very bright and a fantastic team player who always brings enthusiasm and good humour to the instructions."

Professional Negligence, Chambers UK Bar 2021

"Excellent at providing strong advice on legal issues and commercial and strategic considerations, and fantastic on his feet."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2021

"The strategic advice he offers is second to none, he can grasp the big picture within moments and he is the ultimate team player."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2021

"Excellent in cross-examination, he has a lot of experience and it shows."

Construction, Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2021

"He has an engineering background, so he's excellent at complicated technical points. His paperwork is very clear and really engages the judge to steer them around with the right approach."

International Arbitration, Chambers UK Bar 2020

“His legal knowledge and analysis is first-class and he has an excellent manner with clients in conference. He grasps the essentials of complex construction disputes quickly and is very user-friendly."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2020

Richard Coplin is an excellent junior who is regarded as “extremely bright and brilliant with clients”, impressing peers and clients alike with his work in high-stakes construction disputes as counsel and arbitrator.

Who's Who Legal 2019: UK Bar Construction

"A very hard worker, and extremely bright and able - he also gets into the detail."

Construction, Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2019

"With a mastery of detail and a pleasure to work with, he constantly thinks through problems laterally to try to come up with solutions."

Construction, Legal 500 2018

"Has a useful engineering background and he's a personable barrister."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2019

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"Impresses with his drafting skills, construction knowledge, the speed of his response and his overall approachability."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2019

"He has a highly impressive ability to master complex background facts. His drafting is excellent and he is one of the most client-friendly barristers I have come across."

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2018

"He is terrific. Very clever and has a real knack for connecting with clients and understanding how best to deal with cases. He's very hands-on and down to earth."

Professional Negligence: Technology & Construction, Chambers UK 2018

"A great thinker, he has a fantastic ability to identify a killer point."

Construction, Legal 500 2020
