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Emma Healiss



Call: **2014**

"She's first-class and is destined to go to the top. She is really impressive and highly talented."

Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

Clerk Details

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Practice Overview

Emma is a leading junior for construction, building safety and professional negligence disputes, in the UK and internationally. She is described as an "*exceptional*" and "*first-class*" barrister who is "*destined to go to the top*". She was named Construction & Energy Junior of the Year at the Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2024 and was shortlisted for the same award again in 2026.

> *"Emma is especially strong in her written submissions, and demonstrates the ability to effectively marshal legal arguments to fit complex fact patterns."* Legal 500 UK Bar 2026

> *"She was particularly good on her feet, even when up against a far more senior counsel."* Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

> *"Emma is extremely capable technically, responsive, diligent and does not pull any punches."* Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

Emma is ranked by Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners in construction, energy and professional negligence. Chambers & Partners describes her as "*a rising star in the construction law field*" and "*a highly sought-after junior both as sole and junior counsel*". She is recommended as an "*extremely proactive*" barrister with "*easy, personable style*" who "*has exceptional*

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commercial stance and provides commercially focused and innovative advice to clients", and is commended for her advocacy: she cross-examines "*to the level of a barrister far more senior than her*". Emma's excellence in advocacy was recognised by her appointment to the Attorney General's Panel in 2021.

Emma has developed a strong domestic and international practice spanning the full range of construction and engineering disputes: defects, delay, payment and final account disputes, termination, and professional negligence claims against employers, contractors, consultants and insurers. Her work has included a number of high-profile cases involving fire safety issues, including *Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust v Lendlease Construction (Europe) Ltd & Others*, the only construction case to feature in The Lawyer's Top 20 Cases of 2022, and Emma acted as junior counsel to bereaved families, survivors and former residents in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Emma is as often instructed as sole counsel as she is led. She has run TCC trials and adjudications on her own account, is regularly instructed to draft the pleadings and submissions in the heaviest multi-party cases, and has been led by many of Chambers' senior silks in substantial international arbitrations concerning energy, oil and gas and major building projects in Africa, the Middle East, Kazakhstan, the UK and Ireland. Her practice is at the forefront of the building safety work now dominating the TCC: she is regularly instructed in large multi-party defects claims under the Defective Premises Act 1972 and the Building Safety Act 2022, both in the TCC and in applications for remediation contribution orders before the First-Tier Tribunal, and has advised on the Act since it came into force**.**

Emma is a contributor to Keating on Construction Contracts (11th edition) and Keating on Offshore Construction and Marine Engineering Contracts (2nd edition), and writes regularly on construction law.

Practice Areas

Construction, Engineering & Energy

Construction is the core of Emma's practice. She acts for employers, developers, contractors, consultants, insurers and public bodies in the TCC, in adjudication and in arbitration, across the full range of construction and engineering disputes: defects, fire safety and building safety claims, delay and disruption, payment and final accounts, termination and PFI disputes, and commercial claims arising out of construction and infrastructure contracts. She is instructed both as sole counsel and as junior to leading silks, and is as comfortable running a TCC trial alone as working in a large team on a multi-million pound dispute. Selected highlights include:

- Acting in substantial multi-party TCC claims (£1m to £200m+) under the Defective Premises Act 1972 and the Building Safety Act 2022 arising out of structural and fire safety defects, including claims against contractors and design consultants.
- Acting in applications for remediation contribution orders under the Building Safety Act 2022 in the First-tier Tribunal.
- Acting for an NHS Trust in a £160m PFI dispute concerning fire-stopping and passive fire protection defects at two major hospitals.

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- Acting as junior counsel to bereaved families, survivors and former residents in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.
- Acting as sole counsel for the successful defendant in a two week TCC trial, Mallino Developments Ltd v Essex Demolition Contractors Ltd [2022] EWHC 1418 (TCC).
- Acting for a local authority in a £500m+ dispute concerning termination of an energy-sector PFI contract for contractor default.

International Arbitration

Emma is regularly instructed as junior counsel in large-scale international arbitrations concerning energy, oil and gas and major building projects in Africa, the Middle East, Kazakhstan, the UK and Ireland. Highlights include:

- Acting as junior counsel to David Thomas KC for an oil and gas major in relation to the expansion of a supergiant oil field.
- Acting as junior counsel to Simon Hughes KC for a large Italian energy contractor against a Lebanese subcontractor in a €246 million dispute concerning welding defects in an Algerian pipeline.
- Acting as junior counsel to Marcus Taverner KC and Jane Lemon KC in a dispute concerning the delayed construction of a skyscraper in the Middle East.

Adjudication

Adjudication is a major part of Emma's practice. She acts for referring and responding parties in disputes concerning defects, delay, payment and final accounts, and in enforcement and Part 8 proceedings in the TCC. She is particularly sought after on complex enforcement cases, where questions of jurisdiction, natural justice, the slip rule and the interaction between adjudication and court proceedings arise. Proactive and user-friendly, Emma is happy to run an adjudication from start to finish: she will advise on strategy and timing before the notice is served, draft the notice, referral, response and rejoinder, and see the decision through to enforcement or challenge. She is frequently instructed as sole counsel in multi-million pound adjudications. Highlights include:

- Acting regularly in "smash and grab" and true value adjudications; Emma knows the payment and adjudication provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 inside out, and is frequently asked to advise on the validity of payment and pay less notices and on the strategy for recovering or resisting payment.
- Acting as sole counsel in Croda Europe Limited v Optimus Services Ltd [2021] EWHC 332 (TCC), which concerned the application of the slip rule and the proper interpretation of NEC3 adjudication provisions.
- Acting as junior counsel in a multi-million pound adjudication concerning defective fire protection measures and combustible insulation materials.
- Assisting in a case regarding resisting enforcement of an adjudicator's decision via concurrent Part 8 proceedings.

Professional Negligence

Professional negligence is a core part of Emma's practice and she is ranked for it by both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500, which notes her "*notable experience in claims brought against architects and surveyors*". She acts for and against architects, structural, mechanical and electrical engineers, surveyors, approved inspectors and project managers in claims arising from

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defective design, inspection, certification and contract administration. Much of this work is in large multi-party TCC actions in which the claims against consultants run alongside claims against the contractor and sub-contractors, so that questions of design responsibility, the standard of care, contribution and apportionment are at the heart of the case. Emma is equally at home acting for the claimant developer or employer and for the professional and its insurers, and is regularly instructed by insurers and their panel solicitors. Highlights include:

- Acting for a national residential developer in a portfolio of linked TCC claims worth c.£250m against the structural engineer responsible for the defective design of residential developments across London, raising issues under the Defective Premises Act 1972, the Building Safety Act 2022 and the Civil Liability (Contribution) Act 1978.
- Defending a development manager and client's representative in a c.£35m TCC claim alleging that it failed to identify and manage fire safety defects in a student accommodation block.
- Representing Lendlease in *Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust v Lendlease Construction (Europe) Ltd & Others* (the only construction case to feature in The Lawyer's Top 20 Cases of 2022), a c.£80m claim concerning professional negligence allegations against an architect.
- Acting on behalf of a firm of structural engineers in defence of a professional negligence claim relating to a cracking supermarket car park.

Insurance

Emma has a substantial insurance practice in the construction field. She regularly acts for the National House Building Council (NHBC), the UK's leading warranty and insurance provider for new and refurbished homes, in claims against builders, developers and personal guarantors, and in disputes over cover and the scope of the policy. She also acts for and against insurers in coverage disputes arising from construction and professional indemnity policies, and in claims brought directly against insurers under the Third Parties (Rights against Insurers) Act 2010.

Reported Cases

- Mallino Development Ltd v Essex Demolition Contractors Ltd [2022] EWHC 1418 (TCC)
- Croda Europe Ltd v Optimus Services Ltd (Costs) [2021] EWHC 2606 (TCC)
- Indigo v Razin [2019] EWHC 1205 (TCC)
- CEMEX UK Operations Ltd v Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd [2017] EWHC 2425 (TCC)

Other information

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Education & Professional Career

Professional Career

- Tenant, Keating Chambers, 2016
- Pupil, Keating Chambers, 2015 – 2016
- Called to the Bar, Inner Temple, 2014

Education

- Manchester Metropolitan University, Bar Professional Training Course, 2013 – 2014
- MA in Law, St Catharine's College, Cambridge, 2010 – 2013

Additional Information

Emma enjoys playing netball as part of the Keating Chambers team.

Appointments & Awards

- Shortlisted, Construction and Energy Junior of the Year, Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2026
- Winner, Construction and Energy Junior of the Year, Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2024
- Appointed to the Attorney General's C Panel of Counsel, 2021
- BPTC prize, highest mark in Advanced Civil Practice, 2014
- Gooderson Award, St Catharine's College, Cambridge, 2013

Seminars & Publications

- Keating on Construction Contracts, 11th Edition.
- Keating on Offshore Construction and Marine Engineering Contracts, 2nd Edition.
- Set off against another adjudication decision? Only in a limited set of circumstances
- Bresco v Lonsdale: unanswered questions
- *Transfer of proceedings within England and Wales: is it time to take a fresh look at jurisdiction clauses?,* KC Legal Update, June 2018 (co-authored with Jonathan Selby KC)
- *Ignore the procurement dispute timetable at your peril,* Practical Law, Oct 2017
- *You can recover (some of) a claims consultant's costs (some of the time)*, Practical Law, Dec 2016

Recommendations

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“Emma's written work is clear, incisive and persuasive, and she is excellent at dealing with detailed factual matrices and expert evidence.”

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2027

“She is an excellent junior on very complex disputes.”

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2027

“Emma is fantastic to work with. She has a critical eye and is extremely user-friendly.”

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2027

“The claim was complex, both legally and technically. Emma was brilliant at helping to marshal the required evidence. Emma quickly and easily became an integral member of the team.”

Construction, Legal 500 UK Bar 2027

“Very likely a silk of the future. Down to earth and very easy to work with. Manages solicitors well and is happy to push back against silks when she disagrees. Very good with clients.”

Energy, Legal 500 UK Bar 2027

“Emma settled the pleadings and did a great job of explaining a number of complex engineering issues. Emma is a pleasure to work with.”

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 UK Bar 2027

“Emma Healiss has notable experience in claims brought against architects and surveyors. Alongside acting in professional negligence claims, she has represented core participants in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.”

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

“Emma Healiss is a rising star in the construction law field. She is a highly sought-after junior both as sole and junior counsel.”

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

“Emma is especially strong in her written submissions, and demonstrates the ability to effectively marshal legal arguments to fit complex fact patterns.”

Construction, Legal 500 UK Bar 2026

"She's first-class and is destined to go to the top. She is really impressive and highly talented."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Emma Healiss is a first-rate junior."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Emma is extremely responsive and consistently provides high-quality advice and drafting."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Emma is very knowledgeable and has great attention to detail and is always well prepared for battle."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"I was impressed at her level of knowledge. She was particularly good on her feet, even when up against a far more senior counsel."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Emma is a hard-working, responsive junior and a pleasure to work with. Her drafting and advice are clear and precise."

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

"Emma is extremely capable technically, responsive, diligent and does not pull any punches."

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2026

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"She also has a keen commercial awareness."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Emma is able to quickly assimilate and deal with the most sophisticated of matters."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Emma Healiss is a strong advocate who is able to deal with complex matters effectively."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Emma is quickly able to assimilate and deal with the most sophisticated of matters and has a keen commercial awareness."

Construction: Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2025

"Emma is excellent to work with. She is responsive and easy to work with, as well as being technically excellent."

Construction, Legal 500 UK Bar 2025

"Extremely competent and to the point, Emma consistently provides high-quality advice."

Energy, Legal 500 UK Bar 2025

"Emma has strength in construction matters. She is excellent to work with."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 UK Bar 2025

"Excellent attention to detail. Emma picked up on new points, which were really helpful."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 UK Bar 2024

"Emma gets to grips with complex and document-heavy matters quickly."

Energy, Legal 500 UK Bar 2024

"Emma is easy to work with, provides strong commercial and practical advice and is extremely proactive and gets the job done"

Construction, Legal 500 UK Bar 2024

"Emma is a first-rate junior with great technical expertise beyond her call and has an excellent way with clients. She explains things clearly and is always available to mull an idea over."

Professional Negligence, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2024

"She is an excellent young barrister with a great future. She is tenacious and never gives up."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2024

"Emma is very user-friendly, great on the strategy, and her drafting is brilliant."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2024

"She is extremely capable and instantly and seamlessly joined the team and made a difference quickly. She's very astute."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2024

"Emma is absolutely fantastic. She does exceptionally good written work for us and excellent advocacy."

Construction, Chambers & Partners UK Bar 2024

"A rising star - exceptionally methodical, dedicated and cuts through the complex and often opaque issues in a claim with ease, with innovative solutions and commercial advice for the client."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 2023

"Straight talking, knows the details, and thinks outside the box. Emma is confident, deals with questions competently and cross-examines to the level of a barrister far more senior than her."

Construction, Legal 500 2023

"Straight-talking and confident, she knows the details, thinks outside the box and deals with questions competently."

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Energy, Legal 500 2023

"A first-class barrister with an unrivalled ability to review, comprehend and advise on complex points of law within tight timescales."

Construction, Chambers & Partners 2022

"She is an exceptional barrister - incisive on her feet and a very good tactician."

Construction, Chambers & Partners 2022

“She is very impressive and very supportive in the junior role.”

Public Procurement, Chambers & Partners 2022

"A rising star - exceptionally methodical, dedicated and cuts through the complex and often opaque issues in a claim with ease, with innovative solutions and commercial advice for the client."

Professional Negligence, Legal 500 2022

"Emma is a terrific junior who is able to think on her feet and cut through the complex issues easily."

Rising Star, Energy, Legal 500 2022

"Does well when up against significantly more senior barristers and adapts to unexpected arguments with innovation."

Procurement, Chambers & Partners 2021

"Emma is a formidable advocate. She has an incisive advocacy style, particularly in conducting cross-examination."

Rising Star, Construction, Legal 500 2021

"She has an incisive advocacy style and handles questions from the bench or opponents with ease."

Rising Star, Energy, Legal 500 2021