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SARAH WILLIAMS

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Areas of practice

- Construction & Engineering
- Energy & Natural Resources
- International Arbitration
- IT & Technology
- Professional Negligence

Clerks' Details

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Practice overview

Sarah Williams is a specialist in construction, engineering and energy disputes, appearing both in the High Court, in international arbitrations and in adjudications. She has recently been involved in on-shore oil and gas international arbitration disputes in the Middle East, litigation involving complex infrastructure in the UK, and fire-related cladding litigation.

Sarah is recognised for the quality of her oral and written advocacy, and her approachable, straightforward style. She is recommended in the directories as one who "punches above her weight in seniority and is certainly a junior to watch". She "provides both excellent legal representation and commercial advice and is able to quickly and effectively develop a case strategy", "her cross-examination has been precise and incisive" and "she is completely on top of the detail".

Sarah's practice encompasses a diverse range of disputes, centred on construction, engineering and energy and often on repeat instruction. Recently she has been instructed in an ICC arbitration in respect of issues of termination arising from an oil and gas facility in the Middle East, throughout an LCIA arbitration to final hearing concerning an EPF in the Middle East, and in respect of a Section 68 challenge arising out of that dispute; and in a multi handed TCC dispute regarding defects and consequential losses in a new NHS hospital in the NE of England.

Alongside her practice, Sarah is a Councillor for the Society of Construction Law, in which she chairs the SCL sub-committee on Ethics, Equality and Diversity, and takes responsibility for 'SCL Astra' – the branch of SCL for those in their first 10 years in the industry.

In chambers, Sarah sits on the pupillage committee, is a pupil-supervisor, and is the Environmental and Ethical officer for chambers.

Recent Cases

Construction & Engineering

- *Cambridgeshire County Council v BAM Nuttall Limited (TCC)* Repeat instruction from the Council in respect of the design and construction of a bespoke guided busway in Cambridgeshire under the NEC2 form of Contract. The council claims sums under the contract and damages for various defects in the busway, raising complex issues of engineering and quantum (with Piers Stansfield Q.C)
- Acting for the developer in a multi-handed dispute in respect of multi-million pound claims for remedial works and delay to a development in London, with particularly emphasis on Part B Building Regulations compliance of the external cladding (with Marcus Taverner Q.C).
- *Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust v Lendlease and others (TCC)* Acting for the M&E subcontractor in respect of a multi-million pound claim for defects and consequential costs arising in respect of a new hospital in the NE of England (with Piers Stansfield Q.C.)
- Repeat client instruction in an ICC arbitration concerning the termination of works for an oil and gas BS facilities in the Middle East (with Veronique Buehrlen QC)
- Instructed throughout an LCIA arbitration to the successful final hearing on behalf of the EPC contractor in respect of matters of defects and causation concerning an EPF in the Middle East, and in respect of a Section 68 challenge arising out of that dispute (with Richard Harding QC);
- *125 OBS v Lend Lease Construction (EMEA) Limited (TCC)* Junior acting for the Defendants in a claim for direct and consequential losses arising from glazing failures in a property in the City of London (with Adam Constable QC).
- *Costain v Haase Environmental Consulting GmbH (TCC)* Acting on behalf of the main contractor of a waste management facility in the north of England in a claim against its specialist sub-contractor (with Adam Constable QC).
- *De Haan v 89 Drayton Gardens Limited (TCC)* Instructed at all stages of the successful adjudication enforcement, which considered jurisdictional challenges in respect of variations and multiple contracts.
- *Exchequer Partnerships v Lendlease (TCC)* Instructed on behalf of the Claimant against the main contractor and hard facilities management contractor relating to alleged defects in the Government Offices, Great George Street, London (with Alexander Nissen QC).
- *Accolade Wines Limited -v- VolkerFitzpatrick(TCC)* acting for the tenant in a substantial defects claim (circa £130m) in respect of a large wine distribution warehouse (with Alexander Nissen QC and Calum Lamont). Listed by The Lawyer as one of the top 20 cases of that year.
- *Multiplex Constructions (UK) Ltd v Mott Macdonald Ltd* Instructed in the Wembley Stadium litigation as part of the counsel team for Brookfield (formerly Multiplex) in a professional negligence claim against the consultant engineers.

“A quality junior who works hard. In particular her cross-examination is highly recommended.”

Chambers & Partners UK Bar Guide 2019

Energy & Natural Resources

- Repeat client instruction in an ICC arbitration concerning the termination of works for an oil and gas BS facilities in the Middle East (with Veronique Buehrlen QC)
- Instructed throughout an LCIA arbitration to the successful final hearing on behalf of the EPC contractor in respect of matters of defects and causation concerning an EPF in the Middle East, and in respect of a Section 68 challenge arising out of that dispute (with Richard Harding QC);
- Instructed by the Claimant French mining company in the preparation and trial of an ICC arbitration claim concerning questions of force majeure, bailment and causation in a mining facility in Western Africa (with Veronique Buehrlen QC). ICC arbitration to final hearing concerning questions of force majeure, bailment and causation in a mining facility in Western Africa.
- Acting for the claimant JV in an LCIA arbitration concerning issues of substantial delay and variations in respect of a large nuclear power facility (with Simon Hughes QC).

International Arbitration

- Repeat client instruction in an ICC arbitration concerning the termination of works for an oil and gas BS facilities in the Middle East (with Veronique Buehrlen QC)
- Instructed throughout an LCIA arbitration to the successful final hearing on behalf of the EPC contractor in respect of matters of defects and causation concerning an EPF in the Middle East, and in respect of a Section 68 challenge arising out of that dispute (with Richard Harding QC);
- Instructed by the Claimant French mining company throughout all stages to the successful final hearing in an ICC arbitration claim concerning questions of force majeure, bailment and causation in a mining facility in Western Africa (with Veronique Buehrlen QC).
- Acting for the claimant JV in an LCIA arbitration concerning issues of substantial delay and variations in respect of a large nuclear power facility (with Simon Hughes QC).
- Acting for an international JV in a substantial claim in respect of a major municipal facility in Doha, Qatar (as part of the counsel team led by Richard Harding QC).
- Instructed by an Indian energy and infrastructure company to draft proceedings and advise in relation to an ICC arbitration dispute arising out of a major transport construction project in Qatar
- Instructed by the shipbuilder in a variations claim against the purchaser of a mega yacht.

“Has brilliant understanding of the detail and can establish a rapport with clients.”

Chambers & Partners UK Bar Guide 2019

Telecommunications & Utilities

- Repeat instructions from British Telecommunications Plc at all stages to trial in respect of claims of varying scale and nature, including multi million pound disputes regarding nuisance, negligence, fire damage and wayleaves under the Telecommunications Code.
- *Costain v Haase Environmental Consulting GmbH (TCC)* Acting on behalf of the main contractor of a waste management facility in the north of England in a claim against its specialist sub-contractor (with Adam Constable QC).
- Acting for a JV in respect of disputes arising out of public waste water processing facilities across the north of England (with Alexander Nissen QC).

Professional Negligence

- Acting for the developer in a multi-handed dispute in respect of multi-million pound claims for remedial works and delay to a development in London, with particularly emphasis on Part B Building Regulations compliance of the external cladding (with Marcus Taverner Q.C).
- *Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland v Watts PLC (TCC)* Acting for the Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland in a claim against its project monitoring surveyor in respect of residential development in the North (with Veronique Buehrlen QC).
- *Multiplex Constructions (UK) Ltd v Mott Macdonald Ltd* Instructed in the Wembley Stadium litigation as part of the counsel team for Brookfield (formerly Multiplex) in a professional negligence claim against the consultant engineers.
- Various instructions in respect of claims for and against surveyors of residential properties.

“She rolls her sleeves up and gets on with it.”

Chambers & Partners UK Bar Guide 2018

Adjudication

- Various instructions in respect of representation during the adjudication and at enforcement hearings, including:
- Instruction in adjudication proceedings concerning issues raised by the decision in Spartafield and whether an LOI can be superseded where there is a requirement for agreement under seal.
- De Haan v 89 Drayton Gardens Limited (TCC) Instructed at all stages of the successful adjudication enforcement, which considered jurisdictional challenges in respect of variations and multiple contracts.
- Universal Sealants (UK) Ltd (t/a USL Bridgecare) v Sanders Plant and Waste Management (TCC) enforcement proceedings concerning s. 105(2)(d)(ii) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996

Selected Reported Cases

- Universal Sealants (UK) Ltd (t/a USL Bridgecare) v Sanders Plant and Waste Management Ltd [2019] EWHC 2360 (TCC)
- 125 OBS (Nominees1) & another v Lend Lease Construction (Europe) Limited & another
- Accolade Wines v Volkerfitzpatrick (2) Volkervessels (3) Goodman (4) Keller (5) Twintec (6) GJ3&4

Education & Professional Career

Public Access Training	2015
Barrister, Keating Chambers	2009
Pupillage, Keating Chambers	2008-2009
Called to the Bar (Gray's Inn)	2008
Nottingham Law School – BVC (Very Competent) L. LB (1st Class Hons)	2007-2008
Nottingham Law School - Graduate Diploma in Law (Distinction)	2006-2007
Cambridge University, Jesus College – Natural Sciences M.A. (1st Class Hons)	2001-2004
Keswick School, Cumbria	1994-2001

Awards

Bedingfield Scholar, Gray's Inn	2007 - 2008
Scholar, Jesus College, Cambridge	2003 - 2004
Exhibitioner, Jesus College, Cambridge	2001 - 2002

Memberships

Technology and Construction Bar (TECBAR)
Commercial Bar Association (COMBAR)
Society of Construction Law (SCL)

Seminars, Publications & Papers

Sarah is guest speaker at numerous events in London, the regions, and internationally. She is a contributor to several leading texts including Keating on Construction Contracts, Keating on Offshore Construction and Marine Engineering Contracts, and the Construction Law Reports, and she contributes to the Practical Law Arbitration Blog.