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## Christopher Jeans

Described as “one of the all-time greats” of employment law, Christopher Jeans KC has appeared in most of the leading employment cases of the modern era. His practice covers all areas of individual and collective employment law. He has won (and regularly been nominated for) the Chambers & Partners Employment Law Silk of the Year.

Chris is listed in the **Chambers & Partners** Bar 100 (listing him as one of the top KCs at the bar) where he is described as being “super in conference, and excellent with written opinions”. He is valued for his “ability to relate to clients and put them at ease on even the most complex of issues”.

Christopher Jeans also has significant expertise and experience in high-profile media and sports cases, often as an off shoot to his “cutting edge” employment work.

A popular speaker and engaging communicator, Christopher Jeans has broadcasted on TV and radio and regularly speaks on employment law to a variety of legal and non-legal audiences.



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### Professional Summary

Called 1980  
Appointed KC 1997

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### Contact Details

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**Clerk** Lee Cutler  
**Clerk** Tori Eastwick  
[Contact Clerks](#)

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## Specialisms

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### Employment

Since beginning full-time practice at the bar, employment law has always been the major area of his practice and for many years he has worked almost exclusively in this field. His practice covers all areas of individual and collective employment law including contractual disputes, wrongful dismissal, membership disputes, unfair dismissal, transfer of undertakings, redundancy, discrimination (including equal pay) and the full range of statutory employment claims. He also handles internal disciplinary hearings.

Examples of work in this field include:

#### **Paturel v DB Group Services (United Kingdom) Limited**

[2016] IRLR 286 , [2015] EWHC 3659 (QB), QB, November 13 2015

Employer not in breach of contract when it exercised its discretion to award a financial trader a smaller annual bonus than was awarded to others.

#### **CD v ST**

[2014] EqLR 298, ECJ, March 18 2014, C167/12

Female worker whose baby is carried by a surrogate not entitled to maternity leave.

#### **Geys v Société Générale, London Branch**

[2012] UKSC 63, [2013] 2 WLR 50; [2013] IRLR 122

A party's repudiation of a contract of employment did not automatically terminate the contract. The contract would only be terminated if and when the other party elected to accept the repudiation.

#### **Andrew Coulson v News Group Newspapers**

[2012] ICR 385 High Court [2011] EWHC 3482 QBD, December 21 2011 [2012] IRLR 385, [2013] IRLR 116 (CA)

Claim by News of the World Editor under compromise agreement.

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## Sports

“He’s very good at cases where reputational issue is at stake.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is one of the most senior and respected silks around, and brings that gravitas into the sports sector” **Chambers and Partners**

Christopher Jeans’ sports work has developed as an offshoot of employment, particularly in relation to football. His expertise and experience in this area is wide ranging and includes advising in relation to the establishment of the Premier League, manager “bungs” enquiries and disciplinary measures, contractual issues concerning footballers/managers/ clubs/ sponsors /agents. He is regularly nominated to sit on football arbitrations.

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## Recommendations

“Chris is one of the absolute heavyweights at the Employment Bar.” **Chambers and Partners**

“His advocacy and cross-examination is incisive but sensitive and friendly. There is nothing more effective than a KC who asks difficult questions nicely when it comes to getting helpful concessions out of a witness.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He has the ability to convey complex legal matters in an easy-to-understand way for clients.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is very bright, he is a real fighter and he will leave no stone unturned.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He has a huge brain, he is great at devising strategy and the best thing about him is that he is down-to-earth, so clients love working with him, and he can convey complex legal issues in layman’s terms.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is an exceptional advocate, he is super bright, he has an encyclopedic knowledge of discrimination and equal pay claims, and he pulls out all the stops for his clients.” **Chambers and Partners**

“One of the all-time greats” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is an unparalleled expert in the field” **Chambers and Partners**

“He has a wealth of experience and an enormous legal brain, is incredibly responsive and just a fantastic barrister who is easy to work with” **Chambers and Partners**

“He knows the law inside out. Clients love him, he can break down complex legal issues for clients with ease, and is a pleasure to work with. For such a superstar, he is down to earth” **Legal 500**

“Star silk, particularly on must-win cases. One of the top employment silks at the bar, very hardworking and great to work with.” **Legal 500**

“He is extremely clever, amazingly hard-working and so user-friendly and nice to deal with. He’s the epitome of a barrister who is fantastic for the really tough cases.” **Chambers and Partners**

“An absolute master of the whole range of employment law, and is fabulous at dealing with solicitors, clients and the court. He really knows his onions and gets fantastic results.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is superb and is always completely on the money with his advice.” **Chambers and Partners**

“A superstar at the employment Bar; he is absolutely committed to each case” **Legal 500**

“He has real gravitas and is excellent with clients.” **Chambers and Partners**

“His disarming modesty hides his razor-sharp intellect” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is the exceptional employment advocate, who knows everything about employment law”  
**Legal 500**

“Continues to perform at the top of his game” **Legal 500**

“Supremely talented, he is a go-to silk, especially for public sector employment law issues” **Chambers and Partners**

“One of the UK’s leading employment lawyers; he fights every hearing as a matter of life or death” **Legal 500**

“He’s very good at cases where reputational issue is at stake.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is one of the most senior and respected silks around, and brings that gravitas into the sports sector” **Chambers and Partners**

“A first-rate employment silk with an excellent understanding of sport-related work” **Legal 500**

“He is an extremely successful barrister, who is strong and able, but has a human touch too.”  
**Chambers and Partners**

“He has an absolutely masterful command of the law.” **Chambers and Partners**

“He is uniquely engaging and a persuasive advocate.” **Legal 500**

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## Recent Cases

### **Pimlico Plumbers v Smith (No. 2)**

[2022] EWCA Civ 70, CA, February 1 2022, [2022] IRLR 347

Right to ‘carry over’ until the end of employment extends to situations where a worker has taken annual leave but not been paid for it

### **Independent Workers Union of Great Britain v Central Arbitration Committee**

[2021] EWCA Civ 952, CA, June 24 2021, [2021] IRLR 796; [2022] ICR 84

The Central Arbitration Committee had been entitled and correct to hold that riders were not “workers”, given their right to appoint a substitute rider. Christopher Jeans and Tom Cross for Deliveroo as interested party

### **IWGB v Rooffoods Ltd t/a Deliveroo (Interested party Deliveroo)**

[2018] EWHC 1939, [2018] IRLR 911, [2018] IRLR 84, TUR1/985(2016), CAC, November 14 2017

High profile “gig economy” case in the wake of the Uber judgment about whether flexible casuals (here “Deliveroo riders”) qualify for “worker” status.

### **Fenton v Asda Stores**

[2017] IRLR 785, EAT, June 20 2017

Multiple equal pay claims made by claimants who were performing different jobs could not be included in the same ET1 claim form.

### **Brierley and (over 7000) others v Asda Stores Limited (2017)**

Acting for Asda in the largest ever private sector equal pay claim. Described as a “pathfinder” case, as it will set parameters for similar claims against other retailers and private employers generally.

### **Quaid and (over 300) others v IBM (2016)**

Acting for employer (IBM) in mass age discrimination and unfair dismissal claims arising from changes to pension schemes and early retirement policy.

## **Edmundson and others v News Group Newspapers Limited (2016)**

Group of unfair dismissal claims by journalists dismissed as result of criminal involvement in the *News of the World* “phone hacking” scandal.

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## **Education**

Michenden (Comprehensive) School [1967-1974]

King’s College London University [1974-1977] LLB degree

St. John’s College, Oxford University [1977-1979] BCL degree

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## **Other**

Part-time Chairman of Employment Tribunals 1998-2008. Recorder 2009 onwards.

Bencher of Gray’s Inn

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