
Michael Lee

Michael Lee has a broad practice, with a particular focus on employment and commercial matters. He has extensive advocacy experience and regularly appears in a range of courts and tribunals

Michael is recommended in the employment sections of all the leading directories, described as “a go-to junior for employment litigation and associated high court work” and as a “*go-to counsel, who is hugely responsive and great with clients... always well prepared, never misses a trick, and his advocacy is strong*”, whilst noting that “Michael has brilliant legal knowledge” and “is excellent tactically and very good with clients.” Michael has been recommended as being “particularly strong on complex discrimination matters and employment issues with a commercial twist”.

Specialisms

Commercial

Michael undertakes a range of commercial work. He is frequently instructed in cases involving injunctive relief and restraint of trade issues, conspiracy and economic tort claims, and cases involving breaches of directors’ duties, fiduciary duties and duties of confidence. Chambers and Partners has stated that Michael “is noted for his work on injunctive relief and restraint of trade matters”, whilst Who’s Who Legal has commented that he is “lauded as ‘a go-to junior for employment litigation and associated High Court work’”.

Michael’s recent work includes a speedy trial concerning a team-move, led by David Craig KC (*Guy Carpenter v Howden*, which settled on the first day of six-week trial) and a non-compete injunction led by Daniel Oudkerk KC and Amy Rogers (*AstraZeneca v Sheldon* [2022] EWHC 2447). Michael (led by Richard Leiper KC) also represented one of the Defendant insurance brokers in an alleged team move conspiracy case heard over 14 days (*Alesco Risk Management Services Ltd v Bishopsgate Insurance Brokers Ltd* [2019] EWHC 2839 (QB)).

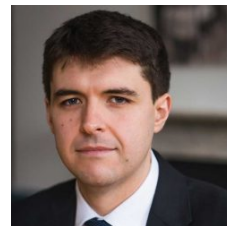
As sole counsel Michael acted the Claimants in a Commercial Court dispute involving contractual claims against Defendants in multiple jurisdictions and represented the individual defendants in a trial concerning misuse of confidential information (*Trailfinders Ltd v Travel Counsellors Ltd* [2020] IRLR 448).

Employment

Michael has acted in a wide variety of complex, high value Employment Tribunal cases, both as sole and junior counsel. His work in this field covers a broad spectrum of employment law issues and has been recognised by the legal directories for several years. As Chambers and Partners has recognised, Michael acts for a diverse range of clients, and has particular experience in the financial services and education sectors.

Michael’s recent work covers the full spectrum of work in the employment law field. He was instructed (led by Daniel Stilitz KC) by Chelsea FC and José Mourinho to defend high profile claims brought against them by a former doctor. Michael was also instructed (led by Simon Devonshire KC) in a sex and age discrimination claim brought against an investment bank. He is currently acting (led by Daniel Stilitz KC and Julian Milford KC) for Sainsbury’s in its defence of a long running equal pay dispute.

As sole counsel Michael recently represented a financial services institution in its successful defence of a highly publicised whistleblowing claim heard over 9 days. In the Court of Appeal, he acted for the respondent to an appeal against an Employment Tribunal’s findings on disability in the field of mental



Professional Summary

Called 2009

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Clerk Lee Cutler

Clerk Tori Eastwick

Clerk Harry Farrow

[Contact Clerks](#)

health (*Sullivan v Bury Street Capital* [2022] IRLR 159), and in the EAT for the respondent to an appeal in a case concerning TUPE (*Tuitt v Richmond Upon Thames LBC* [2022] IRLR 1035). Michael acted for a former-Chief Executive in a well-publicised claim for sex and pregnancy discrimination which settled on the first day of the hearing. He also acted for Dr Carpos-Young in her successful high-profile victimisation claim against the Royal Academy of Music (*Carpos-Young v Royal Academy of Music*).

In the High Court, Michael's recent work includes a speedy trial concerning a team-move, led by David Craig KC (*Guy Carpenter v Howden*, which settled on the first day of six-week trial) and a non-compete injunction led by Daniel Oudkerk KC (*AstraZeneca v Sheldon* [2022] EWHC 2447). Michael (led by Richard Leiper KC) also represented one of the Defendant insurance brokers in an alleged team move conspiracy case heard over 14 days (*Alesco Risk Management Services Ltd v Bishopsgate Insurance Brokers Ltd* [2019] EWHC 2839 (QB)).

As sole counsel Michael acted the Claimants in a Commercial Court dispute involving contractual claims against Defendants in multiple jurisdictions and represented the individual defendants in a trial concerning misuse of confidential information (*Trailfinders Ltd v Travel Counsellors Ltd* [2020] IRLR 448).

Public Law

Michael undertakes a range of public law and regulatory work.

Michael (led by Jonathan Moffett KC) acted for Surrey County Council in its defence of a challenge to its Special Educational Needs budget, heard by a Divisional Court in 2018 (*R (Hollow) v Surrey CC* [2019] EWHC 618 (Admin)). Michael also acted (led by Clive Lewis KC) in judicial review proceedings concerning a challenge to a European-wide prohibition on the sale of certain meat products (*R (Newby) v Food Standards Agency* [2013] EWHC 1966 (Admin)), including acting as sole counsel in defence of the Claimant's application for an interim injunction to dis-apply the prohibition. Michael (now led by Jason Coppell KC) represented the Food Standards Agency before the Supreme Court in that case in 2019 (*R (Newby) v Foods Standards Agency* [2019] UKSC 18).

Michael's public law practice has a particular focus on cases involving the Assents of Community Value regime in the Localism Act 2011. He has extensive expertise in this field, having acted in a large number of appeals, such as *Patel v Hackney CR/2013/0005* (the first appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal under ACV regime), *Kicking Horse Ltd v Camden CR/2015/0012* (an appeal considering the extent to which individuals parts of a building should be given separate consideration under the ACV regime), and *Mendoza Ltd v Camden CR/2015/0015* (an appeal considering the requirements that an organisation must meet to make a valid ACV nomination). Michael regularly advises on and appears in appeals to the First-Tier Tribunal in this field.

Local Government

Michael undertakes a range of work for local government. As well as advising local government on general public, commercial and employment law issues, Michael (led by Jonathan Moffett KC) acted for Surrey County Council in its defence of a challenge to its Special Educational Needs budget, heard by a Divisional Court in 2018 (*R (Hollow) v Surrey CC* [2019] EWHC 618 (Admin)). Michael's practice has a particular focus on cases involving the Assents of Community Value regime in the Localism Act 2011. He has extensive expertise in this field, having acted in a large number of appeals, such as *Patel v Hackney CR/2013/0005* (the first appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal under ACV regime), *Kicking Horse Ltd v Camden CR/2015/0012* (an appeal considering the extent to which individuals parts of a building should be given separate consideration under the ACV regime), and *Mendoza Ltd v Camden CR/2015/0015* (an appeal considering the requirements that an organisation must meet to make a valid ACV nomination). Michael regularly advises on and appears in appeals to the First-Tier Tribunal in this field.

Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory

Michael's employment practice sees him advise on a range of regulatory matters. He has also recently advised on diverse regulatory issues including European regulations on flight times and the regulations governing the work of employment agencies. Michael has acted in judicial review proceedings concerning a challenge to a European-wide prohibition on the sale of certain meat products (*R (Newby) v Food Standards Agency* [2013] EWHC 1966 (Admin)), including acting as sole counsel in defence of the

Claimant's application for an interim injunction to dis-apply the prohibition. Michael (led by Jason Coppell KC) represented the Defendant in those proceedings before the Supreme Court in 2019 (**R (Newby) v FSA [2019] UKSC 18**). He has also represented the Financial Reporting Council in proceedings concerning the extent to which it is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (**Miller v FRC EA/2014/0113**).

Sport

Within his commercial and employment work, Michael has particular expertise in the sport sector. He was recently instructed (led by Daniel Stilitz KC) by Chelsea FC and José Mourinho to defend high profile claims brought against them by a former-doctor (settled on day 2 of a 2 week hearing). He has also advised high profile sporting organisations on contractual disputes and tortious claims such as unlawful means conspiracy and inducing breach of contract.

Recent Cases

Ahmed v Sainsburys

Acting (led by Daniel Stilitz KC and Julian Milford KC) for the Respondents to a long-running equal pay dispute. The Stage 2 Hearing was heard over 4 weeks between April and July 2024.

Guy Carpenter v Howden (October 2023)

Acted (led by David Craig KC) for the Defendants to a team move dispute which settled on the first day of a 6 week speedy trial.

Maugars v Deutsche Bank (October 2022)

Acted (led by Simon Devonshire KC) for the Claimant in her age and sex discrimination claim against the Respondent investment bank.

AstraZeneca v Sheldon [2022] EWHC 2447 (KB)

Acted (led by Daniel Oudkerk KC and Amy Rogers) for AstraZeneca in its application for an interim injunction to enforce a non-compete covenant.

Tuitt v Richmond Upon Thames LBC [2022] IRLR 1035

Acted for the Respondent to a TUPE dispute before the ET in 2020 and before the EAT in March 2022.

Sullivan v Bury Street Capital [2022] IRLR 159

Acted for the Respondent to a disability discrimination claim in the financial services sector, heard over 9 days by the ET in November 2018, by the EAT in July 2020, and by the Court of Appeal in November 2021.

C v D (June 2021)

Acted for a financial services institution in its successful defence of a highly publicised whistleblowing claim heard over 9 days.

Trailfinders Ltd v Travel Counsellors Ltd [2020] IRLR 448

Represented the individual defendants in a trial concerning misuse of confidential information.

Alesco Risk Management Services Ltd v Bishopsgate Insurance Brokers Ltd [2019] EWHC 2839 (QB).

Acted (led by Richard Leiper KC) for one of the Defendant insurance brokers in an alleged team move conspiracy case heard over 14 days.

E v F (November 2019)

Acted for a former-Chief Executive in a well-publicised claim for sex and pregnancy discrimination which settled on the first day of the hearing.

R (Newby Foods Limited) v Food Standards Agency [2013] EWHC 1966 (Admin) [2013] EWHC 2132 (Admin) [2019] UKSC 18

Represented the Defendant in relation to the Claimant's challenge to a European prohibition of certain meat products (led by Clive Lewis KC) and acted for the Defendant in relation to the Claimant's application for interim relief. He later (led by Jason Coppell KC) represented the Defendant before the Supreme Court.

Carpos-Young v Royal Academy of Music (October 2018)

Represented the Claimant lecturer in her high-profile victimisation claim against the Royal Academy of Music.

Ozkaptan v Citibank N.A (2016 and 2017)

Represented the Claimant (an FX trader) in a 6-day ET hearing and subsequent remedy hearing.

Carneiro v Chelsea FC; José Mourinho (2016)

Acted (led by Daniel Stilitz KC) for the Respondents in defence of claims brought in the ET by a former-doctor, which settled on day 2 of a 10 day hearing.

Keppel Seghers v Hinds [2014] ICR 1105

Acted for the Claimant (the Respondent in the EAT) in an appeal concerning the extended definition of “worker” for the purpose of whistleblowing claims.

Personal Management Solutions Ltd v Brakes Bros Ltd [2014] EWHC 3495

Acted as sole counsel in a High Court trial concerning breach of confidence.

Lonmar Global Risks Ltd v West & Ors [2011] IRLR 138

Represented the Claimant in a 3-week trial concerning team moves, employees’ fiduciary duties, and conspiracy (led by Richard Leiper KC).

Recommendations

“A go-to counsel, who is hugely responsive and great with clients. He is always well prepared, never misses a trick, and his advocacy is strong – he gets to the point quickly and clearly without being antagonistic or divisive” **Legal 500**

“He really gets what the client wants, he’s really good technically and commercially, he is super efficient, he turns things around super promptly, he is thorough and he is great to work with” **Chambers & Partners**

“He is very client-friendly, very clear in his advice, very responsive, user-friendly and very bright” **Chambers & Partners**

“The biggest strength is his commitment. He is intellectually top rate and he combines that with sheer hard work and attention to detail. He has been extremely well prepared for everything. He is also very responsive to queries and a team player” **Legal 500**

“He is hugely responsive, practical and very accommodating. A hard worker, whose attention to detail is second to none” **Chambers & Partners**

“He is excellent to work with; incredibly responsive and all over the detail” **Chambers & Partners**

“He’s a really impressive and very supportive barrister to work with, and he’s able to give clear and concise advice to clients” **Chambers & Partners**

“For a junior of his call he is extremely impressive: so detail-oriented, so client-focused and so responsive” **Chambers & Partners**

“Excellent attention to detail, commercial, hardworking and excellent level of legal knowledge” **Legal 500**

“Very commercial, very sensible and very user-friendly” **Chambers & Partners**

“Personable and incredibly persuasive” **Chambers & Partners**

“He grasps complicated and complex matters easily” **Legal 500**

“Responsive, bright and enjoyable to work with. He really gets engaged with the case and makes you feel supported throughout” **Chambers & Partners**

“Good with clients, skilful, confident and persuasive. He is able to adapt his approach appropriately to the claimant, witness and case in hand” **Chambers & Partners**

“He provides sound and practical advice, and is one to watch” **Legal 500**

“He is extremely hard-working, diligent and is able to pick up the facts of a case very quickly” **Chambers & Partners**

“He is extremely thorough, very personable and good with the client” **Chambers & Partners**

“Very down-to-earth and clearly very bright” **Chambers & Partners**

Education

Michael graduated with a first-class degree in Law from St Catharine’s College, Cambridge University.

Other

Michael is a member of the Commercial Bar Association, the Employment Lawyers Association, the Employment Law Bar Association and the Constitutional and the *Administrative Law Bar Association*.

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