Harini Iyengar



Call: 1999

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Harini Iyengar practises as a veteran senior junior barrister, called in 1999, who has spent her entire career at 11KBW. Harini has amassed formidable knowledge, experience and expertise across Data Protection, Employment, Commercial and Public law. She is often selected for difficult matters at the intersections of her specialisms and is well-known for Equality law. As an experienced and established barrister, Harini is equally happy to lead or be led, to work alone or within a team of barristers.

Harini was the winner of the Professional Discipline and Regulatory Junior of the Year at the Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2026. The *Chambers and Partners* and *Legal 500* directories recommend Harini as a leading practitioner in Data Protection, Education, Employment, and Professional Discipline and Regulation, and also recommend her as an outstanding Independent Investigator. They say, "*Harini has one of the most incredible legal minds of her generation. Her ability to digest complex facts, disseminate legal advice in a client-friendly way, and advocate with strength and fortitude are her best qualities,*" and, "*Harini is a joy to work with. Her careful case preparation and warm good humour make it a pleasure to work on even the most challenging of cases with her.*"

> ***She's well prepared, robust and committed to her clients.***
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> **CHAMBERS & PARTNERS**

Harini is often instructed as an advocate in the Court of Appeal, High Court, Employment Appeal Tribunal, and Upper Tribunal Administrative Appeals Chamber. She also continues to appear regularly and deal with witnesses in the First-tier Tribunal Information Rights, the Employment Tribunal, the First-tier Tribunal Special Educational Needs and Disability, and specialist disciplinary or regulatory tribunals.

Her advisory work encompasses governance, regulation and compliance, legal disputes, and complex and sensitive independent investigations.

Harini often represents financial institutions, universities, independent schools and diverse public bodies. Harini has represented individuals from all walks of life during her career. She undertakes direct access work in select cases, typically giving her expert legal opinion in conference or in writing on a difficult point of law.

Harini Iyengar's portrait is displayed at Brasenose College, University of Oxford, as one of 12 "Amazing BNC Women" chosen to represent the successes of 40 years of co-education. A portrait of Harini with her parents also features in the professional photographic exhibition "Where I Come From" by Bill Knight, which depicts high-achieving children of a generation of immigrants who came to Britain in search of a better life for themselves and their families.

Expertise

Equalities, Human Rights and Public Law

Harini has over 20 years' experience in public law and human rights law. She typically advises and represents smaller public bodies, including "hybrid" public authorities, on governance and judicial review matters. She has never represented central government. Harini is often selected for difficult matters at the intersections of her specialisms and is well-known for her expertise in Equality law.

Funerary Arrangements

Harini advised a public body in writing concerning current and future provision for funerary arrangements. This included giving her written opinion on a range of legal issues, including the scope of consultation and the applicability of various legal rules on public health and burial provisions, the public sector equality duty, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Successful Challenge to Office of the Independent Adjudicator of Higher Education

Through advice, drafting a series of formal responses, and a letter before claim for judicial review, Harini helped a higher education institution, which had expelled a student for sexual misconduct towards a peer, to persuade the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education that its proposed complaint outcome was wrong.

Advice to Educational Charity on Public Sector Equality Duty, Human Rights Act and Freedom of Information Act

Harini provided her comprehensive written opinion to an educational charity on difficult legal questions concerning the applicability of the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to its unique activities and functions, and its governance.

Direct Access Advice to School Governor on Gender-Fluid Toilets Policy

Instructed on a direct access basis, Harini provided comprehensive written advice to an individual school governor at a state school, who wanted to have his own expert advice on the law on school toilet provision and the governing body's legal duties, because of a proposed policy on gender-fluid toilets which was causing heated disagreements on the governing body.

A Practical Guide to the Law of Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Harini is the sole author of "*A Practical Guide to the Law of Gender Pay Gap Reporting*", Law Brief Publishers, 2019. If and when the new laws on race and ethnicity pay gap reporting are enacted, Harini will be writing a second edition.

Achievements

Publications

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Women's Legal Landmarks

Harini wrote a chapter on Equal Pay for "*Women's Legal Landmarks*", Hart Publishing, 2018.

Tolley's Employment Law Handbook

Harini has been a contributor writing various chapters of "*Tolley's Employment Law Handbook*" for over 20 years.

Legal Expert, Public Speaker and Trainer

Harini has extensive experience of appearing as a legal expert in live and pre-recorded broadcasts, including appearances on Newsnight, BBC News, Sky News and Victoria Derbyshire's show.

It was the honour of Harini's life to hand out the prizes and give a speech for her former school at a ceremony held in Manchester's Bridgewater Hall in 2024. Harini gave an Annual Lecture to the Employment Lawyers' Association in 2019, and participated as a guest debater in a formal debate at the Oxford Union Society in 2018.

Harini regularly trains solicitors and other professionals by giving talks and writing articles on specialist legal topics. She has written and presented webinars for MBL Seminars for a decade.

Harini's Education

Bar Vocational Course: Inns of Court School of Law

Two-Year BCL (Masters degree including thesis and examined courses): Brasenose College University of Oxford

MA in Jurisprudence (Law degree): Brasenose College, University of Oxford

Non-accredited course “Artificial Intelligence Law and Legal Training”: the Open University

Examined Award in “Finance for Non-Financial Directors”: Institute of Directors

Professional Committee Work

Bencher Member of Inner Temple’s Communications, Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence Committee 2026-

Assistant Master of Pictures at Inner Temple 2026-

Member of Bar Council Race Panel 2020-

Member of Bar Council Retention Panel 2017-

Member of Commercial Law Bar Association’s Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee 2022-2025

Member of several Employment Lawyers’ Association Working Groups 2004-2025

Member of Inner Temple Bencher Nomination Committee 2022-2024

Inner Temple Representation on Steering Group of Temple Women’s Forum 2012-2022

Governing Bencher at the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple 2017-

Professional Memberships

Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers

Commercial Law Bar Association

Employment Lawyers’ Association

Employment Law Bar Association

Inns of Court Alliance for Women

Educational Lawyers’ Association

More about Harini

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Harini is an experienced Director. She was an Independent Governor of London Metropolitan University from 2016 to 2022, a trustee of Oxford University Student Union, and a trustee of Spitalfields City Farm. She holds the examined Award in "Finance for Non-Financial Directors" from the Institute of Directors.

From 2015 to 2022, Harini was formerly politically active as a founder member, elected officer and national spokesperson for the Women's Equality Party. She stood for election to public office seven times. In 2019, Harini attended a week-long course in anti-racist leadership and public policy at the Blavatnik School of Government, through a scholarship in conjunction with Operation Black Vote, Magdalen College Oxford, UK Parliament and Lloyds Banking Group; she presented a paper on Equal Pay as part of the Women's Budget Group delegation to the International Association for Feminist Economics annual conference; and she attended the European Women's Lobby conference in Brussels as a representative of the UK branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Harini worked full-time at the Bar while raising three children as a solo parent and the older two are now grown up and independent. In her free time, Harini now enjoys a few hobbies, as well as London's rich cultural life. She is a PADI Master Scuba Diver and Ice Diver, currently training as a BSAC Dive Leader. Harini studies Hindi and Tamil at SOAS and City Lit. Harini owns and cooks almost every day from over 70 cookbooks.

> ***She provides high-quality advice, and is genuinely interested in her clients***
>
> LEGAL 500

> ***She brings confidence to both instructing solicitor and client***
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> LEGAL 500

> ***She is very good at getting to the issues that matter quickly, and presents her cases to best advantage***
>
> LEGAL 500

> ***She is very accessible and focused on achieving the best outcome.***
>
> CHAMBERS & PARTNERS

> ***She's well prepared, robust and committed to her clients.***
>
> CHAMBERS & PARTNERS

> ***She is extremely responsive and has great attention to detail.***
>
> LEGAL 500

She is very quick to grasp both the legal issues and commercial realities.

LEGAL 500

She is knowledgeable about the subject and provides clear, comprehensive and helpful advice.

CHAMBERS & PARTNERS

She is excellent. Extremely cool under pressure and not fazed by anything.

CHAMBERS & PARTNERS