

Zoe Gannon

Call: 2014

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Zoe specialises in public, human rights, regulatory, education, data protection and information law.

She is ranked as a leading junior in Chambers and Partners and Legal 500 and was shortlisted for the Legal 500 Public Services and Charities Junior of the Year in 2025. She is on both the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Panel of Counsel (B Panel) and the Attorney General's "A" Panel of Counsel.

She is described in the directories as: "a fantastic public law barrister"; "destined to take silk"; "a real expert, especially in education and human rights"; "extremely bright"; "an excellent legal brain"; "a very creative barrister who thinks outside the box"; "clear, concise, technically strong and an all-round pleasure to work with"; "brilliant at making her point"; "pragmatic and fiercely intelligent".

Zoe regularly appears in the High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court in high profile and test cases. This has recently included some of the most high profile cases in the Supreme Court in: *For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers* [2025] UKSC 16, *R (oao Jwanczuk) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2025] UKSC 42, and *AG Reference* [2026] UKSC 16.



She is excellent on her feet, a great drafter and clients really like her. She is patient and brilliant at making her point.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2025

Expertise

Public, Human Rights and Civil Liberties

Zoe is a specialist barrister with extensive expertise in administrative law, civil liberties and human rights claims, often with a regulatory element. Her experience also spans procurement and commercial judicial review. She regularly acts for and advises public bodies, commercial entities and individuals as sole counsel and as a member of a larger team.

Zoe has significant appellate experience including in the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court and has been instructed in relation to applications to the European Court of Human Rights. She has appeared as sole counsel in the High Court, the Divisional Court and a range of Tribunals, including on appeal in the Upper Tribunal.

She is regularly instructed in high profile and sensitive cases, with a particular focus on claims involving the rights of individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Equality Act 2010. Recently this has included three leading Supreme Court cases:

- *For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers* [2025] UKSC 16, the landmark judgment on the meaning of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010.
- *R (oao Jwanczuk) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2025] UKSC 42, on Article 14, Article 8 and A1P1 of the Convention and the proper approach of senior courts (Court of Appeal and High Court) in England and Wales to decisions of higher courts in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- *AG Reference* [2026] UKSC 16 on Article 5 the Convention and whether the Supreme Court should apply the 1966 Practice Statement and depart from its 2014 decision in *Cheshire West*.



Zoe is a fantastic public law barrister. She is objective, very smart, fast, reliable, amazingly well organised, and proactive.

LEGAL 500 2026

R (ooo Good Law Project) v EHRC

[2026] EWHC 279 (ADMIN)

Challenge brought by the Good Law Project to the EHRC's "Interim Update" as published on its website following the judgment of the Supreme Court in *For Women Scotland* on the meaning of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010.

The University of Sussex, R (On the Application Of) v The Office for Students

[2026] EWHC 984 (ADMIN)

Landmark case on university free speech duties, and the regulatory decisions of the Office for Students.

R (on the application of Jwanczuk) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

[2025] UKSC 42

Discrimination claim under Article 14 of the Convention. Leading Supreme Court decision on proper approach of senior courts (Court of Appeal and High Court) in England and Wales to decisions of higher courts in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Led by Sir James Eadie KC for the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers

[2025] UKSC 16

Landmark Supreme Court case on the definition of "sex" and man and woman in the Equality Act 2010. Led by Jason Coppel KC for the Equality and Human Rights Commission intervening.

R (Bell) v Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

[2025] (AC-2024-LON-000706)

Challenge to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's failure to ban cross sex hormones by private providers. Zoe appeared as sole Counsel for the Claimants in the Divisional Court permission hearing (coverage)

R (on the application of) UK Curriculum and Accreditation Body (t/a Scholars School System) v Pearson Education Ltd

[2025] EWHC 2161 (ADMIN)

Sole Counsel for the Claimant in this judicial review of regulatory decision making by Pearson Education Limited acting as a regulator of a private education provider.

R(CKT and DGT) v Twyford Church of England Academies Trust, and the Office of the Schools Adjudicator

[2025] EWHC 2396 (ADMIN)

Leading indirect discrimination case brought under the Equality Act 2010 where claimants sought to challenge a faith school's admissions policy claiming race discrimination. Led by Joanne Clement KC for the Secretary of State for Education Intervening.

R (YVR) v Birmingham City Council

[2025] EWCA CIV 393

Significant Court of Appeal decision on Article 14 of the Convention in the context of public authority decision making and the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and delegated decision making. Led by Joanne Clement KC.

Fertré v Vale of White Horse District Council

[2025] EWCA CIV 1057

Important judgment on the interaction of domestic and EU law (as applied by the Withdrawal Agreement) following the UK's withdrawal from the EU, and the correct approach to the interpretation of the Withdrawal Agreement. Led by Julia Smyth KC and James Cornwell.

Free Speech Union v Secretary of State for Education

2025

Significant challenge to the *vires* of the Secretary of State's decision to revoke regulations bringing the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 into force (see). Led by Tom Cross KC.

R (on the application of Jwanczuk) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

[2023] EWCA CIV 1156

Case involving discrimination claim under Article 14 and A1P1 and constitutional issues as to the effect of a decision of the Northern Ireland Court of Appeal. Led by Clive Sheldon KC.

R (on the application of Motherhood Plan) v HM Treasury

[2021] P.T.S.R. 1202

Challenge to central government Covid decision making. Case involving Article 14, A1P1 and discrimination claims in the context of Covid 19 government support. Led by Julian Milford KC and Rupert Paines.

R (on the application of D) v Hampshire CC

[2020] EWHC 2916 (ADMIN)

Judicial review challenge regarding a school's obligations to pupils with EHCPs (Sole Counsel).

R (London School of Science and Technology) v Pearson Education Limited

[2019] EWHC 3129 (ADMIN)

Sole Counsel to the Claimant in this important regulatory challenge on the legal requirements on qualification awarding bodies when withdrawing accreditation from providers.

Achievements

Education

Zoe was awarded a First Class Honours Degree from Warwick University in 2007 and was later graded Outstanding in the Bar Professional Training Course ("BPTC"). She achieved the highest grade in her year in opinion writing.

R. (on the application of DF) v Essex CC

[2023] EWHC 3330 (ADMIN)

Challenge to local authority decision making and obligations under s.20 of the Children Act 1989. Led by Clive Sheldon KC.

R (Drexler) v Leicestershire City Council

[2020] EWCA 502

Court of Appeal Article 14/A2P1 Convention case involving complex school transport statutory obligations. Led by Peter Oldham KC.

Hendron v Bar Standards Board

[2020] EWHC 1255 (ADMIN)

Sole counsel for the Bar Standards Board in this appeal by Henry Hendron, which involved a "lacuna" in the in the BSB Handbook in relation to suspended Barristers.

R (Haq) v Walsall MBC

[2019] EWHC 70 (ADMIN)

Claim against local authority burial rules brought under Article 9 (religious rights) and as an Article 14 discrimination claim as well as a claim under the Equality Act 2010. Led by Jonathan Auburn KC.

Other

Zoe has won a number of awards and prizes including:

- Phoenica Scholar (Bar European Group)
- The Holt Scholarship for the BPTC from Gray's Inn (Major Scholarship) Norman Tapp Memorial Prize for Mooting from Gray's Inn
- Finalist Gray's Inn Moot Competition 2013
- Finalist Times/Herbert Smith Advocacy Competition 2009

Prior to commencing pupillage Zoe worked for a range of NGOs. Her experience gives her a valuable insight into the political process and the demands that unions, public and third sector organisations face.



Zoe Gannon offers first-class client service

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2026



Zoe's drafting and judgement is excellent.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2026



Zoe is a fantastic public law barrister. She is objective, very smart, fast, reliable, amazingly well organised, and proactive.

LEGAL 500 2026



Zoe is a real expert, especially in education and human rights. She is excellent on the nuts and bolts of a matter. She's very good at giving balanced and objective perspectives, which is very useful.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2026



She is excellent on her feet, a great drafter and clients really like her. She is patient and brilliant at making her point.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2025



She is very good, extremely bright and hard-working.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2025



Zoe is incredibly hardworking and proactive. Her ability to strike the right tone in client communications is second-to-none. You know you will be properly looked after if Zoe is working for you.

LEGAL 500 2024



Hugely knowledgeable and skilled in local government matters. She has built up a fantastic reputation as a go-to barrister for the more complex social care and education judicial reviews.

LEGAL 500 2024



She has an excellent legal brain.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2024