

Ruth Kennedy

Call: 2015 England & Wales Call: 2025 BVI

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Ruth specialises in all areas of commercial, employment, human rights, international, public and sports law.

She acts in the most high-profile and complex cases. She is consistently recognised in the legal directories as a leading junior across her areas of practice: in administrative law, civil liberties and human rights; commercial dispute resolution; employment, public inquiries and sport.

She has been described as *"a real star of the future and a star of the junior bar already", "absolutely fantastic", "a superb advocate", "a real rising star", "a brilliant barrister", "brilliant in everything she does", "exceptionally hard-working", "a pleasure to work with"* and having *"superstar quality."*

A member of both the Attorney General's London B panel and specialist Public International B panel, Ruth has acted and appeared in various domestic courts and tribunals up to and including the Supreme Court, as well as international courts including the DIFC, European Court of Human Rights and the International Court of Justice. She has experience of acting in arbitrations under the LCIA, ICC and UNCITRAL rules and under specialist sports arbitrations.



Ruth is a safe pair of hands. She is incredibly client-friendly and commercial.

LEGAL 500 2025

Expertise

Public Law and Human Rights

Ruth is recognized as a leading junior in Administrative Law and Human Rights in the Legal 500 and in Chambers & Partners for Civil Liberties and Human Rights. At the domestic level, she has particular expertise in claims arising under the Online Safety Act. She often acts in cases before international courts and tribunals, including the European Court of Human Rights, and is called to the Bar of the British Virgin Islands.



A star of the junior bar.

CHAMBERS & PARTNERS

R (Wikipedia) v Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology

[2025] EWHC 2086

acted for the successful SoS in a challenge brought to categorization regulations made under the Online Safety Act alleging they were irrational or infringed ECHR rights

R (Friends of the Earth) v UK Expert Finance

(2022)

acted for the Center for International Environment Law in its application to intervene in the Court of Appeal, making written submissions on the proper interpretation of the Paris Agreement

Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

(2021 – PRESENT)

counsel to the Inquiry

Central European University New York v Hungary

(2023 – PRESENT)

acting for the applicant university in its ECHR claim against the Hungarian Government on account of it having to cease its operations in Budapest

R (All the Citizens) v Minister for the Cabinet Office and others and R (Good Law Project) v The Prime Minister and others

[2022] EWCA CIV 1580

acted for the Defendant government departments in these joined judicial reviews of the use of private communications systems, including WhatsApp, for government business

BA v Derby City Council

([2021] EWCA CIV 1867)

acted for the intervening Secretary of State for Education in this case concerning Deprivation of Liberty orders made in respect of children

R (Salvato) v DWP

[2021] EWCA CIV 1482)

appeared in the Court of Appeal for the Department of Work and Pensions on question of whether payment of the childcare element of universal credit is discriminatory under the ECHR and/or irrational

Lungowe v Vedanta

[2019] UKSC 20

acted as part of the counsel team for the Claimants in this Supreme Court case relating to alleged human rights and environmental abuses in a mine in

Darnley v Croydon NHS Health Trust

[2018] UKSC 50

acted for the defendant NHS trust in the Supreme Court on the scope of the duty of care owed by receptionists in A&E

Achievements

Appointments

Attorney General's London B panel

Public International Law B panel

News, Articles & Publications

The ECHR Grand Chamber judgment in Semenya v Switzerland and its wider impact on international sport, co-authored with Chris Lavey of Bird & Bird, Law in Sport, 3 October 2025

For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers and Haynes v English Blackball Pool Federation: considerations for sports organisations, co-authored with Rachel Nolloth and Siobhan Murray of Farrer & Co, 22 September 2025

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

counsel to the Inquiry for the Lambeth strand

Kimathi and others v Foreign and Commonwealth Office

In which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office successfully defended an application for permission to appeal a final judgment in the first of 25 test cases arising from the acts of the British colonial administration in Kenya during a State of Emergency declared in 1952 to deal with the Mau Mau uprising.

Conveyancing fraudsters – who picks up the bill after P&P & Dreamvar? Journal of Professional Negligence, December 2018

Pure omissions and public authorities, Personal Injury Law Journal, May 2018

Unlawful fees & Out of time claims, New Law Journal, September 2017

Clarity provided for insurers aggregating claims, Insurance Day, August 2017

The Scope and Effect of Purdah, Judicial Review, December 2017

The Scope and Effect of Purdah, Judicial Review, December 2017

Education, Scholarships & Awards

BA (Hons) Pembroke College, Oxford University LLM (Distinction) University College London

Lord Justice Holker Award (Gray's Inn) Residential Scholarship (Gray's Inn)

Lee Essay Prize (second place, Gray's Inn) Advocacy Scholarship (University of Law) Monk Prize (Pembroke College)

Hogan Lovells Prize for Law (Pembroke College)

South Eastern Circuit Florida Bar Civil Advocacy Course

Memberships

ALBA

COMBAR

LawInSport

BASL

ELA

Additional Information

For the legal year 2016-2017 Ruth was Judicial Assistant to Sir Terence Etherton, Master of the Rolls. Prior to becoming a barrister, Ruth was a Research Assistant to Professor Philippe Sands KC working on public international law, ICSID Arbitrations and Court of Arbitration for Sport cases. She also previously worked as a Research Associate at UCL's Judicial Institute and a Teaching Fellow in public law at UCL.

“

She is a superb operator, being technically excellent but also hard-working and hyper commercial and practical.

LEGAL 500 2025

“

A cerebral and hard-working junior with extensive expertise in issues of public and private international law.

LEGAL 500 2021

“

She's a pleasure to work with: insightful and extremely responsive."
"She is very calm, personable and thorough.

CHAMBERS UK 2021

“

Ruth is very commercial and cuts through to the key issues for clients. Ruth is also incredibly personable.

LEGAL 500 2022

“

An up and coming star. Brilliant in everything she does, and so user friendly.

CHAMBERS UK 2022

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She is good at cross-examination and client management, and her presentation of a respondent's case to the client is respectful of their experiences.

CHAMBERS UK 2022

“

Ruth is a highly intelligent, all-round impressive lawyer, who works well on her own or as part of a large team. Ruth is a clear and persuasive advocate.

LEGAL 500 2023

“

Ruth is a diligent and exceptionally hard-working junior barrister with a formidable work ethic and attention to detail. She is a real rising star in the field of administrative law.

CHAMBERS UK 2023

“

Ruth is excellent – she is commercial and practical in her approach and her advocacy is concise and considered. Ruth also has exceptional client-care skills and very much works as a team with instructing solicitors to deliver for the ultimate client.

CHAMBERS UK 2023