Julian Milford KC

Silk: 2020 Call: 2000

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Julian Milford was called to the bar in 2000. His main areas of practice are public law, information law, and employment law. Julian undertakes advisory and judicial review work in the field of public and constitutional law for central and local government, other public authorities, and individuals, and has been instructed for and against government on issues of major public importance. He advises on and acts in cases concerning information rights in the civil courts and statutory tribunals, and has been instructed in significant data protection and freedom of information cases, having a particular specialism in national security cases and proceedings in the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. He acts in employment cases in the civil courts and Employment Tribunal, and has experience across the Tribunal's statutory jurisdiction, including extensive experience of acting in large-scale discrimination/equal pay claims and industrial action cases. His experience in discrimination law and the breadth of his expertise makes him well placed to undertake investigations and inquiries in the employment or regulatory context. He also practices in the field of education law, particularly in cases involving higher education institutions.

> ***He has excellent commercial judgement and is able to put across complicated situations in a way that is clear and reassuring.***
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> CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS

Expertise

Information, Technology & Media

Julian has acted in a number of high-profile cases concerning freedom of information, data protection, and data/privacy rights more generally. That includes data breach cases (where he has acted for data controllers and the Information Commissioner); cases raising significant questions about the interpretation of the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004; and challenges to information gathering or sharing on human rights or EU law grounds. He has appeared in many significant cases in the area, including Vidal-Hall v Google LLC [2016] QB 1003 (recoverability of damages for distress), Ittihadieh v Cheyne Gardens RTM Co Ltd [2018] QB 256 (meaning of personal data), and FOIA proceedings involving Prince Charles (the "spider letters" case). He frequently advises clients on issues connected with state surveillance, including issues arising under the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, and the Computer Misuse Act 1990. He is recommended as a Band 1 Silk for data protection in the Legal 500, which states that he is "expert, client-friendly, phenomenally clever and hard working – a perfect combination in a data barrister ". He was shortlisted for Legal 500's Technology, data and crypto Silk of the Year for 2025. Chambers and Partners states: "he is an exceptional lawyer" and "his knowledge of data protection law and enforcement strategy is unparalleled". Recent and current work includes the following:

- Acting for Apple Inc in major litigation in the Investigatory Powers Tribunal, challenging the Home Secretary's powers to require removal of electronic encryption applied to data held in the cloud.
- Acting for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in Webster v HMRC, a High Court claim in which the claimant challenged the system for the automatic transfer of tax data between the UK and the USA as being contrary to the GDPR and Data Protection Act 1998.
- Acting for the Information Commissioner in current Court of Appeal proceedings concerning the scope of a data controller's duty to protect data from unauthorized processing by third parties (DSG Retail v Information Commissioner).

> ***expert, client-friendly, phenomenally clever and hard working – a perfect combination in a data barrister***
>
> THE LEGAL 500

- Cases for HMG in the Investigatory Powers Tribunal concerning the activities of the Intelligence Agencies in connection with large-scale collection of data under warrants or authorisations, and data sharing with foreign intelligence See e.g. recent proceedings against MI5 (Liberty and Privacy International v (1) Security Service (2) SSHD [2023] HRLR 5). Julian has also acted in a number of cases both domestically and in the ECtHR concerning the Intelligence Agencies, arising out of allegations made by Edward Snowden. Those include current proceedings against HMG in the Divisional Court challenging the compatibility of all the 'bulk' powers in the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 with human rights and EU law: R(Liberty) v (1) SSHD (2) SSFCO [2023] EMLR 22, [2022] 1WLR 4929, [2020] 1 WLR 243, and [2019] QB 481; and in the ECtHR, Big Brother Watch v United Kingdom (2022) 74 EHRR 17 and Wieder v United Kingdom (2024) 78 EHRR 8.
- Acting as Counsel to the Tribunal in the Investigatory Powers Tribunal in cases concerning vetting by the Security and Intelligence Agencies, and proceedings concerning the acquisition of communication data.
- Acting for the Information Commissioner in proceedings concerning the Information Commissioner's investigation into AdTech and targeted advertising on the internet (Veale and Killock v Information Commissioner [2022] 1 WLR 2241).
- Acting for a major international technology company in connection with law enforcement access to data.
- Advising a major international bank on cross-border transfer of data under the UK GDPR.

Achievements

Publications and Appointments

Contributor to Tolley's Employment Handbook and Butterworth's Employment Service.

Julian sits as a Recorder (Crime) on the Western Circuit.

Education

Julian read English at St. John's College, Oxford, and studied piano and piano accompaniment at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna, the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Guildhall School of Music. He spent a number of years as a full-time professional pianist and chamber musician.

He's highly responsive and a pleasure to deal with; he has an exceptional ability to distil highly complex issues and is extremely practical

THE LEGAL 500

He is intellectually rigorous and works very well with clients, commanding their complete confidence.

THE LEGAL 500

He is effective and charming.

THE LEGAL 500

He has an exceptional mind as well as being extraordinarily good with all kinds of different clients.

THE LEGAL 500

Julian is a very considered advocate. He strongly advocates for his client but he is not unnecessarily aggressive or combative, which is a real strength in my view in a public law barrister.

THE LEGAL 500

Extremely knowledgeable and a good communicator who cuts to the chase and puts people at ease.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS

An exceptional barrister, who is very bright and has excellent technical knowledge. He has a razor-sharp mind, and is able to unravel the most complex of factual and legal cases into concise and convincing submissions.

THE LEGAL 500

Expert, client-friendly, phenomenally clever and hard working. A perfect combination in a data barrister.

THE LEGAL 500

He is a star of the public law Bar

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