

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.

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.

Education

Zoe is ranked in both Chambers and Partners and Legal 500 as a leading junior in Education Law.

Zoe represents and advises both claimants and defendants (local authorities, academies, universities and independent schools) in the full range of education matters.

She has extensive experience in the High Court, County Court, SENDIST and Upper Tribunal as sole counsel and being led in the Court of Appeal. Her cases frequently involve complex issues of Convention rights and discrimination law.

Zoe is a contributor to the Education Law Handbook (LexisNexis, 2021)



Zoe is my go-to for higher education matters. She is clear, concise, technically strong and an all-round pleasure to work with!

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2023

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) 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.

DM v Cornwall Council

[2023] P.T.S.R. 795

Leading Upper Tribunal decision on specificity for Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision in Education Health and Care Plans. Sole counsel to the local authority.

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

[2025] EWHC 2396 (ADMIN)

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R (on the application of D) v Hampshire CC

[2020] EWHC 2916 (ADMIN)

High Court judicial review challenge regarding school's obligations. Sole counsel to the County Council.

R (on the application of London School of Science and Technology) v Pearson Education Ltd

[2019] EWHC 3129 (ADMIN)

Judicial review regulatory challenge to withdrawal from a college of accreditation on the basis of malpractice. Sole counsel to the Claimant.

The Proprietor of Ashdown House School v JKL

[2019] HS/1322/2019 (20 AUGUST 2019)

Leading case in the Upper Tribunal on the First Tier Tribunal's power to order independent schools to reinstate pupils, order apologies and enforcement of decisions of the First Tier Tribunal. Sole counsel to the private school.

Regulatory and Professional Discipline

Zoe has significant experience in the field of regulatory law and professional discipline. In particular, she is experienced in cases involving the interrelationship between public and regulatory law, and judicial review of regulatory bodies.

She has been instructed on a number of key judicial review cases involving regulatory bodies, in disciplinary tribunals and as sole counsel in the High Court on appeal. She has experience of acting for and against a number of regulatory bodies including: Bar Standards Board, Care Quality Commission, Solicitors Regulatory Authority, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, Pearson, and the Information Commissioner.

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) UK Curriculum and Accreditation Body (t/a Scholars School System) v Pearson Education Ltd

[2025] EWHC 2161 (ADMIN)

Sole Counsel to the Claimant in a judicial review challenge to the finding of misconduct by its regulator.

Hendron v Bar Standards Board

[2020] EWHC 1255 (ADMIN)

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

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

Health, Social Care and Court of Protection

Zoe has particular expertise in the related areas of community care, court of protection and healthcare. Zoe regularly acts for and advises local authorities, and Integrated Care Boards in community care and court of protection cases. She has experience in funding disputes, including complex s.117 and continuing health care disputes.

Her experience includes cases on local authority obligations to children, for example in *R (on the application of TW) v Essex CC* [2024] EWHC 264 (Admin) and *R. (on the application of DF) v Essex CC* [2023] EWHC 3330 (Admin).

Zoe was led by Jonathan Auburn KC in *R (SH) v Norfolk County Council* [2020] EWHC 3436 (Admin); [2021] PTSR 969 and by Clive Sheldon KC in *R. (on the application of YVR) v Birmingham City Council* [2024] P.T.S.R. 866, and by Jo Clement KC in *R (YVR) v Birmingham City Council* [2025] EWCA Civ 393: both cases concerning Article 14 and A1P1 on local authority charging policies.

Zoe has experience in defending challenges to the alleged failure to properly assess care needs, and the amount of funds provided to meet needs (Zoe was led by Jonathan Auburn KC for Oxfordshire in *R. (on the application of Davey) v Oxfordshire CC* [2018] P.T.S.R. 281: leading Court of Appeal authority on decision making under the Care Act 2014 and *Davey, R (on the application of) v Oxfordshire County Council* [2017] EWHC 354 (Admin), (2017) 20 CCLR 303).

Zoe was instructed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, led by Joanne Clement KC, in what will be a leading case on the meaning of deprivation of liberty (under Article 5 of the Convention) in the Supreme Court in AG Reference on Cheshire West. She has experience in the Court of Protection including in end of life and serious medical treatment cases such as in *Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust v MB* [2019] EWCOP 30, [2019] 7 WLUK 320 and *Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust v MB* [2019] EWCOP 29, [2019] 5 WLUK 673.



She has built up a fantastic reputation as a go-to barrister for the more complex social care ... judicial reviews.

LEGAL 500 2024

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[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.

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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.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust v MB

[2019] EWCOP 30

Court of Protection High Court case involving end of life decision making of a young man with profound disabilities who wanted to leave intensive care and return home to die with his family.

R. (on the application of Davey) v Oxfordshire CC

[2018] P.T.S.R. 281

Leading Court of Appeal case on decision making under the Care Act 2014. Led by Jonathan Auburn KC.

Data and Information

Zoe has experience acting both for and against the Information Commissioner in relation to high value and high-profile Monetary Penalty Notices involving IT related data breach cases.

Zoe also has experience in the context of group action challenges to the recording of personal data.

Her information law experience includes substantial work for the Information Commissioner and for public bodies on FOIA/EIR appeals in the First-tier and Upper Tribunals, frequently as sole counsel against silks and senior juniors.

Page v ICO and the School of Sexuality Education

[2023] UKFTT 476 (GRC)

High profile challenge by a parent seeking information from a school on sex education provided by a third party provider. Sole counsel for the appellant requestor in the First Tier Tribunal and led by Jonathan Moss in the Upper Tribunal (2025).

Department of Health and Social Care v Information Commissioner

[2020] UKUT 299 (AAC)

Upper Tribunal decision on section 35(1(a) FOIA exemption 'chilling effect' and 'safe space'. Sole counsel for the Information Commissioner.

Keighley v Information Commissioner and the BBC

[2023] UKUT 228 (AAC)

Upper Tribunal decision on BBC right to refuse requests where the information requested concerned the impartiality of the BBC and complaints regarding allegations of bias. Sole counsel for the Information Commissioner

O'Hanlon v Information Commission Office

[2019] UKUT 34 (AAC)

Upper Tribunal consideration of the legal professional privilege exemption in the context of an allegation of bad faith. Sole counsel for the Information Commissioner.

Investigations and Inquiries

Zoe has experience of working in high profile and complex investigations and inquiries. This has included:

- The Covid Inquiry: acting for the Ministry of Defence in the inquiry streams on procurement and preparedness. This included advising on and assisting in the preparation of witness evidence that was to be submitted to the Inquiry.
- The Independent Review into Child Sexual Abuse in Football 1970-2005. Instructed by the Football Association in a four year independent investigation led by Clive Sheldon KC (as he was then now Mr Justice Sheldon) into child sexual abuse in football (2017 -2021). This was a high profile investigation which was covered extensively in the national media. The eventual report was over 700 pages long and the investigation had required the review of thousands of pages of documents dating back to the 1970s and hundreds of interviews with survivors and those involved in football over the last 50 years.
- Sole counsel to the review conducted by Sir Joseph Pilling into the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) the print industry regulator.

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.

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

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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

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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

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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

“

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

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

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2025

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She has an excellent legal brain.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2024