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John Platts-Mills

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Year of Call: 2016



John's areas of practice are employment, sports, personal injury and insurance. Before joining the Bar, John worked in the Shell Global Litigation and as a corporate finance analyst in Deutsche Bank's mergers and acquisitions team.

### Recommendations

**"He is brilliant. He's really on top of the detail and is very empathetic. He has strategic nous and drafts pleadings really quickly."** - Employment, Chambers UK 2025

**"John provides excellent client care. He is very quick to respond to client queries and provides legal positions with thorough expert advice."** - Employment, Chambers UK 2025

**"John is a confident and capable advocate who is very good 'in the trenches'. He is able to be calm and polite yet very robust at the same time."** - Employment, Chambers UK 2025

**"John is a superstar in the making."** - Personal Injury, Chambers UK 2025

**"John has great attention to detail with all pleadings and is very experienced. He is an excellent advocate. He's very personable with all clients and adapts his style to make the client feel at home."** - Personal Injury, Chambers UK 2025

**"He has a great manner with clients, cutting through to the nub of the issue very quickly. A talented and promising junior."** - Employment, Legal 500 2025

**"I was very happy with how John represented our case and, in particular, his calm and reassuring demeanour."** - *Senior Lawyer, International Airline*

**"I was very impressed and would not hesitate to use John again, really helpful, well prepared, professional and very user friendly."** *Paul Breen, Partner, JMW Solicitors LLP*

### Employment

John is recognised as a leading junior in employment by both Legal 500 (tier 4) and Chambers and Partners (Up and Coming).

John's practice covers all aspects of employment law. He regularly appears in the Civil Courts and Employment Tribunal, on his own and with leaders both inside and outside of Chambers. He has significant experience in industrial relations, restraint of trade, injunctions, whistleblowing and discrimination.

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**Recent case highlights include:**

- *Moretti v Davide Leone* KB-2024-001032: open justice issues arising out of a complex seven figure stress at work claim, against leading counsel.
- *Saunders v Peloton* (2025) two-week discrimination trial in Central London.
- *Geeks Ltd v Watts* (2025) – appeal on the application of restraint of trade to training fee clawback provisions, instructed by the Good Law Project. First appeal heard by HHJ Evans-Gordon. Currently seeking PTA to the Court of Appeal.
- *Financial Services Institution* (2025) investigation, alleged disability discrimination.
- *Black v Imagination* (2024) nine figure whistleblowing claim in the Employment Tribunal (led by Andrew Burns KC), following a six week trial in June 2024 a remedy hearing is listed for 2026.
- Restrictive covenant injunction (2024) settled on steps of court.
- *NSL Ltd v Zaluski* [2024] EAT 86 appeal correct approach to the justification defence in respect of indirect discrimination claims.
- *Morley v UNISON The Public Service Union* [2024] EAT 143 appeal addressing the powers of the Certification Officer in respect of disputes between unions and their members.
- *Logo v Payone Ltd* (2024) successful 3(10) hearing in EAT, multiple issues arising under the Equality Act 2010. Listed for a full hearing in 2025.
- *X v Y* (2024): successful six figure settlement for financial services stress at work claim.
- *Fenniche v Kuwait Health Office and The Government of the State of Kuwait* (2024): successfully represented the claimant in a complex discrimination claim engaging questions of state immunity, against leading counsel. Recovered damages in excess of £500,000, including lifetime loss of earnings for psychiatric injury.
- *Riley v Direct Line Insurance Group PLC* [2023] EAT 118 appeal on the correct approach to reasonable adjustments in the Employment Tribunal for a person with autistic spectrum disorder.
- High Street Brand, sex discrimination investigation (2024)
- *Secretary of State for Health and Social Care v Royal College of Nursing* KB-2023-001961: led by Andrew Burns KC, successfully sought a declaration preventing the RCN from taking unlawful strike action on 2 May 2023.
- *Smith v Tesco Stores Ltd* [2023] EAT 11 successfully opposed appeal: persuaded the EAT that the employment tribunal correctly held that the claimant had acted in a manner that was scandalous, unreasonable or vexatious, concluded that a fair trial was no longer possible and decided it was proportionate to strike out the entire claim.
- *Trade Union v Employer* (2023): advising multinational organisation about section 145B risks (junior to Andrew Burns KC).
- *Former Employees v Law Firm* (2023): instructed by a law firm in relation to discrimination and whistleblowing claims brought by former fee earner.
- *Employer v Trade Union* (2023): advising multinational organisation about interpretation of collective agreements and extent of liability to pay contractual redundancy (junior to Andrew Burns KC).
- *International consultancy v former employee* (2022): advising employer in relation to enforceability of restrictive covenants and seeking injunctive relief.

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- Trade Union v Employer (2022): advising transport company in relation to potential injunctive relief, issues arising out of Mercer v Alternative Futures Group Ltd and section 145B liability (junior to Andrew Burns KC).
  - Investigation into allegations of discrimination made against NHT Trust (2022): assisting Georgia Hicks.
  - Investigation into allegations of discrimination made against commercial gallery (2022): assisting Lucinda Harris.

## Personal Injury

John is recognised as a leading junior in Personal Injury by both Legal 500 (tier 5) and Chambers and Partners (Up and Coming).

John's practice covers all aspects of Personal Injury law including group actions. He regularly appears in the Civil Courts, on his own and with leaders both inside and outside of Chambers. He has significant experience in neurological injuries (both modest and catastrophic) and all aspects of liability, including sport.

### Recent case highlights include:

- Rugby Union and Rugby League concussion group litigations (ongoing, 2025): junior to Susan Rodway KC and Shaman Kapoor – long-term neurological consequences of playing contact sport.
- Robertson v Cornwall Council [2024] EWHC 2830 (KB): Linden J dismissed appeal on behalf of a cyclist who suffered modest TBI, seeking PTA to Court of Appeal.
- Huntercombe Hospital litigation (ongoing, 2025): junior to Niazi Fetto KC, Prof. Conor Gearty KC, Peter Edwards and Stephen Cottrell – group action in relation to widespread abuse at psychiatric hospital.
- Catastrophic pedestrian case (settled, 2025): junior to Stephen Killalea KC, instructed by Irwin Mitchell London – seven figure claim for first class student deprived of career in energy trading.
- Catastrophic restraint by employees of a hotel (ongoing, 2025): junior to Stephen Killalea KC and Peter Edwards instructed by JMW.
- Spinal injury following an accident onboard a barge (ongoing, 2025): instructed by Dunne and Co.
- Serious injury in consequence of a falling tree (ongoing, 2025): instructed by Irwin Mitchell London.
- Catastrophic construction accident (ongoing, 2025): instructed by CL Medilaw, junior to Stephen Killalea KC.
- Catastrophic pedestrian case (ongoing, 2025): instructed by Moore Barlow, junior to Stephen Killalea KC.
- Serious injury workplace circular saw (ongoing, 2025): instructed by Irwin Mitchell London.
- Catastrophic wakeboarding accident (ongoing, 2025): instructed by Irwin Mitchell London.
- Catastrophic RTA (settled, 2024): instructed by Moore Barlow junior to Susan Rodway KC.

## Tax

John is currently instructed as junior in a number of anti-avoidance cases, encompassing the notice provisions (FNs, APNs and PPNs) contained in the Finance Act 2014. He has also been instructed on behalf of the taxpayer in an IR35 matter.

John has also been instructed on a number of matters concerning domicile and residency from an advisory

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perspective, he has a particular interest in developing his practice in this area.

As a pupil John gained substantial experience in tax litigation as well as a range of advisory matters from a taxpayer perspective, including: inheritance tax and liability for failure to comply with follower notices (*Benton v HMRC*). He also appeared in the Masters' Corridor of the Royal Courts of Justice in applying to rectify a deed of variation.

John welcomes instructions from both taxpayers and the revenue.

## Insurance & Reinsurance

John is regularly instructed on a range of Insurance and Reinsurance disputes. He has recently assisted Colin Edelman KC and Andrew Burns KC in drafting the Third Edition of the Law of Reinsurance.

### Recent highlights include:

- Instructed on a series of advisory briefs, led by Richard Harrison, in relation to issues arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and business interruption (2021)
- Junior to Richard Harrison in relation to a coverage dispute under a product liability policy following the sale of allegedly defective adhesive (2021)
- Junior to Richard Harrison advising in relation to the scope of a professional liability policy issued to a financial institution, concerning proper construction of insuring clause (2021)
- Junior to Richard Harrison advising on coverage and notification issues in relation to a professional liability policy issued to a private medical practice (2021)
- Being led by Richard Harrison in a complex High Court product liability dispute (2021)
- External advisor to the FCA team in the Business Interruption test case litigation (2020)
- Junior to Andrew Burns KC in relation to an aggregation clause dispute (2020)
- Assisting Colin Edelman KC and Richard Harrison, albeit at a late stage, in the preparation for the Supreme Court hearing in *R & S Pilling t/a Phoenix Engineering Limited v UK Insurance Limited* [2019] UKSC 16.
- Successfully claiming against an insurer, in circumstances where the insured taxi driver, who had not been negligent but whose passenger had negligently opened the door of the taxi and knocked a passing cyclist off of his bike.
- Junior to Richard Harrison in an arbitration under the 1996 Act, concerning an insured's attempt to recover on a policy of legal expenses coverage.
- Assisting Andrew Burns KC in *Allianz Insurance Plc v Tonicstar Ltd* [2018] 1 Lloyd's Rep 38 – construction of agreement in relation to necessary qualifications of arbitrator.
- Assisting Richard Harrison in *Catlin Syndicate Ltd v Weyerhaeuser Co* [2018] EWHC 3609 (Comm) anti-suit injunctions, incorporation of an arbitration clause and construction of an excess layer insurance policy.

## Commercial Litigation and Disputes

Building on his experience as a member of the Shell Global Litigation team, John has experience of litigation in both the courts and arbitration. He regularly accepts instructions in respect of a wide range of contractual disputes.

**Recent highlights include:**

- Currently being led by Richard Harrison in a complex High Court product liability dispute.
- Assisting Andrew Burns KC in drafting an advice in relation to an aggregation clause.
- Junior to Andrew Burns KC and Alice Mayhew in successfully mediated High Court dispute concerning breach of restrictive covenants and breach of confidence.
- Assisting Colin Edelman KC and Richard Harrison, albeit at a late stage, in the preparation for the Supreme Court hearing in R & S Pilling t/a Phoenix Engineering Limited v UK Insurance Limited [2019] UKSC 16.
- Successfully establishing the validity of a settlement agreement in a two-day trial of a preliminary issue.
- Advising a client alongside Andrew Burns KC as to the prospect of pursuing the executor of a deceased defendant.

**Clinical Negligence**

John accepts instruction across the full range of medical disciplines.

**Academic**

BPP University London, Bar Professional Training Course (Outstanding)

City University London, Graduate Diploma in Law (Distinction)

University of Oxford, St Cross College, MSc Latin American Studies

University of Oxford, University College, BA (Hons) Philosophy, Politics and Economics

**Awards & scholarships**

Lincoln's Inn, Buchanan Prize

Lincoln's Inn, Lord Denning Scholarship

Lincoln's Inn, Hardwicke Entrance Award

**Memberships & Associations**

COMBAR; ELA; PIBA; BILA