



Matthew Sellwood
Year of Call: 2013



After reading Modern History at the University of Oxford, Matthew spent a number of years serving on the Executive Board of a local council as an elected politician and working for national and international charitable organisations. He then retrained as a barrister, and regularly appears in the County Court, High Court and Employment Tribunal in cases ranging from interlocutory matters to multi-week discrimination and contractual claims. In 2023 he was named as a Leading Junior in Employment by the Legal 500 directory and was appointed as a Deputy District Judge in the County Court.

Due to his previous working experience, Matthew has a keen awareness of the commercial realities facing both his professional and lay clients.

Recommendations

'Matt is a shrewd operator, a stand-out litigator and a strategic negotiator who is down to earth, approachable and engaging. Clients and witnesses love him.' - Employment, Legal 500 2024

'Matt is a very calm and compassionate person. His empathy is a welcome change for clients, and he achieves very successful outcomes without resorting to aggressive or unpleasant tactics. His advocacy is measured and effective, and he understands how to win over a tribunal with his tone and style.' - Employment, Legal 500 2023

Clients have described Matthew as **"extremely approachable"**. They value his timely and detailed advice which is **"always well researched and indeed goes above and beyond what we would expect to see"**.

"Having worked with Matt for a number of years, I wouldn't hesitate in recommending him for Employment work." - Tom Stenner-Evans, Partner, Thrive Law

"We have instructed Matthew Sellwood on a number of occasions on some very complex claims and have been more than impressed with the speed of turn around and thorough job he has done for us. In addition to this we have also utilised him to provide staff training on a number of topics, very much tailored to our own needs. Matthew has provided a first rate training package including detailed notes, group meetings and one to one correspondence. Matthew has always delivered training in the most suitable format and tailored the course content and materials to the specific audience. I would highly recommend Matthew and will continue to use his services in the future." - Beth Mackay, Partner, Slater Gordon Solutions Legal

"The client was very pleased with our Tribunal victory in a race discrimination and harassment claim, due in no small part to Matt's practical approach and his effective advocacy. He showed excellent judgement in his handling of the claimant, who was self-represented, and was able to react quickly when the claimant raised a preliminary issue on no notice, which took up the first day of the hearing." - Tessa Cranfield, Seyfarth Shaw LLP

Employment

Having served as a member of a disciplinary panel for a major public sector employer and as a former union representative at a national charity, Matthew has wide experience of employment law from the perspectives of both Claimant and Respondent.

Matthew is regularly instructed in the Employment Tribunal by some of the largest employers in the UK, along with several multi-national corporations. He has appeared in cases involving unfair dismissal, employee status, whistleblowing, TUPE, and all forms of discrimination. Hearings in which he has been solely instructed have included multi-week cases involving numerous allegations of discrimination, along with cases involving complex areas of health & safety, working time and trade union detriment/dismissal, as well as TUPE. He has developed a particular specialism in disability discrimination and cases involving mental health issues.

Matthew has also been instructed on several occasions in the Employment Appeal Tribunal, including in matters heard before Langstaff J (former President of the EAT) and HHJ Eady (now Eady J). Most recently, he was successful in persuading the EAT to overturn a significant portion of a quantum award made incorrectly at first instance.

Employment matters in which Matthew has been instructed include:

K v B & Ors: Acting for the Respondent in a multi week financial services disability discrimination claim

N v C & Ors: Acting for the Respondent as junior counsel to Adam Solomon KC in a multi week financial services whistleblowing claim

W v A: Acting for the Respondent in a multi week disability discrimination claim

C v SW: Acting for the Respondent in a multi week disability discrimination and whistleblowing claim

S v E UK plc: Acting for the Respondent in a five day race discrimination claim

UNISON & Ors v L & Anor: Acting for the First Respondent in a complex TUPE case involving multiple Respondents and questions of trade union recognition

D v SL: Acting for the Claimant in a four day disability discrimination claim

C v E plc: Acting for the Respondent in a four day whistleblowing claim

Z v STM: Acting for the Respondent in a four day maternity discrimination claim

G v MCS: Acting for the Respondent in a four day race discrimination claim

Matthew also regularly appears in Preliminary Hearings (both private and public) within the Employment Tribunal and has provided pleadings and advice to Claimants and Respondents in a multitude of successfully settled claims which did not reach the final hearing stage.

Commercial Litigation and Disputes

Matthew has appeared on numerous occasions in the High Court on commercial matters, successfully obtaining freezing injunctions for public sector clients and dealing with matters relating to the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. He has also appeared on the Masters' Corridor of the Royal Courts of Justice in connection with charging orders, third party debt orders and orders for sale, and regularly appears in the County Court in commercial matters of all kinds. These include both fast-track and multi-track claims in contractual and property disputes, as well as multi-track costs and case management hearings.

Recently, Matthew has been instructed both to defend a claim of fraud against a corporate client on the multi-track and to represent the Defendant in a complex unjust enrichment claim. His experience in both employment and personal injury matters enable him to function particularly effectively in the cross-over between those areas and commercial law.

In addition to his own caseload, Matthew has been led on a range of commercial cases and has assisted members of chambers in matters ranging from contractual disputes to international arbitrations.

Investigations

Matthew has conducted independent investigations into disciplinary and grievance matters for a number of employers, ranging from small voluntary sector organisations to multi-million pound businesses. He is available to conduct interviews and compile reports both on a remote and in-person basis, depending on the requirements of the client. He is often asked to conduct such investigations when the matters concerned are sensitive and involve senior managers or directors.

Appointments

Deputy District Judge (Civil)

Memberships and Associations

ELA, ELBA, PIBA, Advocate (formerly Bar Pro Bono Unit) Panel

Personal Interests

Matthew is a keen but mediocre athlete, dabbling in disciplines as wide-ranging as powerlifting and ultra-distance running. He is also a passionate cricket fan, and has the misfortune of being a lifelong supporter of Nottingham Forest FC.