

Sarah O'Keeffe

YEAR OF CALL: 2021

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Practice Overview

Sarah practises in competition, commercial and public law. She joined chambers as a tenant in September 2022, following the successful completion of pupillage supervised by Laura Newton, Tim Johnston and Daniel Piccinin.

Sarah graduated with a BA in Jurisprudence with Law Studies in Europe (Spain) (First Class) from Brasenose College, Oxford in 2017. This included a year studying Spanish Law at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. She then obtained a distinction in the BCL (Brasenose College, Oxford), studying competition law, law and computer science, commercial remedies and conflict of laws. During her studies, Sarah secured six scholarships and six university prizes, including for the highest marks in human rights (UPF) and criminal litigation (the Bar Course).

Before coming to the Bar, Sarah was a research assistant to professors Ariel Ezrachi and Rebecca Williams, primarily in competition law, law and computer science, and public law. She then worked with the British Institute of International and Comparative Law, researching private international law and AI. She speaks fluent Spanish and conversational Turkish.

Commercial

Sarah accepts instructions in all areas of commercial law. Her recent experience includes:

- *Azima v RAKIA, Dechert and others* [2022] EWHC 1295 (Ch) – proceedings against a global law firm and a retired English solicitor arising out of hacking of a businessman's data (as a pupil, assisting Laura Newton; as a tenant, assisting with a disclosure exercise)

- *Roberts v MOD/SSAFA* – Supreme Court appeal on extra-territorial effect of the Civil Liability (Contribution) Act (as a pupil, assisting Charles Hollander KC)
- *SR Projects v Liquidator of the Hindu Credit Union* [2022] UKPC 24 – successful Privy Council appeal relating to an issue of Trinidad & Tobago banking law (as a pupil, assisting Laura Newton)
- *X v Y* – multiple proceedings for an insurance and reinsurance broker arising out of a fatal aeroplane crash in Colombia (as a pupil, assisting Laura Newton)
- *Mahmood v Big Bus* – a negotiating damages claim between joint venture parties (as a pupil, assisting Daniel Piccinin)
- *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Tibit Limited* – BVI court proceedings concerning a Bombardier jet alleged to have been acquired using the proceeds of substantial fraud in relation to the valuable oil field OPL-245 (as a pupil, assisting Laura Newton)
- *A v B* – unfair prejudice and breach of contract alleged against an Indian multinational information technology services and consulting company in relation to an English tech start-up in the healthcare system (as a pupil, assisting Laura Newton)

Competition

Sarah accepts instructions across all areas of competition law. Her recent experience includes:

- *Mark McLaren Class Representative Ltd v MOL (Europe Africa) Ltd & Ors* [2022] EWCA Civ 1701 – acting for the class representative in the RoRo collective proceedings (led by Sarah Ford KC and Emma Mockford).
- *Pfizer Inc v Competition and Markets Authority* [2022] CAT 56 – acting for Pfizer to challenge the CMA's remittal finding of excessive pricing in the UK market for manufacture of Pfizer-manufactured phenytoin sodium capsules (led by Mark Brealey KC, Robert O'Donoghue KC and Tim Johnston).
- Acting for LG Display in relation to a follow-on damages claim brought by computer retailers

and manufacturers, including a successful application to strike out a post-insolvency compound interest claim in the equitable jurisdiction: *Granville Technology Group Limited v LG Display Co. Limited* [2022] EWHC 3271 (Comm) (led by Daniel Piccinin).

- *Samsung Electronics Co. Limited v LG Display Co. Ltd* [2023] EWHC 203 (Comm) – acting for LG Display in a successful strike-out application relating to abuse of process and *forum conveniens* in a jurisdictional challenge to a LCD cartel settlement contribution claim (led by Daniel Piccinin).
- *RWE Renewables UK Robin Rigg East Limited v Prysmian Cavi e Sistemi S.r.l.* – acting for the defendants in a follow-on damages claim relating to the Power Cables cartel found by the European Commission (led by Helen Davies KC).
- Advising the defendant to a collective follow-on damages action in a musical instrument cartel (led by Aidan Robertson KC).
- Instructed by a sporting body in relation to a Sports Resolutions panel claim (led by Marie Demetriou KC, Daniel Piccinin, Ravi Mehta and Emmeline Plews).
- *Dr Kent v Apple* – collective proceedings in the CAT relating to the App Store (as a pupil, assisting Daniel Piccinin)
- *Allergan Plc and others v CMA* – CAT challenge to a CMA decision to fine various pharmaceutical manufacturers of hydrocortisone tablets under Chapters I and II of the Competition Act 1998 (as a pupil, assisting Tim Johnston)
- *Various retailers v Visa* – CAT damages proceedings relating to pass-on and interchange fees (as a pupil, assisting Daniel Piccinin)

Public Law

Sarah accepts instructions across all areas of public law. Her recent experience includes:

- *R (o.a.o. WA) v the Director of Legal Aid Casework* – acting for the Director of Legal Aid

Casework in relation to the challenge of a legal aid determination (led by Malcolm Birdling).

- *R (NoteMachine) v Payment Services Regulator* – challenge brought by a leading ATM operator to the PSR’s decision not to open investigations into LINK’s setting of ATM interchange fees (as a pupil, assisting Tim Johnston)
- *R (UTAG) v Transport for London* – Court of Appeal proceedings resisting a challenge to TfL’s licensing of a private hire vehicle operator (as a pupil, assisting Tim Johnston)
- Assisting in advising a NGO in relation to possible GDPR and international human rights claims against a global technology company (as a pupil, assisting Jennifer Macleod)
- Assisting with an ECHR discrimination application (as a pupil, assisting Tim Johnston)
- Assisting in advising various government departments on their statutory powers, including the Legal Services Board (as a pupil, assisting Tim Johnston)

International/EU

Sarah accepts instructions across all areas of international law. Her recent experience includes:

- Assisting in advising a NGO in relation to possible GDPR and international human rights claims against a global technology company (as a pupil, assisting Jennifer Macleod)
- Assisting with an ECHR discrimination application (as a pupil, assisting Tim Johnston)

PUBLICATIONS

British Institute of International and Comparative Law (E Lein, S Migliorini, C Bonzé & S O’Keeffe), ‘Study on the Rome II Regulation (EC) 864/2007 on the law applicable to non-contractual obligations’, JUST/2019/JCOO_FW_CIVI_0167. Study on behalf of the European Commission reviewing the operation and interpretation of Rome II across the EU, with primary responsibility for Rome II’s interaction with Artificial Intelligence.

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

Education:

2021: Bar Course at the Inns of Court College of Advocacy

2020: BCL at Brasenose College, Oxford (Distinction)

2017: BA in Jurisprudence with Law Studies in Europe (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona) (First Class)

Prizes and Scholarships:

23 Essex Street Michael Hill QC Memorial Prize for Criminal Litigation (top of year)

Inns of Court College of Advocacy Award for BSB Civil Litigation Assessment

Gray's Inn Prince of Wales Scholarship

BPP Advocate of the Year Regional Team Champion and Individual National Finalist

One Essex Court Chambers BCL Scholarship

Barry Nicholas BCL Scholarship

Brasenose College Finals Prize

Harold Parr Bursary

Universitat Pompeu Fabra Matrícula de Honor for best Fundamental Rights and Freedoms examination

Brasenose College Collection Prize

Semi-Finalist of the Landmark Chambers, ICLR, Shearman & Sterling, Holdsworth and Oxford Legal Assistance Mooting Competitions; member of the Oxford Cuppers winning Brasenose Mooting Squad

Lloyds Banking Group Scholarship

Corporation of London Leaving Scholarship

The Lord Mayor's Prize for A Level Results

Worshipful Company of Innholders Full Academic Scholarship

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

British Institute of International and Comparative Law, Research Assistant (August 2020–April 2021)

Pembroke College, Oxford, Research Assistant to Rebecca Williams, primarily in law and computer science and public law (July 2020–July 2021)

Pembroke College, Oxford, Research Assistant to Ariel Ezrachi in competition law (December 2019–August 2020)

St John's College, Oxford, Admissions Assistant (2019)

Senior Oracy Trainer, The English-Speaking Union (2016–2019)

Mentor, Debate Mate (2012–2019)

Rowing Coach (2008–2019) and Assistant Operations Manager (2017–18), London Youth Rowing

Debating Coach, Lady Margaret School (2016–17)