BRICK COURT
CHAMBERS

Brick Court Chambers
7-8 Essex Street, London WC2R 3LD
DX 302 London Chancery Lane

Robert Steele

YEAR OF CALL: 2023

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Practice Overview

Robert practises across commercial, competition, public/human rights and international law. His recent or current instructions include:

- *Gormsen v Meta* – acting for Meta in collective action proceedings in the Competition Appeal Tribunal, alleging abuse of dominance in the collection and use of data from users of Facebook. The claim is brought on behalf of c. 45 million users and valued at c. £2 – 3 billion (led by Marie Demetriou KC, Tony Singla KC and David Bailey KC, instructed by Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer LLP).
- *Shayakhmetova v Gehler* – Commercial Court proceedings concerning an alleged multi-decade fraud and disputed inheritance over an interest in a significant Kazakh business. Robert acts for the current President of the business, who is challenging the jurisdiction of the English Court to hear the claims made against her (led by Rupert D'Cruz KC, instructed by Enyo Law LLP).
- Acting for the Claimants, two Ukrainian banks, in LCIA arbitration proceedings seeking the enforcement of a guarantee (valued at over $200 million) against a sanctioned Ukrainian oligarch (led by Richard Eschwege KC, instructed by Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP).
- *Magomedov v Transneft* [2026] EWCA Civ 516 – acted for the Claimants in their application to reopen a final appeal, pursuant to CPR 52.30, before the Court of Appeal. The underlying proceedings, alleging conspiracy and asset stripping, were valued at c. $13 billion. The judgment is available here (led by Thomas Plewman KC, instructed by Seladore Legal Limited).
- *Wang v Luxembourg* – acting for the Wang family in proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights challenging the enforcement of a Taiwanese confiscation order of over EUR 200 million by the Luxembourg Courts. The proceedings allege breaches of Articles 6, 7

and A1P1 and raise novel issues regarding the duties of a Convention State to assess the Convention compliance of confiscation orders from a foreign state (led by Paul Bowen KC, instructed by LK Law LLP).

Prior to joining Brick Court, Robert was the Judicial Assistant to Lord Sales and Lord Richards (in the United Kingdom Supreme Court and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council) and to Mr Justice Chamberlain (as he then was in the Administrative Court, now Lord Justice Chamberlain). Robert also practised as a solicitor in the Litigation and Investigations team of a Magic Circle law firm for a number of years. He trained at the same firm, in London and Dubai.

Robert studied law at the University of Oxford (Jesus College), where he graduated with a BA in Jurisprudence (First Class) and the BCL (Distinction). He won a number of prizes during his studies, including the Law Faculty Prize in European Human Rights Law, for coming top of the year in that subject.

Commercial

Robert accepts instructions across all areas of commercial litigation and arbitration. His recent experience includes:

- *Shayakhmetova v Gehler* – Commercial Court proceedings concerning an alleged multi-decade fraud and disputed inheritance over an interest in a significant Kazakh business. Robert acts for the current President of the business, who is challenging the jurisdiction of the English Court to hear the claims made against her (led by Rupert D'Cruz KC, instructed by Enyo Law LLP).
- Acting for the Claimants, two Ukrainian banks, in LCIA arbitration proceedings seeking the enforcement of a guarantee (valued at over $200 million) against a sanctioned Ukrainian oligarch (led by Richard Eschwege KC, instructed by Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP).
- *Magomedov v Transneft* [2026] EWCA Civ 516 – acted for the Claimants in their application to reopen a final appeal, pursuant to CPR 52.30, before the Court of Appeal. The underlying proceedings, alleging conspiracy and asset stripping, were valued at c. $13 billion. The judgment is available here (led by Thomas Plewman KC, instructed by Seladore Legal Limited).
- *Just Us v Fibula* [2026] EWHC 1270 (Comm) – acted for the applicant in successfully obtaining, and continuing at the return date, a post-judgment worldwide freezing injunction. The judgment from the return date is available here. (led by Edward Harrison KC, Jonathan Dawid and Emilie Gonin).
- *Municipio de Mariana v IBRAM* – acting for IBRAM challenging the jurisdiction of the English Court to award an anti-suit injunction in relation to proceedings in the Brazilian Federal

Supreme Court. The proceedings settled shortly before the return date, with the injunction successfully discharged and IBRAM receiving its costs on the indemnity basis (led by Craig Morrison KC, instructed by Enyo Law LLP).

- Acting for a fund in proceedings regarding the sufficiency of AML information provided by members, raising issues of the proper exercise of contractual discretions and good faith (led by Vernon Flynn KC, Paul Bowen KC and Tim Johnston).
- Advising a company in relation to a shareholder dispute and the operation of a Bad Leaver provision in a Shareholders' Agreement to recover shares (unled, instructed by Travers Smith LLP).
- Advising a company in relation to possible claims in abuse of dominance and/or unlawful means conspiracy in the horseracing and betting industries (with Charles Hollander KC, instructed by K&L Gates LLP).
- Substantial advice to a BVI fund in relation to the "owned or controlled" test under Reg 7 of the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (with Fergus Randolph KC, instructed by Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP).
- *Re Compound Photonics Group Limited* [2021] EWHC 787 (Ch) and [2022] EWCA Civ 1371 – acting for the Respondents in an unfair prejudice petition in an optical technology company. The Court of Appeal judgment is now the leading appellate authority on the scope of the express duty of good faith (as a solicitor).
- *Kinled Investments Ltd v Zopa Group Ltd* [2022] EWHC 1194 (Comm) – acting for the Defendant in claims for breach of contract or restitution of an introducer's fee (as a solicitor).
- *Jinxin Inc v Aser Media Pte Ltd and others* – acting for two defendants in claims alleging deceit and unlawful means conspiracy following the sale of shares in a global sports agency, relating to the sale of media rights in Serie A football matches and to the 2022 and 2026 FIFA World Cups (as a solicitor).
- *Confidential insurance arbitration* – acting for the policyholder in LCIA arbitration concerning claims under a W&I insurance policy (as a solicitor).

Competition

Robert accepts instructions in competition law. His recent experience includes:

- *Gormsen v Meta* – acting for Meta in collective action proceedings in the Competition Appeal Tribunal, alleging abuse of dominance in the collection and use of data from users of Facebook. The claim is brought on behalf of c. 45 million users and valued at c. £2 – 3 billion (led by Marie Demetriou KC, Tony Singla KC and David Bailey KC, instructed by Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer LLP).

- *NHS v Servier* - acting for Lupin, a Part 20 Defendant in the long running "pay for delay" competition damages claim in the pharmaceutical sector (led by Sarah Love KC, instructed by Simmons & Simmons LLP).
- Advising a company in relation to possible claims in abuse of dominance and/or unlawful means conspiracy in the horseracing and betting industries (with Charles Hollander KC, instructed by K&L Gates LLP).
- *PACCAR v CAT* [2023] UKSC 28 – appeal concerning whether certain standalone litigation funding agreements constitute "damages-based agreements" for the purposes of section 58AA(3) of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (as a Judicial Assistant, assisting Lord Sales).
- *Trucks Cartel Litigation* – acting for Scania in UK litigation arising from the Commission's decisions relating to the alleged trucks cartel (as a solicitor).
- *Interchange Fee Litigation* – advising the Visa Europe Member Representative in relation to various settlements (as a solicitor).

Public Law/Human Rights

Robert accepts instructions across all areas of public/human rights law. He gained particular experience in these areas as Judicial Assistant to Lord Sales in the United Kingdom Supreme Court, as well as to Mr Justice Chamberlain (as he then was, now Lord Justice Chamberlain). He also won the prize for coming top of the year in European Human Rights Law whilst at University.

His recent experience includes:

- *Wang v Luxembourg* – acting for the Wang family in proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights challenging the enforcement of a Taiwanese confiscation order of over EUR 200 million by the Luxembourg Courts. The proceedings allege breaches of Articles 6, 7 and A1P1 and raises novel issues regarding the duties of a Convention State to assess the Convention compliance of confiscation orders from a foreign state (led by Paul Bowen KC, instructed by LK Law LLP).
- Acting in an appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council regarding the interaction between the duty of candour in judicial review proceedings and the duty of full and frank disclosure in the context of sanctions (led by a team including Richard Lissack KC, Maya Lester KC and Malcolm Birdling, instructed by Kobre & Kim LLP).
- *Ravanelli v HMRC* - acting for Mr Ravanelli, a former professional footballer, in judicial review proceedings against HMRC regarding the tax treatment of certain distributions from an employee benefit trust during his time at Derby County Football Club (led by Tim Johnston, instructed by FidLaw Limited).

- Advising the Independent Football Regulator on various matters in relation to the interpretation and application of the Football Governance Act 2025, and previously the Football Governance Bill (with Tim Johnston).
- Acting for an oil and gas company in dealings with its regulator, the North Sea Transition Authority, regarding the scope of its powers in relation to a proposed change of control (led by Paul Bowen KC, instructed by Mayer Brown International LLP).
- Substantial advice to the London Metal Exchange, a "*UK recognised investment exchange*" within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, raising various issues in private and public law, and the interpretation and application of financial services regulation (with James McClelland KC).
- Acting for a victim of rape in judicial review proceedings regarding the police's failure to give proper reasons in their decision not to refer the matter to the CPS. A new VRR was offered and conducted following the grant of permission (led by Jennifer MacLeod, instructed by Simpson Millar LLP).
- Advising an energy company in relation to its regulatory and licensing position, including the prospects of injunctive relief against a regulator (with James McClelland KC and Emily MacKenzie, instructed by Towerhouse LLP).
- *C.O.C.G. v Lithuania* (European Court of Human Rights) – acting for four asylum seekers in claims relating to alleged "pushbacks" at the Belarussian/Lithuanian border. The applicants allege breaches of Articles 2, 3, 5 and Art 4 of Protocol No. 4 of the ECHR (led by Ali Al-Karim).
- *In re Dalton* [2023] UKSC 36 – appeal concerning the extent to which positive obligation on public authorities to investigate an individual's death under Article 2 extends to deaths before the Human Rights Act 1998 came into force (as a Judicial Assistant, assisting Lord Sales).
- *R (Maguire) v Senior Coroner for Blackpool & Fylde* [2023] UKSC 20 – appeal concerning the application of Article 2 to the conduct of an inquest (as a Judicial Assistant, assisting Lord Sales).
- *Maharaj v The Cabinet of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago* [2023] UKPC 17 – appeal concerning local government elections in Trinidad and Tobago (as a Judicial Assistant, assisting Lord Richards).
- *Reference by the Lord Advocate of Devolution Issues under the Scotland Act 1998* [2022] UKSC 31 – devolution reference of the question of whether the Scottish Parliament has legislative competence to legislate for a second independence referendum (as a Judicial Assistant, assisting Lord Sales).

International

Robert accepts instructions across all areas of international law. His recent experience includes:

- *Wang v Luxembourg* – acting for the Wang family in proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights challenging the enforcement of a Taiwanese confiscation order of over EUR 200 million by the Luxembourg Courts. The proceedings allege breaches of Articles 6, 7 and A1P1 and raises novel issues regarding the duties of a Convention State to assess the Convention compliance of confiscation orders from a foreign state (led by Paul Bowen KC, instructed by LK Law LLP).
- *Rohr v Russia* (United Nations Human Rights Committee) – acting for the applicant, an indigenous rights activist, following his expulsion from Russia in December 2018. Mr Rohr alleges violations of Articles 13, 17 and 19 ICCPR (led by Ben Juratowitch KC and Jennifer MacLeod).
- *C.O.C.G. v Lithuania* (European Court of Human Rights) – acting for four asylum seekers in claims relating to alleged "pushbacks" at the Belarussian/Lithuanian border. The applicants allege breaches of Articles 2, 3, 5 and Art 4 of Protocol No. 4 of the ECHR (led by Ali Al-Karim).
- *Zubaydah v FCDO* [2023] UKSC 50 – appeal concerning the law applicable to torts alleged to have been committed by the UK Security and Intelligence Services to a current Guantanamo Bay detainee in CIA "black sites" (as a Judicial Assistant, assisting Lord Sales).
- *Deutsche Bank v Central Bank of Venezuela* – acting for the Claimant in relation to sums owed to the Central Bank of Venezuela under a gold swap contract, ultimately raising issues concerning the recognition of a foreign head of state and the foreign act of state doctrine (as a solicitor).

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

Professional experience:

2024-present: Tenant, Brick Court Chambers

2023-2024: Pupillage, Brick Court Chambers

2023: Called to the Bar of England and Wales (Lincoln's Inn)

2022-2023: Judicial Assistant to Lord Sales and Lord Richards, United Kingdom Supreme Court and Judicial Committee of the Privy Council

2020-2022: Associate (Litigation and Investigations), Allen & Overy LLP (now A&O Shearman

LLP)

2021: Judicial Assistant to Mr Justice Chamberlain, High Court (Administrative Court)

2018-2020: Trainee Solicitor, Allen & Overy LLP (London and Dubai)

Education:

2017-2018: LLM, Commercial Legal Practice, BPP University (Distinction)

2016-2017: BCL, University of Oxford, Jesus College (Distinction)

2012-2015: BA in Jurisprudence, University of Oxford, Jesus College (First Class)

Scholarships and Prizes:

Sir John and Lady Sophie Laws Scholarship (Bar European Group), 2024

Pegasus Scholarship, US Supreme Court (Inner Temple), 2023

Viscount Sankey Award (Jesus College, University of Oxford), 2017

Law Faculty Prize in European Human Rights Law (Law Faculty, University of Oxford), 2015

S R Welson Prize for meritorious work in law (Jesus College, University of Oxford), 2015

Various College and Book Prizes (Jesus College, University of Oxford), 2015-2017