

Roger Masefield KC

YEAR OF CALL: 1995 YEAR OF SILK: 2013

"Roger is the black letter lawyer that no one wants to be against; he is an impressive advocate and a pleasure to work with"

Chambers & Partners 2023

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Practice Overview

Roger Masefield has over 25 years' litigation experience of all aspects of commercial law, and has been consistently recommended by Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 as a leading silk in the fields of commercial litigation, banking, civil fraud, insurance and reinsurance. Whilst Roger's cases are mostly based in the English Courts, he has also appeared on a number of occasions in the BVI and Dubai and in international arbitration.

Roger has been instructed as leading counsel in a wide range of high profile and high value matters, including claims on behalf of the Libyan Investment Authority against Goldman Sachs and Société Generale (each worth in excess of \$1 billion); claims on behalf of PT Ventures (a Portuguese telecoms company) against companies owned and controlled by Isabel dos Santos (involving a \$2 billion freezing injunction in the BVI); claims on behalf of the Federal Republic of Nigeria against JP Morgan (worth in excess of \$875 million); and insurance and reinsurance claims running to hundreds of millions arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Commercial

"One of the hardest working silks. He is really clever and has the ability to get on top of points so quickly." (Chambers & Partners 2024)

"Described as a rockstar by a client. He is not precious about rolling his sleeves up and working as hard as his juniors. He is very client friendly and has an enthusiastic and smooth manner in court." (Legal 500 2023)

"A pleasure to work with, all over the detail of the most substantial heavyweight litigation in the

market, and a robust and effective advocate” (Legal 500 2020)

“A fantastic all-rounder who rolls his sleeves up, helps with preparation and proves a pragmatic and user-friendly advocate ” “ He’s exceptionally charming and has a silky-smooth advocacy style ” (Chambers & Partners 2019)

“A terrific practitioner, very calm, very bright, and particularly strong on the law ” (Legal 500 2018-2019)

Roger Masefield has a broad commercial practice, ranging from civil fraud to professional negligence, and spanning several sectors of the economy (banking and finance; oil and gas; insurance and reinsurance; media; the legal professions). Over the last 25 years he has appeared regularly in the High Court, Court of Appeal, Privy Council and in commercial arbitrations. He has also been involved in several cases in the British Virgin Islands and Dubai (in the DIFC Courts), both at first instance and at appellate level.

Roger Masefield has recently been instructed in a number of *Quincecare* claims against banks; on claims involving allegations of bribery and corruption (in the banking, oil gas, and mineral sectors); and in professional negligence matters (for solicitors and accountants). He is also currently involved in an international reinsurance arbitration relating to the aggregation of business interruption losses arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Further examples of his commercial practice (including significant cases) are set out below.

Civil fraud

“Roger’s stamina and positivity are a blessing. He comes across as unflappable and is always one to look for legal and commercial solutions. His cross-examination style is firm and fair but at the same time forensic and detailed.” (Chambers & Partners 2024)

“Gets on top of the detail, very good on his feet, persuasive advocate who makes sure judges understand even the most complex cases.” (Legal 500 2023)

“Modestly the smartest guy in the room, Roger is the full package: he is all over the detail, a robust and effective advocate and a pleasure to deal with” (Legal 500 2021)

“He is ferociously intelligent and is able to master the facts of incredibly complicated and large litigations” (Chambers & Partners 2021)

Roger Masefield QC is *“an excellent advocate”* who offers *“practical advice”* on issues arising out of jurisdiction challenges, seizure orders and tracing claims (Who’s Who Legal – UK Bar: Civil Fraud 2019)

Since taking silk, Roger Masefield has been involved in a number of high profile and high value claims in civil fraud, typically on behalf of sovereign clients or Western investors, in the banking, energy and telecoms sectors.

Significant cases include:

- *Azima v Dechert & Ors* [2023] EWCA Civ 507: Roger Masefield was instructed on behalf of Dechert, seeking to strike out a claim to set aside a judgment alleged to have been procured by fraud on grounds of abuse of process.
- *Federal Republic of Nigeria v JP Morgan* [2022] EWHC Civ 1447 (Comm): Roger Masefield was instructed in a 7-week trial, on a claim for in excess of \$875m against the bank for breach of a *Quincecare* duty of care (a duty not to pay out, when on notice of a fraud) – having successfully seen off attempts by the bank to have the claim summarily dismissed, both at first instance and on appeal (*Federal Republic of Nigeria v JP Morgan* [2019] EWHC 347 (Comm); and *Federal Republic of Nigeria v JP Morgan* [2019] EWCA Civ 1641)
- *PT Ventures v Vidatel* [2020] and [2018] BVIHC: Roger Masefield successfully applied to the BVI Court to enforce an arbitral award for c. \$650 million against Vidatel, the BVI Company owned by Ms dos Santos (the daughter of the former premier of Angola), arising out of alleged dishonest conduct. Vidatel sought to resist enforcement, by alleging that the Tribunal had not been properly constituted, having regard to the provisions of the arbitration agreement and French law (as the law of the seat), including the *Dutco* principle of *égalité*. Following a week’s trial, and having heard from experts on French arbitration law, the award was upheld and Vidatel’s defence dismissed. Roger Masefield has previously been instructed successfully to maintain a freezing injunction for \$2.1 billion, and striking out an application to have it set aside for misrepresentation as an abuse of process
- *Libyan Investment Authority v Societe Generale* [2017] EWHC 2631 (Comm); and [2016] EWHC 375 (Comm): a claim in excess of \$1.5 billion, raising issues of bribery and corruption in the twilight years of the Gaddafi era. Roger Masefield was instructed for the LIA. The case settled on the first day of the 12 week trial, with the bank paying in excess of \$1 billion to the LIA, and issuing a public apology.
- *Libyan Investment Authority v Goldman Sachs* [2016] EWHC 2530 (Ch); and [2014] EWHC 3364 (Ch): a claim in excess of \$1 billion, seeking rescission of 4 derivative transactions for undue influence. Roger Masefield was one of the lead counsel instructed on the 7 week trial, and delivered the opening and closing submissions, and cross-examined witnesses and banking experts on behalf of the LIA.

- *Berezovsky v Abramovich* [2012] EWHC 2463 (Comm) – a claim in excess of \$5 billion, for intimidation and breach of trust; and the related claims of *Berezovsky v Hine* in the Chancery Division

Banking and finance

"He's very calm and took everything in his stride..He's proving to be a very effective silk." (Legal 500 2023)

"Very impressive. He brings judges around with very artful persuasion." (Chambers & Partners 2021)

"His easy going manner coupled with his comprehensive mastery of the facts of our case make him an ideal silk – truly first class" (Legal 500 2021)

Roger Masefield has been involved in a large number of banking cases, acting both for and against some of the largest names in the world of banking and finance, in claims relating to fraudulent payment instructions, complex derivative instruments, rectification of loan facilities, debtor-in-possession agreements, and anti-money laundering regulations.

Roger Masefield has acted as an Assistant Editor (under Mark Hapgood QC) to *Paget's Law of Banking* (13th Edition, 2007); Co-Editor (along with Mark Howard QC) to Butterworth's *Banking Law Guide* (October 2006); and a contributor to Oxford University Press' *Banks and Financial Crime* (February 2008).

Significant cases include:

- *Federal Republic of Nigeria v JP Morgan* [2022] EWHC Civ 1447 (Comm): Roger Masefield was instructed in a 7-week trial, on a claim for in excess of \$875m against the bank for breach of a *Quincecare* duty of care (a duty not to pay out, when on notice of a fraud) – having successfully seen off attempts by the bank to have the claim summarily dismissed, both at first instance and on appeal (*Federal Republic of Nigeria v JP Morgan* [2019] EWHC 347 (Comm); and *Federal Republic of Nigeria v JP Morgan* [2019] EWCA Civ 1641)
- *IDBI v Amira Foods* [2021] DIFC CA 004; and [2019] DIFC CA 014: Roger Masefield was instructed on behalf of IDBI Bank in two appeals in the Dubai DIFC: and successfully turned a substantial litigation loss into a substantial recovery for the bank.
- *FSHC v Barclays Bank* [2019] EWCA Civ 31; Roger Masefield appeared for the appellant in a case that is now the leading authority on the rectification of contracts for common mistake

- *Libyan Investment Authority v Societe Generale* [2017] EWHC 2631 (Comm); and [2016] EWHC 375 (Comm): a claim in excess of \$1.5 billion, raising issues of bribery and corruption in the twilight years of the Gaddafi era. Roger Masefield was instructed for the LIA. The case settled on the first day of the 12 week trial, with the bank paying in excess of \$1 billion to the LIA, and issuing a public apology
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Energy and natural resources

Roger Masefield has been instructed both for and against a number of well-known oil and gas majors and mining companies, including BP, BHP Billiton, Exxon Mobil, Esso, Royal Dutch Shell and Agip/Eni. He has a wide ranging experience of different types of energy claims, having been instructed in claims relating to jack-up oil rigs, coal-fired power stations, FPSO's, and long-term oil and gas supply contracts.

Significant cases include:

- *Federal Republic of Nigeria v Royal Dutch Shell & Ors*: a claim for in excess of \$3.5 billion against two oil majors (Royal Dutch Shell plc and Eni S.p.A), in bribery and corruption
- *Sabre Oil & Gas v Standard Bank*: Roger Masefield successfully defended claims in a multi-million dollar dispute relating to funding for the development of the Jubilee Oil field (offshore Ghana)
- *Eskom v Alstom*: Roger Masefield acted for Eskom (the South African state electricity company), following an explosion at a coal powered power-station
- *BP v Aon* [2006] 1 Lloyd's Rep 549: Roger Masefield acted for BP, in a dispute with its insurance brokers relating to the negligent placement of a facultative open cover
- *BP v Frankona* [2003] 1 Lloyd's Rep 537: Roger Masefield acted for BP, in a dispute with its insurers, relating to the proper interpretation of a facultative open cover

Insurance and reinsurance

"A first-class silk who is a very effective advocate" (Legal 500 2021)

Roger Masefield has acted for a large number of insureds, insurers and reinsurers, both in the High Court and international arbitrations.

Significant cases include:

- Various insurance and reinsurance business interruption claims arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic (on-going international commercial arbitration)
- *SBM v Zurich & Ors* : Roger Masefield acted for one of the following market insurers, in a \$1 billion insurance dispute arising out of the faulty design / construction of an offshore jack-up oil rig
- *Re New Zealand earthquakes* : Roger Masefield acted in a multi-million dollar reinsurance arbitration between various Lloyds syndicates and a Bermudian reinsurer, arising out of the 2010 New Zealand earthquakes (involving contractual interpretation of aggregation and extended expiration clauses)
- *Markel v Surety Guarantee Consultants* [2008] EWHC 3087 (Comm): Roger Masefield acted in the early stages of the litigation for the insurers, in a claim against former underwriting agents in fraud
- *ING v R+V* [2006] 2 All ER (Comm) 870: a claim in relation to the fraudulent operation of a binding cover, raising complex issues of actual and ostensible authority, and ratification
- *BP v Aon* [2006] 1 Lloyd's Rep 549: Roger Masefield acted for BP, in a dispute with its insurance brokers relating to the negligent placement of a facultative open cover
- *Prifti v Musini* [2005] 5 All ER (D) 82, a claim in respect of a permanent disability policy in respect of a well-known international midfielder (raising complex issues of jurisdiction)
- *Brotherton v Colseguros* [2003] EWCA Civ 705, an appeal relating to moral hazard in the context of a bankers' blanket bond insurance policy, and non-disclosure of allegations of

impropriety against senior bank officers

- *BP v Frankona* [2003] 1 Lloyd's Rep 537: Roger Masefield acted for BP, in a dispute with its insurers relating to the proper interpretation of a facultative open cover

Professional negligence

Roger Masefield has been involved in a number of professional negligence cases involving lawyers and accountants (*Wallace Smith v Deloitte*; *Abbey Life v Rowe & Maw*). He has acted for both claimants and defendants. In *BP v Aon* [2006] 1 Lloyd's Rep 549, he appeared (led by Andrew Popplewell QC) for BP and its joint venture partners in a multi-million dollar claim against insurance brokers.

Significant cases include:

- A number of matters where Roger Masefield has been instructed to advise and act for Grant Thornton
- *Azima v Dechert & Ors* [2023] EWCA Civ 507: Roger Masefield was instructed on behalf of Dechert, seeking to strike out a claim to set aside a judgment alleged to have been procured by fraud on grounds of abuse of process.
- Before taking silk, Roger Masefield was involved in a highly complex 8 week trial in the Commercial Court involving claims against an engineering company (*Eskom v Alstom*). The case turned, to a large extent, on the expert evidence which covered the fields of metallurgy, steam chemistry, power station operations, and non-destructive testing techniques (as well as quantum).

Qualifications & Further Information

Qualifications:

1990 – 1993 First Class, BA (Hons) Law, St John's College Cambridge

1994 – 1995 First Class and Vinerian Scholar, BCL, Magdalen College Oxford

Career:

Called to the Bar by Middle Temple, November 1994

Pupillage at Brick Court Chambers 1995 - 1996 (Pupilmasters: Mark Howard, George Leggatt, Michael Swainston, Nicholas Green)

Tenancy at Brick Court since 1996

Took silk in 2013.

Further Information:

- Languages: working knowledge of French
- Called to the Bar of the British Virgin Islands in 1999

Publications

Assistant Editor to *Paget's Law of Banking* (13th Edition 2007)

Co-Editor of *Butterworths Banking Law Guide* (2006)

Contributor to *Banks and Financial Crime* (2008)

Contributor to *Competition Litigation UK Practice and Procedure* (2010)

Directory Quotes

- "One of the hardest working silks. He is really clever and has the ability to get on top of points so quickly." (Chambers & Partners 2024)
- "Roger is a good advocate with very clear and logical views." (Chambers & Partners 2024)
- "He is really excellent - very well prepared and persuasive in his advocacy." (Chambers & Partners 2024)
- "Roger's stamina and positivity are a blessing. He comes across as unflappable and is always one to look for legal and commercial solutions. His cross-examination style is firm and fair but at the same time forensic and detailed." (Chambers & Partners 2024)
- "Roger Masefield is a very good advocate. He is particularly good at presenting a complex case." (Chambers & Partners 2024)
- "Roger has an exceptionally sharp mind, is hard working and not afraid to roll up his sleeves and a very client friendly manner. Despite his intelligence and unlike some silks he does not have airs and graces and is not as dry as a stick but is fun to work with. His advocacy is lively and persuasive." (Legal 500 2024)
- "Roger combines technical expertise with sound pragmatic advice." (Legal 500 2024)
- "Roger is the black letter lawyer that no one wants to be against; he is an impressive advocate

and a pleasure to work with." (Chambers & Partners 2023)

- "He has a very good feel for points that will hit well with the judge." (Chambers & Partners 2023)
- "He is very user-friendly, both for those instructing him and the clients." (Chambers & Partners 2023)
- "Roger is knowledgeable and user-friendly." (Chambers & Partners 2023)
- "Roger is an impressive advocate. He is charming and personable." (Chambers & Partners 2023)
- "Roger Masefield KC has very good judgement. He is very understated, but persuasive." (Chambers & Partners 2023)
- "Gets on top of the detail, very good on his feet, persuasive advocate who makes sure judges understand even the most complex cases." (Legal 500 2023)
- "Described as a rockstar by a client. He is not precious about rolling his sleeves up and working as hard as his juniors. He is very client friendly and has an enthusiastic and smooth manner in court." (Legal 500 2023)
- "He's very calm and took everything in his stride in a way that some people won't. He just got on with it. He's proving to be a very effective silk." (Legal 500 2023)
- "He is considered and very personable." "A young silk but a good one who wins round judges through his intelligence and hard work." (Chambers & Partners 2022)
- "He is incredibly detail-orientated, but also able to see the bigger picture. He is an aggressive advocate but a total pleasure to work with - he is utterly charming and a really nice guy." "He's very bright, has a very good courtroom demeanour, and is very measured and sensible." (Chambers & Partners 2022)
- "He is a very good performer." "Impressive analysis and robust in his views. He is also calm with clients." (Chambers & Partners 2022)
- "Very clever and a nice advocacy style and good strategically. He's developing into a real front rank silk." (Legal 500 2022)
- "Willing to roll up his sleeves and get stuck into the detail but also has the ability to keep in mind the key strategic points. Roger is exceptionally bright and has a high EQ." (Legal 500 2022)
- "Exceptionally bright and with very good client-handling skills." (Legal 500 2022)
- "He is ferociously intelligent and is able to master the facts of incredibly complicated and large litigations." "A calm and charming barrister who is very good with judges." "He prepares meticulously and has sound judgement." (Chambers & Partners 2021)
- "Supremely at home in heavyweight litigation." "He is very bright and very good on the detail but sees the commercial big picture." (Chambers & Partners 2021)
- "Very impressive. He brings judges around with very artful persuasion." (Chambers & Partners 2021)
- "His easy going manner coupled with his comprehensive mastery of the facts of our case make him an ideal silk - truly first class." (Legal 500 2021)
- "A pleasure to work with, all over the detail of the most substantial heavyweight litigation in the market, and a robust and effective advocate." (Legal 500 2021)

- "Modestly the smartest guy in the room, Roger is the full package: he is all over the detail, a robust and effective advocate, and a pleasure to deal with." (Legal 500 2021)
- "A first-class silk who is a very effective advocate." (Legal 500 2021)
- Roger Masefield KC is a "diligent and calm" advocate, distinguished by peers as "a real pleasure to work with". (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Civil Fraud 2020)
- "A very thoughtful and very tenacious advocate who is fantastic to work with." "He is one of the most user-friendly and approachable counsel you can have the privilege to work with." (Chambers & Partners 2020)
- "He's fantastic to work with and is in his element when marshalling a broader team." "He's always meticulously prepared and has very sound judgement." "A very thoughtful and tenacious advocate." (Chambers & Partners 2020)
- "Represents the new breed of advocate. He's got a fantastic brain, he's very effective and he's able to get across very difficult points." "He's meticulously prepared and demonstrates sound judgement." (Chambers & Partners UK & Global 2020)
- "A very good, bright advocate who runs a team very well." (Legal 500 2020)
- "An excellent lawyer and an elegant advocate, particularly on difficult points of law." (Legal 500 2020)
- "A very good civil fraud silk." (Legal 500 2020)
- "He is fantastic on complex matters." (Legal 500 2020)
- Roger Masefield KC is "an excellent advocate," who offers "practical advice" on issues arising out of jurisdiction changes, seizure orders and tracing claims. (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Civil Fraud 2019)
- "A fantastic all-rounder who rolls his sleeves up, helps with preparation, and proves a pragmatic and user-friendly advocate." "He's exceptionally charming and has a silky-smooth advocacy style." (Chambers & Partners 2019)
- "Very calm, sensible and methodical in the way that he approaches matters." (Chambers & Partners 2019)
- "An excellent silk with a strong practice." (Legal 500 2018-19)
- "A terrific practitioner, very calm, very bright, and particularly strong on the law." (Legal 500 2018-19)
- "Superb at managing large teams and particularly strong on commercial fraud." (Legal 500 2018-19)
- "A fantastic litigator with a really strong commercial understanding." "He's very responsive, very good at dealing with difficult issues, and fearless as an advocate." (Chambers & Partners 2018)
- "He is methodical and very effective." (Chambers & Partners 2018)
- "Very, very good in the preparatory stages and excellent at giving initial advice. Once the case fully gets under way he is very good in terms of tactical guidance." (Chambers & Partners 2018)
- "Unfailingly polite and a delight to work with." (Legal 500 2017)
- "Unswervingly impressive and a master tactician." (Legal 500 2017)
- "A brilliant strategic thinker and absolutely on top of his brief." (Legal 500 2017)

- "Hugely impressive: he punches above his weight and has real charisma." "He's very sensible and extremely diligent." (Chambers & Partners 2017)
- "He has a first-class mind, adopts an extremely flexible approach and is thoroughly committed to the case." "He's very hands on, really gets stuck into the detail and shows real enthusiasm for the cause." (Chambers & Partners 2017)
- "Cerebral and very good on paper." "He has an extremely flexible approach and thoroughly committed to the case." (Chambers & Partners 2017)
- "An excellent strategist and leader of teams." (Legal 500 2016)
- "He is very commercial and communicates with lay clients very effectively." (Legal 500 2016)
- "An absolutely superb advocate. He's brilliantly persuasive, reads the court to perfection and demonstrably changes the judge's mind. He's persistent without being tedious and is one of the most polished advocates at the Bar." (Chambers & Partners 2014)
- "Absolutely outstanding and expected to be one of the great stars of the future." (Chambers & Partners 2014)
- "A man you can have huge respect for." (Chambers & Partners 2014)
- "Roger Masefield is "an imaginative lawyer and a forceful advocate" who is an "impressive all-rounder."" (Chambers & Partners 2013)
- "The "excellent" Roger Masefield is a popular choice with clients who appreciate his "no-nonsense, black and white approach."" (Chambers & Partners 2013)
- "Roger Masefield 'develops a complete understanding of the factual issues that surpasses even that of the client who has lived through the matter'." (Legal 500 2012)