

Christopher Geering

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Legal 500 UK 2021



Year of Call: 2009

020 7353 5324

Christopher Geering has a strong reputation in the fields of Professional Discipline and Coronial proceedings. He appears regularly before all the major healthcare regulators, as well as teaching and accountancy bodies.

He has experience dealing with cases of particular seriousness – including successfully representing the financial director of an NHS Trust who was awarded record costs against the ACCA after being accused of backdating million pound contracts, and a doctor accused of a sexual assault on a colleague. In addition to fitness to practise proceedings, he regularly appears in the High Court, both for and against the regulator.

In coronial work he has represented the interests of a care home and County Council, as well as those of individual doctors or nurses.

Christopher also has a significant advisory practice. He has assisted a variety of regulators on legal issues and case preparation, as well as advising registrants on prospects of appeal.

Christopher accepts **Direct Access** instructions.

What others say:

"An excellent practitioner. He is tactically very good and he knows his stuff." "Really superb, professional and works well in a team." – Chambers UK 2021

"Christopher is forensic in his approach to cases. He is thoughtful and concise in his advice and sympathetic to and, where necessary, firm with his clients, who often present with heightened emotions given that their careers and livelihoods are at stake." – Legal 500 UK 2021

"Combines excellent commercial skills with great hearing room presence and a phenomenal work ethic." "He is talented at dealing with individual practitioner clients and large corporate clients alike. He is persuasive and great to work with." – Chambers UK 2020

Location

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“Very astute, and very persuasive on his feet.” – Legal 500 2020

“A fantastic cross-examiner and incredibly clever.” – Chambers UK 2018

“He has outstanding knowledge, is incredibly approachable and works tirelessly on cases. He never ceases to amaze in terms of the skills he offers.” – Chambers UK 2018

“A really systematic thinker who gets to the heart of a matter quickly and presents persuasively” – Chambers UK 2017

“A very good and persuasive advocate, who is excellent with clients and a pleasure to work with.” – Legal 500 2017

Inquests & Public Inquiries

Allied to his professional disciplinary work, Christopher enjoys a significant coronial practice. He has represented nurses and doctors in a wide variety of different inquests. Such cases include a doctor who provided telephone advice in respect of a young child in severe respiratory distress; a mental health nurse whose patient jumped from the top of a multi-story care park; and a nurse caring for a dementia patient whose leg had to be amputated following an undiagnosed fall. In addition to healthcare practitioners, Christopher appeared on behalf of Kent County Council following the death of a child who had been taken into care.

Professional Discipline

Christopher’s practice is primarily focused on professional disciplinary work. In terms of healthcare regulation he regularly prosecutes and defends in the General Medical Council, General Dental Council, General Optical Council, General Pharmaceutical Council, General Chiropractic Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. He has also appeared before internal disciplinary proceedings.

He has a growing High Court appellate practice. He appeared on behalf of the registrant in an important appeal brought by the Professional Standards Authority against the Nursing and Midwifery Council (PSA v NMC and Macleod [2014] EWHC 4354 (Admin)). He won an appeal against the General Medical Council on behalf of a doctor alleged to have sexually assaulted a patient. This case was conducted on a direct access basis. (TZ v GMC (2015) EWHC 1001 (Admin)).

Last year Christopher also won an appeal against a decision of the Nursing and Midwifery Council which turned on whether a single drug overdose could constitute misconduct (NMC v Masih). He is currently instructed to defend a doctor on one of the first statutory appeals brought by the GMC under its new powers, and is also due to appear in a judicial review against the GMC in relation to same case.

Outside of healthcare, Christopher has appeared before the ACCA’s Disciplinary, Licensing and Appeal Committees. Having prosecuted on behalf of the ACCA, he now defends there. He was recently instructed by Mishcon de Reya to defend the former financial director of Whipps Cross Hospital. All charges were found not proved and an unprecedented £60,000 costs awarded to the defence.

He has prosecuted numerous cases of teacher misconduct on behalf of the Department of Education. This involved cases of considerable complexity and sensitivity, including allegations of examination fraud, bullying and sexual abuse.

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He is recognised as being highly adept at dealing with factually complex and paper heavy cases. He successfully defended a registrant accused of in excess of thirty instances of clinical malpractice over a six month period. He is also very skilful at questioning vulnerable witnesses including an acutely unwell elderly patient who was financially exploited by his community carer, and former pupils who were the target of their teacher's inappropriate advances.

Notable Cases:

ACCA v X

In July 2017 Christopher represented the former financial director of an NHS Trust before the Disciplinary Committee, instructed by Mishcon de Reya solicitors. He faced allegations of incompetence, unprofessional behaviour and dishonesty relating to the provision of public contracts worth millions of pounds. The case required extensive cross examination of the former Chief Executive of the hospital, as well as mastering thousands of pages of documents. After a ten day hearing all the allegations were found not proved and the ACCA was ordered to pay costs of £60,000 – the largest such order in the history of the organisation.

TZ v General Medical Council [2015] EWHC 1001 (Admin)

Dr TZ was working in A&E when Patient A came in complaining of abdominal pain. It was alleged that whilst treating her he conducted an unnecessary vaginal examination. He denied ever having done so. At the substantive hearing the panel issued its draft factual findings, which found the allegations proved, by email in order to allow the parties to prepare their submissions before the case resumed. Dr TZ then attempted to adduce further factual evidence, principally the evidence of a Health Care Assistant who had been working at the time. The panel found it had no power to reopen its factual determination. The High Court held this was wrong since the decision had not been announced. The new evidence cast doubt on the panel's decision and the matter was remitted for a new hearing.

Professional Standards Authority v NMC & Macleod [2014] EWHC 4354 (Admin)

Mr Macleod observed a colleague assaulting a patient but did not report it for a significant period of time. He was referred to the NMC, admitted the charge and was given conditions of practice. The PSA appealed on the basis this sanction was unduly lenient because the charges should have alleged his actions were dishonest, or at least that the decision not to report the incident was as a result of a deliberate decision not to get his colleague in trouble. The appeal was allowed on the second of these submissions but the more serious issue of dishonesty was not remitted to the panel.

Accreditations



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Appointments & Memberships

- ARDL Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers

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