

Stephen Brassington

"One of the best professional disciplinary lawyers and probably the best advocate of all."
Chambers UK 2024



Year of Call: 1994

020 7353 5324

Stephen Brassington is rightly regarded as one of the leading practitioners in the field of Professional Discipline and was named Chambers and Partners Junior of the Year 2016. In Chambers UK 2021, Stephen continues his status as a star individual and is described as 'fearless' and 'brilliant' by the directory.

He is described, as "*a class operator*" by Chambers and Partners (2013) and The legal 500 comment he is "*an extraordinarily effective advocate*" (2014) and '*they should sell tickets to watch his cross-examination of experts.*' (2016). He advises and acts primarily in cases arising from the healthcare, sports, education and legal industries.

Stephen also undertakes a significant amount of Health and Safety defence work, in particular advising and assisting in defence of criminal prosecutions and at Coronial Inquests.

His background is one of criminal defence work, where he has advised and represented clients facing allegations of murder, manslaughter (including gross negligence) and other non-fatal offences of violence, sexual offences, substantial drugs supply and importation, counterfeit pharmaceuticals and others. He also has extensive experience of cases of fraud, money laundering and other financial wrongdoing. Notable cases included defending in a conspiracy to kidnap Victoria Beckham, and in a £multi-million conspiracy to defraud Microsoft.

Winner of the Professional Disciplinary and Regulatory Law Junior of the Year in The Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2022.

Stephen has recently also been shortlisted as Professional Disciplinary and Regulatory Junior of the Year in The Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2023.

What others say:

"One of the leaders in his field, liked by clients for his no-nonsense approach and vast experience."
"One of the best professional disciplinary lawyers and probably the best advocate of all." and "A superb barrister with exceptional advocacy skills. Incredibly tenacious and clients really feel they

Location

2 Hare Court
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have been extremely well represented.” – Chambers UK 2024

“Stephen’s advocacy is a pleasure to watch. He reads the room and his audience perfectly, and has everyone on tenterhooks as he delivers eloquent submissions and incisive cross-examinations.” – Legal UK 2024

“Stephen is a great advocate who achieves outstanding results.” and “He is always on top of his game.” – Chambers UK 2023

“He is a master advocate. His submissions are always first class and so compelling. He can win what seem like the most hopeless cases through his brilliant advocacy. He is great with difficult clients. At the end of a case he has won over panels, opposition and clients alike.” – Legal 500 UK 2023

“His reputation in terms of cross-examination is completely legendary. He knows how to work a panel.” “He’s a stalwart of GDC work; there’s no case or experience he hasn’t come across. A very strong advocate who’s aggressive but takes the right points, is good with clients and has a very strong reputation for fighting their corner.” and “If you want to pull a rabbit out of a hat he’s the barrister for you: he deals with very complex and difficult cases and gets really good results.” – Chambers UK 2022

“Stephen is a natural advocate who manages to charm panels, juries and experts alike.” – Legal 500 UK 2022

“He is a fearless advocate, and a thorough and robust-cross examiner. He is a good fighter for his client. Really stands out as a star of the Bar.” “An excellent advocate who has gravitas.” “Simply brilliant, and he has a straight-talking and engaging style.” – Chambers UK 2021

“Incredibly popular and rightly so. His cross-examinations are fantastic and play like something from a legal drama. He easily gains the respect of panels and experts and is reasonable and straightforward with opponents.” – Legal 500 UK 2021

“Trusted with the most complex and high-profile matters. He is unrivalled in his strategic thinking, persuasive manner and relentless hard work. He charms clients, committees and witnesses alike.” “Eats expert witnesses for breakfast.” – Chambers UK 2020

“A superb cross-examiner, who can reduce the most robust experts to kittens.” – Legal 500 2020

“He has a really excellent tactical mind. He’s brilliant on his feet and very persuasive with committees.” – Chambers UK 2018

“He never fails to deliver outstanding results.” – Chambers UK 2018

“He defends in heavyweight General Dental Council and General Medical Council cases.” – Legal 500 2017

“A spellbinding advocate who achieves astounding results for his clients. Add relentless hard work, fierce intellect and natural charisma all together, and you get Stephen Brassington”

“The best cross-examiner I have ever come across, due to his ability to pick people apart. He beats experts in their own area of expertise, pouncing on any comment in a way that changes the game.” – Chambers UK 2017

“A charismatic, dynamic advocate who is also an extremely skilled, strong strategist.” – Chambers

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UK 2017

“He’s calm, efficient and able to put the most anxious of clients at ease. He has a slick advocacy style and ability to engage well with panels.” – Chambers UK 2016

“He has a charisma and style about him that is underpinned by hard work.” – Chambers UK 2015

Professional Discipline

Stephen has, for the last ten years, practised almost exclusively in Professional Discipline and Regulation, representing professionals from a wide variety of industry sectors in cases brought by their regulatory bodies and in related proceedings in the criminal, civil and Coronial courts, and other tribunals.

For a number of years, Stephen was regularly instructed by the General Medical Council to present complex and lengthy cases before its disciplinary committees, and in the High Court, when it was said of him that he “has knowledge, drafting and presentational skills that are second to none at this level” (Chambers UK, 2009).

He now defends almost exclusively, and is in great demand by the principal indemnity providers who instruct him both directly and through their panel firms to represent professionals before their regulatory bodies (GMC, GDC, NMC and others), in Coroners’ Inquests, and associated proceedings (PCT, CESR/Specialist Register applications, Performers List Appeals, etc). He appears both at first instance and advises on statutory appeals and Judicial Review applications to the High Court. He is “praised for his high standard of client care, is firm without being unduly aggressive and does the job brilliantly with great humour and charm” (Chambers UK, 2011).

Stephen also undertakes significant cases associated with sports regulation. He was instructed by the Football Association as junior counsel in the prosecution of John Terry and also appeared in the appeal of physiotherapist Stephen Brennan in the Harlequins Rugby Football Club “Bloodgate” case. He is described as “a natural advocate, who will go the extra mile to provide a good service to his client” (Chambers UK, 2010).

He is also in particular demand to defend healthcare and other professionals involved in proceedings the criminal courts, particularly where there are concurrent or associated regulatory proceedings. Current cases include the defence of a consultant paediatrician accused of assaulting a patient’s sibling during a consultation.

Stephen was nominated by Chambers and Partners, publishers of market leading industry directories, as “Professional Discipline Junior of the Year” at the 2013 UK Bar Awards.

Cases

GDC v NA

Defence of orthodontist accused of significant and multiple clinical failings and incompetence leading to irreparable damage to children’s dentition over sustained period and at multiple practices.

GMC v X and R v X

Defence of world renown Consultant Paediatric Urologist accused of taking and retaining indecent images of children during complex surgery. Providing representation at the GMC and pre charge advice in the police investigation.

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GDC v NA

Defence of orthodontist accused of significant and multiple clinical failings and incompetence leading to irreparable damage to children's dentition over sustained period and at multiple practices.

GDC v Mr E

Defended an internationally renowned dentist who was accused of incompetently placing implants without the informed consent of patients.

Football Association v John Terry

Junior counsel to the FA in proceedings against Mr Terry following use of racially motivated language directed towards Anton Ferdinand.

Brennan v Health Professions Council

The "Bloodgate" case involving Harlequins RFC. Represented HPC in the High Court responding to appeal by Mr Brennan, the physiotherapist accused of helping to fabricate a blood injury using fake blood capsules during a Heineken Cup Quarter-Final rugby match in 2009.

General Medical Council v Favier

Prosecution of a Consultant Anaesthetist for failure to declare financial interest in a product he recommended to patients suffering chronic intractable pain.

Inquests & Public Inquiries

Stephen's practice is principally concerned with the defence of healthcare professionals accused of misconduct and the defence of other professionals under investigation by the Health and Safety Executive before the criminal courts and at Coroners Inquests and is frequently instructed to represent Hospital Trusts at complex inquests.

Cases

Westminster Bridge Terror Attack

Stephen appeared Pro-Bono for victims of the Westminster Bridge attack at a pre-inquest hearing.

R (Parkinson) v HM Senior Coroner for Kent

Stephen represented the Trust who were an interested party in Judicial Review proceedings concerned with allegations of system failures, including an alleged Trust policy not to actively resuscitate elderly patients. The claim was dismissed and Stephen secured costs for the Trust.

Inquest touching upon the death of Katie Hamilton

Katie Hamilton died from hypoxic brain injury following self ligature whilst detained under s.2 Mental Health Act at the Becklin Centre in Leeds. Stephen represented the interests of Leeds and York Partnership Trust and

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Community Links Limited. Expert opinion obtained by HM Coroner contended that the Becklin centre failed to provide adequate supervision for Ms Hamilton whilst she was at significant risk of serious harm. The Coroner determined no neglect by the Trust.

Inquest touching upon the death of Craig Barratt

Craig Barratt was a 16 year old student studying for a Diploma in Animal Welfare who volunteered at Northamptonshire Animals Need Nurturing and Adoption (“NANNA”) where the HSE had previously investigated rat infestations. Craig contracted and died from complications of Leptospirosis. Stephen represented the interests of NANNA.

Inquest touching upon the death of James Morris

James Morris died as a result of complications arising from heart valve replacement surgery. Stephen represented the interests of the cardiac surgeon who performed the surgery. It was suggested that the surgeon had conducted the wrong type of surgery and inadequately. The case involved complex and competing expert surgical evidence.

Criminal Regulatory

Stephen also defends corporate and individual clients who face proceedings brought by the Health & Safety Executive for fatal and other accidents in the workplace, and also advises in related proceedings in Coroners’ Courts. He is currently advising a global construction and development company on their involvement in an inquest into a death said to have arisen as a result of an alleged failure of a hospital paging system. He also has an interest in licensing work.

Accreditations



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Appointments & Memberships

- 2022: Winner of Legal 500 UK Professional Disciplinary and Regulatory Junior of the year
- Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers
- Health & Safety Lawyers Association
- Criminal Bar Association

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