

Ben Amunwa

Year of Call: 2013

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Employment and discrimination

Ben Amunwa is an experienced employment lawyer who advises and assists employers and employees on grievances, disciplinary matters, dismissals, discrimination, sexual harassment, whistleblowing, business transfers, wages and holiday disputes, union matters and modern slavery.

Ben has conducted complex trials in person and remotely via video-link, including several 15-day discrimination, victimisation and whistleblowing trials cases involving thousands of pages of evidence and multiple witnesses.

Ben's experience includes settlement negotiations, drafting (employment contracts, internal policies and pleadings) and representation in Tribunals, civil courts and before regulatory panels. He primarily focuses on the corporate, legal and public sectors but also accepts instructions from other fields or industries.

He provides practical and strategic advice, negotiation skills and effective representation at preliminary hearings, multi-day trials and appeals.

Owing to the breadth of Ben's practice, clients often request him when atypical points arise, such as wasted costs, self-incrimination, breaches of disclosure duties, data protection or immigration issues. Unusually, he has cross-examined numerous solicitors (including partners at magic circle law firms) in his employment trials, as well as questioning executive witnesses over sexual harassment allegations.

Ben has given training to employment law practitioners and has written an acclaimed guidebook for the Law Centres Network on employment rights (described by a Head of Employment as "incredibly useful and thorough"), plus many articles and blogs.

Articles

Ben Amunwa explores in three stages the sudden withdrawal of employment claims and the issues that can arise as result. Ben first considers the procedure in itself; practical difficulties; timing and finally the wider implications for the administration of justice.

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Ben Amunwa represented the respondent in *Muyulu v London Borough of Harrow*: 3301910/2023, in which the Employment Tribunal dismissed an unfair dismissal claim brought by an 'as and when' or 'sessional' social worker.

The judgment illustrates some of the factors Tribunals are likely to consider relevant when determining employment status of sessional social workers hired by local authorities.

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Ben Amunwa analyses the case of Connor v Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police [2024] EAT 175, in which HHJ Beard confirms that a claimant relying on a recurrent condition as a disability under s.6 and Sch.1 of the Equality Act 2010 must prove that the condition had a substantial adverse effect in both past and current circumstances.

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Ben Amunwa analyses the case of Adekoya & Ors v Heathrow Express Operating Company Ltd [2024] EAT 72, which found that the Employment Tribunal erred when it dismissed the claimants' claims for breach of contract challenging the withdrawal of post-termination travel benefits from them in reliance on a contractual agreement that had not been sent to the claimants.

Ben considers the resulting practical implications for practitioners, employers and employees.

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Ben Amunwa analyses the case of Secretary of State for Business and Trade v Mercer [2024] UKSC 12, in which the UK Supreme Court hands out a victory for the protection of Trade Union freedoms and workers' rights, finding the UK to be in breach of ECHR article 11 as section 146(2) of TULRCA fails to provide protection from detriment for workers participating in lawful strike action.

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Ben Amunwa analyses the case of Omooba v Michael Garrett Associates Ltd (t/a Global Artists) & Anor [2024] EAT 30, in which the EAT upheld the Tribunal's judgment, including its key finding that where a protected belief forms part of the context but not part of the reason for a decision, that will be insufficient to establish religion or belief discrimination.

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Recommendations

Ben Amunwa has a standout practice in public and equality law, including cases challenging inadequate provision of education and housing. He draws on his background in NGOs and advocacy groups to handle strategic litigation, primarily on behalf of vulnerable clients and asylum seekers.

Strengths: "Ben is very thorough and detailed in his drafting. He is accessible to work with but confident about his views and judgement."

"Ben is fantastic. He is reliable, has sound judgement and will leave no stone unturned."

"His work is just impeccable. He is super reliable and very well organised."

"He is thorough and dedicated. Ben is knowledgeable on immigration and asylum issues."

Chambers 2025/Administrative and Public Law/London Bar

"Ben is well respected, responsive and efficient, providing a high quality of drafting and advocacy."

Chambers 2024/Administrative and Public Law/London Bar

"He provides superb work that never needs amending and has good judgement."

Chambers 2023/Administrative and Public Law/London Bar

"He is an extremely clever barrister, who provides excellent drafting and is also great with clients." "He is collaborative, responds quickly and is very dedicated."

Chambers 2022/Administrative and Public Law/London Bar

"I will never understand how on earth Ben absorbed so much detail... In cross-examination of the other side's witnesses, Ben very artfully led those witnesses to make admissions that they had avoided. He blew their case wide open, making them admit that they should have taken steps to retain data, that they should not have deleted electronic data. These were witnesses at the top of the organisational chart."

Farzana Saiyed, Employment law client 2020

Academic qualifications

- BA Hons in English and Related Literature (1st Class), University of York
- BPTC (Very Competent), City University of London
- GDL (Distinction), City University of London

Scholarships

- Lord Denning Major Scholarship, Lincoln's Inn
- Lord Brougham CPE Scholarship, Lincoln's Inn

Professional bodies

- Administrative Law Bar Association ('ALBA')
- Education Lawyers Association ('ELAS')
- Employment Lawyers Association ('ELA')
- Advocate (formerly the Bar Pro Bono Unit)
- Bar Council, Race training panel
- Lincoln's Inn

Direct Access

Ben Amunwa is qualified to accept instructions directly from members of the public and professional clients under the Direct Public Access scheme.