

Liam O'Shaughnessy

Year of Call: 2024
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Overview

Liam O'Shaughnessy is a barrister specialising in employment and discrimination. He transferred to the Bar having worked as a senior HR professional for over 25 years, specialising in industrial relations, employment law and disputes.

Liam is much in demand across all aspects of employment law including discrimination issues and employment status acting for a wide range of clients.

Before coming to the Bar, Liam held director-level HR roles working for major UK organisations such as the AA, Carnival PLC (P&O Cruises and Cunard Line), British Airways, and the Civil Service. . He has also acted as a consultant to organisations including Birmingham City Council, MTR Corporation (Hong Kong Metro), National Express and Stagecoach Group. His extensive in-house experience has seen Liam develop expertise across all areas of employment and wider HR matters such as stakeholder management and regulatory compliance as well as legal services delivery. Liam understands well the legal needs of both private and public sector employers.

Liam has advised on all aspects of employment law including discrimination issues and employment status as well as advising on the people aspects of addressing a potential equal pay liability. He has managed bulk tribunal litigation, union negotiations, negotiated and created exit packages for senior employees, managed high risk tribunal cases with counsel, drafted employment contracts and policies, and provided support and assistance on large-scale redundancy exercises.

Liam also has excellent experience in handling very sensitive investigations and whistleblowing complaints. Notably, he has advised extensively on very high-profile collective employee relations issues and settlement. He has worked as part of a team resolving industrial disputes, including at ACAS, and is a practical and pragmatic negotiator.

He has managed litigation to Court of Appeal level, giving him valuable insight into the operation of the Employment Appeal Tribunal and the Court of Appeal. He spent three years as an employer member of the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC), appointed by the Secretary of State. He also spent three years as a lay member of the Fitness to Practice Panel of the General Medical Council (GMC) and has marshalled with the then President of the Employment Appeal Tribunal.

In addition to his employment and discrimination work, Liam has acted as junior counsel in the County Court in a professional negligence claim related to employment law advice.

Outside of work, Liam enjoys rugby union.

Recommendations

"Just a quick note to say thank you very much for your brilliant work on this matter today in achieving the best outcome for

us. It's been a pleasure to work with you and I look forward to hopefully working together soon." **Instructing solicitor**

"I would just like to add, it was a pleasure working with you Liam. Felt fully supported by Liam and his team!" **Client Witnesses**

"Thank you for your note, and assistance today. As mentioned earlier, thank you for your submissions today which were delivered excellently and resulted in a fantastic judgment in our client's favour." **Instructing solicitor**

"The client also wanted me to pass on his feedback that "Liam was very good today". Thank you for all your support and the detailed note." **Instructing Solicitor**

"Great to have you on this case and look forward to working with you in the future." **Instructing Solicitor**

Academic qualifications

- Postgraduate Diploma Bar Vocational Studies with specialism in Advanced Advocacy Skills, City, University of London - Distinction
- LLM Employment Law, Kingston University, London - Distinction
- MSc Human Resources, London South Bank University
- Postgraduate Diploma, Human Resource Management, University of East London
- LLB(Hons) Law, University of London
- Certificate in Education (CertEd), University of Greenwich

Scholarships

- Certificate of Honour, Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
- Dean's Certificate of Excellence in Labour Law, University of London
- Ron Shepherd Trust Award, University of East London

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Registered Test User, Occupational Personality and Ability, British Psychological Society (BPS)
- Crisis Leadership Qualification, Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College

Professional bodies

- Employment Lawyers Association
- Employment Law Bar Association
- Chartered Fellow, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)
- Fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA)

Expertise

Employment and discrimination

Liam O'Shaughnessy is an employment and discrimination barrister who moved to the Bar having worked as a senior HR professional for over 25 years, specialising in industrial relations, employment law and disputes. Liam is now much in demand across all aspects of employment law including discrimination issues and employment status cases, acting for a wide range of clients.

Recent cases include:

B v G: Successfully defended a claim for unfair and automatic unfair dismissal (health and safety case) following a multi-day trial.

P v I: Successfully defended a claim for unfair dismissal in a multi-day trial involving multiple witnesses.

S v M: Successfully defeating claims of unfair dismissal and unauthorised deduction from wages, with the claimant succeeding only on a wrongful dismissal claim.

A v M: Acting for the respondent employer, secured strike out of a claim for discrimination on grounds of unreasonable conduct.

L v E: Achieved strike out of a discrimination, harassment, and unfair dismissal claim against a client, in a multi-respondent case involving building management companies and a security contractor.

J v A: Successfully defended a worker status claim, which included allegations of breach of contract, claims under the Agency Worker Regulations, and claims for unauthorised deduction of wages. The tribunal concluded that the claimant was a self-employed contractor.

N v M: Achieved strike out of a claim against an individual respondent company director on the basis of no reasonable prospects of success.

M v K: Acted for the respondent in proceedings involving allegations of race and sex discrimination, wrongful dismissal, and an amendment application during the hearing itself. Successfully defended all discrimination claims and resisted the addition of a further claim against a Director; the claimant succeeded on wrongful dismissal only.

R v C: Acting for the respondent employer at a remedy hearing, secured a considerable reduction in compensation payable to the claimant.