

## Lawyer of the week Mathew Gullick QC

Mathew Gullick QC, a member of 3PB Barristers, acted for Lesley Brazel, a school music teacher, in the Supreme Court. Brazel claimed that her employer was wrong to give her fewer days of paid annual leave because she worked only during the terms. The court ruled unanimously that all workers are guaranteed 5.6 weeks' paid holiday even if they do not perform work throughout the whole year.

### What were the biggest hurdles you had to overcome in this case?

Persuading the court that the 1998 working time regulations give all workers on permanent contracts the same holiday entitlement, even though part-year workers could receive a greater proportion of

overall earnings as holiday pay. It was important to keep the court's focus on the universal applicability of the regulations, the way in which they are structured, and the language used.

### What is the best decision you have taken as a lawyer?

Doing mootings as a student at Gray's Inn 20 years ago. Standing up in front of judges gave me confidence that I might be good at it for real.

### Who do you most admire in the law? My colleagues doing publicly

funded work and providing representation for people who wouldn't otherwise have it.



### What is the best advice you have received?

Not to let rejection undermine belief in your abilities; try again and, if you can, try harder. I have done that and succeeded the second time around — or later.

### What is the funniest thing that has happened in your

job? Receiving a draft judgment many months after trial, which, in addition to the evidence given, was

based on the judge's post-hearing research on Wikipedia.

**What are the best and worst elements of being a lawyer?** Best: solving problems people haven't been able to sort out before you got involved. Worst: the hours and the pressure.

**What law would you enact?** A statutory duty on public authorities to promote access to justice.

**What is your favourite pop song?** *I Quit* by Hepburn — because in the second verse it rhymes “baby” with “emotional debris”.

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