

David Knifton QC

Call 1986



Clerks' Details

 Rachel Williams
 0151 242 8840

Appointments

- Accredited Mediator (2006)
- Recorder - Crown and County Court (2002)

Memberships

- Northern Circuit
- Personal Injury Bar Association
- Professional Negligence Bar Association
- Northern Circuit Medico-Legal Association

Education

- LLB (Hons), University of Nottingham (Class II.i, 1985)
- Inner Temple, Duke of Edinburgh Entrance Scholarship

Overview

David specialises in high-value personal injury and clinical negligence cases, particularly those involving brain or spinal cord injuries, amputations, serious psychiatric injuries and historical sex abuse claims. He acts almost exclusively on behalf of claimants, where his abilities as an outstanding advocate are widely recognised. He is consistently recommended as a leading barrister in Chambers & Partners and the Legal 500.

As a junior, he was regularly instructed, with or without a leader, in claims of the utmost severity. His highest award in that capacity was £5.85m, and he consistently achieved settlements totalling around £20m per year.

Since taking silk, his catastrophic injury practice has continued to develop, and his enormous experience, meticulous preparation, excellent client skills and pragmatic approach are highly-valued by clients.

David generally only accepts new instructions in cases with a value in excess of £1m.

He has acted at a number of high-profile Inquests and public inquiries, including the North Wales (Waterhouse) Child Abuse Inquiry and the 'Blue 25' Inquest concerning the deaths of 5 UK servicemen shot by a rogue Afghan policeman.

Recommendations

“His attention to detail and client care skills are excellent.” “He is very organised and communicative.” “He conducts his cases with skill and has excellent judgement.”

“An excellent strategist who is completely trusted by clients and will fight tooth and nail to get the best result possible. He is bright, sharp and has excellent attention to detail.” “He is very approachable and good at explaining difficult issues to clients.”

Chambers and Partners 2021

“He’s a good negotiator and is very thorough.” “He’s always well prepared and has very good attention to detail.”

Chambers and Partners 2020

“He is able to deal with huge amounts of detail and quantum elements very quickly. He is organised in his approach and in conferences he will provide a detailed plan, which clients appreciate.”

Chambers and Partners 2019

“Technically excellent. He takes a pragmatic approach to cases and is very approachable.” “He has a keen eye for detail and gets excellent results. Clients like him.”

Chambers and Partners 2018

“Just supreme in his technical ability, though his best asset is the way he can take something that appears indecipherable and break it down into manageable terms, not only for the solicitor but for the client.” “He takes no nonsense and gets the job done. Meticulous in his preparation and strong in negotiation, he is a calm but strong and reassuring presence.”

Chambers and Partners 2017

“A highly-experienced senior junior who acts primarily for claimants on cases involving serious injuries, with notable expertise in military claims... He is meticulous in his approach. He’s calm and patient with clients, with a reassuring and confident demeanour. He is efficient, accessible and approachable. He has excellent technical skills together with a superb manner with clients.”

Chambers and Partners 2016

“Focuses in particular on claimant work, with notable skills in dealing with matters involving brain, spinal injury and military claims. Interviewees particularly praise his excellent client skills.” “He is fiercely intelligent whilst also being tactically brilliant.” “He is very practical, and has a very nice manner with clients and opponents.”

Chambers and Partners 2015

“David has great technical knowledge and a keen forensic eye for detail, and his experience sitting as a Judge, places him in an excellent position to advise on the likely approach of the court. David has a relaxed and calm manner which is particularly helpful

with claimants. David has always been very accessible which is crucial in litigation, available to provide fast advice and guidance on situations that may arise.”

“David is calm, patient with families who have seen the worst things happen to them, and a determined and able advocate. He will fight difficult cases and is able to quickly determine the right approach on any case. He is not shy of taking on the most difficult cases and successfully navigates them.”

The Legal 500 2021

“A true claimant specialist who is determined to fight for clients.”

The Legal 500 2020

“He argues his points with a steely charm.”

The Legal 500 2018/19

“Thorough, quick and tactically astute.”

The Legal 500 2017

“He has a fantastic eye for detail, and is always calm and rational under pressure.”

The Legal 500 2016

Beyond the Bar

David is married with 4 children, 3 of whom have autism spectrum disorders. He was responsible for setting up a pro bono alliance between Exchange Chambers and the National Autistic Society to provide advice and representation in the field of special educational needs. This alliance has provided invaluable assistance to parents struggling to secure appropriate education to meet their children’s needs. Away from work, he is a keen musician, singing in a choir and occasionally playing guitar and keyboards in a band. He enjoys cycling, and was a member of the Chambers’ team which raised nearly £30,000 following a trans-Pennine charity ride.