

WILLIAM CHAPMAN

Year of call
2003



William is a civil law practitioner. His principal areas of practice are personal injury and clinical negligence. He also accepts instructions in employment and commercial disputes.

He is regularly instructed in claims valued £1m to £10m including those who have suffered traumatic brain injuries. He has detailed knowledge of life expectancy and the calculation of appropriate multipliers. He is credited with the Additional Life Tables in Ogden 8. He is the author of online software for the precise calculation of any multiplier including joint multipliers. He acted for Matthew Wiessler in the 'Princess Diana' case. He is often instructed in clinical negligence claims for detailed consideration of the statistical basis supporting reduced life expectancy and chances of survival from delayed diagnoses.

He read economics at Cambridge and worked as an economics consultant in the UK and USA before coming to the Bar.

He has particular expertise in civil actions against the police and social services and the law of the liability of public authorities. He is, and has been, junior counsel in a number of cutting edge cases on the scope of public authority liability for determination in the Court of Appeal. He is regularly instructed in claims arising out of historic child abuse including complex cases where such children have suffered additional traumatic brain injury. He was counsel for core participant victims of historic child abuse in six of the investigations conducted by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. His speeches were widely reported in the mainstream media. He is regularly instructed as the family's representative in Inquests.

He acts for respondents and claimants in the Employment Tribunal, particularly where there is overlap with claims for personal injury.

William is qualified to accept instructions directly from clients and is registered under the Bar Council's Public Access Scheme, meaning that members of the public who seek specialist advice can come direct to him. In addition, he welcomes instructions from solicitors, in-house law departments, qualified foreign lawyers, and clients licensed by the Bar Council to give instructions direct to barristers under the Bar Council's Licensed

Access Scheme. For more information please visit our Direct Access page [here](#).

LEGAL EXPERTISE

Personal Injury

William acts principally for claimants in multi-track personal injury and historic abuse cases. He has extensive experience in RTA, EL and PL claims and those involving highway authorities. William's background in economics and computers means he makes short work of even large and complicated Schedules of Loss. He also straddles the Employment Tribunal jurisdiction in stress-at-work claims. He recently successfully argued that a claimant was not estopped from pursuing a parallel claim in the ET after the civil claim had been compromised.

He has appeared successfully in the Court of Appeal both on his own and with a leader. He has been instructed as junior counsel in the high-profile case concerning Mark Kennedy, the undercover policeman.

Selected Cases

[CJ v Chief Constable of Wiltshire Police \[2022\] EWHC 1661 \(QB\)](#)

Acting (led) for multiple child complainants for failures by the police to apprehend perpetrator sooner after discovering child pornography on a computer related to him.

[Champion v Surrey CC \[2020\] 6 WLUK 588](#)

Acting for the claimant in his claim against the local authority for failing to remove the claimant from abusive parents. Settled following refusal of the defendant's application for permission to appeal by the Supreme Court on the question of the scope of the duty of care for preventing harm caused by third parties.

[IICSA Anglican Church investigation \(2019\)](#)

William Chapman makes final submissions at the Inquiry into the Anglican Church.

[Mark Kennedy v Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis \(2013\)](#)

Claim against the Metropolitan Police for psychology injury resulting from a mismanaged placement of the claimant as an undercover police officer.

[Durham CC v Dunn \[2012\] EWCA Civ 1654, \[2013\] 1 WLR 2305](#)

Duty of disclosure in a civil action for damages arises under the Civil Procedure Rules. Where a public

authority seeks to withhold sensitive confidential information on public interest grounds, the issue of public interest immunity in the strict sense does not necessarily arise, rather, provided the test of relevance is satisfied, the issue falls to be determined by balancing the competing common law and article 6 right to a fair trial against rights to privacy or confidentiality under article 8 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

[Sadler v Filipiak \[2011\] EWCA Civ 1728](#)

Leading case cited in the forward to the JC Guidelines on the correct approach to the assessment of general damages where there have been multiple injuries.

[PQR v Eastbourne College](#)

Claim by former Royal Navy Officer for sexual abuse at public school resulting in loss of career in Royal Navy.

Inquests & Inquiries

William had substantial involvement in various strands of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, appearing in a total of six substantive hearings, among other inquiries. He also appears in Article 2 inquests, using his extensive personal injury and clinical negligence experience.

Selected Cases

[Inquest into the Death of Michael Bray](#)

Acting for the family in a two week Article 2 Inquest into the death by hanging of a mentally ill man. The emergency services failed to attend following a 999 call for several hours.

[IICSA inquiry strands](#)

- Greville Janner
- Roman Catholic Church
- Archdioceses of Birmingham
- Ampleforth and Downside Schools
- Anglican Church
- [Peter Ball](#)
- Organised networks
- Internet

Abuse (Claimant)

William has acted for claimants in historic abuse claims for over six years and is instructed by some of the leading firms in the field. He has a particular interest in the disclosure requirements for litigation of these claims and was junior counsel in the important case of [Durham CC v Dunn](#) [2012] EWCA Civ 1654, [2013] 1

WLR 2305 that determined that the DPA had no bearing on the requirements of standard disclosure under the CPR. As a result social services records and the like are no longer routinely provided for inspection in heavily redacted form.

Selected Cases

PQR v Eastbourne College

Claim by former Royal Navy Officer for sexual abuse at public school resulting in loss of career in Royal Navy.

William Chapman cited as expert witness in support of Charles Geekie QC's conclusion that 'there should not have been a confidentiality clause' in the settlement of a claim in 2015 against Chelsea Football Club for damages for sexual abuse by the football-scout, Eddie Heath.

Actions Involving The Police

William has acted in a number of claims on behalf of and against the police. He is currently being led in the claim by Mark Kennedy, the undercover policeman, against the Metropolitan Police for damages for psychological injury following a mismanaged undercover placement.

Claims Involving The Military

William is instructed on a large number of claims against the Ministry of Defence. He has acted for the dependents of a soldier killed in Iraq following a successful attempt to order the re-opening of the Inquest into his death.

Employment

William has acted in the Employment Tribunal for over six years including claims for discrimination, unfair and wrongful dismissal. He acts for a number of local authorities in London. He has a particular interest in those cases straddling the civil and employment tribunal jurisdictions, especially in stress-at-work claims.

Stress At Work Claims

William is experienced in the competing jurisdictions of the Employment Tribunal and Civil Courts. He recently successfully argued that, having settled the civil claim, the Claimant was not estopped from pursuing overlapping damages in the Employment Tribunal.

Selected Cases

Matthew Wiessler v BBC

Acting for Mr Wiessler. I drafted the complex schedule in his claim for career blight. Mr. Wiessler, a graphics designer, filed a claim for career damages after the BBC falsely attributed blame to him for his involvement in the graphics used during Martin Bashir's interview with Princess Diana. This erroneous action effectively ended his otherwise promising career.

Afolabi-Brown v Evolve Facility Services Ltd

William represented the respondent and successfully defended against a claim of racial discrimination arising from a redundancy process.

Griffiths v Hobourne Limited (2014)

A stress-at-work claim leading to unfair dismissal with parallel proceedings in the civil courts. The interesting aspect of this claim is that once the civil proceedings were settled William successfully argued in the ET that proceedings in the ET on the same facts were not estopped. This means C may well recover overlapping damages twice.

Hothi v London Borough of Waltham Forest (2013)

William acted for the Respondent successfully resisting a claim for victimisation & harassment leading to constructive dismissal. The curious facts were that C was suspended from her work as a successful Youth Training Officer after police complained she had refused to provide a witness statement against a youth in her care. C said she was frightened of the repercussions and felt undue pressure from her employer to assist the police. The true reason emerged in cross examination.

Commercial

William makes full use of his background in economics and computers to judge the commercial realities of complex and big-paper cases including claims in negligence against professionals. He is particularly strong in those areas that straddle other areas of his practice.

Selected Cases

EMFC v TRG [2022] 1 WLR 717

At first instance and then led on appeal. Acting for the claimant for unpaid commission for funding services in support of €130m loan facility.

Williams v Worldwide Financial Group (2014)

Claim by IFA for unpaid commissions due in breach of an oral agreement on transfer of the business. Documentation running to tens of thousands pages.

Transfast Remittance (London) Ltd v Lloyd's Bank Group PLC (2014)

Claims by money transfer companies against the banks for refusing to provide banking facilities on arbitrary and discriminatory grounds. Interim injunction obtained pending resolution of the question of whether such refusal amounted to a breach of the Equality Act 2010.

Valentine v Richmond Day & Wilson Ltd, Bernard Matthews Ltd (2012)

Acting for private detective defending a claim for damages for invasion of privacy after an animal rights activist discovered a tracking device on her car planted by him at the behest of his client, Bernard Matthews. Claim pleaded novel causes of action under the Human Rights Act, the Harassment Act and under the Data Protection Act.

Mansfield v NYK (2006)

Successfully argued against recovery of vehicle recovery operators' costs in defence of the owner of a stricken lorry. Precedent established.

Memberships

- The Ogden Working Committee
- APIL
- AvMA
- ELA
- PIBA