

Queens Counsel Announcement

27th February 2013

We are delighted to announce that David Williams has been approved as Queens Counsel.

The silk ceremony will be held on Wednesday 27th March.

What does being appointed QC mean in respect of David's work?

Are you a QC yet?

No I am not a QC yet – and won't be until 27th March 2013. That means I am still a junior and can be instructed as a junior until then. Indeed if instructed as a junior (whether to advise or to appear) in a matter prior to 27th March 2013 I continue to act as a junior until the case concludes (if it is of Jarndyce longevity that might be an exception!!).

What happens after 27th March?

After the 27th March I will be able to accept instructions as a QC – either alone or with a junior. I expect in the current climate (both for private and legally aided clients) that acting as a QC alone is likely to become more common and I am happy to act on this basis.

I will remain available to discuss prospective or on-going cases on a 'pick your brain' basis and I hope that you will permit me to continue to pick yours.

Who will be taking on all the junior work you have been doing up to now?

As you know we have a large practice group conducting international family cases, in particular abduction. These range from the most senior like Robin Barda, Mark Jarman and Chris Hames through experienced juniors like Cliona Papazian, Hassan Khan, Cleo Perry, Jacqueline Renton and Michael Gratton to our recent juniors like Michael Edwards, Harry Nosworthy, Rachel Chisholm and Julia Townend; and many more. Between them they will be able to take on all the cases you might have been kind enough to instruct me in from the simplest to the most complex. They will also of course be able to advise on whether a QC (!) is required in addition to them or as a silk alone.

What sort of work will you be doing?

I will continue to practice in all the areas of international family law that I have for the last few years including,

- Relocation (permanent and temporary),
- incoming abductions (Hague and non-Hague)
- outgoing abductions
- jurisdictional conflict cases – covering children and divorce
- reciprocal enforcement of orders and mirror orders
- international aspects of public law cases, in particular issues connected with placements of children abroad.
- Forced marriage and stranded spouse cases,

- Private law disputes, in particular but not limited to those with some international dimension.
- Other miscellaneous cases including 1984 Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act cases for financial remedies after a foreign divorce.

I hope to continue to represent parents, children, relatives, local authorities, other state agencies and others.

I am also planning (after a lengthy lay-off) to refresh my memory on Court of Protection work and to re-enter that arena.

Mediation

I have also just completed updating my mediation qualifications, including being trained in and being approved by the Ministry of Justice to do MIAMs. I hope to develop my work in this area and will not be limiting this work to children cases but will be doing money cases and indeed all issues cases. I am able to do sole mediations but will (in accordance with the Hague Mediation Good Practice Guide) co-mediate on abduction and re-location cases. Unfortunately 4PB does not have a mediation legal aid contract and so all mediation work, save abduction and relocation, will be funded on a private basis. For the abduction and relocation cases I have arrangements with two mediators who have legal aid mediation contracts and so there is the opportunity to co-mediate these cases under legal aid cover.

What else will you be up to?

In those quiet moments I will be doing some writing with one Teertha Gupta QC. We are Contributing Editors to the Butterworths Family Law Service and are in the process of re-writing the chapters on child abduction. Apart from that I shall be doing some lecturing - including a presentation to Italian, Croatian and Slovenian judges on applications to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Are your fees going to become unaffordable to all but the rich?

No.

My long-standing commitment to legal aid continues.

For privately paying clients Michael and the rest of the clerking team will be able to negotiate fees which reflect the clients means and the complexity of the case. I remain committed to providing help to those who need it - irrespective of their means. I do not expect my fees to risk significantly over the next 12 months - still less to double!

What do you look like in silk stockings and breeches?

Photos on the website on 27th March