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Laurence Emmett KC

Barrister
Call 2004 Silk 2021



Scope of Practice

• Administrative & Public Law • Agency & Commercial Agents Regulations • Arbitration & ADR • Art and Antiques • Banking and Financial Services • Civil Fraud and Investigations • Commodities, Derivatives, Futures & Options Trading • Construction & Technology (Including IT & Telecoms) • Energy Law (incl. Electricity, Oil, Gas, Utilities & Associated Regulation) • Jurisdiction, Conflict of Laws & International Litigation • Pharmaceutical Industry • Sale of Goods and Supply of Goods and Services • Share and Business Sale Agreements, including claims on Warranties and Indemnities

Overview

Laurence Emmett's practice extends over the full range of issues that arise in commercial disputes, including litigation and international arbitration. His experience covers issues of contractual interpretation, jurisdiction and the enforcement of judgments and injunctive relief. He has particular experience in the energy industry (including hydrocarbon-based and renewable resources), as well as in life sciences, natural resources, infrastructure and banking and finance.

Beyond our core practice areas, Laurence has particular interest and experience in fine art disputes. He was appointed KC in 2021 and is an experienced trial advocate.

His recent work includes *Bilta (UK) Ltd v Tradition Financial Services Ltd* [2025] UKSC 18, a claim against an inter-dealer broker relating VAT fraud committed in the carbon credit market, leading to appeals to the Supreme Court on issues of company law; *Siccar Point v Ithaca Energy*, a claim relating to the consideration to be paid for the sale / purchase of shares in a company holding a share in various licences to develop and produce oil and gas from areas of the UK continental shelf under the North Sea; *QIPCO v Phoenix Ancient Art SA*, a claim arising out of the purchase of antiquities by a major collector; *Cardiorentis SA v IQVIA UK Ltd*, a claim arising out of a major clinical trial relating to a proposed treatment for heart failure; and various arbitral proceedings relating to, among other matters, alleged misrepresentation / breach by the sellers of shares in a company operating in the IT industry, royalty provisions in a contract licensing rights to patented biochemical technology, the deliver or pay terms in a long-term contract for the supply of LNG, and profit-sharing terms under an agreement governing the design, construction and leasing of a major international landmark building.

He is ranked by Legal 500 for Energy, Commercial Litigation and Banking and Finance; and by Chambers & Partners for Energy and Commercial Litigation.

Examples of Recent Cases

Arbitration

Laurence Emmett has extensive experience of international arbitrations, under ICC, LCIA, SIAC and UNCITRAL rules. This includes:

Banking and Financial Services

Laurence Emmett's practice covers banking, finance and regulation, including banking disputes, derivatives, regulatory enforcement and disciplinary proceedings, management and administration of investment funds, guarantees and pensions. He is ranked as a leading junior in the field by Legal 500.

Comments include:

'His advocacy is clear and persuasive, he prepares well and works collegiately with the solicitor team.' (Legal 500, 2020)

- **Bilta (UK) Ltd v Tradition Financial Services Ltd**
  Acted for the defendant brokerage house in a claim brought by the liquidators of companies which were used to perpetrate VAT fraud in relation to the trading of carbon trading allowances. See, among other judgments, [2021] EWCA Civ 221 (following trial); and [2025] UKSC 18 (Supreme Court).
- **Novitas v Amtrust**
  Acted in a dispute as to the interpretation of agreements governing a litigation-funding scheme.
- **Indemnity claim**
  Acting in a dispute regarding the indemnity and warranty provisions in an agreement for the sale and purchase of share in a business supplying pension and other advice.
- **Injunction to prevent the cessation of services.**
  Acted for a claimant seeking an injunction to prevent its counterparty from ceasing to provide payment services after it was requested to do so by a regulator.
- **FMCP v Ohmura**
  Acted for the third defendant in Commercial Court proceedings brought against a number of individuals in relation to investments in complex structured products by the Libya Africa Investment Porfolio. See [2018] EWHC 1768 (Comm) (judgment following trial); [2018] EWHC 2905 (Comm) (judgment in relation to consequential issues); and [2018] EWHC 2889 (Comm) (scope of post-judgment freezing order).
- **Enforcement proceedings**
  Acted for the FCA enforcement team in various enforcement matters.
- **BGC v Tradition**
  Acted for the third party respondent to an application for specific disclosure in relation to a dispute concerning recruitment in the brokering industry.
- **Barclays Bank plc v Orlandofin BV**
  Acted for the borrowers under a syndicated loan facility in relation to a dispute over the contractual effect of documents sent by the lenders during the life of the loan. See [2015] EWHC 582 (Comm).
- **Capita v RFIB**
  Acted in a long-running dispute on an indemnity given in a share purchase agreement in relation to liabilities arising from negligent provision of services in the pensions industry. The case led to a significant judgment by the Court of Appeal on the principles governing the interpretation of indemnities and on the circumstances in which a professional (in this case a pensions advisor) comes under an obligation to correct advice that has previously been given. [2015] EWCA Civ 1310; [2016] QB 835. This was followed by a separate hearing in the Court of Appeal on the effect of a Part 36 offer, which was made in unusual circumstances. See [2017] EWCA Civ 1032.
- **The Royal Bank of Scotland plc v. Highland Financial Partners LP [2013] EWCA Civ 328**
  For Highland, defending Commercial Court proceedings for an anti-suit injunction in connection with claims arising out of a collateralised debt obligation (CDO) transaction following a trial.

Civil Fraud and Investigations

Laurence Emmett has extensive experience in fraud-related disputes, acting for both claimants and defendants. His recent experience and knowledge covers freezing injunctions, jurisdictional disputes in relation to fraud claims and of both personal and proprietary remedies. In addition, his work for FCA enforcement gives him a good knowledge of the regulatory dimension of fraud claims, particularly in banking and financial services.

Commercial Dispute Resolution

Laurence Emmett's practice covers a range of commercial disputes, including claims arising out of the sales of businesses, energy, banking and financial services, art and antiques and the pharmaceuticals industry. He has extensive experience of disputes under commercial contracts of various kinds, including in particular contracts for the sale and purchase of shares and businesses (in particular, claims for breach of warranty, claims under indemnities and claims in misrepresentation) and licensing contracts.

Construction & Infrastructure

Laurence is regularly involved in a wide range of disputes arising out of complex and technical construction and infrastructure projects. These span many industries including natural resources, renewable energy, telecoms, transportation and property development, and include physical as well as IT projects. He has dealt with issues relating to engineering - covering construction, maintenance and demolition of infrastructure - as well as the prevention and remediation of land contamination, and regulatory issues in the UK and in other jurisdictions.

- ICC arbitration
  Acting in dispute relating to the construction and maintenance of telecoms infrastructure in Africa.
- LCIA arbitration
  Acting in dispute relating to a tech infrastructure project in an EU state.
- Expert determination
  Acting in dispute between the development manager and investor in relation to the construction, fitting-out and letting of a landmark building.
- Expert determination
  Acted in dispute relating to the demolition and reconstruction of an oil storage facility, including the remediation of substantial environmental contamination.
- Assensus Ltd -v- Wirsol Energy Ltd
  Acted in dispute relating to the planning of the UK's largest solar farm.
- Biosol v Lovering [2021] EWHC 71 (Comm)
  Acted in dispute relating to the construction and installation of power and heating facilities.
- Scottish Power v BP [2016] EWCA 1043
  Acted in dispute relating to the maintenance and repair of a North Sea platform.
- Ad hoc arbitration
  Acted in dispute relating to the construction of a solar farm and connection to the grid.
- LCIA arbitration
  Acted in dispute relating to the construction of a wind farm.
- Providence v Transocean [2016] EWCA Civ 372
  Acted in dispute relating to the maintenance and repair of a drilling rig.
- Port of Tilbury v Stora Enso [2009] 1 Lloyd's Rep 391
  Acted in dispute relating to the construction of an automated cargo-handling facility.

Energy and Natural Resources

Laurence Emmett has an extensive practice in the energy industry. It encompasses both oil and gas (upstream and downstream) as well as renewable energy; he has covered contractual disputes, technical issues and regulatory/advisory work. He was described in Chambers & Partners 2025 as having a "huge depth of experience in the energy market".

As set out below, his recent work includes a series of cases on significant issues relating to the UK offshore oil and gas industries and electricity supply, as well as renewable energy and unconventional onshore gas resources.

- Early-stage English proceeding
  Acting for major industrial user in dispute over of electricity in dispute with various upstream parties (including supplier and owner of transmission network) in a dispute over the maintenance of supply and the safety of transmission installations

- Early-stage English proceedings
  Acting for transporter in dispute over the reconciliation mechanisms and payment terms under the uniform network code for the transmission of gas in the UK
  Previously acted for network operators in dispute with regulator over the operation of reconciliation mechanisms under the various codes for the transmission of electricity

- English proceedings
  Acted for major industrial user in dispute with supplier over the close-out and other terms of agreements for the forward supply of electricity
  Advised generators, suppliers and users of electricity in the UK

- English proceedings
  Acted for contractor in dispute over payment for and conduct of major on-shore development in the UK. Included issues relating to planning permission and the design of a large installation, including those relating to the supply of electricity to the grid, battery storage and the management of the construction process.

- Ad hoc arbitral proceedings
  Acted for developer in a dispute over the payment of conditional consideration dependent on the speed of completion of a solar power project. The issues focused on the mechanics of connecting the installation to the grid, including the use of battery supply and storage

- Early-stage English proceedings
  Acting for the holder of an interest in an offshore oil and gas field in a dispute involving both the buyer under a long-term purchase contract and the operator of the field.

- Early-stage English proceedings
  Acting for the holder of an interest in an offshore oil and gas field in a dispute with the holders of interests in neighbouring fields over the conduct of tie-in works

- Siccar Point v Ithaca Energy
  Acting for the defendant in a claim relating to the payment terms of a contract for the sale and purchase of shares in an entity holding various hydrocarbon-related assets, including an interest in a licence to develop and produce from the Rosebank Field in the North Sea.
- ICC arbitration
  Acted in a dispute as to the interpretation of deliver or pay provisions in a long-term contract for the supply of LNG.
- Advisory work
  Recently advised a holder of UK offshore wind assets as to the effect of subordinate legislation governing contracts for differences; and a UK manufacturing entity as to the post-Brexit transition provisions governing carbon credits.
- YA II PN v Frontera Resources
  Acted in a dispute as to service of proceedings in the US. The underlying factual dispute related to the development of hydrocarbon resources in Georgia.
- ConocoPhillips A/S v Aker BP ASA
  Acting for the claimant in a price review dispute relating to the sale of gas produced from the Valhall field. Unusually, the dispute is being resolved in the High Court.
- ICC proceedings
  Acted in arbitral proceedings under ICC rules concerning a force majeure claim relating to a long-term gas supply contract.
- Biosol Renewables UK Ltd v R&A Properties
  Acted for the buyers of a system of biofuel-powered boilers. See [2021] EWHC 71 (Comm).

- **Ad hoc arbitral proceedings**
  Acted in an ad hoc arbitration concerning the interpretation of deferred consideration and escrow provisions in an agreement for the purchase and sale of shares in a company incorporated to construct and operate a solar farm.
- **Dispute concerning forward purchases of electricity**
  Acted in dispute concerning the effect of close-out provisions under an agreement for the forward purchase of electricity.
- **Nexen Petroleum Dragon UK Ltd v BP Exploration Operating Company Ltd and others**
  Acted for the Claimant in Commercial Court proceedings concerning an extended shut-down of oil production from the Farragon field.
- **Advice in relation to schemes administered by Ofgem**
  Laurence is frequently instructed to advise on renewable energy-related schemes administered by Ofgem. Recent examples include advising the operators of CHP and waste-powered installations.
- **Endeavour Energy UK Limited v Hess Ltd**
  Acted for the defendant in Commercial Court proceedings concerning the conduct of decommissioning activities in a number of adjacent North Sea fields.
- **Scottish Power UK plc v BP Exploration Operating Company Limited [2015] EWHC 2568 (Comm)**
  Acted for Scottish Power in a long-running dispute over a 3½-year outage in production from the Andrew Field in the North Sea, with issues including the meaning and application of the "Reasonable and Prudent Operator" standard and the extent to which clauses giving the buyer (Scottish Power) the remedy of "Default Gas" exclude the sellers' liability in damages. A number of preliminary issues were determined by Leggatt J in September 2015: see [2015] EWHC 2568 (Comm), and the judgment of the Court of Appeal in relation to an issue in the interpretation of an exemption clause at [2016] EWCA Civ 1043.
- **Transocean Drilling U.K. Ltd v Providence Resources plc ("The Arctic III")**
  Acted for Providence Resources, the hirer of a drilling rig which proved to be defective. The case involved complex technical issues as to the operation of well control equipment (particularly a blow-out preventer), well construction and the progress of drilling operations; as well as legal issues relating to the interpretation of the rig hire contract. See the judgment of Popplewell J at first instance at [2014] EWHC 4260 (Comm); and the judgment of the Court of Appeal at [2016] EWCA Civ 372. See also [2016] EWHC 2611 (Comm), re the application of Part 36.
- **Environmental indemnity claim**
  Acted for the sellers of a major international chemicals manufacturing business defending a claim by the Buyer on environmental indemnities.
- **Dispute over classification of expenses**
  Acted in ad hoc arbitral proceedings between joint venture partners as to the proper classification of expenses incurred by the operator for the purposes of an operating agreement governing a North Sea asset. The proceedings involve complex technical and legal issues.
- **Dispute over pre-emption provisions**
  Acted in an ICC arbitration over the interpretation of pre-emption provisions under a joint venture agreement governing the development of hydrocarbon-related resources in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Dispute over conditional consideration**
  Acted in LCIA arbitration over the interpretation of conditional consideration provisions in an agreement for the sale of shares in a company established to build and operate a windfarm.
- **Dispute over construction of on-shore wells.**
  Acted for the claimant in a claim for breach of warranty and misrepresentation, in relation to the purchase of the shares in a company involved in the development of unconventional onshore gas resources. The case involved technical issues as to the construction of onshore wells.
- **Ithaca Energy (UK) Ltd v. North Sea Energy (UK) Ltd [2012] EWHC 1823 (Comm)**
  Acted in a dispute over the interpretation of a joint operating agreement. The case included technical issues over the nature and status of a well.

Pharmaceutical Industry

Laurence has extensive recent experience of disputes in the pharmaceutical industry. All of them have involved detailed consideration of scientific and technical questions, as well as of the regulatory framework of the industry.

- LCIA arbitration
  Dispute over the interpretation of payment provisions in a contract granting a licence over patented rights in an invention in the field of biochemistry.
- SERB v March
  Acted in a claim for breach of warranty / misrepresentation relating to the sale and purchase of shares in a company operating in the pharmaceuticals industry.
- LCIA arbitration
  Dispute over the termination of a contract relating to the distribution of a pharmaceutical product in a major market.
- Licence Agreement
  Acted in a dispute as to the interpretation of an agreement granting a licence to develop and sell pharmaceutical products, in circumstances where there had been findings by the courts of various European countries that the underlying intellectual property involved the breach of third-party patent rights.
- Cardiorentis AG v IQVIA Ltd
  Acted for IQVIA Ltd in relation to a dispute concerning the conduct of a clinical trial of a product originally intended to treat heart failure.
- Allergy Therapeutics (UK) Limited v Inflamax Research Inc
  Acted for the claimant in Commercial Court proceedings concerning an alleged fraud in the conduct of a clinical study relating to a new pharmaceutical product. The case settled following exchange of skeleton arguments on the eve of trial.
- Indemnity claim
  Acted for the patent-holder of a pharmaceutical product in relation to a claim on an indemnity brought by a distributor, following substantial product liability claims brought by patients against the distributor.

Jurisdiction, Conflict of Laws & International Litigation

Laurence Emmett's practice has a strong focus on issues of jurisdiction. This includes challenges to the jurisdiction of the English court, injunctions to prevent foreign proceedings and disputes over the enforcement of foreign judgments.

Administrative & Public Law

Laurence Emmett's practice includes the statutory regulation of both Financial Services and Utilities industries. He advises both Regulators and industry participants alike.

- Enforcement proceedings
  Has recently been instructed by the FCA in relation to a number of high-profile enforcement matters.
- Regulatory matter
  Currently instructed on behalf of a major company involved in the generation of electricity in relation to a substantial regulatory matter.
- Decision of regulatory body
  advised a major energy supply company in relation to JR proceedings following a highly technical decision affecting a large number of industry participants.
- Pharmaceutical Industry
  Acting and advising on a number of disputes concering the ownership of retail pharmacies involving the regulatory provisions governing the sale of pharmaceutical products to the public, as well as a dispute between a patent-holder and a licensee manufacturer.
- Advice to Energy Sector
  Frequently instructed to advise Ofgem and industry participants on administrative law and regulatory issues, with a particular focus on renewable energy schemes.
- In the Matter of Cattles plc
  For the FSA Enforcement team in disciplinary proceedings arising out of the collapse of the 'subprime' lender Cattles plc and its subsidiary Welcome Financial Services Limited. The proceedings concerned allegations of market abuse (under s118 FSMA 2000) and breaches of Listing Rules and Listing Principles.
- In the Matter of Equitable Life
  Counsel to the Office of Sir John Chadwick, appointed to advise HM Treasury on the extent of losses suffered

by policyholders in Equitable Life as a result of maladministration found by the Parliamentary Ombudsman. This involved extensive analysis of the regulation of financial services, particularly life assurance and pensions.

Art and Antiques

Laurence Emmett's practice has covered the range of legal issues that arise in relation to art and antiques, including liabilities arising from loss, theft, forgery and non-delivery. He also has experience addressing technical issues of valuation and authenticity, in relation to works that range from Egyptian antiquities to 20th century paintings. His clients have included artists, individual purchasers and sellers, trade sellers, auction houses, museum owners and the Art Loss Register.

What the Directories Say

"Laurence is very engaging, diligent and responsive. He can use his sector knowledge to provide legal advice in a commercial way." (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Life Sciences Regulatory)

"Laurence's advocacy is strong. He is highly responsive and technically very good." (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Life Sciences Regulatory)

"Laurence is a new style of silk - he is always accessible, thoughtful and always rolls up his sleeves." (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Energy & Natural Resources)

"Laurence is all over the technical details." (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Energy & Natural Resources)

"Laurence is a go-to guy for energy disputes." (Chambers UK Bar 2026, Energy & Natural Resources)

"Approachable and easy to work with, very well prepared for hearings, he provides great written work, really thinks through the critical issues in the case, and is great on his feet." (Legal 500 2026, Energy)

'very clever indeed ... great with clients, great on his feet and great on paper too.' (Chambers Global 2025, Energy)

"huge depth of experience in the energy market" (Chambers Global 2025, Energy)

"advice is impeccable ... commercial, practical and easy to work with" (Chambers Global 2025, Energy)

"a very good team player ... very thorough ... treats everyone in a courteous way" (Chambers Global 2025, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"key strengths are his attention to detail and his ability to really get into technical issues and immerse himself in them" (Chambers Global 2025, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"incredibly sharp" (Chambers Global 2025, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Laurence is really easy going, down to earth and very bright. People who are not easily impressed by lawyers are impressed by Laurence Emmett." (Chambers Global 2024, Energy)

"He's very good on oil and gas matters and on moving into the energy transition. He's a very thorough and thoughtful lawyer." (Chambers Global 2024, Energy)

"Laurence is extremely good at getting into great levels of detail and he can get his head around complex technical issues." (Chambers Global 2024, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"He is very pragmatic, thorough and commercially minded." (Chambers Global 2024, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"A safe pair of hands and very good forensically." "He gets up to speed very quickly." (Chambers Global 2021, Commercial)

"He is calm, a safe pair of hands and has an attractive advocacy style." "He's outstanding for big contractual work."

(Chambers Global 2021, Energy)

*"He represents cases very well and is very impressive." "Incredibly easy to work with." (*Chambers & Partners 2022, Chambers UK, Energy)

"He is extremely detailed, highly focused and fantastic at processing complex data." (Chambers & Partners 2022, Chambers UK, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"A very astute operator and a brilliant advocate. He gets to the heart of the issue very quickly and can foresee potential challenges and strengths of the parties positions very quickly and often more so than the other side." (Legal 500 2021, Commercial Litigation)

"He gets to the heart of the issue very quickly and can foresee potential challenges and strengths of the parties positions very quickly and often more so than the other side." (Legal 500 2021, Banking & Finance)

"Laurence is intelligent, knowledgeable and thorough, and he understands clients' commercial needs." (Legal 500 2021, Energy)

"His advocacy is clear and persuasive, he prepares well and works collegiately with the solicitor team." (Legal 500 2020, Banking)

"A good and measured advocate who is a serious opponent with good legal instincts." (Legal 500 2020, Energy)

"A brilliant advocate – his mind is razor sharp and his legal analysis (particularly his written work) and advice is first class." (Legal 500 2020, Commercial Litigation)

"He is calm, a safe pair of hands and has an attractive advocacy style … Outstanding for big contractual work." (Chambers & Partners 2020, Energy & Natural Resources)

"A safe pair of hands and very good forensically." (Chambers & Partners 2020, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Has the rare combination of being bright, responsive and practically minded. He adds significant value with his input into a case." "He's very engaging; he gets to grips with the issues and really puts the work in." (Chambers & Partners 2019, Energy)

"Very commercial and clearly understands the client's commercial objectives." "He's an excellent senior junior who is measured and has sound judgement." (Chambers & Partners 2019, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Demonstrates a keen sense of detail and a good understanding of difficult technical issues." (Legal 500 2019, Energy)

"Stands out due to his outstanding legal knowledge and strategic decision making." "Intelligent, responsive and thorough." (Chambers and Partners 2018, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"He is thorough, diligent intelligent and easy to work with." "A responsive junior with strong experience in energy disputes." (Chambers and Partners 2018, Energy & Natural Resources)

'Bright, user-friendly and great with clients.' (Legal 500 2017, Energy)

"He is a very clever draftsman who is creative in his analysis of difficult legal problems." "He really thinks deeply about the issues, and is not afraid to come up with novel arguments in difficult cases." (Chambers and Partners 2017, Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"He's very good to deal with as he's very clever and pragmatic. He has a common-sense approach and is measured." "He's very engaged, helpful and enthusiastic." (Chambers and Partners 2017, Energy & Natural Resources)

'He has an insightful and analytical mind, along with an eye for detail.' (Legal 500 2016, Energy)

'A real star in the making, providing quality, common-sense advice in a relaxed manner.' (Legal 500 2016, Commercial Litigation)

'He is collaborative and bright, and takes a constructive approach to solving tricky problems' (Legal 500 2016, Banking and Finance)

Other Involvements

COMBAR
LCLCBA
Chairman of the Anglo-Australian Lawyers Society

Other Professional Experience

Clifford Chance LLP, 2003-04

Education

BA (Sydney University), 1995: (Greek, English)
DPhil (Brasenose College, Oxford), 2001
PgDL (Oxford Brookes University), 2002
LPC (BPP Law School), 2003

Awards

LEADING SILK
Legal500
UNITED KINGDOM
2026

Chambers
TOP RANKED
UK
Bar
2026
One Essex Court

ONE ESSEX COURT

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