



Jonathan Exten-Wright

Partner

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Jonathan Exten-Wright practises employment law on behalf of public and private companies of all sizes, from the giving of advice at the outset of the employment relationship through to termination, on both contentious and non-contentious issues. He also advises extensively in the emergent field of Business and Human Rights, including Modern Slavery, recognised as one of 20 global experts in this area.

- Corporate
- Employment
- Litigation, Arbitration and Investigations
- International Business and Human Rights

Jonathan regularly advises on senior executive issues, board room disputes, strategic advice and change programmes, global and international projects, collective bargaining, union matters, industrial and employee relations; M&A employment issues; business transfers and outsourcing; whistleblowing and discrimination; the impact of AI.

Jonathan's clients include various well-known service providers; financial service organisations; hoteliers; industrial and engineering companies; FMCGs; telecom, technology and media organisations; and professional services firms.

- Advising a global investment bank on BPO outsourcing.
- Advising an international engineering company on large scale business transfers and restructurings on a public infrastructure project.
- Advising a global service provider on multiple whistleblowing and discrimination claims.
- Advising a global FMCG on industrial relations strategy, industrial action, and injunctive disputes.
- Advising a FTSE 250 on a boardroom dispute and exits as a condition of refinancing.
- Advising a global professional services firm on LLP issues generally.
- Advising a FTSE 250 on training, risk management and escalation procedures and policy statements in respect of Human Rights.
- Advising a global media company on contingent labour restructuring.
- Advising a leading management consultancy on the implications of Brexit.
- Advising on a range of LLP issues for a global professional services firm.

CREDENTIALS

Professional Qualifications

- Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales

Prior Experience

- 1995 to date, DLA Piper
- 1993 to 1995, London based law firm
- 1990 to 1993, London based international law firm

Recognitions

Jonathan has been named in Euromoney's Guide to the World's Leading Labour and Employment Lawyers, an expert in the HR Magazine Research, listed by the Insider's Guide to Employment Lawyers, and nominated by his peers for *Who's Who Legal*.

He has been rated as one of just 20 lawyers globally by *Chambers* as a notable practitioner in Business and Human Rights law, and again named in that field by *Legal 500*.

He has been listed as an *Acritas Star*, having been client-nominated as a recommended specialist.

Education

- St John's College, Oxford, Jurisprudence

Memberships

- Employment Lawyers Association
- Discrimination Law Association
- Law Society's International Action Team

INSIGHTS

Publications

Post-COVID-19 sustainability and ESG disputes: pinch points and practical pointers

12 May 2020

Where businesses are putting all of their efforts into crisis mitigation and survival in response to COVID-19, it is worth considering the importance of balancing short-term mitigation measures with the preservation of long term value and sustainability and ESG commitments

COVID-19: UK Government guidance on Modern Slavery reporting

6 May 2020

The UK Government has acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 on businesses' modern slavery reporting requirements and will allow businesses to delay publication of their modern slavery statement.

Post-COVID-19 Sustainability and ESG disputes: human rights commitments and key legal risk during times of crisis

5 May 2020

Maintaining a consistent approach to sustainability and human rights is not just the right thing to do during the COVID-19 crisis, but an important consideration to mitigate medium and long-term legal risks

Slavery in the supply chain: new corporate reporting obligations for companies

9 DEC 2015

Health, Safety and Environmental Matters Series

The UK's Modern Slavery Act 2015 is in force, imposing on companies new reporting requirements and new enforcement powers, including the creation of an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

Events

- Westminster Policy Forum: Modern Slavery Panel Speaker
- Modern Slavery Corporate Compliance MBL Seminar series
- UN Forum: Governance, Business and Human Rights Panel
- DLA Piper Workshop Chair: Employee Voice
- DLA Piper Panel Chair: TopCo Liability: Where are we now?

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Jonathan is one of the lead partners for the firm's Boardroom Advisory Service. He regularly gives boardroom training and executive committee briefings on issues around business and human rights. Jonathan is one of the partners leading the firm's establishment of an AI Advisory Council. He has responsibility for the Human Rights and Employment tower arising out of the transformational impact of AI and is also on an Employment Lawyers association working party looking at the use of data in AI.

Jonathan was a member of the Law Society of England's Advisory Group on Business and Human Rights, which produced a ground-breaking report on the responsibilities of the legal profession, many of whose recommendations were adopted by the International Bar Association. He has worked with the Office of the UN Global Compact to produce a guide for business on aspects of human rights.

He regularly presents on business and human rights topics, including at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights. Jonathan is also a member of the Solicitors' International Human Rights Group, and a Member of the Oxford Human Rights Hub. Jonathan has previously been a member of The Law Society's International Action Team, comprising pro bono lawyers working on the Lawyers for Lawyers Intervention Programme, making submissions on behalf of human rights defenders suffering imprisonment or oppression.

Experience

- Advising a Fast-Moving Consumer Goods ("FMCG") multinational implement a Living Wage for workers across its value chain including in relation to the policy framework and guardrails for its implementation throughout the organisation, issues relating to sign off, verification and assurance and consequences for non-compliance.
- Advising a global multinational on disclosure to the public authorities as well as public statements and regulatory disclosures relating to modern slavery and human trafficking.
- Advising a FMCG multinational on the formulation of its land rights policy and issues relating to indigenous rights, and its related guidance and implementation. He has advised a number of companies on the Human Rights issues arising out of Palm Oil production. This has included issues of deforestation, support to small holders and farmers to engage in best practice, disclosure of

mills/supply chains, the role of agents, prevention of the supply chain's contamination with illegally occupied land, and traceability. This also includes addressing public commitments and parent company liability.

- Advising a number of multinationals on directors duties under section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 and human rights reporting requirements under 414CB of the Companies Act 2006, individual director liability, parent company liability and subsidiary failure.
- Advising a quoted multinational in the gambling sector on UNGP compliance.
- Advising on sensitive sexual harassment issues coming to light after the #metoo campaign, including in relation to the regulatory and professional issues about NDAs.
- Advising executive teams on responding to allegations of Human rights abuses, where litigation has been brought and where public campaigns have targeting individuals in senior management. He has advised on dealing with "Leverage Campaigns", communications and remediation plans. He regularly deals with recognition requests, campaigns and assertions relating to freedom of association.
- Advising clients on disengagement with investment entities linked to Sovereign Funds of Brunei, following the well-publicised backlash relating to the criminalisation of certain LGBT-related issues, including by death penalty. This included assessing the contractual terms concerning force majeure through the lens of advising on Human Rights impacts, and providing the Executive team with a framework for decision making based on the UNGP.
- Advising a number of International Development Banks' on the extension of their Independent Grievance Mechanisms to allow access to other Development Banks, including to ensure alignment with the UNGP.
- Advising a custodial services company on its Human Rights obligations. This has included advising on a custodial services provider on human rights risks associated with government contracts in Asia-Pacific.
- Co-lead author of an independent report into the allegations of slavery and human rights abuses involving Migrant Workers engaged in the construction sector building for the 2020 World Cup. The report produced 56 recommendations for policy, legislative and enforcement changes, many of which have since been adopted by the Qatari Government. This has had a lasting impact, and was well received by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.
- Advising the US State Department's Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons to produce a Model Contract within ILO standards for Domestic Migrant Workers, alongside a Memorandum of Understanding to be used in Diplomatic discussions between the US and other Sovereign Nations.