

Elizabeth Wark

Called: 2018



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Practice Overview

Elizabeth Wark -Ranked: Rising Star-FAMILY: CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC ABUSE -'Elizabeth has great communication skills and is very approachable. She is very good at getting to the heart of a case.' **Legal 500** Prior to coming to the Bar, Elizabeth practised as a Registered Nurse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in her hometown of Sydney, Australia. She completed a two-year post-graduate training programme in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

This experience gives Elizabeth a unique insight into complex family problems and the difficulties individuals have in navigating the system when dealing with extreme stress, trauma and mental or physical ill health.

Elizabeth practises across all areas of family law:

Financial Remedies Nuptial Agreements Private Children Public Children Schedule 1 Children Act 1989 Family Law Act 1996

Elizabeth practises in civil law and chancery:

Cohabitation / Trusts of Land & Appointment of Trustees Act 1996 Undue Influence

Seminars

2020: 'Forgery: General Principles, Practice and Procedure' **2021:** Setting Aside a Financial Remedy Order - Where Are We Now? A Look at Current Law and Practice in Light of BT v. CU (2021) EWFC 87 **2022:** Where are we now? The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 & Case Update. Delivered alongside Anushka Kangesu **2024:** Current Issues in Modest Asset Cases: Part 1. Delivered alongside Laurence Cooper. Considered two issues (i) What's in the Pot? 'matrimonialisation' after Standish v Standish [2024] EWCA 567 and (ii) The 'Chimera' Problem - Family Loans & Resources **Forthcoming** -Current Issues in Modest Asset Cases: Part 2. Consideration of (i) Conduct (ii) Costs and (iii) Non-Court Dispute Resolution

Articles

'Setting Aside a Financial Remedy Consent Order in Covid Pandemic Times' on the Transparency Project Blog, August 2021 -<https://transparencyproject.org.uk/setting-aside-a-financial-remedy-consent-order-in-covid-pandemic-times-hw-ww2021-ewfc-b20/> Setting Aside a Financial Remedy Order -Where Are We Now? A Look at Current Law and Practice in Light of BT v. CU (2021) EWFC 87. This was a two-part article, published in the March and April 2022 edition of the Family Law Journal *Final Divorce Orders -a 'Particular Category'*, August 2024 -<https://transparencyproject.org.uk/final-divorce-orders-a-particular-category/> *Forthcoming* -'the Latest on Nuptial Agreements -Recent Cases & Key Practice Points' -Family Law Journal

Advocacy

January 2022 -Vulnerable Witness Training -Family Law Bar Association, London March 2022 -Advocacy Skills Workshop -Australian Advocacy Institute, Sydney September 2022 -Advanced International Advocacy Course, Keble College, Oxford January 2024 -Advanced Trial Advocacy, Australian Bar Association, Sydney

Other Roles

London Resolution Committee 3DJB Marketing Committee 3DJB Pupillage Committee Elizabeth will be involved in the City University Women in Law Society mootng programme and in their EmpowHER mentorship scheme

Previous Professional & Advocacy Experience



Elizabeth represented Middle Temple Inn at the European Universities Debating Championship in 2017, University College London at the World Universities Debating Championship in 2018, and was secretary of the Middle Temple mooted team at the 2017 Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Competition. In 2015-16 whilst undertaking the BPTC Elizabeth volunteered on the Vocalise pro-bono scheme which involved teaching debating in schools and prisons.

Her broad interests are reflected by various summer internships, including at the Bar Pro Bono Unit (now 'Advocate'), M&decins Sans Frontières in Madrid and ACI (The Financial Markets Association). Elizabeth takes on pro-bono work for Advocate as and when she is able.

Qualifications

Bachelor of Nursing, University of Technology, Sydney
Graduate Diploma in Law, City University, London (Commendation)
Bar Professional Training Course, City University, London (Very Competent)
LLM (International Commercial Law), UCL (Distinction)

Memberships

Honourable Society of Middle Temple
Resolution
Family Law Bar Association
Anglo-Australasian Lawyers Society
Britain-Australia Society
Association of Lawyers for Children
Royal Over-Seas League

Areas of Practice

Family

Domestic Violence
Family Finance
Public Children Law
Private Children Law

Civil

Contract, Company and Commercial
Chancery

Other Interests

Outside of the law, Elizabeth enjoys travel and medium distance running. She ran in the London Landmarks Half Marathon in 2021 to raise money for Advocate.

Katherine Gittins

Called: 2014



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Practice Overview

At over 10 years call, Katherine has built a thriving practice specialising in Children Law and Family Law Act application and has appeared in all levels of court including being led in the Court of Appeal. Having honed her advocacy skills in her early years through a mix of criminal, immigration, housing and family law, Katherine's expertise feeds into her cases which often include issues arising from these other areas of law. Katherine is known for her meticulous preparation, straight-forward approach and attentive client care. She has built a loyal base of Solicitors who appreciate her insight and openness and welcomes new instructions. She has a reputation amongst the Bar and judiciary alike as a diligent and trustworthy advocate with sound judgment. In care proceedings, Katherine is routinely instructed to represent Local Authorities, parents and children through their Children's Guardian. This broad base of work is an asset to Katherine who has detailed understanding of local authority operations and resources, the best way to support parents, and the focus on the best interests for the welfare of the children. This allows Katherine to make strategic and well-thought out submissions to advance her client's case and insulate against opposing arguments.

In particular, Katherine deals with cases involving:

vulnerable parents including parents with cognitive or mental health difficulties parents with addiction issues serious domestic abuse including physical and psychological abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour deprivation of liberty placement outside the jurisdiction designation between local authorities interveners such as grandparents

Katherine is frequently instructed in long running cases and multi-day trials and has extensive experience in cross examining expert witnesses. She is in high demand to be retained on cases given her sensitive approach to cases and her ability to be both empathetic but also pragmatic.

In private law proceedings, Katherine often acts in complex cases involving:

fact-finding hearings in serious domestic abuse cases parental alienation high conflict cases which require a rule 16.4 guardian threats of permanent removal from the jurisdiction

Katherine has a keen interest in cases with an international element and in January 2025, gave a joint seminar to solicitors on internal and international relocation.

In 2020, Katherine was recognised in The Times newspaper as "Lawyer of the Week" following a successful appeal to the High Court in the case of *JH v MF* (2020) EWHC 86 Fam which considered how the court deals with cases with allegations of serious sexual abuse and changed how family judges are trained. The matter remained in the High Court for the re-trial where Katherine secured significant findings of domestic abuse.

Katherine also has a background in International and European human rights law. In 2016 she spent 5 months in the UK division of the European Court of Human Rights as a Study Visitor working on cases linked to mass surveillance (*Big Brother Watch and Others v United Kingdom*) and contributing to comparative law studies.

Recently, from September 2023-August 2024, Katherine took a sabbatical from practice to undertake an Advanced Masters in International and European Human Rights Law at Leiden University, Netherlands, where she achieved a "Cum Laude". Her studies have provided expertise in particular in international children law providing an insight into the United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child and international standards.

Katherine's detailed understanding of international human rights law has given her unique insight to human rights issues which arise from article 6 and 8 in many of her cases. More specifically, she has started to build a practice in cases involving human trafficking and victims of modern slavery in a Children Law context. Katherine has recent experience in making detailed submissions relating to habitual residence and the jurisdiction of the court and looks forward to expanding this practice.

Katherine is a valued member of Chambers. She organises marketing events, helps with mini pupillage and is set to become a pupil supervisor in 2026.

Reported Cases

Tousi v Gaydukova [2024] EWCA Civ 203.

Tousi & Gaydukova [2023] EWHC 404 (Fam)

JH v MF (2020) EWHC 86 Fam

C v D [2020] EWFC 83

Articles

LexisNexis case analysis on *JH v MF* ([Link here](#))

Financial Remedies Journal "*Tousi v Gaydukova* -Must Parties to a Void Marriage First Seek a Nullity Order before Obtaining an Order for the Transfer of a Tenancy?" [Click Link](#)

Family Law Week Judgment Summary *Tousi v Gaydukova* [2024] EWCA Civ 203 [Click Link](#)

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Qualifications

LLM, Leiden University

LLB Law, Keele University

BPTC, BPP University

Scholarships

Peter Duffy Human Rights Award, Lincoln's Inn

Pupillage Award, Lincoln's Inn

Memberships

Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

Family Law Bar Association

Areas of Practice

Domestic Violence

Public Children Law

Private Children Law

International Family Law

Outside interests

Outside work, Katherine enjoys salsa dancing, long-distance running and kitesurfing.