ropewalk.co.uk

Your Barristers

ROPEWALK
CHAMBERS

Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Sarah Hopkinson 3
Overview 3
Expertise 4
Personal Injury 4
Counter Fraud 4
Costs & Litigation Funding 5
Disease 5
Credit Hire 5
Motor 5
Appointments 6
Professional Memberships 6
Qualifications 6
Recommendations 7

ROPEWALK
CHAMBERS

Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board



Sarah Hopkinson

Year of Call: 2013
Telephone: 0115 947 2581

Overview

Sarah enjoys a busy civil practice alongside sitting as a Deputy District Judge on the Midland Circuit.

She is ranked by the Legal 500 as a leading junior in personal injury work, where she is praised for her "*thorough and pragmatic*" approach and "*strong breadth of knowledge*".

Sarah practises principally in personal injury-related claims, including disease work, and in counter fraud and credit hire.

Sarah prides herself on her analytical ability and attention to detail. Both in her trial preparation and when advising, Sarah is adept at working her way through voluminous documents to identify and master the key issues.

Sarah is a well-prepared and forensic advocate, and considers herself to be balanced and approachable to her lay and professional clients.

Sarah studied law at the University of Sheffield, where she won the university's mooting competition in her first semester and received a high distinction for her third year spent studying in Australia. She graduated with a 2:1 degree and the University of Sheffield's Graduate Award.

Sarah completed the BPTC at Nottingham Law School and was graded Outstanding, receiving the Taylor Prize for achieving the highest overall marks in her year. Away from the Bar, Sarah enjoys good food and travel. She recently returned to practice following a year-long sabbatical travelling with her husband.

Expertise

Personal Injury

Personal injury is Sarah's principal practice area and she is ranked in the Legal 500 as a leading junior, where she is described as thorough and pragmatic, and as a strong verbal and written communicator.

Sarah is an approachable advocate who prides herself on making herself available to her lay and professional clients whilst managing her fast-paced and successful practice.

She accepts instructions on the Fast Track and Multi Track, and routinely appears at all stages of litigation representing claimants and defendants in a wide range of personal injury matters, including:

- Employer's liability
- Occupiers' liability
- Highways and other claims against local authorities
- Product liability
- Defective premises
- Road traffic accidents (including credit hire and counter fraud).

Sarah's expertise extends to issues of fraud and fundamental dishonesty. She has successfully pursued and resisted such allegations on behalf of claimant and defendant clients.

In addition to her busy court practice, Sarah accepts instructions to draft pleadings and advise, in conference or in writing, on issues of liability, quantum, medical causation and procedure. Sarah is particularly adept at working through voluminous medical evidence and other documents in order to provide thorough yet succinct advice on the core issues in any case.

Counter Fraud

Sarah is routinely instructed on behalf of defendants in a wide variety of suspected fraudulent or exaggerated claims (concerning both personal injury and financial loss), including:

- Low velocity impacts
- Staged or induced accidents and/or phantom passenger claims
- Fraud rings
- Inflated of fictitious credit hire and/or credit storage claims
- Employer's liability claims
- Public liability claims

Sarah's forensic approach to cross examination makes her an excellent advocate for robustly testing Claimants' evidence where there are fraud or fundamental dishonesty concerns. In addition to skillful cross examination, Sarah is a persuasive advocate who is well-versed in the recent authorities on fraud and fundamental dishonesty. This has led to a considerable number of cases being dismissed on the grounds of the claim not being proved or being found to be fundamentally dishonest.

Costs & Litigation Funding

Sarah regularly appears at CCMCs to both attack and defend budgets. She frequently conducts summary assessments and is well-practiced in submissions concerning unreasonable conduct, the disapplication of QOCS and costs consequences relating to CPR Part 36.

Sarah appeared for the Appellant in an appeal to the High Court on whether it was unjust to apply Part 36 costs consequences and whether exceptional circumstances existed so as to warrant additional costs pursuant to CPR 45.29J.

Disease

Sarah has a busy industrial disease practice, regularly accepting instructions for claimants and defendants in cases concerning NIHL, HAVS and COSHH.

Sarah is routinely instructed to advise pre-trial, whether in conference or in writing, on difficult issues of medical causation, breach of duty and limitation. Sarah has experience of conducting conferences with medical experts and engineers. Her ability to analyse voluminous medical and engineering evidence to provide succinct yet thorough advice is a real asset in this practice area.

Sarah is familiar with, and adept at applying, the law pertaining to limitation in disease claims. She often appears in preliminary issue limitation trials where she has had considerable success for defendants.

Credit Hire

Sarah has considerable experience of credit hire litigation and accepts instructions on behalf of claimants and defendants in fast and multi track matters.

She prides herself on keeping up to date with the latest credit hire decisions and arguments and has extensive knowledge of credit hire law and the issues involved in credit hire litigation.

Sarah's attention to detail and forensic approach to trial preparation and cross examination is particularly useful when it comes to impecuniosity evidence and evidence of basic hire rates.

She has a great deal of experience in running arguments relating to need, period, rate of hire and enforceability. She was recently successful in getting a significant credit hire claim dismissed entirely on the grounds of fraudulent misrepresentation, following robust cross examination of the Claimant and persuasive legal submissions in closing.

Motor

In the Legal 500, Sarah is described as "*thorough and pragmatic in advising and preparing for court. In particular, with regard to RTA claims, she has a strong breadth of knowledge on both claimant and defendant matters.*"

Sarah regularly appears in road traffic accident matters on the Fast Track and Multi Track. She has considerable experience with dealing with liability and quantum disputes, including credit hire. Sarah's experience extends to issues of fraud and fundamental dishonesty. She has successfully pursued and resisted such allegations on behalf of claimant and defendant clients.

Sarah's knowledge of motor-related claims extends to issues relating to defendant insurers' status, and claims involving the Motor Insurers Bureau, brought pursuant to both the Untraced and Uninsured Drivers' Agreements. To read Sarah's article on 'Identifying the Correct Defendant in RTA Claims', click here.

Appointments

- Deputy District Judge

Professional Memberships

- Personal Injuries Bar Association

Qualifications

- LLB, University of Sheffield

Recommendations

"Sarah is an excellent communicator and is very professional."

- The Legal 500 2025

"Sarah is an excellent barrister. Her advocacy in court is excellent, as are her communication skills when interviewing witnesses."

- The Legal 500 2024

"Sarah is thorough and pragmatic in advising and preparing for court. In particular, with regard to RTA claims, she has a strong breadth of knowledge on both claimant and defendant matters. She is a strong communicator both verbal and written."

- The Legal 500 2023

Ropewalk Chambers

24 The Ropewalk
Nottingham NG1 5EF

T 0115 947 2581
E clerks@ropewalk.co.uk