

## Alex Gask (Associate)



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### Profile

His practice encompasses both private and public law, with Alex as comfortable pursuing civil actions against the police as he is arguing judicial review claims turning on complex points of law. He has an in depth knowledge of police and prison law and has appeared in numerous inquests on behalf of bereaved families.

Alex has represented clients at all levels, from parole board hearings and tribunals to applications before the European Court of Human Rights.

### What the Directories Say

Alex is listed in Chambers and Partners as a leading junior in both police law and civil liberties and human rights.

"He is pragmatic, dynamic and skilful," "his written work is very good," and "he has sound judgement."

– Chambers & Partners 2017

"He's very efficient, clear and bright and actually very good at getting an understanding of disparate areas."

"I have a 100% success rate with him so far. His advice and particulars of claim are spot-on. He's one to watch. He's really on the ball with police actions."

"He's very good and very clever."

- Chambers & Partners 2016

"He is incredibly bright and hard-working"

"Very bright and talented, he is easy to work with and spot-on in his analysis of legal issues."

"He is a really hard-working, bright and incisive junior who is a pleasure to work with."

- Chambers & Partners 2015

## **Publications**

Alex is a contributing author to Halsbury's Laws of England: Rights and Freedoms (Butterworths, 2013), and to the 4th to 6th editions of Supperstone, Goudie & Walker: Judicial Review (Lexis Nexis). He is currently working on a police actions text book.

## **Related practice areas**

Actions Against the Police and Public Authorities

Inquests and Public Inquiries

Anti-Trafficking

Data Protection and Information Law

## **Actions Against the Police and Public Authorities**

Alex regularly represents clients who have been wrongly arrested, assaulted or prosecuted. He has also acted in human rights claims against the police for failures in investigations and failures to protect victims of crime. He has also successfully represented claimants in actions against the prison service. Alex has years of experience in securing compensation for breaches of privacy.

In recent cases, Alex has secured compensation for a rape victim whose complaint was not investigated properly, for a prisoner who was assaulted by prison officers and for children

whose father took his own life when the state had a duty to protect him. Alex also recently acted in a claim against undercover police officers who deceitfully engaged in intimate relationships with the targets of their surveillance and represented the family of Olaseni Lewis, a young man who died after prolonged restrained by police officers whilst being treated at Bethlem Royal Hospital.

Alex has advised numerous individuals mistreated by police during protests and demonstrations. Public order is an area of particular interest to Alex, who has been involved in several of the principle cases in this area, including *R (Laporte) v DPP*, *R (Gillan) v Metropolitan Police Commissioner*; *Austin & Saxby v Metropolitan Police Commissioner*; *R (Wood) v Metropolitan Police Commissioner*.

## Administrative and Public Law

Alex has a wealth of experience in judicial review claims, particularly those based on and involving issues under the Human Rights Act 1998. In addition to his work for adult clients, Alex has represented vulnerable children in public law challenges to the provision of community care services, to flawed age assessments by local authorities and to the wrongful dismissal of police complaints.

Alex was recently led by Phillippa Kaufmann QC in the Howard League and Prisoners' Advice Service's successful public law challenge to the removal of legal aid from prisoners: *R (Howard League) v Lord Chancellor* [2017] 4 WLR 92.

## Inquests and Inquiries

Alex has represented families in numerous inquests concerned with deaths arising from failings by the state. He has particular experience of self-inflicted deaths in prison, where the mechanisms designed to protect vulnerable prisoners have broken down.

Alex has also acted on high profile inquests outside the prison context, including:

- **Inquest into the death of Olaseni Lewis**, who died after prolonged restraint by the police whilst being treated at Bethlem Royal Hospital. The jury returned a narrative conclusion highly critical of both the police and the NHS Trust.
- **Inquest into the death of Gavin Williams**, a young soldier who died of heat exhaustion after being subjected to a "beasting" (unlawful and unauthorised physical punishment)

by his Regiment. The Coroner returned a highly critical narrative conclusion leading to a public apology by a senior Army figure.

## Prison Law

Alex frequently represents clients serving prison sentences. His work involves representation at all levels - parole board hearings; claims for damages; and judicial review. He has brought judicial review claims challenging matters such as flawed adjudications, unlawful recategorisation & reallocation decisions and disproportionately restrictive licence conditions.

## International Law

Alex's focus on protecting the rights of the vulnerable has extended to high profile international cases, including the 'Mau Mau' litigation, *Mutua & others v Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs* [2012] EWHC 2678 (QB) (seeking compensation for victims of torture in Kenya when under British rule), *Kontic v Ministry of Defence* [2016] EWHC 2034 (QB) (claim against MoD for failing to protect and to investigate civilian deaths in Kosovo) and *Al -Jedda v Ministry of Defence* [2010] EWCA Civ 758 (unlawful detention of terrorist suspect in Iraq).

## National Security

Alex has acted for clients in proceedings before the Special Immigration Appeal Commission (SIAC) and in Control Order/TPIM applications in the High Court, including *DD v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2015] EWHC 1681 (Admin) and *Secretary of State for the Home Department v LG* [2017] EWHC 1529 (Admin).