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Lara Kuehl

Year of Call: 2012

"An absolute star, razor sharp and fearless in submissions and cross-examination."

"Lara is a robust advocate who is confident and persuasive. She is a delight to work with and always has a commercial, bigger-picture view in mind."

Legal 500, 2025

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Practice Overview

Lara has a commercial Chancery practice, with a particular emphasis on high value disputes in England & Wales and offshore. Her work encompasses all aspects of commercial litigation and arbitration, property litigation, civil fraud, company law and insolvency matters.

Consistently ranked as a leading junior barrister in the legal directories, Lara is currently recommended in three practice areas (commercial litigation, insolvency and property litigation) across the 2025 (London Bar) editions of the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners.

The legal directories describe Lara as: ***“very thorough and precise. She comes across as very reliable and trustworthy. She is not easily thrown and is a strong and careful advocate”; “a robust advocate who is confident and persuasive. She is a delight to work with and always has a commercial, bigger-picture view in mind”; “an absolute star, razor sharp and fearless in submissions and cross-examination”;*** and they also say that ***“Lara’s advice on complex matters is always timely and easy to understand. Her drafting skills are excellent, being clear, concise and pragmatic, and her advocacy style is calm but confident”***.

Previous editions have said she is ***“an intelligent tactician”; “determined, tenacious and gets to the heart of an issue with practical solutions”; “incredibly diligent”; “a bright and hardworking junior with a good grasp of company law and a zest for commercial litigation. Her pleadings are excellent and she is an assured performer in court”; “bright, thorough, responsive and very easy to work with. She adds value to all that she has been asked to assist with”;*** and ***“covers every angle and has brilliant drafting abilities”***.

Lara is highly regarded for her advocacy and, in the majority of her cases, she acts as lead or sole advocate. She frequently appears (unled) against senior juniors or KCs. However, she is equally comfortable acting as junior counsel led by more senior barristers from within or outside chambers, as she is currently doing across a range of cases in England and internationally.

In addition to her private work, Lara also undertakes work on behalf of the UK Government. She is on the Attorney General’s C Panel of Junior Counsel to the Crown and represents the Government in commercial, property, company and insolvency matters.

Before transferring to the English Bar, Lara was a solicitor in the London commercial disputes team of two US firms: Weil, Gotshal & Manges and McDermott Will & Emery UK LLP. Between 2013 and 2015, Lara practised as a Cayman Islands attorney in the Dispute Resolution and Insolvency group at Maples and Calder.

Areas of Expertise

Commercial Litigation

Lara is recommended in the Legal 500 (UK Bar) as a leading commercial litigation junior.

She has significant experience of complex commercial litigation and has appeared in the English Courts and offshore in disputes relating to a range of industry sectors, frequently with a technological focus and involving cross-border issues.

Lara’s practice covers all the key areas of contractual disputes, including the sale of goods and supply of services; joint venture and shareholder disputes; and claims arising from guarantees and indemnities. Her clients include individuals, large corporate entities, the UK Government and litigation funders.


Lara is a member of COMBAR. She writes regularly about subjects relating to commercial litigation for several legal journals including the Butterworths Journal of International Banking & Financial Law and the New Law Journal.

Recent and notable matters include:

- ***Mornington 2000 LLP (t/a Sterilab Services) v The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care*** - acting (led by Michael Bowsher KC) for the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in three substantial connected £500 million+ claims concerning contracts for the manufacture and sale of Covid lateral flow tests (listed for trial in 2026).
- ***Amirez v Huntley*** - sole counsel for a property developer in its misrepresentation claim for substantial damages arising from the purchase of a plot of development land (listed for trial in 2026).
- ***South East Water Ltd v Elster Water Metering Ltd*** [2024] EWHC 620 (TCC)(decision under appeal to the Court of Appeal) – led by Clifford Darton KC, represented the Claimant in this summary judgment application relating to whether a schedule to a sale of goods contract should be interpreted as a provision limiting the Defendant’s liability.
- ***NWA v NVF*** [2021] EWHC 2666 (Comm) – appeared as sole counsel for the Second Claimant in this significant case regarding whether the failure of a party to comply with a contractual term requiring mediation before arbitration affected the jurisdiction of an arbitral tribunal in the context of an international commercial arbitration. This judgment is now referred to in several academic and practitioner texts, including the White Book (Civil Procedure); K. Lewison’s “The Interpretation of Contracts”; Lindley & Banks on Partnership and Keating on Construction Contracts.
- ***Ernst & Young v The Immigration Department of the Cayman Islands*** [2015] (1) CILR 151 – (led by Mac Imrie of Maples and Calder) appeared before the Grand Court of the Cayman Islands on behalf of a number of accountancy and law firms seeking an urgent ex parte injunction (the first of its kind in the Cayman Islands) against the Department of Immigration, persons unknown and contra mundum (against the world) to prevent publication of personal and commercially sensitive information relating to all 21,000 work permit holders in the jurisdiction.
- ***Madoff Securities International Limited (In Liquidation) v Raven and Ors*** [2013] EWHC 3147 (Comm) (Poplewell J) – in a 5-week trial, led by Ian Clarke, successfully represented one of the defendant directors against claims alleging fraudulent breaches of fiduciary duty brought in the Commercial Court by the liquidators of the Madoff UK corporate entity. This case was listed as one of the Lawyer’s top ten cases of 2013.

As a solicitor, Lara advised and acted in a number of very significant high-profile commercial disputes, including:

- ***In the matter of Coroin Limited*** [2012] EWHC 2343 (Ch) (successfully represented Sir David and Sir Frederick

Barclay and their interests in a high profile 30 day expedited trial concerning a dispute over the ownership of Coroin Limited, which owned Claridge's, The Connaught and The Berkeley hotels).

- ***VTB v Nutritek*** [2011] EWHC 3107 (Ch) – represented Nutritek in a major 6-day jurisdiction challenge, requiring extensive Russian law expert evidence, in relation to a US\$250m civil fraud and deceit claim. The case produced a landmark ruling on the circumstances in which the corporate veil may be pierced, as well as on issues concerning the applicable law, forum non conveniens and loss in tort claims. Jurisdiction was successfully resisted and the decision was upheld on appeal to the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court.
- ***Lehman Brothers Special Financing (LBSF) v Carlton Communications*** [2012] EWCA Civ 419 – Acted for LBSF in the High Court and the Court of Appeal in a claim relating to the construction of the ISDA Master Agreement, including whether reliance on s2(a)(iii) against an insolvent swap counterparty was contrary to English insolvency law. The appeal was heard together with three other appeals on a similar point of law and attracted considerable attention from the legal and financial press, due to its impact on global derivatives trading.
- ***Lehman Brothers Commodity Services (LBCS) v Crédit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank (formerly Calyon)*** [2011] EWHC 1390 (Comm) – represented LBCS in a Commercial Court claim for €11 million relating to the construction of an English law letter of credit and a New York law ISDA Master Agreement, involving complicated cross-border issues.

Arbitration

Lara has significant experience in international commercial arbitration, having represented clients in high-value and complex matters heard under ICC, LCIA, SIAC, SCC and UNCITRAL rules, as well as in ad hoc arbitrations.

Lara has a Diploma in International Arbitration from the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb). She accepts instructions to act as an arbitrator and is a panel arbitrator for the Asian International Arbitration Centre (Kuala Lumpur).

Recent and notable cases include:

- Appeared (as sole counsel) for a respondent to a US\$7 million SIAC arbitration concerning alleged breaches of a consultancy agreement concerning a substantial construction contract.
- Appeared (as sole counsel) for one of the respondents to a multi-party LCIA arbitration in relation to a long-running dispute allegedly worth over £20m.
- Appeared for a global manufacturing conglomerate in a US\$250 million SIAC arbitration concerning breaches by a Chinese company of a confidentiality agreement relating to production and development technology.
- Representing a major shipbuilding company in a LMAA arbitration governed by English law with the arbitration seated in London regarding consequential loss issues.

- Representing an international financial institution in an UNCITRAL arbitration governed by Czech law with a London arbitration seat relating to a shareholders' dispute.
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Insolvency

Lara is ranked by the Legal 500 (London Bar) as a leading junior in Insolvency.

Lara's practice includes acting and advising in relation to corporate and personal insolvency matters of all sizes, including: hostile administration applications; challenges to company voluntary arrangements; challenges to decisions of insolvency officeholders; applications for validation orders; challenges to officeholders' remuneration and expenses; appeals of liquidators' rejections of proofs of debt; contested winding up petitions and bankruptcy petitions; applications to set aside statutory demands and injunctions to restrain the presentation of winding up petitions.

Lara is on the Attorney General's C Panel of Junior Counsel to the Crown and regularly advises and represents HMRC, the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, the Official Receiver and the Insolvency Service in insolvency-related matters, including winding-up petitions (and related injunctions) and directors disqualification proceedings.

Current and recent instructions include:

- ***Paramount Licensing Inc. v Batty and Anr*** (also known as ***Re London Resort Co Holdings Ltd***) [2024] EWHC 3287 (Ch) – appeared as sole counsel for the successful applicant, Paramount Licensing Inc., in this widely reported case concerning irremediable breaches of the terms of a company voluntary arrangement (CVA) by an insolvent company and the refusal by the CVA supervisor to terminate the CVA in response to such breaches. The case is a rare example of a successful challenge to a decision/omission of a CVA supervisor under section 7(3) of the Insolvency Act 1986 and it is now referred to in the leading insolvency texts, including Sealy & Milman's Annotated Guide to the Insolvency Legislation. Lara subsequently appeared again for Paramount in opposition to an administration application by the company's directors and successfully obtained a winding up order instead (judgment unreported).
- Lara (unled) is representing Paramount Licensing Inc. in its challenge under section 6 of the Insolvency Act 1986 to a CVA in respect of debts of £105 million proposed by London Resort Company Holdings Limited, on grounds of material irregularity and unfair prejudice.
- Lara is acting as sole counsel for the Official Receiver in an application by a creditor under section 303 of the Insolvency Act 1986 to challenge the Official Receiver's decision to sell the beneficial interest in foreign land back to a bankrupt.
- Advising a specialist insolvency litigation financing company in relation to several substantial claims relating to preferences/transactions at an undervalue.
- Lara is currently instructed in relation to multiple directors disqualification proceedings relating to the misuse of the Covid Bounce Bank Loan scheme.

- Representing trustees in bankruptcy in an application pursuant to s339 of the Insolvency Act 1986 (transactions at an undervalue).
- ***Randhawa v Bridgeco Ltd*** [2019] EWHC 1811 (Ch) – Appearing for the successful creditor in the one-day hearing of an application by a debtor to set aside a statutory demand for £4.5 million.
- Numerous matters in which Lara successfully obtained urgent injunctions from the High Court to prevent the advertisement of winding up petitions
- Acting for creditors and debtors in several contested set-aside applications and bankruptcy petitions in which the debt has been substantial (in each case, between £1m-£4m).
- Acting for directors of an insolvent company in a successful application for validation orders to allow a company to carry on trading (by paying employee salaries and suppliers) while a winding up petition was pending.

As a solicitor, Lara advised and acted for a number of financial institutions in relation to matters arising from high-profile insolvencies, including: representing Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. and various of its subsidiaries in UK proceedings related to their US Chapter 11 bankruptcies; acting for the Icelandic bank, Kaupthing, in relation to various litigation and recovery proceedings in the UK; advising and acting for creditors of Madoff “feeder funds”. She represented Lehman Brothers Special Financing in one of the four conjoined appeals regarding (among other things) whether the operation of s2(a)(iii) of the ISDA 1992 Master Agreement in an insolvency context engaged the anti-deprivation principle or infringed the *pari passu* principle: ***Lomas v JFB Firth Rixson*** [2012] EWCA Civ 419.

Property

Lara is highly regarded for her property work and is ranked as a leading junior in both Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500 for Property/Real Estate Litigation.

Her practice encompasses a broad range of real property and landlord and tenant related litigation and advice. Given her expertise in relation to construction and insolvency matters, she is frequently instructed on complex property cases which require experience of all three practice areas.

Lara is on the C Panel of Junior Counsel to the Crown and advises and acts for several Government bodies in relation to property matters which have a public law aspect.

Lara is the author of the “Security on Land” chapters of Practical Lending and Security Precedents (published by Sweet & Maxwell).

Landlord and Tenant

Lara has considerable experience of representing both landlords and tenants across a range of commercial and residential disputes. She regularly advises and acts in opposed and unopposed lease renewal claims under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and in matters concerning forfeiture, service charges, breaches/enforceability of leasehold covenants, dilapidations and rent reviews.

Current and recent work includes:

- ***Natural England v The Trustees of the Melbourne Heritage Fund*** – Lara is acting (as sole counsel) for Natural England in a complex contested lease renewal claim involving a split reversion and sporting rights over a site of special scientific interest.
- Representing the Government in terminal dilapidations proceedings relating to premises previously occupied by Government entities for over 70 years.
- ***Samantha Aspey v Bartley Way Limited*** – Appearing as sole counsel in a long-running dispute between the leaseholders of 57 flats and their claims against their landlord and the developer for serious breaches of covenant and contract. In 2021, Lara successfully obtained an order for the appointment of a manager after a 2-day trial before the First Tier Tribunal (Residential Property) (reported as CHI/24UG/LAM/2020/0008) and has subsequently appeared several times recently for related orders to enable claims to be pursued against the landlord and developer.
- Lara is currently instructed on multiple cases involving the landlord's opposition to the grant of a new lease under grounds 30(1)(f) and (g) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, including cases involving the practical application of the Supreme Court's decision in *S Franses Ltd v Cavendish Hotel (London) Ltd* and business tenancies affected by the Covid-19 lockdowns.
- Acting for a commercial tenant in a substantial service charge dispute which raises issues of fairness in apportioning service charges in mixed use premises and breaches of covenant by the landlord.
- Representing a tenant of commercial premises alleging unlawful re-entry and seeking associated damages, in a case which raises unusual issues regarding the right to forfeit where a managing agent has acted outside its authority in affirming the lease.
- Advising and drafting proceedings for a holiday let company against individuals who claim to have acquired a periodic tenancy.

Real Property

Lara accepts instructions in relation to all real property matters, including co-ownership disputes, applications under the Trusts of Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996, claims concerning proprietary estoppel, easements, nuisance, trespass, disputed boundaries and party wall litigation.

Current and recent cases include:

- Acting for the claimant property developer in a High Court claim relating to misrepresentations made by a seller during the sale of a development site.
- ***Maypole Dock Ltd v Catalyst Housing Ltd*** – Acted for Maypole Dock Limited in its claim against a housing developer, Catalyst Housing Limited, for breaches of an overage agreement in relation to land. Significant reported interim decisions in these proceedings include [2021] EWHC 1742 (TCC) (injunction to restrain an expert determination) and [2022] EWHC 701 (TCC) (security for costs).

- ***Demetriou v Mapara*** [2022] EWCA Civ 1001 – Lara (led by Justin Kitson) appeared before the Court of Appeal in this appeal relating to the nature of burial rights over land.
- Currently instructed by both claimants and defendants on multiple cases involving easements by prescription.
- Represented a developer and freeholder of a high value Central London development in a substantial claim relating to alleged defects in the construction of certain apartments and an alleged easement over a parking space.
- As junior counsel, led by Mark Warwick KC, represented a defendant to a possession claim in respect of land charged by the claimant, which raised issues of duress, undue influence and unconscionable dealing.
- Appeared for the successful claimants in a 3-day trial concerning the beneficial ownership of a central London house.
- Acted for the successful defendants in a 4-day trial concerning whether a mortgagee had become entitled to enforce a charge over commercial property.

International and Offshore

Lara has substantial experience appearing in, or assisting with, arbitrations and cases in other jurisdictions, including Anguilla, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands. She is called to the Bar of the British Virgin Islands. Between 2013 and 2015, Lara practised as a Cayman Islands attorney in the Dispute Resolution and Insolvency group at Maples and Calder.

Examples of cases include:

- Advising (as sole counsel) several BVI companies in relation to their ownership of real property in the UK.
- Appeared (unled) in late 2024 for a respondent in a confidential US\$7 million arbitration in the Singapore International Arbitration Centre concerning alleged breaches of a consultancy agreement concerning a substantial multibillion-dollar construction contract.
- ***Ernst & Young v The Immigration Department of the Cayman Islands*** [2015] (1) CILR 151 – appeared before the Grand Court of the Cayman Islands on behalf of a number of accountancy and law firms seeking an urgent ex parte injunction (the first of its kind in the Cayman Islands) against the Department of Immigration, persons unknown and contra mundum (against the world) to prevent publication of personal and commercially sensitive information relating to all 21,000 work permit holders in the jurisdiction.
- ***Tempo v Fortuna*** [2014] 2 CILR 191 – representing the plaintiffs in a shareholder dispute in respect of a very substantial Cayman Islands company in the Grand Court of the Cayman Islands.

- *In the matter of the Shiu Pak Nin Discretionary Trust* (2014) (1) 1 CILR 173 – appeared on behalf of a professional trustee (an HSBC entity) seeking the Court’s sanction of the proposed exercise of powers in relation to a discretionary trust established by the late Mr Shiu Pak Nin (a resident of Hong Kong) for the benefit of his “issue”.
- Appeared (as sole counsel) for one of the respondents to a multi-party LCIA arbitration in relation to a long-running dispute allegedly worth over £20m.
- Appeared for a global manufacturing conglomerate in a US\$250 million SIAC arbitration concerning breaches by a Chinese company of a confidentiality agreement relating to production and development technology.
- Representing a major shipbuilding company in a LMAA arbitration governed by English law with the arbitration seated in London regarding consequential loss issues.
- Representing an international financial institution in an UNCITRAL arbitration governed by Czech law with a London arbitration seat relating to a shareholders’ dispute.

Company

Civil Fraud

Partnership and LLP

Recommendations

- Commercial Litigation (Legal 500, London Bar)
- Insolvency (Legal 500, London Bar)
- Property Litigation (Legal 500, London Bar)
- Real Estate Litigation (Chambers and Partners, UK Bar (London))

Quotes

“Lara is a robust advocate who is confident and persuasive. She is a delight to work with and always has a commercial, bigger-picture view in mind” (Commercial Litigation, Legal 500, 2025)

"Lara is very thorough and precise. She comes across as very reliable and trustworthy. She is not easily thrown and is a strong and careful advocate" (**Insolvency, Legal 500, 2025**)

"An absolute star, razor sharp and fearless in submissions and cross-examination" (**Property Litigation, Legal 500, 2025**)

"Lara's advice on complex matters is always timely and easy to understand. Her drafting skills are excellent, being clear, concise and pragmatic, and her advocacy style is calm but confident"; and "Lara is highly competent, attentive and generates a positive client experience" (**Real Estate Litigation, Chambers and Partners 2025**)

"a bright and hardworking junior with a good grasp of company law and a zest for commercial litigation. Her pleadings are excellent and she is an assured performer in court" (**Commercial Litigation, Legal 500, 2024**)

"bright, thorough, responsive and very easy to work with. She adds value to all that she has been asked to assist with" (**Property Litigation, Legal 500, 2024**)

"an intelligent tactician"; "determined, tenacious and gets to the heart of an issue with practical solutions"; "incredibly diligent" (**Real Estate Litigation, Chambers and Partners, 2024**)

"covers every angle and has brilliant drafting abilities" (**Property Litigation, Legal 500, 2023**)

Publications

Lara is the author of the "Security on Land" chapters of Practical Lending and Security Precedents (published by Sweet & Maxwell).

[Section 994 Petitions: Received Wisdom?](#) – New Law Journal, Vol 174, Issue 8069, 3 May 2024.

[Foreign crypto arbitrations and UK consumer rights: a culture clash?](#) – Butterworths Journal of International Banking and Financial Law, March 2024

[The Decentralised Governance of Bitcoin: Truth or Myth?](#) – Society for Computers and Law, May 2023

Appointments

Junior Counsel to the Crown – C Panel

Memberships

Chancery Bar Association

Property Bar Association

COMBAR (The Commercial Bar Association)
