serle court

# Max Marenbon

Call: 2020

*A formidable advocate undeterred by the most difficult challenges.*

LEGAL 500

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Max Marenbon is a commercial chancery barrister with a focus on civil fraud, company and insolvency disputes. He is ranked in both London and the Middle East as a 'Rising Star' and recognised as 'a great talent' in the Legal 500 2026.

"*As well as having great clarity of thought that can cut through legal complexity, Max is highly attuned to strategic and commercial sensitivities. He places client objectives front and centre.*" (Legal 500, 2026)

Max has appeared unled in significant cases, frequently against more senior opponents. As sole counsel, his experience includes appearing in the new leading authority on the territorial scope of the English courts' jurisdiction to grant worldwide freezing orders against third parties.

He has assisted as junior counsel with cases before the High Court, the Court of Appeal of England and Wales, and the UK Supreme Court.

He has a practice in the Middle East, appearing in complex, high-value cases as sole counsel in the DIFC and ADGM Courts of First Instance and as junior counsel in the DIFC Court of Appeal, including in the leading case on the jurisdiction to make examination orders against the officers of corporate judgment debtors.

Max is also building a practice around cases engaging artificial intelligence, having appeared as sole counsel in the leading ADGM authority on the use of AI-generated documents in court. His cryptocurrency litigation experience makes him well-placed to handle cases at the intersection of crypto fraud and AI.

In 2024, he was appointed to the UK Attorney General's Panel of Junior Counsel to the Crown. Before transferring to the Bar, Max qualified as a solicitor at a leading City firm and worked as a judicial assistant to Lord Wilson at the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.



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# Expertise

## Civil Fraud

Max acts for clients on significant instructions relating to civil fraud cases raising new issues of law, both as sole counsel and as part of a team.

### Recent Cases

- *Gilbert v Broadoak Private Finance* [2026] EWHC 153; [2024] EWHC 2046 (Comm); [2024] 6 WLUK 771 – Max was lead counsel for the Claimants, successfully obtaining a £4 million judgment from Andrew Hochhauser KC (sitting as a Deputy High Court Judge) at trial, recovering substantial assets, as well as obtaining worldwide freezing Orders against the Defendant company, its human controller and his wife. He appeared as sole counsel in the new leading authority on the limits of the court's jurisdiction to make worldwide freezing orders against non-parties overseas, obtained a rare grant of permission to appeal from the High Court itself on the interpretation of the 'Enactment Gateway', and is instructed to appear on behalf of the Claimants in the Court of Appeal.
- *Glenea Contracts v Friel* [2024] EWHC 1243 (Ch) – Max was sole counsel for the successful claimant in this three-day trial. The Court found that a senior manager had wrongfully overpaid himself from the claimant company's bank account and was a fiduciary and trustee for the Company, and that he had misused the Company's confidential information. Max obtained judgment for the Claimant in the region of £1 million (inclusive of interest and costs.)
- *Ras Al-Khaimah Investment Authority v Azima & Others* [2024] EWHC 1511 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 2108 (Ch) ; [2023] EWHC 1923 (Ch); [2023] EWCA Civ 507; [2021] EWCA Civ 349; [2020] EWHC 1327 (Ch) (etc.) – Max acted for the Fourth Additional Defendant in this "*extraordinary*" ([2024] EWHC 1511 (Ch), §1 (Michael Green J)) multi-party, multi-jurisdictional long-running litigation involving allegations of fraud, perjury and computer hacking. The case settled shortly before a ten-week trial listed to be heard by Mr Justice Michael Green in 2024. Led by Antony White KC and Ben Silverstone.
- *Revenue & Customs Commissioners v IGE USA Investments Limited* – Max acted for HMRC in its $1 billion fraud claim against US multinational conglomerate General Electric. Max appeared in the Court of Appeal and worked on HMRC's successful application for permission to appeal to the Supreme Court (drawing on his former experience as a Judicial Assistant). The case settled soon after the Supreme Court granted permission. Led by Philip Jones KC, Gareth Tilley and Barbara Belgrano.
- *Re Klimvest Plc* [2022] EWHC 596 (Ch) – Max acted for the successful petitioner in this trial of a winding-up petition for a listed plc. The High Court made findings of dishonesty against a Respondent's main witnesses, including that the chairman had called another witness to give false evidence and colluded to circumvent the Takeover Code. The case raised complex company law issues including loss of substratum and equitable considerations in listed public companies. Led by Daniel Lightman KC at trial; sole counsel at the interlocutory stage.

## Company

Max has appeared in recent precedent-setting company law cases. He co-wrote the chapter on minority shareholder protection in the new edition of T*he Law and Practice of Shareholders' Agreements* (ed. Reece Thomas). He contributes to Practical Law Corporate's "*Questions for Counsel*" and holds an LLM degree specialised in company law.



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## Recent Cases

- Advising a US tech giant, one of the most valuable companies listed on the NASDAQ exchange, in relation to a contemplated urgent injunction and petition under s. 994 of the Companies Act 2006 in respect of a US $55m investment in a UK-incorporated joint venture with three other multinational technology companies, also household names, alleging breaches of duty, bad faith and impropriety on the part of the CEO, with the connivance of one of the joint venture parties. Led by Daniel Lightman KC.
- Sole counsel for the petitioner in a shareholder dispute concerning a c. £5 million two-person care home business. The case settled after a mediation at which Max represented the s. 994 petitioner.
- *Re Klimvest Plc* [2023] 1 BCLC 388 – Max represented the successful petitioner in this landmark company law case, notable as the first example of a public listed company being wound up on the just and equitable ground for loss of substratum, as well as for commentary on whether a public listed company can be a quasi partnership. The decision provided a comprehensive framework for identifying a company's purpose or substratum and determining whether it has been lost. Led by Daniel Lightman KC at trial; sole counsel at the interlocutory stage.
- *Ntzegkoutanis v Kimionis (Re Coinomi Ltd)* [2022] EWHC Civ 3178 (Ch) – Max represented the petitioner in the High Court in a joint venture dispute concerning the ownership of a cryptocurrency wallet business and alleging misappropriation to offshore companies of valuable cryptocurrency assets. The case raised important issues as to the relationship between an unfair prejudice petition and a derivative claim, and the Court of Appeal ultimately upheld the Petitioner's arguments. Led by James Mather.
- *Duneau v Klimt Invest SA & Others* [2022] Costs LR 1463 – In which the High Court set a new precedent on the jurisdiction to award costs in favour of the company subject to a just and equitable winding up petition. Max represented the successful petitioner, led by Daniel Lightman KC.

# Commercial Litigation

Max has worked on a variety of complex domestic and international commercial disputes. He is equally comfortable being led as a junior in large-scale litigation and acting as sole counsel in mid-sized disputes.

## Recent Cases

- *Gilbert v Broadoak Private Finance* [2026] EWHC 153; [2024] EWHC 2046 (Comm); [2024] 6 WLUK 771 – Max was lead counsel for the Claimants, successfully obtaining a £4 million judgment from Andrew Hochhauser KC (sitting as a Deputy High Court Judge), recovering substantial assets, as well as obtaining worldwide freezing Orders against the Defendant company, its human controller and his wife. He appeared as sole counsel in the new leading authority on the limits of the court's jurisdiction to make worldwide freezing orders against non-parties overseas, obtained a rare grant of permission to appeal from the High Court itself on the interpretation of the 'Enactment Gateway', and is instructed to appear on behalf of the Claimants in the Court of Appeal.
- *Paramjit Kahlon v Liberty Steel & Others* [2026] DIFC CFI 070 – Max obtained judgment in favour of the Third Defendant, British billionaire and GFG Alliance Chairman Sanjeev Gupta, once hailed as "*saviour of steel*" (Financial Times), at the two-week trial before Lord Glennie of this high profile US$96 million deceit claim by a former senior executive. The case is now the leading authority on the governing law of contracts in the DIFC and sets a new common law precedent on uncertainty of contractual terms. Led by Daniel Burgess, with Natalie Koh as co-counsel.
- *Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust v ESMS Global Limited* [2022] EWHC 2941 (Comm) – Max continues to act as sole counsel for the claimants in this Commercial Court litigation concerning employee share participation in a



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pharmaceutical business originally spun-off from the claimant NHS trust. The claim is listed for a two-week trial in the Commercial Court in 2026. Max originally appeared as a junior counsel in an early application hearing before Julia Dias KC (sitting as Deputy High Court Judge) led by Patrick Talbot KC and Zahler Bryan.

- *Revenue & Customs Commissioners v IGE USA Investments Limited* – Max acted for HMRC in its $1 billion fraud claim against US multinational conglomerate General Electric. Max appeared in the Court of Appeal and worked on HMRC's successful application for permission to appeal to the Supreme Court (drawing on his former experience as a Judicial Assistant). The case settled soon after the Supreme Court granted permission. Led by Philip Jones KC, Gareth Tilley and Barbara Belgrano.
- *Ras Al-Khaimah Investment Authority v Azima & Others* [2024] EWHC 1511 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 2108 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 1923 (Ch); [2023] EWCA Civ 507; [2021] EWCA Civ 349; [2020] EWHC 1327 (Ch) (etc.) – Max acted for the Fourth Additional Defendant in this "*extraordinary*" ([2024] EWHC 1511 (Ch), §1 (Michael Green J)) multi-party, multi-jurisdictional long-running litigation involving allegations of fraud, perjury and computer hacking. The case settled shortly before a ten-week trial listed to be heard by Mr Justice Michael Green in 2024. Led by Antony White KC and Ben Silverstone.

## International

Max has a strong practice in the Middle East. He has appeared in several of the most significant cases in the DIFC and ADGM Courts in recent years.

### Recent Cases

- *Paramjit Kahlon v Liberty Steel & Others* [2026] DIFC CFI 070 – Max obtained judgment in favour of the Third Defendant, British billionaire and GFG Alliance Chairman Sanjeev Gupta, once hailed as "*saviour of steel*" (Financial Times), at the two-week trial before Lord Glennie of this high profile US$96 million deceit claim by a former senior executive. The case is now the leading authority on the governing law of contracts in the DIFC and sets a new common law precedent on uncertainty of contractual terms. Led by Daniel Burgess, with Natalie Koh as co-counsel.
- *Arabyads Holding Limited v Gulrez Alam Marghoob Alam* [2025] ADGMCFI 0032 – Max was sole counsel for the defendant in the first AI hallucinations case to come before the ADGM Court of First Instance. Justice Paul Heath KC accepted Max's argument that the Court had jurisdiction to grant a wasted costs order in favour of the defendant against his own lawyers after they drafted an AI-assisted Defence that he was ordered to replead. The case gave guidance on the use of AI-assisted materials in court and is expected to be regarded as leading legal authority in the region on the issue, as well as an important milestone in the wider common law world's engagement with the use of AI in litigation.
- *Ozias, Ori, Octavio v Oaklen; Obadiah v Oaklen* [2023] DIFC ENF 269 (1 July 2025) (CA) (31 January 2025) (CFI) – Max represented the Respondents to enforcement proceedings relating to an AED 73 million arbitral award. The case engaged the conflict between the UK's highest court and those of Singapore and the ADGM on whether an examination order may be made against the officer of a corporate judgment debtor outside the Court's territorial jurisdiction. The case has settled. Led by Rupert Reed KC.
- *Oskar v (1) Olindo (2) Onita (3) Oron* [2024] DIFC CA 009 (30 October 2024) – Max appeared for the successful appellant in this appeal on the scope of the power to order an "officer" of a corporate judgment debtor to attend Court for questioning under RDC 50.2(2) and the interpretation of the term "officer" in that provision. The decision of the Court of Appeal (Martin CJ, Al Madhani and Moran JJ) is now the leading case on this power in the DIFC and has implications for the interpretation of its counterparts across the common law world. Led by Rupert Reed KC.
- *Muhallam v Muhaf* [2022] DIFC ARB 21 – Max represented the Defendant to DIFC enforcement proceedings relating to a US $91 million Award. Earlier decisions clarified that interim awards of non-DIFC seated arbitrations are enforceable in the



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DIFC. Max then appeared as sole counsel for the Defendant at what appears to have been the first committal application hearing before H.E. Justice Shamlan Al Sawalehi under the clarified rules, and at an application before H.E. Deputy Chief Justice Ali Al Madhani.

- *AES Middle East Insurance Broker LLC v GSB Capital Limited* [2023] DIFC CFI 60 (9 July 2025) – Max represented the Claimants in this complex trial before Justice Rene Le Miere, of a £9m claim raising allegations of unlawful conspiracy and widespread document deletion. It was the first time the contentious issue of whether knowledge of unlawfulness is a necessary element in the tort of unlawful conspiracy had come before the DIFC Courts, following recent English and ADGM decisions on the issue. Led by Rupert Reed KC.

## Arbitrators

Max has been instructed as counsel in disputes subject to arbitration under the LCIA and ICC Rules as well as sport arbitration under the rules of the relevant governing body and ad hoc arbitrations. He has also advised on cross-border enforcement of arbitral awards and conflicts of jurisdiction between courts and arbitral institutions.

### Recent Cases

- Representing a private equity fund in an ICC arbitration concerning a US$112 million investment in a joint venture company, opposing claims under a statutory scheme similar to s. 994 of the Companies Act 2006 (unfair prejudice). Led by Tim Collingwood KC.
- Advising an AIF startup founder on an LLP dispute subject to LCIA arbitration.
- Advising a well-known sports team on an arbitration under the rules of the sport's governing body.
- Representing the judgment creditor of a DIFC-LCIA arbitral award in what is believed to have been the first application of its kind, an attempt by the debtor to set aside the award on the ground that the arbitration agreement was rendered invalid by the transfer of cases from the DIFC-LCIA arbitration centre to DIAC under Decree No. 34 of 2021. The case settled. Led by Rupert Reed KC.
- *Muhallam v Muhaf* [2022] DIFC ARB 21 – Max represented the Defendant to DIFC enforcement proceedings relating to a US $91 million Award. Earlier decisions clarified that interim awards of non-DIFC seated arbitrations are enforceable in the DIFC. Max then appeared as sole counsel for the Defendant at what appears to have been the first committal application hearing before H.E. Justice Shamlan Al Sawalehi under the clarified rules, and at an application before H.E. Deputy Chief Justice Ali Al Madhani.

## Artificial Intelligence

Max is developing a practice engaging the hotly-debated issues surrounding the increased use of artificial intelligence in the legal world. Given his cryptocurrency litigation experience (*Coinomi*, above) and expertise in civil fraud litigation, he is well-placed to handle cases at the intersection of crypto fraud and AI.

### Recent Cases

- *Arabyads Holding Limited v Gulrez Alam Marghoob Alam* [2025] ADGMCFI 0032 – Max was sole counsel for the defendant in the first AI hallucinations case to come before the ADGM Court of First Instance. Justice Paul Heath KC accepted Max's argument that the Court had jurisdiction to grant a wasted costs order in favour of the defendant against his own lawyers



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after they drafted an AI-assisted Defence that he was ordered to replead. The case gave guidance on the use of AI-assisted materials in court and is expected to be regarded as leading legal authority in the region on the issue, as well as an important milestone in the wider common law world's engagement with the use of AI in litigation.

- Deploying advanced artificial intelligence to enhance an asset recovery strategy in a complex cross-border fraud case and reduce costs.
- Delivering a seminar on AI and its implications for practising solicitors.

## Insolvency & Restructuring

Max has a broad insolvency practice acting for both creditors and debtors.

### Recent Cases

- *Kennedy v The Official Receiver* [2022] BPIR 1536, [2022] EWHC 1973 (Ch) – Max was sole counsel for the successful appellant in this appeal against the length of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order ("BRO"). In a reserved judgment following a one-day appeal hearing, the High Court clarified the legal principles that apply to determining the length of a BRO, accepting Max's argument that the Court should have regard to the facts of similar cases when determining the tariff of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order.
- Advising a company on the minority shareholder protection implications of an intended reorganisation and cashflow injection. Led by Daniel Lightman KC.
- *The Official Receiver v Lyons* – Sole counsel for the Official Receiver in ongoing complex High Court proceedings concerning the respondent's suspension of discharge from bankruptcy. Successfully obtained a Limited Civil Restraint Order before ICC Judge Mullen.
- Appeared as sole counsel for the respondents to an application under s. 423 of the Insolvency Act 1986 (transactions defrauding creditors) in respect of an overseas asset allegedly worth over $10 million.
- Advising a major creditor of an insolvent utility company on issues of statutory interpretation and unjust enrichment arising from proofs of debt in excess of £20 million (led by Philip Jones KC).
- Appeared as sole counsel in the High Court for the respondent to a bankruptcy petition in relation to a c. £2 million estate, securing a substantial adjournment on the basis that the alleged creditor had failed to disclose its security.

## Partnership

In addition to his company law practice, Max has advised clients on issues arising out of partnership and LLP law.

### Recent Cases

- Advising the majority partners of a medical partnership on a dispute relating to the termination of a partner. The case settled after a successful mediation.
- *Re Inter Global Surgical LLP* [2021] EWHC 2685 (Ch) – Max acted for the successful applicants before Fancourt J, for an interim receivership order in respect of an LLP. The application raised the novel legal issue of whether a dissolved company that was a member of an LLP prior to dissolution is automatically reinstated as a member on restoration. Led by James Mather.



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- Advising HMRC on the partnership law aspects of an artificial sale of a partnership to a limited company.
- Advising a sustainable investment fund on internal governance including in relation to bad leaver provisions. Led by James Mather.
- Advising the AIFM of a fund worth >£500m on the effect of conflict-avoidance rules in its LLP agreement. Led by James Mather.

# Testimonials

*"A formidable advocate undeterred by the most difficult challenges."*

Legal 500

*"A great talent."*

Legal 500 2026

*"Exceptionally bright."*

Legal 500 2026

*"A formidable advocate."*

Legal 500 2026

*"Incredibly hard working."*

Legal 500 2026

*"Operates well above his years of call."*

Legal 500 2026

# Appointments

- Registered Part II Practitioner before the DIFC Courts (2024)
- Attorney General's 'C' Panel of Junior Counsel to the Crown (2024)
- Solicitor (2018)



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# Publications

- Reece Thomas (ed.), The Law and Practice of Shareholders' Agreements (forthcoming). Max co-authored (with Jennifer Heywood) the chapter on the protection of minority shareholders.
- "Bankruptcy Law: reading between the lines" (with Mondschein, A.) (2023) 173 NLJ 8039, 15.
- "Quasi-Partnerships in Public Companies" (with Daniel Lightman KC), ThoughtLeaders 4 Disputes Magazine (2022), 5.
- "Confidence and Supply: do retirement village leaseholders need more protection from event fees?" Elder Law Journal [2016] Eld LJ 74 (with Lewis, S.)
- Max is also a contributor to Practical Law Corporate's Questions for Counsel series.

# Memberships

- Commercial Bar Association
- Chancery Bar Association

# Education, Qualifications and Awards

- Postgraduate Law Prize, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
- Duns Scotus Medieval Philosophy Prize, University of Oxford
- Academic Scholarship, St Hugh's College, Oxford
- CPE Award, Gray's Inn
- LLM (First), University of Cambridge
- GDL, City University
- BA Classics, University of Oxford

# In the Press

- Husband and wife sued by wealthy investor for not paying back £4.2m loan they used to 'buy Ferraris and Lamborghinis' (Daily Mail, February 2026)
- 'Perpetual god': Gupta trial reveals cash crunch and Greensill reverence (Financial Times, November 2025)
- Manager overpaying himself liable as trustee (Lexis Nexis, June 2024)



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- Final Curtain in Drawn Out Hacking Saga (The Times, April 2024)
- 'UAE Fund Must Pay £7M As Judge Tosses Azima Fraud Ruling' (Law 360, March 2024)

# BSB Registration

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