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Colin Bourne



CEDR-Accredited Mediator with a Distinguished Career at the Bar

Commercial, Workplace and Employment Disputes

Colin Bourne is a highly experienced CEDR-accredited mediator who now focuses his professional practice on mediation and alternative dispute resolution. Called to the Bar in 1997, Colin developed a distinguished career in employment and discrimination law, representing employers, employees, senior executives, trade unions, public authorities and corporate clients. He appeared in numerous significant and reported cases and was recognised by The Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners for his legal knowledge, strategic judgement and ability to provide clear, practical advice.

Before joining the Bar, Colin spent 15 years as a full-time officer with the National Union of Journalists. During this period, he advised on workplace matters, pensions and European Works Councils, participated in collective negotiations and represented members before courts and tribunals. Colin qualified as a mediator with CEDR in 1999. Having concluded his practice at the Bar, he now applies more than 25 years of legal, advocacy and dispute-resolution experience to commercial, workplace and employment mediations.

He combines the analytical rigour and authority of an experienced barrister with a calm, pragmatic and personable mediation style. He is particularly well suited to disputes involving complex facts or legal issues, damaged professional relationships, significant financial exposure, reputational concerns or parties who have become entrenched in their positions. His extensive experience of litigation enables him to work confidently with solicitors, counsel, senior executives, business owners, organisational decision-makers and individual parties while remaining firmly independent and impartial.

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MEDIATION EXPERTISE

- Commercial and contractual disputes
- Discrimination, harassment and whistleblowing matters
- Landlord and tenant disputes
- Multi-party and relationship-sensitive disputes
- Partnership and business relationship disputes
- Probate and inheritance disputes
- Professional negligence claims
- Restrictive covenants and contractual terms
- Senior executive and post-termination disputes
- TUPE and organisational change disputes
- Workplace and employment disputes

SELECTED MEDIATION EXPERIENCE

- Commercial - claim and counterclaim concerning the use of warehouse facilities.
- Discrimination - sensitive and complex discrimination and harassment claims.
- Education - dispute arising from the withdrawal of a university place.
- Partnership - division of assets following the winding up of a partnership.
- Probate Dispute - concerning the terms of a will.
- Professional Negligence - arising from a large-scale construction project.

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LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Barrister specialising in employment and discrimination law
1997-2023
Colin practised for more than 25 years, acting for both claimants and respondents across the public and private sectors. His clients included businesses, senior employees, individuals, trade unions, local authorities, NHS trusts and police organisations.

- Complex and multi-party proceedings
- Discrimination, harassment and equal pay
- Police pensions and disciplinary matters
- Senior employee contracts and restrictive covenants
- Trade union recognition and industrial action
- TUPE and service provision changes
- Unfair dismissal and redundancy
- Whistleblowing
- Working time and National Minimum Wage claims

Colin now draws upon this experience in his mediation and ADR practice, bringing a sophisticated understanding of legal risk, evidence, litigation costs, commercial pressures and the dynamics that can prevent disputes from settling.

QUALIFICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- CEDR Accredited Mediator, 1999
- Called to the Bar, 1997
- Bar Vocational Course, Inns of Court School of Law
- LLB (Hons), Manchester Metropolitan University
- Civil Mediation Council
- Association of Northern Mediators
- Shortlisted, National Mediation Awards 2024 - Innovator of the Year

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SELECTED REPORTED CASES

- Connolly v Sellers Arenascene [2001] ICR 760 - Employment status and controlling shareholders.
- Lincolnshire County Council v Hopper [2002] ICR 1301 - Employment status of a registrar of births, marriages and deaths.
- Christie and Others v John E Haith Ltd [2003] IRLR 670 - Equal pay.
- Street v Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre [2004] IRLR 687 - Leading authority concerning good faith in protected disclosures.
- Knapton and Others v ECC Card Clothing [2006] ICR 1084 - Treatment of pension receipts in post-termination loss.
- B v A [2007] UKEATS/0029/06/MT - Employer duties following criminal records checks and soft disclosure.
- Miles v Linkage Community Trust [2008] IRLR 602 - Successful argument for a nil award under the Working Time Regulations.
- Metropolitan Resources v Churchill Dulwich [2009] IRLR 700 - Identification of a service provision change under TUPE.
- Leeds City Council v Woodhouse UKEAT/0521/08/DA - Potential liability for race discrimination involving a contract worker.
- McAteer v Housing Maintenance Solutions [2015] ICR 87 - Identification of the correct date of a TUPE transfer.

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

Colin has been recommended in employment law by The Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners. Professional commentary has described him as:

"Encyclopaedic knowledge of discrimination law."

"A formidable opponent."

"A very experienced barrister in knotty discrimination cases."

"An excellent strategist, always four steps ahead."

"A seasoned pro who knows the law inside out."

"Precise advice and ability to put clients at ease in any situation."

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