

Adam Black

Year called: 2020
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Qualifications: LLB (Hons) - University of Strathclyde
PG Dip. Legal Practice - University of Strathclyde



Profile

Adam has a busy and deliberately wide-ranging practice, dealing with broadly reparation, regulatory crime, commercial litigation, and public law.

Adam has significant group litigation experience having been instructed to act and advise in a variety of claims including those relating to medical products, diesel emissions, data privacy, and working conditions. Previous instructions include: Vaginal Mesh Litigation. Current instructions include: The Kenyan Tea Pickers group litigation, The BMW NOx Emissions Litigation, and anticipated litigation against a number of other diesel vehicle manufacturers.

In his reparation practice, Adam is regularly instructed in personal injury and clinical negligence matters for both pursuers and defenders including individuals, health boards, local authorities and insurers.

In commercial litigation, Adam has acted in cases concerning contractual disputes, professional negligence, insurance, and public liability.

Adam's public law practice has principally related to cases involving issues of mental health law and capacity. He has been instructed to appear before the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland and has regularly been appointed as a curator ad litem. He has acted in several appeals relating to decisions of the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland, in proceedings under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000, and in related judicial reviews. He has also acted in cases relating to children's hearings/referrals, prison law; and human rights. He has appeared in criminal appeals relating to sentencing policy.

Representative Cases



The Scottish Legal Complaints Commission v Jane Elizabeth Robison & Another [2024] CSIH 10

In this matter Adam appeared for the SLCC in relation to a solicitor's failure to timeously comply with a court order for production of their files. Whilst finding no contempt, the court marked its disapproval of the solicitor's conduct by awarding agent and client, client paying expenses to the SLCC.

Application to Bring Group Proceedings by Lee Bridgehouse v BMW & Others [2024] CSOH 16

Adam appeared with Robert Milligan KC for the representative party and successfully opposed BMW's application for permission to reclaim the decision of the Lord Ordinary in 2024 CSOH 2. The judgment helpfully summarises the relevant considerations in an application or permission to reclaim in group proceedings.

Application to Bring Group Proceedings by Lee Bridgehouse v BMW & Others [2024] CSOH 2

Adam Black appeared with Robert Milligan KC for the successful applicant to become the representative party and secured permission for the BMW diesel emissions cases to proceed. In this significant judgment the court has clarified the distinct nature of Scottish group proceedings, emphasising the access to justice considerations which underly the process.

SL v RL 2023 CSOH 91

Adam appeared for the Defender in a debate on a question of contractual construction concerning whether a minute of agreement in divorce proceedings contractually barred the pursuer from bringing an action in terms of section 8 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Mr Z v Ms X 2023 CSIH 40

In this matter Adam represented the claimer along with Andrew Smith KC. The case concerned financial provision for private school fees following a divorce. The court agreed with the claimer's submission that the Lord Ordinary had erred in their application of section 4(1)(a) read together with 27(1) of the Family Law (Scotland) Act 1985 however, reconsidering the matter for itself, declined to interfere with the substance of Lord Ordinary's decision. The case clarifies that it is appropriate for the court to have regard to both net free income and realisable capital in reaching alimentary decisions.

James Findlay (Kenya) Limited Tea Estate Workers Group Proceedings – 2023 CSIH 39

Adam was instructed for the respondent along with Cameron Smith and Andrew Smith KC in a reclaiming motion brought by the Defender. The action is now sisted to enable the group members to attempt to bring their claims in Kenya.

Margaret Kirkwood v Thelem Assurances 2023 CSIH 30

This case concerned the recoverability of fees of a foreign agent in a Scottish litigation.

LM v Renfrewshire Council and KG SAC/2023/PAI-AW77-21

Adam was instructed for KG in an appeal brought by LM against the decision of the Sheriff in an application for nearest relative status in an Application for Welfare Guardianship brought by the local authority (see here). The appeal was successfully resisted.

Grier v The Chief Constable & The Lord Advocate

Adam was instructed as junior counsel to Andrew Smith QC for the pursuer in this commercial action alleging malicious



prosecution of Mr Grier by The Chief Constable and The Lord Advocate in the Outer and Inner House.

HMA v LB, JI & JT 2022 HCJAC 48

In this case Adam appeared for LB as junior counsel to Donald Findlay KC in a crown appeal against sentence in which the crown invited the court to provide a guideline judgment on sentencing in rape cases.

Pelvic Mesh Group Litigation

Adam acted as junior counsel for the pursuers in the pelvic mesh group litigation, achieving settlement in advance of proof in 2022.

JM v Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland B1379/20 (Glasgow Sheriff Court)

This successful appeal to the Sheriff Principal against a decision of the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland considered the fairness and compatibility of MHTS being unable to grant an adjournment to an application for a Compulsory Treatment Order, in the case of a patient who had been subject to a Transfer for Treatment Direction before the application.

Appointments

Member of the Scottish Junior Bar Association Committee (2023 -)

Member of the Faculty of Advocates Free Legal Services Unit Committee (2021-2022)

Curator ad litem for the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland (2021 -)

Ad hoc Reporter to the Professional Conduct Sub-Committee of the Law Society of Scotland (2020-2021)

Publications

Discount or Windfall? The Cost of Future Accommodation, Journal of the Law Society of Scotland, November 2020