



Akua Reindorf

Year of Call: 1999

Call Clerk on 020 7827 4000

PRACTICE AREAS

Discrimination & Equality | Employment | Human Rights | Professional Discipline

HIGHLIGHTS

"A persuasive advocate who had the respect of the tribunal from the outset and who presented the case with a sense of balance and where necessary a certain dispassionate manner as well. She was good at taking the heat out of things."

Chambers & Partners 2021

"Outstanding skills all round, including brilliant, highly effective advocacy and incredibly clear, understandable written advice - makes the most complex points seem straightforward." **Legal 500 2021**

OVERVIEW

Akua Reindorf specialises in employment, discrimination and human rights law, focussing on complex and protracted litigation and high profile internal investigations. She has particular expertise in the higher education sector.

Akua is acclaimed in the directories as “superb” and is noted for her “gravitas”, her excellent cross-examination skills, attention to detail and ability to quickly get to the heart of a case.

Akua's substantial experience of investigatory work includes:

- University of Essex [“Reindorf Report”](#) into alleged no-platforming of two external speakers who were accused of transphobia. The report was hailed as a “turning point” in the debate on sex and gender, trans rights and cancel culture in universities. Press coverage includes: [Stonewall should stay out of trans rights war](#) (Matthew Parris, The Times); [Stonewall and the silencing of feminist voices at universities](#) (Julie Bindel, The Spectator); [It's wrong to erase women for the rights of others](#) (Suzanne Moore, The Daily Telegraph); [The Observer view on the right to free expression](#).
- Investigation into a grievance alleging wide-ranging bullying and harassment against the celebrated founder and director of a prestigious public-facing organisation.
- Large scale investigations into sensitive and controversial internal matters for the University of Cambridge, a University of Oxford college and the University of Warwick.

Akua's litigation practice covers the full range of employment sectors, with an emphasis on advice and representation in challenging, hard-fought discrimination and harassment cases.

Recent Claimant work includes:

- Representing a migrant domestic worker who alleged that she had been gravely mistreated and underpaid. Instructed by [ATLEU](#), Akua obtained a [landmark judgment](#) which has the potential to substantially improve the lives of thousands of unpaid or underpaid and severely exploited migrant workers. The Tribunal set aside the “family worker exemption” (also known as the “au pair exemption”) in the national minimum wage legislation on the basis that it indirectly discriminates against women. As a result of the case the government has announced a [review of the legislation](#).
- Advising and representing a politician who made explosive allegations of institutional Islamophobia against a national political party.
- Advising a newspaper reporter on potential disability discrimination and whistleblowing claims after he contracted PTSD as a result of his work in war zones.
- Successfully [representing cleaners employed at Topshop](#) after they were dismissed for taking part in union protests over “poverty pay”. Press coverage: [Cleaner at flagship Topshop branch wins £75k payout after being fired over low wage protest](#) (Evening Standard); [Cleaner sacked for Topshop pay protest wins tribunal](#) (The Times).
- Acting for a former senior employee of Amazon in her disability discrimination complaint.
- Advising a well-known BBC journalist on a potential complaint of sex discrimination and equal pay in light of Carrie Gracie's successful claim.
- Successfully [representing a police officer](#) in his complex sexual orientation discrimination claim. The case was part of a [Section 20 investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission into the Metropolitan Police Service](#).

In her Respondent practice Akua receives repeat instructions to advise and represent the University of Cambridge in relation to its labyrinthine internal policies and procedures and employment disputes, both internally and in the Employment Tribunal. She is frequently instructed by the British Transport Police in whistleblowing and discrimination cases. Other repeat clients include Government agencies, the University of Warwick, Marks & Spencer and HSBC.

In 2021 Akua was appointed as one of the two barrister members of the Consulting Editorial Board for LexisPSL Employment. She contributes to the Employment Lawyers Association Briefings and Cloisters' blog.

Akua delivers witness familiarisation training with [Assurety](#). In suitable cases she accepts direct instructions from members of the public under the Bar Council Public Access scheme.

REFERENCES

Chambers & Partners 2021: "A persuasive advocate who had the respect of the tribunal from the outset and who presented the case with a sense of balance and where necessary a certain dispassionate manner as well. She was good at taking the heat out of things."

Legal 500 2021: "Outstanding skills all round, including brilliant, highly effective advocacy and incredibly clear, understandable written advice - makes the most complex points seem straightforward."

Chambers & Partners 2020: "Very down to earth, clear and pragmatic, and can make complex information seem straightforward." "She has great attention to detail, is very hard-working and quickly gets to the heart of a case."

Legal 500 2020: "A class act; a quite outstanding junior with the ability to cut to the heart of a matter and a devastating cross-examiner."

Chambers & Partners 2019: "Works primarily on highly complex discrimination cases, often representing trade unions and individuals at appellate cases and in Supreme Court matters. She also has experience

handling dismissal claims." "She has got a very calm and measured manner, which is effective." "She has fantastic attention to detail and is always willing to go the extra mile."

APPOINTMENTS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Appointments

Fee Paid Employment Judge (South East Region) (appointed 2020)

Attorney General's Panel of Counsel (B Panel) (appointed 2019)

Membership

ELA

ELBA

Discrimination Law Association

PUBLICATIONS AND TRAINING

Contributed to the LAG Discrimination Law Handbook and to Tolley's XpertHR, an on-line HR information service.

Member of the LexisPSL Employment Consulting Editorial Board

QUALIFICATIONS

BA (Hons)

MA

HIGHLIGHT CASES

- University of Essex [“Reindorf Report”](#) (2021) into alleged no-platforming of two external speakers who were accused of transphobia. The report was hailed as a “turning point” in the debate on sex and gender, trans rights and cancel culture in universities. Press coverage includes: [Stonewall should stay out of trans rights war](#) (Matthew Parris, The Times); [Stonewall and the silencing of feminist voices at universities](#) (Julie Bindel, The Spectator); [It's wrong to erase women for the rights of others](#) (Suzanne Moore, The Daily Telegraph); [The Observer view on the right to free expression](#).
- Ms K P K Puthenveetil v Mr S Alexander and Others: [2018] 1 WLUK 549; UKEAT/0165/17/DM / ET Case 2361118/2013 (15 December 2020); Instructed by [ATLEU](#) for the Claimant, a migrant domestic worker who alleged that she had been gravely mistreated and underpaid. At appeal achieved remission to freshly constituted Tribunal to determine the Claimant's challenge to the legality of the “family worker exemption” (also known as the “au pair exemption”) in the national minimum wage legislation. On remission, obtained a [landmark judgment](#) which has the potential to substantially improve the lives of thousands of unpaid or underpaid and severely exploited migrant workers. The Tribunal found that the family worker exemption indirectly discriminates against women. As a result of the case the government has announced a [review of the legislation](#).
- Benavides v Britannia Services Group Limited ET case 2208186/2016. Successfully [represented cleaners employed at Topshop](#) after they were dismissed for taking part in union protests over “poverty pay”. Press coverage: [Cleaner at flagship Topshop branch wins £75k payout after being fired over low wage protest](#) (Evening Standard); [Cleaner sacked for Topshop pay protest wins tribunal](#) (The Times).

- *Serco Leisure Operating Ltd v Miss M Lau*: [2018] 4 WLUK 6; UKEAT/0120/17/RN : Successful appeal on the application of the burden of proof in a s.18 pregnancy discrimination case.
- *Prospect v Mr A Hajee*: UKEAT/0313/16/DA: Successfully defended an appeal against the Tribunal's findings on impartiality and failure to conduct investigation.
- *BDW Trading Limited v Mr J Kopec*: [2019] 12 WLUK 635; UKEAT/0197/19/OO: Successful appeal against the Tribunal's finding that the Respondent was liable for third party harassment, without any finding that the Respondent's officers themselves had any discriminatory motivation.
- *Singh v Reading Borough Council and Governing Body of Moorlands Primary School* [2013] ICR 1158 CA. Akua and Robin Allen QC appeared for the Respondent school in this appeal relating to the application of judicial proceedings immunity, which was determined while the trial was part-heard. Akua was instructed alone in the long-running and exceptionally complex trial.
- *Hayes v Willoughby* [2013] UKSC 17. Akua and Robin Allen QC successfully represented the Respondent (formerly Claimant) in this Supreme Court case relating to the scope of the defence in s.1(3)(a) of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. The SC formulated a new test to determine whether a defendant has pursued a course of conduct amounting to harassment for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime.
- *Aziz v FDA* [2010] EWCA Civ 304; (2010) 154(14) SJLB 29 CA. A Court of Appeal case concerning continuing acts in discrimination law. This case formed a part of protracted and complex litigation by the Appellant in which Akua was instructed by the Respondent trade union.
- *Carter v Ahsan* [2008] 1 AC 696 HL. A long running race discrimination case against the Labour Party in which Akua was led at liability stage from first instance in 2001 to the House of Lords in 2007 by Robin Allen QC. Akua appeared on her own behalf at remedy stage in the EAT.
- *Alabaster v Woolwich plc (ECJ)* [2005] ICR 695 ECJ; [2005] ICR1246 CA. A complex equal pay matter in which Akua was led in the Court of Appeal and

European Court of Justice by Karon Monaghan QC.

- *Moonsar v Fiveways Transport* [2005] IRLR 9 EAT. A sexual harassment case concerning pornography in the workplace.
- *Moroak t/a Blake Envelopes v Cromie* [2005] ICR 1226. Time limits in the EAT.