

Thomas Cordrey

CALL 2006



Areas of Expertise

• Employment • Commercial Litigation and Disputes • Professional Negligence • Insurance & Reinsurance • Arbitration • Dismissals & Employment Rights • Equality • Industrial Relations • Pay, Incentives and Pensions • Restrictive Covenants & Injunctions • COVID-19: Commercial Litigation & Disputes • Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) • Investigations • Human Rights • Regulatory & Professional Discipline

Thomas is ranked as a Band 1 Leading Junior in The Legal 500. He specialises in particular in the fields of employment and professional negligence, with extensive experience in the appellate courts and dealing with complex litigation. Thomas has been ranked in the directories for over a decade. Legal 500 describes him as *"a robust and impressive advocate who exudes confidence and calm"* (2026).

Recommendations

"Thomas is a robust and impressive advocate who exudes confidence and calm, and is particularly adept at dealing with challenging opposition parties" – Legal 500, 2026

"Thomas Cordrey's drafting is a joy to read and his understated advocacy gets results. His ability to distil and focus on what matters is impressive... He is very easy to work with and very user-friendly. He is a good team player who is very well prepared" – Chambers UK Bar, 2025

"Thomas has amazing attention to detail and is wonderful with clients" - Legal 500, 2024

"He is great at narrowing a case down from something complex and he works his magic in court; he always gets his style right by adapting to the client" - Chambers UK Bar, 2022

"Thomas is also very good on his feet, convincing in his submissions and tenacious, and will not let a point go" - Legal 500, 2022

Expertise

Employment

Band 1 Leading Junior

Thomas has been ranked in the leading directories for over a decade and is in a select group recognised by the Legal 500 as a Band 1 Leading Junior.

Appellate Cases

Thomas has appeared over thirty times in the Employment Appeal Tribunal in England and Scotland and has acted both led and un-led in the Court of Appeal. He regularly appears against leading counsel. His cases include:

- [Chand v EE limited](#) [2026] EAT 17
- [Handa v The Station Hotel \(Newcastle\) Limited & Ors](#) [2025] EAT 62
- [Brake Bros Ltd v Hudek](#) [2025] EAT 53
- [Manning v Walker Crips](#) [2023] IRLR 729 (led by [Bruce Carr KC](#))
- [Harris v East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust](#) [2022] EAT 41
- [Gould v St John's Downshire Hill](#) [2020] IRLR 863
- [E.ON Control Solutions v Caspall](#) [2020] ICR 552
- [Srivatsa v Secretary of State for Health](#) [2018] EWCA Civ 936, [2018] ICR 1660
- [Xerox UK Ltd v Jahan Zeb](#) [2017] EWCA Civ 2137
- [Eiger Securities LLP v Korshunova](#) [2017] IRLR 115
- [De Souza v Vinci Construction \(UK\) Ltd](#) [2017] EWCA Civ 879, [2017] IRLR 844
- [Chawla v Hewlett Packard Ltd](#) [2015] IRLR 356
- [General Dynamics v Carranza](#) [2015] IRLR 43
- [Brown-Quinn v Equity Syndicate Management Ltd](#) [2012] EWCA Civ 1633, [2013] 1 WLR 1740
- [McFarlane v Relate Avon Plc](#) [2010] ICR 507

Complex Tribunal Litigation

Thomas particularly specialises in the strategy and management of highly complex Tribunal

litigation. His work frequently involves multi-jurisdiction civil and tribunal claims, claims involving high numbers of interlocutory hearings and appeals, costs applications, jurisdictional issues and navigating procedural complexities. **He is author of the chapters which deal with Tribunal procedure in the authoritative text, Harvey on Industrial Relations and Employment Law.**

High Court and County Court

Thomas is experienced in civil litigation and is familiar with the CPR, drafting High Court pleadings, dealing with interlocutory matters in front of the masters, case management conferences and appearing in multi-day civil trials.

High-Profile Clients and Sensitive Cases

Thomas is used to acting for high profile clients including in relation to sensitive cases such as those involving historical sexual harassment allegations. Thomas is author of a leading text covering anonymity orders and restricted reporting. High-profile clients include a top Premier League football club, a household-name UK billionaire, a tier 1 Barristers' Chambers, an ultra high net worth Kuwaiti employer and a well-known King's Counsel.

Investigations and Reports

Thomas is an experienced investigator. He has particular experience handling sensitive and complex allegations by C-suite executives, including into whistleblowing and sexual harassment, and in the regulated financial services context.

England, Scotland, Wales

Thomas practises in England, Scotland and Wales. In particular, Thomas is familiar with Scottish employment proceedings, having acted in numerous trials in Scottish ETs, including Inverness, Aberdeen and Glasgow, and having appeared several times in the Scottish EAT.

Mediation and ADR

Thomas is available for instruction in relation to judicial mediation and other forms of ADR including joint-settlement meetings and private mediations.

Professional Negligence

Thomas acts in a range of professional negligence disputes, some involving a cross-over with his employment specialism – a common source of instructions relates to failure to meet limitation periods in the short timescales of statutory employment claims. In *Richardson v Copley Clark &*

Bennett LLP (UKEAT/0866/09) Thomas won permission to appeal from HHJ Peter Clarke in a case centring on the reasonable standards expected of a solicitor in a complex conveyance and in *Irenicon v Integrated Solutions* Thomas represented a defendant payroll provider in a County Court claim alleging failure to meet the reasonable standards of that profession. Thomas also has experience of advising vis-a-vis the practice of solicitors in personal injury work, including alleged failure to plead certain heads of loss in a valuable claim.

In other areas, Thomas has acted for an A-list Hollywood film star in negligence proceedings against his former lawyers regarding rights over a film production and has been instructed by a corporate claimant in a High Court action involving alleged negligence by a Big Four firm conducting an iTunes royalty compliance examination. Other cases include representing a multi-million pound property company counter-claiming in negligence against solicitors, and acting for a CEO in a claim against an international law firm – both of which were successfully settled at mediation. Thomas has also acted as junior counsel in a complex tax case relating to negligent accountancy advice on intangibles relief and was instructed by the Bar Mutual Indemnity Fund defending a wasted costs application against a member of the Bar arising from alleged negligent representation.

Thomas was instructed as junior counsel in the Court of Appeal in *Toombs v Bridging Loans* [2017] EWCA Civ 205 in a case in which he had appeared unled at the first instance hearing in front of the High Court Master and in the appeal before HHJ Seymour QC ([2014] EWHC 4566 (QB)). In that case Thomas was instructed by the lender in a claim which arose out of valuer's negligence. The case concerned the Nykredit line of authority, and considered the question of how to assess the date of damage in security valuation claims.

Thomas is a member of the PNBA.

Human Rights

Thomas specialises in the application of human rights laws to a range of areas with a particular focus on the right to freedom of religion and the right to freedom of expression. Thomas has acted in numerous high profile cases in this area. In *Ferguson v Kintail Trustees* he represented the former CEO of Scotland's largest charity, successfully establishing that the claimant had been dismissed for discriminatory reasons relating to his Christian beliefs, protected by Article 9. The case attracted coverage in The Times and other news outlets. Thomas also represented Noah Carl, the Cambridge academic dismissed from his post after students protested about his right-wing views. Thomas is retained by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in relation to ongoing litigation over the protections afforded to religious employers by Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010.

Thomas has advised numerous charities on issues arising from the Equality Act 2010 and other legislation such as the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, considering their effect on religious service providers. He has advised the Metropolitan Police Service on the correct approach to its uniform policy in light of the Equality Act. Examples of Thomas' cases include acting for a church defending a claim by a vicar in one of the few marriage discrimination claims to reach the EAT: *Gould v St John's Downshire Hill* [2020] IRLR 863. In that case Thomas appeared against Karon Monahan KC. The same case had previously been to the EAT (*Gould v Trustees of St John Downshire Hill* [2017] 10 WLUK 88) where Simler P described Thomas' "able assistance" both "orally and in writing". Another President of the EAT, Underhill P, described

Thomas' submissions as "cogent" and "clear and helpful" in the leading Article 9 discrimination case of McFarlane v Relate Avon Plc [2010] ICR 507.

In other proceedings Thomas represented a Christian teacher who was under threat of being struck off after making public posts on Facebook, some of which related to his religious beliefs (*Evans v General Teaching Council for Wales* (2014)) and in *Amachree v Wandsworth LBC* [2010] EqLR 254 ET he was instructed by a claimant in a multi-day unfair dismissal and religious discrimination claim relating to proselytism. Thomas has advised on a public body dismissing an employee for their refusal to use the chosen pronouns of transgender service-users.

Thomas was previously author of Bloomsbury Professional's Discrimination Law chapter on religious exceptions to the Equality Act 2010 and he sat on the Bar Council's Equality & Diversity Committee for a number of years – he is now part of the Bar Council's Legislation & Guidance Committee. Thomas drafted the Bar Council's briefing on the Equality Act 2010 and the Bar Council's Tackling Sexual Harassment Guide. He has spoken internationally on the topics of human rights and religious discrimination and has spent time working with NGOs at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Thomas also has extensive media experience in this field and has been interviewed on BBC1, BBC News 24, CNN and Channel 4 and on Radio 4's Today Programme and Radio 5 Live. He was featured in *The Lawyer*, commenting on the European Court of Human Rights' landmark decision in *Eweida*.

Commercial Litigation and Disputes

Thomas has experience of advising on and acting in a range of commercial proceedings in both the Court of Appeal, High Court and County Courts. He has been instructed in numerous High Court and County Court breach of contract disputes, representing both claimants and defendants, often with a cross-over into his employment specialism. Issues dealt with include: clawing back discretionary bonus payments made to a former director following discovery of breaches of fiduciary duty; acting for a former CEO seeking damages for breach of contract following a power struggle for control of the company; and acting for another former CEO seeking to recover bonus payments under a complex contractual arrangement with a franchisee.

Thomas has experience in interlocutory hearings before High Court Masters and is experienced in ADR and negotiating settlements through mediations and round-table discussions. He also has experience advising on restrictive covenant issues including (in the business to business context) advising a prestigious 5 Star London Hotel and advising a leading estate agency brand. He has advised on springboard injunctive relief, non-solicitation and non-dealing clauses and the drafting of clauses to protect legitimate business interests. Thomas has acted in several multi-day High Court trials, for example, representing the Secretary of State for Health in a High Court breach of contract estoppel and res judicata case (where he continued to act, unled, in the Court of Appeal: *Srivatsa v Secretary of State for Health* [2018] EWCA Civ 936, [2018] ICR 1660) and acting for a claimant in a complex contract claim against an NHS Foundation Trust (*Grainger v North East London NHS Foundation Trust* [2017] EWHC 2254 (QB); [2017] IRLR 981).

Other examples of Thomas' cases include acting for a corporate claimant in a High Court action involving alleged negligence by a Big Four firm in relation to an iTunes royalty compliance examination, representing a multi-million pound property company counter-claiming in

negligence against solicitors, and acting for a CEO in a claim against an international law firm. Further cases in which Thomas has acted include *W v HC* where he represented the executor of an estate in a High Court breach of contract claim which resulted in a six figure settlement; *Aslam v Camelot plc* in which he represented the Defendant in a Norwich Pharmacal application by the Claimant for disclosure of the details of a National Lottery winner; *Penycate v Wembley National Stadium* in which he represented Wembley stadium in a County Court breach of contract claim; and *Revenue & Customs Comrs v Benschdollar* [2009] EWHC 1310 (Ch) [2010] 1 All E.R. 174 in which he acted as junior counsel for HMRC at the pre-trial stages of a multi million pound NIC claim.

Insurance & Reinsurance

Thomas advises and acts in a range of insurance disputes. He has acted in a series of cases on the scope of an insured's right to choose their own lawyer under a policy of legal expenses insurance. In the most high profile of these, described by Burton J as a "test case" in the LEI field, Thomas was instructed to appear in the High Court in a dispute concerning the refusal of a global insurance company to allow an insured to instruct an international law firm under the terms of before-the-event legal expenses insurance. Thomas was junior counsel, led by **Colin Wynter KC**, acting for the Claimants in the 2 day High Court trial of *Brown Quinn v Equity Syndicate* [2011] EWHC 2661 (Comm); [2012] 1 All E.R. 778. Thomas remained instructed as junior counsel when the Defendants appealed to the **Court of Appeal** where the Law Society received permission to intervene on behalf of the Claimants, and three of Europe's leading insurance companies intervened on behalf of the Defendants. The decision by the appellate court (*Brown-Quinn v Equity Syndicate Management Ltd* [2012] EWCA Civ 1633; [2013] 1 WLR 1740) remains the leading domestic authority and attracted widespread interest in the legal market and media including in articles in *The Lawyer*, *Law Gazette* and *The Post Online*.

Thomas has also recently acted as junior counsel on a Commercial Court professional indemnity coverage claim relating to a Guernsey offshore trust management company. The claim settled successfully shortly before trial. Other examples of Thomas' insurance law practice include advising a Claimant on his position under the Third Parties (Rights Against Insurers) Act 2010 (including in relation to the complicated transitional provisions and the insurer's right to rely on a notification defence). Thomas has also represented Allianz Insurance plc at a contested hearing in the Mercantile Court and advised Arag plc on a defence to a claim relating to an untested provision of the Insurance Companies (Legal Expenses Insurance) Regulations 1990 (*Hardwicke Motor Company Limited v Arag plc* (3YM24927)).

Other examples of Thomas' cases include advising in relation to losses recoverable under a home insurance policy following the insurer's efforts to avoid the policy for non-disclosure. The advice covered complex matters around recoverability of remote losses and the limits of recovery under the Ombudsman scheme. Separately he has issued an application under section 18 of the Arbitration Act 1996 on behalf of a client following an insurer's refusal to pay out for damage to vintage cars assessed by a joint expert.

Thomas formerly sat on the COMBAR Equality & Diversity Committee and has previously attended the North American COMBAR conference, assisting Colin Edelman KC with an address on the Bermuda Form.

Memberships and Associations

ELA, ELBA, PNBA

Awards and Scholarships

Kemp-Gooderson Scholarship

Lincoln's Inn Hardwicke Scholarship

Lincoln's Inn Tancred Studentship

Cambridge University Squire Scholarship

Adderley Prize for Law

Mrs Payne (1610) Scholarship

Education

Bar Vocational Course at BPP Law School, London

MA (Law) (Cantab) at St Catharine's College, University of Cambridge

Personal Interests

Thomas is a member of the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship: "Seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8)

Awards



For enquiries & instruction please contact



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