



ALEX LAING

Year called 2014

clerks@coramchambers.com

+44020 7092 3700

OVERVIEW

Alex specialises in children and finance law, particularly cases with an international element. He is described as the “*absolute go-to barrister on all matters*”.

Alex was last year’s Family Law Awards: Junior Barrister of the Year, which is the top category under KC. He is the only barrister ever to have won this twice. Before that, he was the only member of the Bar twice to win the Family Law Awards: Young Barrister of the Year. He was Lincoln’s Inn’s top barrister of his Call to the Bar across all areas of law.

The legal directories review Alex as “*amazing on the detail*”, “*extremely personable, very bright and always thorough and prepared*”, “*diligent, unflappable, precise, clear and effective*” and “*A Queen’s Counsel in the making*”.

Alex is co-author of the two ‘bibles’ of family law, given to every family judge in England and Wales: the Red Book and *Hershman and McFarlane: Children Law and Practice*. He is co-author of four further books on family law: *Laing and Jackson: Public Children Law: Contemporary Issues* ([1st edn., 2018](#)); *Child Protection and the Family Court: What You Need to Know* ([3rd edn., 2019](#)); *Family Law Precedents Service* and *A Practical Guide to Family Proceedings* ([7th edn., 2022](#)).

Alex has appeared in five UK Supreme Court cases about family law, including the Family Law Awards: Case of the Year. In finance cases, Alex has dealt with assets of up to £1billion; in children law, he is instructed across the globe, from the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to St Helena and the British Indian Ocean Territory.

Alex speaks and writes fluent Spanish. He previously studied in Spain and worked for the United Nations in El Salvador.

PRACTICE AREAS

Finance and Private Client

Private Law Children

Public Law Children
Human Rights
International Family Law

EXPERIENCE

Alex studied history and modern languages at Trinity College Dublin for which he was awarded a First, an honorary distinction and the Gold Medal for receiving a First in each and every paper, essay and dissertation (famous recipients include the Nobel laureate, Samuel Beckett). As part of that, Alex spent a year at the Universidad de Salamanca in Spain; subsequently, he completed a masters-level programme at the Universidad para la Paz in Costa Rica (distinction: 1st in year).

He completed the GDL (distinction) and the BPTC (outstanding) at the City Law School, London, where he won the Everard Van Heyden prize.

Before coming to the Bar, Alex worked for the United Nations in El Salvador. At that time, El Salvador suffered from the highest murder rate of any country not in open war. His primary tasks were to help investigate corruption in the justice system and introduce electoral reform; he also worked with charities assisting ex “maras” (or gang members) to reintegrate into society.

In Alex’s first year of practice, Sir James Munby P described his work in complex areas as “very impressive” ([2015] EWCA Civ 1112) and “illuminating” ([2016] EWHC 2271). Alex was then awarded the Outstanding Newcomer in the Field of Children Law: ALC (2017) and the Family Law Awards: Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year (2017).

PUBLICATIONS

Books

[*The Family Court Practice*](#)

[*Hershman and McFarlane: Children Law and Practice*](#)

[*Family Law Precedents Service*](#)

Child Protection and the Family Court: What You Need to Know (3rd edn., 2019), with Sir Andrew McFarlane P and HHJ Reardon.

Laing and Jackson: Public Children Law: Contemporary Issues (1st edn., 2018), with Dr Bianca Jackson.

Articles

No Exceptions to the Ongoing Involvement of the Judge Who Hears the FDR, Lexis PSL online, 9 August 2019

Outta Time, But Not Outta Luck (co-author, Greg Williams), *The Review*, July 2019
Family: Update, *Legal Action* (December 2018 / January 2019)

A Short Note on Habitual Residence: AB v CD [2018] EWHC 1021 (Fam), *Family Law Week*, 22 May 2018
(read <https://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed190031>)

Daedalus, Ariadne and the Minotaur: Where are we now? *Family Law Week*, 15 May 2018
(read <https://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed189940>)

Villiers v Villiers: The Hammer of the Scots?: Part I (co-author, Michael Horton) *The Review*, May 2018

Why pro bono? [2018] *Fam Law* 361

Villiers v Villiers: An Update (co-author, Michael Horton) *Family Law Week*, 22 March 2018
(read <http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed188904>)

I Can't Get No (Just) Satisfaction: Human Rights Act Claims in Family Law (co-author, Rachel Cooper), *The Review*, December 2017

Guidance on the Use of Professional Time to Benefit Children, *The Review*, September 2017
Children Giving Evidence in Family Proceedings: A Pocket Guide to the Law, Bloomsbury

Law Online, 26 October 2016 (read <http://www.bloomsburylawonline.com/children-giving-evidence-in-family-proceedings/>)

Secure, Secure, Secure, Absconding, Bloomsbury Law Online, 5 October 2016
(read <http://www.bloomsburylawonline.com/secure-secure-secure-absconding/>)

Children Case Update: Public law: Part 3: Special guardianship orders; female genital mutilation protection orders; Blla and other international care cases; inherent jurisdiction and wardship; decisions of the Supreme Court [2016] *Fam Law* 643

Children Case Update: Public law: Part 2: Fact finding; medical treatment; adoption and placement orders [2016] *Fam Law* 931

Children Case Update: Public law: Part 1: Care Proceedings, [2016] *Fam Law* 643
And There Lurks the Minotaur: The Interrelationship Between the Inherent Jurisdiction and Section 25, CA 1989: Part II, *Family Law Week*, 8 July 2016
(read <http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed161670>)

And There Lurks the Minotaur: The Interrelationship Between the Inherent Jurisdiction and Section 25, CA 1989: Part I, Family Law Week, 22 June 2016
(read <http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed161398>)

A Very Legal Playground: In the Matter of B (A Child) and the Habitual Residence Seesaw, Family Law (online), 22 February 2016

Saleem, Shivering and English Winters: Jurisdiction under Article 11 of the 1996 Hague Convention and is published on Family Law (online), 4 January 2015. ([read here](#))

'Calderback to the Future: A Debate on the Motion: This House Believes the Calderbank Regime Should be Restored in Family Cases' [2015] Fam Law 1537
"*... this can no longer be tolerated*": a short guide to the correct use of section 20, Children Act 1989' Family Law Week, 11 November 2015 (read here)

'Limping Infants and Article 15 BIIA: the "magisterial" judgment in In the Matter of N (Children) (Adoption: Jurisdiction)', Family Law Week, 10 November 2015 ([read here](#))

'Magna Carta 800 Years On: Faded Lustre and Family Law.' Family Law (online), 17 July 2015 ([read here](#))

Genes or Jeans? The Importance of the Genetic Relationship when Evaluating a Child's Best Interests, Family Law (online), 3 June 2015 ([read here](#))

Adopting Foreign Children: Part II: A Counter-Argument; Choice of Laws [2015] Fam Law 703
Adopting Foreign Children: Part I: Jurisdiction [2015] Fam Law 565 ([read here](#))

Re J: A Lesson on Threshold and Logic, Family Law Week, 23 April 2015 ([read here](#))

Daedalus's Twist? Secure Accommodation after a Child's 16th Birthday, Family Law Week, 9 April 2015 ([read here](#))

Ariadne's Golden Thread: Placing Children in Secure Accommodation, Family Law Week, 9 April 2015 ([read here](#))

Podcast and Case Summaries

Secure Accommodation Orders and Deprivation of Liberty of Children and Young Persons, 29 July 2017 (listen here <http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed178924>)

CASES

2024

BR v BR [2024] EWFC 11

2023

Agarwal v the Czech Republic, app no 44870/19 (19 January 2023) (European Court of Human Rights)
B v C [2023] EWHC 291 (Fam)

Re A (Parental Responsibility) [2023] EWCA Civ 689

B v C (No 2) (1996 Hague Convention) [2023] EWHC 2524 (Fam)

Caso Cordoba vs Paraguay, 4 de Septiembre de 2023, Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos

2022

PT v CW & Ors [2022] EWHC 3557 (Fam)

Villiers v Villiers (Rev 1) [2022] EWCA Civ 772

MZ v FZ [2022] EWHC 295 (Fam)

Re N (A Child) (Instruction of Expert) [2022] EWCA Civ 1588

2021

In the matter of T (A Child) [2021] UKSC 35

Re D (Care Proceedings: 1996 Hague Convention: Article 9 Request) [2021] EWHC 1970 (Fam)

Re E (Care Proceedings: Welfare Determination) [2021] EWFC 52

AX v BX & Ors (Revocation of Adoption Order) (Rev 1) [2021] EWHC 1121 (Fam)

G v G [2021] UKSC 9

Villiers v Villiers [2021] EWFC 23

2020

Villiers v Villiers [2020] UKSC 30

Re T (Jurisdiction: BIIIR: Cyprus) [2020] EWFC 37

Re E (Care Proceedings: Fact Finding) [2020] EWFC 24

M v F [2020] EWHC 576 (Fam)

2019

Re E (A Child: Questioning of Vulnerable Witness) [2019] EWHC 3808 (Fam)

In the matter of NY (A Child) [2019] UKSC 49

Re NY (A Child) (1980 Hague Abduction Convention) (Inherent Jurisdiction) [2019] EWCA Civ 1065

TY and HY [2019] EWHC 1310 (Fam)

2018

T (A Child) [2018] EWCA Civ 2136

X and Y (Appeal against Care Order) [2018] EWFC B55

Williams and another v London Borough of Hackney [2018] UKSC 37

Letts v Letts [2018] EWHC 1639 (Fam)

Villiers v Villiers [2018] EWCA Civ 1120

A Local Authority v A's Father, Mr F & Ors [2018] EWHC 1121 (Fam)

AB v CD [2018] EWHC 1021 (Fam)

A Local Authority v T (No. 2) [2018] EWHC 816 (Fam)

A Local Authority v T (No. 1) [2018] EWHC 576 (Fam)

2017

F v H & Anor [2017] EWHC 3358 (Fam)

A London Borough v M, F and B [2017] EWFC B93

J (A Child) (Finland) (Habitual Residence) [2017] EWCA Civ 80

2016

Magiera v Magiera [2016] EWCA Civ 1292

P (A Child) [2016] EWCA Civ 1127

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn (top barrister)

The City Law School, BPTC (Outstanding)

Universidad para la Paz, Costa Rica, M.A.-level certificate, Transitions to Democracy (Distinction)

The City Law School, GDL (Distinction)

Trinity College Dublin, B.A. (Mod.) European Studies (Gold Medal; First Class Honours, with Distinction)

The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

Family Law Bar Association

Resolution

LANGUAGES

Spanish

Italian (basic)
