

# Nicholas Dennys KC

Call: 1975 | Silk: 1991

**“He is a compelling advocate with bags of gravitas. Nicholas is laser sharp and takes a very commercial approach in his analysis of the merits.”**

Chambers & Partners



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**Nicholas Dennys KC is a leading specialist in construction, civil engineering, international arbitration, professional negligence and information technology together with related areas such as insurance, sale of goods, insolvency, transport and energy.**

He acts as advocate and advisor domestically and overseas in court and arbitration proceedings concerning major construction, engineering, IT, road and rail transport, infrastructure, and oil and gas projects. Overseas disputes commonly involve international corporations and joint ventures, and governmental or quasi-governmental bodies. He has appeared in arbitrations conducted in various parts of the world under LCIA, ICC, HKIAC, SIAC and UNCITRAL rules.

He also acts as arbitrator, adjudicator and mediator. He has acted as party-nominated arbitrator, chairman and sole arbitrator on numerous occasions in domestic and international disputes, and conducts adjudications early neutral valuations and other forms of dispute resolution.

He has been involved in disputes involving foreign law including in India, Hong Kong, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nepal, Singapore, UAE, USA (including New York, Texas, California), Europe (including Spain and Poland), South Africa and Gibraltar. In 2023 he was appointed as a member of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) panel of arbitrators.

Nicholas has been recognised for many years by the legal directories, Chambers and Partners (UK, Global and Asia) as well as The Legal 500, as a leading silk in the fields of construction, professional negligence, international arbitration, professional negligence and information technology.

## Expertise

### Atkin Chambers

## Construction, Engineering & Infrastructure

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Nicholas has extensive and wide-ranging experience of construction and civil engineering disputes, involving major projects of all types. Case examples include:

### International

- Acted in a series of substantial arbitrations in Hong Kong relating to a dispute between the domestic developer and a local contractor concerning issues relating to government consents for tree felling defects loss and expense claims, final account and completion.
- Acting on a UNCITRAL rules arbitration concerning a contract to build and operate a process plant and supply products to the Thai subsidiary of a Swiss food company for a Thai contractor under Thai substantive law in claims valued at c.US\$300million due to be heard in Singapore.
- Airport buildings for Middle East redevelopment of transport hub.
- Bridge construction in the Far East.
- European airport redevelopment.
- Acted for a Portuguese joint venture against the Polish Government in an ICC arbitration in Warsaw arising out of major infrastructure project.
- Acted for the ship-owners in a high-value and long-running dispute between Singaporean shipbuilders and Dutch ship-owners.
- Acted in an ICC arbitration which was the subject of several hearings between two major Japanese corporations concerning claims arising from construction of state of art plastics in UK.

### Domestic

- Destruction of confectionary factory by fire, *Trebor Bassett Holdings Ltd v ADT Fire & Security* [2011] BLR 661.
- Termination/alleged frustration Redevelopment Agreement, *Gold Group Properties v BDW Trading Ltd* [2010] BLR 235.
- Instructed to lead the counsel team to act for PC Harrington, the concrete sub-contractor, in part of the Wembley Stadium litigation, *PC Harrington Contractors Ltd v Multiplex Constructions (UK) Wembley*.
- Dispute over environmental and fire controls at Heathrow Terminal 5. Final account dispute valued circa £80m.
- Mixed office, retail and domestic development in Central London.
- The development of large site in UK city centre.
- Edinburgh tram project.

## Energy, Natural Resources & Utilities

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Nicholas has considerable experience of both domestic and international disputes regarding utilities and oil and gas particularly in relation to the design and construction of on and off-shore installations. Cases include:

- Marine installation of power distribution system for offshore wind farm.
- Petrochemical process plant in the North East of England.
- Two thermal power plants in India.
- Extraction and supply of marine aggregates to Russian Federation.
- Acting for an oil company in disputes relating to offshore facility in Gulf of Mexico.
- Bioethanol plant in the North East of England
- Advising a contractor regarding a sewage disposal scheme in Hong Kong.
- Advising a contractor regarding a delay claim for a sewage improvement facility in Hong Kong.
- Representing a local authority in the High Court arising out of a PFI contract relating to a wastewater/sewage treatment plant in UK.

## Professional Negligence

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Nicholas has acted in a number of disputes of alleged professional negligence between construction professionals and their advisors. A number of his leading cases include:

- *Co-Operative v John Allen Associates* [CA 2011] – acting for defendant architects in the TCC and in the Court of Appeal in relation to a claim by the occupier of a distribution warehouse arising out of a flood. Issues included the scope of an architect's duty of care to 'subsequent' occupiers and the relevance of the opportunity for intermediate examination and discovery of design defects, *Pearson Education Ltd v The Charter Partnership Ltd* [2006] PNLR 14 (TCC), [2007] EWCA Civ 130 (CA).
- Acting for the architects in an alleged negligence claim by Baxtall in relation to the proper approach to duties of care owed by design professionals to 'subsequent occupiers' for property damage, *Baxall Ltd v Sheard Walsh Partnership & Others* [2002] BLR (CA).
- Acting on a claim for alleged negligence of architects for subsequent fire damage, *E Turner & Sons v Watkins* [2001] TCLR (CA).
- Acting on a negligence claim regarding the obligations of developer, project manager and architect to a contractor for cost overruns, *Jarvis Ltd v Castle Wharf & Others* [2000] PNLR (CA).

## Technology & Telecommunications

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Nicholas has considerable experience in the IT and telecommunications field acting on disputes in relation to telecommunication systems and computer software and hardware systems for many big household names, including Accenture, LCH Clearnet, T-Mobile, Unisys, Liberata, BBC and UBS. Cases include:

- Dispute over supply of broadband equipment in Far East.
- Traffic control system in Middle East.
- Implementation of a new Governmental software and hardware system in Far East.
- IT systems failure at a major commercial and clearing bank based in UK.

## ADR Appointments

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### Africa

- Appointed as President of an arbitral tribunal (UNCITRAL, South Africa) concerning the sub-contract relating to air-cooled condensers installed in a coal-fired power station in South Africa.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitration (UNCITRAL Rules, Ethiopia) regarding a highway in Ethiopia.
- Appointed to a three person DAB in respect of two power stations in South Africa.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (LCIA). The arbitration proceedings arise out of disputes related to an LNG development project in Mozambique.
- Appointed as sole arbitrator (ICC) regarding a Hydropower plant in Rwanda. Claims in excess of USD15million.

### Asia

- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (ICC, Hong Kong) in respect of dispute relating to the supply and purchase of telecommunication equipment.
- Appointed as sole arbitrator in respect of HK\$ multi-million claims arising out of a project for one of the world's longest cable-stayed highway bridges.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (LCIA) in respect of claims resulting in the renovation of a thermal power plant in East Asia.
- Appointed as sole arbitrator in respect of the implementation of a new governmental software and hardware system in Far East.

- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (ICC) regarding a hydroelectric project in South Asia. Claims in excess of USD20million.

## Europe

- Appointed as sole arbitrator in dispute arising from the design and construction of a UK water treatment facility.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (LCIA) relating to claims from the development of various airports in Europe. Claims in excess of USD30million.
- Appointed as President in an ICC arbitration regarding various power stations in UK. Claims in excess of GBP100million.
- A dispute regarding the construction of a thermal power station based within the UK under a PFI agreement (LCIA Chairman).
- Appointed as adjudicator in dispute regarding the design, construction and commissioning of an offshore alternative energy project.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (ICC) regarding and offshore wind project in the UK.
- Appointed as sole arbitrator regarding claims on a PFI contract for the development, construction and operation of two mass burn energy from waste facilities.
- Acted as adjudicator in various disputes relating to road and rail construction including the M6 Tollway and London Underground.
- Acted as expert determinator in several cases including the A13 improvement work and an offshore wind facility.
- Appointed as Adjudicator regarding a contract for the civil, installation and other works in connection with the refurbishment of various gas compressor sites in UK.
- Appointed as adjudicator in connection with a dispute regarding the refurbishment of a 5-star hotel in London.
- Appointed as adjudicator in connection with a dispute regarding the design and construction of a high-quality residential and premium quality hotel development in London, comprising of two Towers of 57 and 42 storeys.

## Middle East

- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (LCIA) relating to claims concerning the design, procurement, construction and commissioning of a nuclear power plant in the Middle East. Claims circa US\$900million.
- Party nominated arbitrator (International ad-hoc, UNCITRAL rules) regarding the dredging of channels for a project in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Claims in excess of USD100million.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (LCIA) regarding a petrochemical plant in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Claims in excess of USD340million.
- Appointed as sole arbitrator (LCIA) regarding an automated traffic enforcement system across three sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The project was to design, install a red light and a speed enforcement system which will also detect traffic volumes.
- Appointed as sole arbitrator (DIFC-LCIA) regarding the transportation, handling of marine barge operations, port activities in Bahrain and delivery services for certain cargo items. Claims in excess of USD15million.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (DIAC) regarding an IT system for a Health Authority in the UAE. Claims in excess of AED435million.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (ICC) regarding a rapid transit system in the Middle East. Claims in excess of USD25million.
- Appointed as chairman of an arbitral tribunal (Adhoc, DIAC rules) regarding a breach of contract resulting from the 2008 financial crisis for the construction and completion of over 2,000 villas, townhouses and associated infrastructure at a development in the Middle East.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (LCIA) regarding the installation of pipelines in various power stations in the Middle East. Claims circa £1.5billion.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (DIAC) relating to claims during the construction of a luxury beachfront resort in the UAE. Claims circa AED\$150million.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (SIAC) relating to claims following the construction of a ring road in Afghanistan. Contract sum US\$470million, claim circa US\$67million.
- Appointed a party-nominated arbitrator (ICC, Oman) regarding a major international airport in the Middle East. Claims in excess of US\$400million.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (ICC, Paris) regarding the design, construction, operation and maintenance of a domestic solid waste management centre located in the Middle East. Claims in excess of US\$230million.
- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (ICC) in respect of dispute relating to a dredging / engineering project.

- Appointed as party-nominated arbitrator (DIAC) concerning the design and construction of a mixed-use development comprising over 70 structures in the Middle East.
- Appointed as President of an arbitration (ICC) concerning a sewage treatment plant in Oman.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (LCIA) regarding the construction, operation and maintenance of a sewage treatment plant and sewer conveyance system in the Middle East.
- Appointed as party appointed arbitrator (ICC) in a dispute concerning the renovation of an airport in the Middle East.
- Appointed as party nominated arbitrator (ICC) regarding claims resulting from the design, execution and complete refurbishment of a 5 star hotel in Qatar. Claims in excess of USD80million.
- Appointed to three-person DAB regarding the construction of a high-value, mixed-use commercial and residential development in Middle East.
- Appointed as party appointed arbitrator (Ad-hoc) regarding the construction of waste water and treated water networks. The project consolidated the collected sewer flows to a major Sewage Treatment Plant in the Middle East.

## Qualifications and Awards

- Bencher of Middle Temple (2003)
- Recorder (2000)
- Assistant Recorder (1997)
- Brasenose College, Oxford (PPE) (1970-1973)

## Recent Recommendations

*"Nicholas is very flexible, creative and very intelligent."*

International Arbitration: Technology/Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2025

*"Nicholas Dennys is great."*

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2025

*"Nicholas Dennys is very approachable."*

Energy & Natural Resources, Chambers UK Bar 2025

*"Lying behind his relaxed style is a razor-sharp mind and a wealth of experience."*

Energy, The Legal 500 2025

*"Nicholas is calm, smooth, and confident. He exudes all that a KC should and more; super knowledgeable but great at client delivery; strong oral arguments; patient and diligent mediator; massive brain; great to have on your side and as a mediator you are immediately confident in his ability to get the matter resolved."*

Construction, The Legal 500 2024

*"Nick has always had an enviable reputation for his skill as a lawyer, and he demonstrates a great ability to master the most complex matters."*

Energy, The Legal 500 2024

*"Able to quickly grasp issues and provide pragmatic, helpful advice."*

Professional Negligence, The Legal 500 2024

*"Nicholas Dennys is a very easygoing, amenable and clever guy who obviously knows the law and produces persuasive documents; he's an easy barrister to get on with."*

*"He is a compelling advocate with bags of gravitas. Nicholas is laser sharp and takes a very commercial approach in his analysis of the merits."*

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2024

*"Nicholas Dennys is totally comfortable with the legal and technical issues, and he keeps the whole show on the road."*

*"He is very focused and doesn't get fazed by massive amounts of detail, but gets to the heart of things."*

International Arbitration: Arbitrators, Chambers UK Bar 2024

*"Nicholas Dennys is totally comfortable with legal and technical issues, and he keeps the whole show on the road."*

*"He is very focused and doesn't get fazed by massive amounts of detail but gets to the heart of things."*

International Arbitration: Construction/Engineering, Chambers UK Bar 2024

*"Nicholas Dennys is a clever guy who knows the law and produces persuasive documents."*

*"He's very impressive, very practical and very good at understanding human characteristics, not just commercial and legal issues."*

Energy & Natural Resources, Chambers UK Bar 2024

*"Nicholas is an experienced barrister and arbitrator. He is efficient in dealing with complicated legal issues."*

Construction, Energy and Infrastructure, The Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2023

*"He's client-friendly and confident, and his written advice is very strong."*

*"Nicholas Dennys is very able, experienced and personable."*

Construction, Chambers UK Bar 2023

*"He's really good on the strategy and the big picture. He's good on the technical side but he's also really focused on being commercial, strategic and astute."*

Energy & Natural Resources, Chambers UK Bar 2023

*"Nick is super-experienced in construction dispute resolution."*

*"He's a very good arbitrator – very nice and extremely thorough."*

International Arbitration: Arbitrators, Chambers UK Bar 2023

*"Nicholas provides very high-level advice and is a fantastic mediator. He has the ability to make complex areas of law seem more straightforward and always develops a strong rapport with clients."*

Construction, The Legal 500 2023

*"He uses his experience to his client's benefit by thinking about and working the problem, and he has a very rare ability to find new lines to take."*

Energy, The Legal 500 2023

*"Nicholas uses his accumulated experience wisely in the interests of his clients. He often brings fresh insights to complex matters and is convincing and brief at explaining complicated things simply. Excellent."*

International Arbitration: Counsel, The Legal 500 2023