

# Serena Sekhon

Call: 2021

“Serena was brilliant. Really impressive. Worked very hard, communicative, good with the clients and advocacy was great. Written submissions were also excellent. She...was committed all the way.”

Solicitor



Serena specialises in public and administrative law. Her busy practice encompasses areas including judicial review, community care, inquests, prison and police law and education.

Serena is particularly experienced in judicial review cases relating to asylum support. She advises at all stages of the claim process and regularly secures settlements and interim relief for clients.

She undertakes a mix of led and unled work.

Serena’s recent cases include:

- R (SAC) v SSHD [2025] EWHC 1400 (Admin) – successful challenge to the Home Secretary’s negative reasonable grounds decision under the National Referral Mechanism.
- R (BEU) v SSHD – issued urgent judicial review proceedings on behalf of a homeless asylum-seeking client; secured an urgent injunction ordering the Defendant to accommodate the client within 48 hours. The client was accommodated the following day.
- R (LR) v Coventry City Council [2025] EWHC 20 (Admin) – successful challenge to a Local Authority’s section 17 Children Act assessment, led by Ranjiv Khubber.
- Investigation and Inquests into the Deaths of Patients of Ian Paterson – tens of inquests into the deaths of patients of breast surgeon Ian Paterson. Serena was one of a team of counsel to the inquest, team led by Jonathan Jones KC, from 2023 to 2025.
- R (OA) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2023] EWHC 2227 (Admin) – Serena secured interim relief for her client, an asylum seeker whose son had particular accommodation needs due to his disability.

Prior to coming to the Bar, Serena graduated from the University of Bristol with a first class degree in history. She undertook her legal studies with a total of five scholarships. She has volunteered at organisations including Southall Black Sisters, a charity providing advice to and advocacy for survivors of domestic violence.

Serena has an international outlook, having studied Peacebuilding in Colombia at Universidad de los Andes in 2017, and international criminal justice in the context of mass atrocities in Dubrovnik in 2023 (Geoffrey Nice Foundation Masterclass). She is a voluntary member of the Sikh Human Rights Group.

## Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

## London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

## Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

# Expertise

## Public Law

---

### Notable Cases

---

#### R (LR) v Coventry City Council [2025] EWHC 20 (Admin)

Led by Ranjiv Khubber.

---

#### Re Christopher Kapessa

Inquest, representing Christopher's mother, led by Michael Mansfield KC. Christopher died aged 13 after drowning in the River Cynon in Wales. After a two-week inquest, the Coroner found that Christopher was deliberately pushed into the water by a 14 year old boy. The Coroner also issued a Prevention of Future Deaths Report to the Coal Authority about the prevailing absence of a water safety policy with specific steps to protect members of the public.

---

#### R (OA) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2023] EWHC 2227 (Admin)

Representing a pregnant asylum seeker, OA, housed for over a year in "temporary" hotel accommodation with her two children including a son with significant care and access needs. The High Court had previously granted permission to proceed with judicial review and ordered that the Secretary of State provide suitable accommodation within 9 days, which the Secretary of State failed to do, leading to the judgment cited above

---

## Community Care

---

Serena is very frequently instructed on behalf of asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers in relation to various asylum support and accommodation decisions.

Serena has secured a number of settlements in asylum support cases, as well as positive interim relief decisions from the Administrative Court. Her cases have included challenges to failures to provide suitable accommodation (including in a disability/care needs context), challenges to the amount of financial subsistence support received by clients, challenges to location/dispersal decisions, and challenges to failures to implement asylum decisions/issue a BRP.

Serena also acts in judicial reviews relating to trafficking and has secured a quashing of a negative NRM decision in the High Court.

Serena advises and represents clients at all stages of the judicial review process, including pre-issue advice on prospects and preparing the claim, as well as drafting urgent applications for interim relief.

Serena represents clients in the Asylum Support Tribunal as a volunteer advocate for the Asylum Support Appeals Project. As such, she is able to understand well the wider asylum support landscape and the broader legal and policy framework. She brings this

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

knowledge to her public law practice in order to resolve her clients' issues.

Serena also represents clients in age assessment challenges and has been led in urgent judicial review and policy challenges relating to section 17 Children Act support for families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

## Education

---

Serena has extensive experience with school admission appeals. She also appears regularly in the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) in relation to Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Serena welcomes instructions relating to higher education providers, and judicial review in the context of education.

## Mental Health

---

Serena represents individuals who are detained under the Mental Health Act before the First-tier Tribunal (Mental Health).

## Inquest & Inquiries

---

Serena's inquests practice includes Article 2 inquests with and without a jury, as well as non-Article 2 inquests. She provides advice and representation at all stages of the inquest process, including in relation to post-inquest civil claims.

Recent inquest instructions include:

- Re Chenise Gregory – inquest into the killing of Chenise by her partner MM, who was on licence and under multi-agency management at the time. The jury returned a conclusion of unlawful killing and found that failures by the Metropolitan Police may have caused or contributed to Chenise's death. Serena was instructed by Chenise's family, led by Maya Sikand KC.
- Re Christopher Kapessa – inquest into the death of a Black child who drowned in a river in Wales. The Coroner concluded that another boy deliberately pushed Christopher off a bridge and that this act was capable of meeting the criteria of "being an intentional act, an unlawful act and one that caused Christopher's death." Serena was instructed by Christopher's family, led by Michael Mansfield KC
- Re Ryan Harris – sole counsel for the family, inquest into a death in prison custody.
- Re Katie O'Neill (current) – instructed by the family, led by Nick Brown.
- Sole counsel for an IP in a four-week inquest with a jury.
- Assisting Philip Rule KC (instructed by the family) on a two-week inquest relating to a death in prison custody.
- Coroner's Investigation into Ian Paterson – inquests into the deaths of tens of former patients of Ian Paterson, a consultant breast surgeon alleged to have carried out an unapproved "cleavage-sparing mastectomy" procedure on patients with breast cancer. Serena was a member of a team of Counsel to the Inquest.

Serena is a member of the INQUEST Lawyers' Group.

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

## Prison and Police Law

---

Serena's prison law experience includes:

- Representing clients in oral hearings before the Parole Board
- Judicial review
- Civil claims in a prison context, including those arising out of the Equality Act 2010

Serena has experience in inquests involving criticisms of the police and prison staff.

During pupillage, Serena assisted with civil actions against the police.

## Awards



## Accreditations

- Geoffrey Nice Foundation Masterclass Scholarship – Inner Temple
- Postgraduate Academic Scholarship – City University of London
- Major Scholarship (BPTC) – Inner Temple
- Duke of Edinburgh Entrance Award (BPTC) – Inner Temple
- Dean of the Law School's Award (GDL) – BPP University, London
- Exhibition Award (GDL) – Inner Temple

## Memberships

- Constitutional and Administrative Law Bar Association (ALBA)
- Human Rights Lawyers Association (HRLA)
- Bar Human Rights Committee (BHRC)
- Housing and Immigration Group (HIG)
- INQUEST Lawyers Group

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

## Appointments

- Member of Young Barristers' Committee (2022-2025)

## Qualifications

- BA (Hons) History, University of Bristol (First Class)
- GDL, BPP University (Commendation)
- BPTC, City University (Very Competent)

## Client Recommendations

"Serena was brilliant. Really impressive. Worked very hard, communicative, good with the clients and advocacy was great. Written submissions were also excellent. She...was committed all the way."

Solicitor – inquest

### Birmingham

103 Colmore Row  
Birmingham  
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham  
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

### London

Fifth Floor  
7 Savoy Court  
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

### Bristol

30 Queen Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol  
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501