

Drew Holiner

Curriculum Vitae

Profile

Commercial barrister and international arbitrator with global practice in cross-border commercial disputes involving sanctions, geopolitical risk and high-risk jurisdictions. Qualified across the UK, US, EU and CIS, Drew has more than 20 years' experience as an arbitrator, counsel, expert adviser and expert witness in energy, infrastructure, finance, corporate, sanctions and technology matters worldwide.

Drew's combination of qualifications and cross-system expertise in diverse legal systems allows him to advise on the interaction between UK, US and EU sanctions and Russian countermeasures, and to assist tribunals and parties in disputes requiring deep knowledge of both common law and civil law traditions.

Regularly instructed by international law firms, governments and state-owned entities, financial institutions, multinational corporates and private parties on matters across the UK, US, Middle East and Asia-Pacific.

Admissions

- UK: England and Wales; British Virgin Islands
- US: California; Washington state
- EU: Ireland
- CIS: Russia; Kazakhstan (AIFC Court)
- UAE: Dubai (DIFC Courts)

Languages

English (native); Russian (fluent); German (intermediate); Mandarin, Arabic (beginner).

Education and professional qualifications

Moscow University for the Humanities – Jurist (Russian law)

BPP Law School – GDL, BVC (English law)

Graduate, ICC Advanced Arbitration Academy for North America

Fellow, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

Arbitrator experience

Drew sits as chair, sole and party-appointed arbitrator in commercial, energy, finance and technology disputes across Europe, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific. His arbitrator experience includes matters seated in:

- London (LCIA, ICC, UNCITRAL)

- Dubai (DIAC)
- Hong Kong (HKIAC)
- Central Asia (AIFC IAC)
- Geneva (PCA, UNCITRAL)

He is frequently appointed in matters involving sanctions, corporate governance, cross-border finance and regulatory issues, energy supply chains, and disputes involving corporate groups, state-related entities, private parties, financial institutions and investors. His experience in the additional roles of counsel and expert witness ensures a procedural, commercially focused approach valued by parties and co-arbitrators.

Drew has been recognised in the Legal500 for his work as arbitrator, with colleagues highlighting his impartiality, sound judgment and knowledge of arbitration procedure (see Directories section below).

Representative appointments include:

- UNCITRAL arbitration (PCA-supported) (2024-) – Government railway supply dispute (China-Turkmenistan).
- ICC (2023-) – Party-appointed arbitrator in dispute over sanctions-impacted exit from energy project (US-Russia).
- DIAC (2025) – Presiding arbitrator in dispute concerning guarantees for delivery of oil supplies to West Africa (UAE–Russia).
- AIFC IAC (2023-2025) – Presiding arbitrator in dispute over supply of drilling equipment for Caspian Sea exploration project, including sanctions-related issues (Russia-Kazakhstan).*
- LCIA (2021-2025) – LCIA-appointed arbitrator in 27 consolidated agricultural trade finance arbitrations alleging sanctions impact (US-Ukraine/Poland).
- LCIA (2024) – Presiding arbitrator in cross-border mining finance dispute (Singapore-Switzerland).*
- LCIA (2023) – Sole arbitrator in food and beverage distribution dispute governed by Belarusian law (Ukraine-Belarus).*
- LCIA (2020-2022) – Sole arbitrator in freight forwarding dispute (Switzerland-Russia).*
- LCIA (2019-2022) – Sole arbitrator in retail jewellery finance dispute involving parallel High Court proceedings (UK-Russia).
- HKIAC (2018-2020) – Sole arbitrator in cross-border film industry dispute involving internationally renowned actors (China-Russia).

*Arbitration conducted in the Russian language.

Counsel experience

As counsel, Drew has experience in energy, finance, corporate, media and technology and disputes affected by sanctions or other geopolitical measures involving parties from Europe, the US, Middle East, Asia, Africa and the CIS. Drew's practice integrates commercial,

regulatory and geopolitical expertise. He is frequently instructed as lead or co-counsel in high-value matters requiring strategic management of foreign law issues, parallel court proceedings, enforcement risk and cross-border strategy, and has acted opposite King's Counsel in multiple international arbitrations.

Drew has been recognised in leading legal directories Chambers & Partners and Legal500 for his work as counsel, with clients and colleagues highlighting his depth of analysis, clarity and effective advocacy, and his ability to navigate complex disputes (see Directories section below).

Representative matters include:

- LCIA (2024-2025) – Lead counsel in fintech dispute alleging application of Ukrainian sanctions.
- LCIA (2023-2024) – Lead counsel in sport investment dispute involving enforcement of pledge over shares in premier division Spanish football club.
- LCIA (2022-2024) – Lead counsel in dispute concerning effect of Chinese offtake agreement to a Zimbabwean lithium mining project.
- LCIA (2018-2021) – Co-counsel in corporate governance dispute in Russian oilfield services.
- LCIA (2018-2019) – Co-counsel in finance dispute involving alleged extortion scheme.
- LCIA (2017-2018) – Lead counsel in TV licensing fees arbitration.
- LCIA (2010-2017) – Co-counsel in two arbitrations over sale of Moscow shopping mall
- LCIA (2010-2014) – Co-counsel in series of arbitrations concerning control of a multi-billion-dollar landmark real estate development in Moscow
- LCIA (2011-2014) – Co-counsel for major Russian bank over sale of telecoms company

Expert evidence & advice

Drew's expertise in Russian and CIS legal systems supports his work as arbitrator and counsel, and he is recognised as one of the leading experts on Russian and CIS law in international arbitration and cross-border litigation. He has acted as expert in over 100 matters worldwide involving parties from the UK, US, Middle East and Asia-Pacific, including before:

- UK courts (England, BVI, Cayman Islands, Isle of Man)
- US courts (New York, California, Texas, DC, Illinois, North Carolina, Nevada)
- Asia-Pacific courts (Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand)
- European courts (Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Cyprus, Ireland)
- Court of Justice of the European Union and European Court of Human Rights
- Arbitral tribunals under ICC, LCIA, HKIAC, AAA-ICDR and ICSID rules
- Disciplinary tribunals and boards (World Athletics, International Psychoanalytical Association)

Drew is also a trusted advisory expert on the laws of Russia and other CIS states in matters involving parties from the UK, US, Middle East, Europe and Asia-Pacific, and is regularly

instructed by law firms in London, Hong Kong, Singapore and the EU in disputes involving sanctions, corporate governance, insolvency, foreign law issues and cross-border enforcement.

Drew is especially valued for his independence and ability to convey complex legal concepts across different legal systems. For more than 15 years, clients have consistently highlighted Drew's clarity, accessibility and presentational skills as an expert witness in leading legal directories such as Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 (see Directories section below).

Selected instructions

Russian law

- UK (England): Expert witness on Russian insurance law and countersanctions in multi-billion-dollar aircraft leasing litigation
- UK (England): Expert witness for Russia's Deposit Insurance Agency in USD 2.5bn freezing order application
- US (New York): Expert witness on Russian contract, tort, unjust enrichment and limitation law in USD 1.3bn fiduciary duty claim
- US (California): Expert witness for Google on Russian anti-suit injunctions
- UK (England): Expert witness for JPMorgan on Russian law on countersanctions and anti-suit injunctions
- China (Hong Kong): Expert witness on Russian contract law, commercial court procedure, private international law
- Singapore: Expert witness on Russian law in USD 100m+ arbitral award enforcement
- US (North Carolina): Expert witness for US Department of Justice in criminal prosecution

Kazakhstani law

- UK (England): Expert witness on Kazakhstani law on proprietary remedies, trusts, fraudulent transfers and limitation in fraud claim
- UK (BVI): Expert witness for BTA Bank on Kazakhstani law in embezzlement claim
- US (DC): Advisory expert in ICSID arbitration on Kazakhstani law

Kyrgyz law

- UK (England): Expert witness on Kyrgyz constitutional law in assassination attempt claim
- UK (Isle of Man): Expert witness on Kyrgyz law in telecommunications seizure dispute

Ukrainian, Belarusian and other CIS law

- UK (England): Advisory expert Ukrainian law in banking fraud claim

- US (DC): Advisory expert in ICSID arbitration on Belarusian banking and insolvency law

Drew is also regularly instructed as an advisory expert and expert witness on the laws of common law jurisdictions in courts and tribunals in Russia and other CIS states, most recently on the laws of England and Hong Kong.

Public International Law & Human Rights

Drew has acted in more than 50 cases before the European Court of Human Rights and UN Human Rights Committee. While he does not maintain a standalone human rights practice, this background is valuable in commercial disputes that intersect with public international law, state conduct and individual rights issues, particularly in high-risk jurisdictions.

His experience in this area supports advisory work relating to sanctions, asset freezes, politically motivated prosecutions, bank de-risking, PEP-related concerns, cross-border regulatory exposure and parallel criminal–civil proceedings, including in complex matters involving high-net-worth individuals.

Representative matters include:

- *Yukos Oil Company v Russia* (property rights, fair trial)
- *Google v Russia* (freedom of expression, fair trial)
- *Merchant International Company v Ukraine* (legal certainty, fair trial)
- *Aleksanyan v Russia* (unlawful detention, office search of corporate counsel)
- Expert advice and evidence in multiple matters concerning compliance of criminal and regulatory proceedings with applicable human rights standards, including for use in representations to governments, financial institutions and regulators.

International practice footprint

Drew's work spans all major international dispute hubs. His experience includes acting as arbitrator, counsel and expert witness in matters connected with the jurisdictions below.

United Kingdom & Europe

- LCIA, ICC and UNCITRAL arbitrations seated in London and Geneva
- Expert evidence to UK High Court and offshore jurisdictions (BVI, Cayman, Isle of Man)
- Expert evidence to European supranational and national courts (CJEU, ECtHR, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Cyprus, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Monaco)

United States

- US-qualified attorney (California and Washington state) with extensive experience as expert witness on Russian and CIS law in US federal and state courts nationwide, including New York, California, Texas, DC, Illinois, North Carolina and Nevada
- Expert evidence and advice in AAA-ICDR and ICSID arbitrations
- Board of directors, California Arbitration

Middle East (UAE, Saudi Arabia)

- DIFC qualified, DIAC and SCCA panels
- Presiding arbitrator in DIAC arbitration, advice to Saudi firms
- Regular contributor to arbitration and legal events across the region

Asia-Pacific (Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand)

- HKIAC, SIAC, SCIA, KCAB, AIAC panels
- Sole arbitrator in HKIAC arbitration, advice to Hong Kong, Singapore firms
- Expert evidence to national courts in Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand

Panels of Arbitrators

Drew sits on the panels of arbitrators of leading international and regional arbitral institutions worldwide:

Asia-Pacific

- Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC)
- Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC)
- Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA)
- Korean Commercial Arbitration Board International (KCAB)
- Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC)

Middle East & Central Asia

- Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC)
- Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration (SCCA)
- Astana International Financial Centre IAC (AIFC IAC)
- Tashkent International Arbitration Centre (TIAC)
- Mongolian International Arbitration Center (MIAC)

Europe

- London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA)*
- ICC International Court of Arbitration (ICC)*
- Stockholm Chamber of Commerce Arbitration Institute (SCC)*
- Russian Arbitration Centre (RAC)
- Vienna International Arbitration Centre (VIAC)

* Do not operate formal panels or lists, but has substantial experience

Americas

- BVI International Arbitration Centre (BVI IAC)

Recent directory quotes

Arbitrator

- *“Drew is an excellent arbitrator [...] wise and impartial [and] respected by both sides.”* – Legal 500, 2025 – Leading Junior in International Arbitration: Arbitrator

Counsel

- *“A fantastic asset to have when you’re faced with complex [cross-]border disputes.”* *“He’s very responsive, and he is very good at explaining things clearly.”* – Chambers UK, 2026 – Commercial Dispute Resolution
- *“It is a pleasure to have Drew Holiner as a representative in the arbitration. He is extremely smart and has an unprecedentedly high ability to quickly absorb and understand matters.”* – Chambers UK, 2026 – International Arbitration: General Commercial & Insurance
- *“Solicitors appreciate his technical knowledge, teamwork and responsiveness.”* – Legal 500, 2024 – Leading Junior in International Arbitration: Counsel

Expert

- *“Drew is an absolute expert in Russian law. He probably knows more about the area than anyone else in the UK Bar.”* *“Drew has fantastic language skills. He doesn’t overburden you with details. All his comments are economical but always on point.”* – Chambers Global, 2025 – International Arbitration – The English Bar
- *“Drew is responsive and business-orientated and provides concise and practical advice that is straight to the point.”* – Chambers UK and Chambers Global, 2025 – Commercial Dispute Resolution
- *“Drew Holiner is adept at putting complex foreign law concepts into terms a judge can easily understand.”* – Chambers UK, 2024 – Commercial Dispute Resolution

General

- *“Drew is responsive, razor-sharp, business-oriented and provides concise and practical advice. He has an incredible background for working on CIS-related matters.”* – Chambers Global, 2025 – International Arbitration – The English Bar
- *“Highly responsible. Impressive expertise and knowledge of procedural nuances of international commercial arbitration. Takes care of the client’s practical needs. Flawless choice for a CIS-related matter.”* – Legal 500, 2025 – Leading Junior in International Arbitration: Counsel

Contact

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