

Nikita McNeill

Call: 2010



Nikita McNeill is a highly sought-after junior barrister with a practice combining inquests and public inquiries with expertise in professional discipline, sports law and general public law.

Nikita has appeared in many of the most significant and high-profile inquests and inquiries of recent years, earning recognition for her *“formidable intellect”*, *“first-rate expertise”*, and *“exceptional client care”*. She is adept at managing cases involving substantial volumes of material and complex expert evidence, bringing clarity, precision, and strategic insight to every instruction.

Nikita’s expertise is reflected in her rankings: both leading legal directories recognise her as a Band 1 practitioner. She was also shortlisted for Inquests and Public Inquiries Junior of the Year at the Chambers UK Bar Awards 2025 and Public Law Junior of the Year at the Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2024.

She is a member of the Attorney General’s Civil B Panel.

Inquests

Nikita is an experienced inquest advocate and represents a full range of clients, including coroners, families, doctors, hospital trusts, police forces, and government departments. She also appears in judicial reviews arising from inquests on behalf of both Coroners and Interested Persons.

She has been consistently ranked as a leading individual in the Inquests and Public Inquiries sections of both Chambers & Partners and the Legal 500 since 2018.

Recent editorial includes:

“Nikita is phenomenal. She is a complete powerhouse in terms of work.” Chambers & Partners 2025

"Nikita is really diligent and sharp" Chambers & Partners 2025

"Nikita is a joy to work with: first-rate expertise in this area, responses are quick and succinct, with advice which cuts to the core of the issues." Chambers & Partners 2024

"She is on the ball and up to speed: she provides excellent work." Chambers & Partners 2024

"Nikita has a formidable intellect. She demonstrates a forensic command of the issues and has a real gift for making the most complex points accessible." Legal 500 2024

"Nikita is a phenomenal barrister who is the most organised person I have ever met. She is so efficient and has a really good strategic instinct." Chambers & Partners 2023

"Nikita's strengths are her soaring intellect, her capacity to turn papers around at such a fast pace, and her attention to client care – a winning combination!" Legal 500 2023

"She is an exceptionally good advocate. She has encyclopaedic knowledge of inquests and inquiries, with really good judgement." Chambers & Partners 2022

"Nikita is a go-to junior – anyone involved in a public inquiry or large inquest would do well to have her on their side." Legal 500 2022

"Nikita is a really good advocate, who also offers exceptional client care and excellent judgement." Chambers & Partners 2021

Selected Cases

- **Inquests into the deaths of patients of Ian Paterson:** Nikita represents the former medical director of Spire private hospitals in which Ian Paterson practised. Mr Paterson was convicted of 17 counts of wounding with intent and 3 counts of unlawful wounding. He was sentenced in 2017 to a 20 year custodial sentence.
- **Inquest touching upon the death of Jack Burnell-Williams:** Nikita, leading Laura Stephenson of 2 Hare Court, represented the Ministry of Defence in an inquest into the death of a member of the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment who took his own life days after he had taken part in the late Queen's state funeral.
- **Inquest touching upon the death of Jaysley-Louise Beck:** Nikita, leading Helena Drage of Gatehouse Chambers, appeared in Salisbury Coroner's Court to represent the Ministry of Defence in the inquest into the death of Gunner Beck who took her own life at Larkhill Garrison in 2021. The inquest probed important evidence about the experiences of women in the Army and the Army's ability to respond to unacceptable sexual behaviours.
- **Inquest touching upon the death of Andrew Clarke:** Nikita was instructed by a private mental health facility in an Article 2 jury inquest following the death of a detained patient from diabetic ketoacidosis as a result of failings identified in the facility's management of his diabetes.
- **Inquest touching upon the death of Olivia Perks:** Nikita was instructed by the Government Legal Department to represent the Ministry of Defence in an inquest touching upon the suicide of an Officer Cadet at Sandhurst which considered the systems and support in place for vulnerable officer cadets.
- **Inquest touching upon the death of Corrie McKeague:** Nikita was instructed by the Government Legal

Department on behalf of the Ministry of Defence in an inquest touching upon the death of an RAF Airman who went missing but whose body was never found.

- **R (Morahan) v HM Assistant Coroner for West London:** Nikita successfully represented HMAc for West London in a permission hearing before the High Court in relation to the, now leading, case considering the application of Article 2 for cases involving the treatment of mental health in the community.
- **Inquest into the death of Alexander Tostevin:** Nikita was junior counsel for the Ministry of Defence in an inquest into the death of a member of specialist military unit, in which there were complex arguments about the anonymity of the unit and its members.
- **Rushbrooke v HM Coroner for West London:** Nikita acted on behalf of the Coroner in an application to the Divisional Court to quash the inquest into the death of Sylvia Rushbrooke who was, at the time of her death, subject to a DOLS order and resident in a care home. The application was based upon procedural irregularities in the first inquest as well as insufficiency of inquiry.
- **R.e. Peter John Fasoli:** Nikita acted on behalf of the Senior Coroner for West London in an application to the Divisional Court to quash the inquest into the death of Peter Fasoli. Mr Fasoli's death was originally found to be accidental, following a fire at his home. Video footage subsequently discovered showed that Mr Fasoli was murdered before the fire was intentionally set.
- **Cummings v HM Coroner for West London:** Nikita acted for the Senior Coroner for West London in an application to quash the inquest into the death of an elderly lady who died when her home caught on fire, following receipt of a new investigation by the London Fire Brigade into the possible causes of that fire.
- **Hillsborough Stadium Disaster:** Nikita was instructed by Sir John Goldring as junior counsel to the inquest into the death of 96 football fans at the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster. Nikita was particularly involved in the consideration of the extensive and complex pathological evidence.

Public Inquiries

Nikita instructed in many of the most important public inquiries of recent years, representing government departments and corporate core participants, as well as acting as counsel to the inquiry.

She has been consistently ranked as a leading individual in the Inquests and Public Inquiries sections of both Chambers & Partners and the Legal 500 since 2018.

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Selected Cases

- **Independent Inquiry into Afghanistan:** Nikita is currently instructed by the Government Legal Department to represent the Ministry of Defence in the Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan, which was established to investigate matters arising from the deployment of UK Special Forces to Afghanistan between mid-2010 and mid-2013.
- **Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry:** Nikita is currently instructed on behalf of the Post Office in the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry established to gather a clear account of the implementation and failings of the Horizon IT system at the Post Office over its lifetime.
- **UK Covid-19 Inquiry:** Nikita currently acts for the Welsh Government in their role as Core Participants to the independent public inquiry into the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK. Nikita is taking responsibility for the Inquiry's Module 3 which will examine the impact of the pandemic on healthcare systems in the 4 nations of the UK.
- **Jermaine Baker Public Inquiry:** Nikita was instructed as first junior counsel to the Jermaine Baker Inquiry – an independent public inquiry into the shooting of Jermaine Baker during a Metropolitan Police Service operation.
- **Grenfell Tower Inquiry:** Nikita was instructed to represent a core participant involved in the design of the cladding in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. Nikita advised on the application for to the Inquiry to seek an undertaking from the Attorney General that evidence given before the Inquiry would not be used in subsequent criminal proceedings, whilst advising upon the implications of the Inquiry for the ongoing police investigation.
- **Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse:** Nikita was instructed as first junior counsel to the inquiry for the investigations into the Anglican Church and into Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings.

Professional Discipline & Regulation

Nikits has a strong professional discipline practice in the healthcare field, concentrating on the General Medical Council, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and the Care Quality Commission.

Selected Cases

- **GMC v M:** Nikita is instructed by the MDDUS to represent a consultant accused of sexual assault of two complainants in the course of respiratory examinations.
- **GMC v G:** Nikita was instructed by the MDDUS to represent a consultant who had pleaded guilty to assaulting his partner, who was a nurse in the hospital, by headbutting her and punching her twice to the face. He was accused of, but denied, further assaults. The further assaults were not found proved and he was sanctioned with a two-month suspension for the domestic violence.
- **NMC v PA:** Nikita was instructed to represent a registered nurse who was the owner and operator of a care home provider. Lengthy fitness to practise proceedings commenced following highly critical CQC inspections, with one of the homes closed. All but one of the 30 allegations were found unproved and no sanction was ordered.
- **RCC v CQC:** Nikita was instructed to represent a care home operator before the First Tier Tribunal (Care Standards) in an appeal against a decision by the CQC to close one of the homes.

Public Law

Nikita advises and represents across the range of public law matters, with a focus on cases involving defence and national security, as well as representing Coroners in judicial review proceedings and applications to quash inquests.

Selected Cases

- **H & Ors v Ministry of Defence:** Nikita is instructed to represent the Ministry of Defence in relation to group litigation against the MOD for personal injury caused by exposure to asbestos.
- **Cherfan v Senior Coroner for West London:** Nikita was instructed on behalf of the Coroner to represent her in an application to the High Court to reopen an inquest following an inadvertent failure to inform the family about the listing of that inquest.
- **Independent Review into the SFO's handling of the Unaoil Case:** Nikita was instructed by the AG's Office to be a member of, and legal advisor to, the panel led by Sir David Calvert-Smith KC to review the SFO's handling of a large corruption case in which convictions were quashed following allegations of misconduct by the SFO and its former director.
- **R (Morahan) v HM Assistant Coroner for West London:** Nikita successfully represented HMA for West London in a permission hearing before the High Court in relation to the, now leading, case considering the application of Article 2 for cases involving the treatment of mental health in the community.
- **Rushbrooke v HM Coroner for West London:** Nikita acted on behalf of the Coroner in an application to the Divisional Court to quash the inquest into the death of Sylvia Rushbrooke who was, at the time of her death, subject to a DOLS order and resident in a care home. The application was based upon procedural irregularities in the first inquest as well as insufficiency of inquiry.
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Sports Law

Nikita advises and represents both athletes and their regulators. She has appeared before a number of different sports associations in relation to conduct and disciplinary proceedings.

Her experience in the fields of crime and professional discipline, as well as her very extensive knowledge of safeguarding provisions, make her ideally suited to the very broad range of cases which may arise within the field of Sports Law.

Nikita is a member of the review board for the International Tennis Integrity Association's anti-doping panel.

Selected Cases

- **British Gymnastics v L:** Nikita acted for British Gymnastics in an appeal relating to the extent to which independent case panel's were entitled to consider the standards applicable at the time when considering disciplinary and safeguarding allegations against elite gymnastic coaches.
- **British Gymnastics v H:** Nikita acted for British Gymnastics in an appeal against sanction relating to historic safeguarding allegations.
- **British Gymnastics Association v S:** Nikita acted for the British Gymnastics Association in disciplinary proceedings against a gymnastic club and its coaches relating to its treatment of young elite gymnasts.
- **FA v X:** Nikita appeared on behalf of the FA to present the case against a player who failed an out of competition drugs test.
- **FA v M:** Nikita appeared on behalf of the FA to present the case against a player who used discriminatory language towards opposing players.

Appointments

Attorney General's B Panel (September 2024 – present)

Review board for the International Tennis Integrity Association's anti-doping panel

Education

- 2010: BVC, College of Law
- 2009: BVC Exhibition Award, Inner Temple
- 2008: LLB (Hons) Law with Australian Law, University of Nottingham

Memberships

- Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers
- Health and Safety Lawyers Association
- South Eastern Circuit