

"Austin Welch offers an excellent capacity to handle difficult instructions in inquests and inquiries. He draws strength from his experience of health and safety law, and advises a list of clients comprising bereaved families, police forces, businesses and government departments." - Inquests and Public Inquiries - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Austin gets to grips with a case quickly and he is personable with clients." - Inquests and Public Inquiries - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Austin is an incredibly sound and skilled advocate." Inquests and Public Inquiries - Chambers and Partners 2024

"He is very experienced, very measured, and doesn't take bad points." Inquests and Public Inquiries - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Austin Welch is a specialist in regulatory crime who often appears in health and safety cases. He is adept at acting on behalf of clients from the construction and waste sectors. He has expertise in food safety offences and cases relating to infectious disease outbreaks." Tier 1 – Health & Safety – Northern/North Eastern Bar - Chambers & Partners 2024

"Austin's attention to detail is excellent and his advocacy is persuasive and strong." Tier 1 – Health & Safety – Northern/North Eastern Bar - Chambers & Partners 2024

"He is an incredibly sound and skilled advocate." Tier 1 – Health & Safety – Northern/North Eastern Bar - Chambers & Partners 2024

"Austin is an excellent advocate. He has an authoritative presence in the courtroom and emits gravitas, he presents clear and well-reasoned arguments with ease, and he is an outstanding strategist and highly respected by clients and peers." Tier 1 Business and Regulatory Crime (inc H&S) - Legal 500 2024

"Austin is an excellent advocate and an outstanding strategist with an authoritative presence in the court room, and he emits gravitas. He presents clear and well-reasoned arguments with ease, and he is one of the best senior juniors in the field of health and safety, inquests, and public inquiries." Tier 1 Inquests and Inquiries - Legal 500 2024

"Very knowledgeable; his written and oral advocacy is top class. He is very patient and understanding with clients. A very capable lawyer and is very generous with his time. He has a very good track record." – Legal 500, 2021 – Regulatory – Tier 1

"A committed and exceptionally talented barrister; without doubt a future QC. He is meticulous in his approach to the case and excellent with the client, he was reassuring, confident and worked hard to ensure a positive outcome for the client." – Legal 500, 2021 – Inquests and Inquiries – Tier 1



CONTACT DETAILS

Email:

austin.welch@lincolnhousechambers.com

Telephone:

0161 832 5701

PRACTICE AREAS

Inquests & Inquiries

Health & Safety

Regulatory

Professional Discipline

SPECIALIST PANELS

Attorney General's List of Junior Counsel to the Crown

List of Specialist Regulatory Advocates in Health and Safety and Environmental Law - List B

MEMBERSHIPS

Health & Safety Lawyers Association

Institute of Occupational Safety and Health

Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers

Northern Circuit

EDUCATION

The University of Leeds
LLB (Hons)

The College of Law
Legal Practice Course

Manchester Metropolitan University
Bar Vocational Course

"All the qualities you expect in the best barristers – he is meticulous, a great tactician and confident on his feet. He combines all this with a very personable approach, and my clients can't speak highly enough of him." "Austin's capacity for hard work is mind-blowing. He has a diverse practice and is handling high-level and large-scale work." - Chambers & Partners, 2021 - Inquests and Public Inquiries

"A very personable barrister." - Chambers & Partners, 2021 - Health and Safety

"Combines superb client care with fantastic technical ability." – Legal 500, 2020 – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1)

"His client care skills are second to none." – Legal 500, 2020 – Regulatory, Health and Safety and Licensing (Tier 1)

"An excellent tactician who is persuasive on his feet." – Legal 500, 2019 – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1)

"He combines fantastic technical ability with great client care skills." – Legal 500, 2019 – Regulatory, Health and Safety and Licensing (Tier 1)

"Knowledgeable and approachable." "Very thorough." – Chambers and Partners 2019 – Health and Safety (Band 2)

"His legal, tactical and presentational abilities are excellent." – Legal 500, 2018 – Inquests and Inquiries (Tier 1)

PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE

Austin Welch represents a wide range of professionals facing disciplinary and regulatory proceedings. He has particular strength and experience in representing doctors in proceedings brought by the GMC at the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service. Austin is regularly instructed by doctors in fitness to practice hearings and interim order hearings.

Austin has represented police officers in misconduct hearings and officers who have been charged with criminal offences. Austin has also represented professional athletes in disciplinary proceedings before the National Anti-Doping Panel in proceedings brought by the UK Anti-Doping.

Austin is recognised by the leading legal directories as being a leading junior in the field of inquests and public inquiries. He has represented medical professionals and police officers in a number of high profile and complex inquests and public inquiries.

NOTABLE CASES

GMC v Dr A - Representing a Consultant in fitness to practice proceedings following the death of a patient under her care.

R v D – Junior Counsel representing a retired police officer being prosecuted for perverting the course of justice in relation to the alleged Hillsborough "cover-up."

GMC v Dr P – Represented a consultant in fitness to practise proceedings before the MPTS. Dr P had falsified professional references when applying for a promotion. A short suspension was imposed.

GMC v Dr B – Represented a doctor in fitness to practise proceedings before the MPTS. Dr B had been convicted of drink driving and had ongoing alcohol issues.



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GMC v Dr W – Represented a doctor in fitness to practise proceedings before the MPTS. Dr W had become addicted to opiate medication and had been convicted by the criminal courts of breaking into a hospital on numerous occasions over the course of 12 months to steal medication. A suspension was imposed on his registration.

In the matter of Chief Constable G – As junior counsel, represented the Chief Constable of a major police force in relation to allegations of gross misconduct.

UKAD v B – Represented a professional rugby league player in proceedings brought for doping control violations.

R v Detective Constable M – Represented a serving member of GMP charged with criminal offences relating to an alleged 'road rage' incident. The case was dismissed on application by the defence.

R v Superintendent K – Represented a senior police officer charged with a public order offence.

Newcastle University v L – Represented a medical student in an appeal against the University's decision to expel her.

Care Quality Commission v W – Represented a GP's surgery in an emergency application brought by the CQC to close the practice.

RECENT INQUESTS AND PUBLIC ENQUIRIES INVOLVING MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS AND POLICE OFFICERS

In the Hillsborough inquests – As junior counsel, Austin represented two senior South Yorkshire Police officers who were alleged to have orchestrated the "cover up" following the disaster at Hillsborough football stadium in 1989. The inquests lasted 2 years and are the longest in English legal history.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse – Currently instructed to represent a senior police officer in relation to the investigation into alleged sexual abuse by Lord Janner.

The inquest into the Manchester Arena Bombing – Austin is currently instructed to represent a number of family members of those who died as a result of the bombing at the Manchester Arena in 2017.

The Gosport War Memorial Hospital Independent Panel – Austin was part of the team involved in the investigation into the deaths that occurred at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital between 1988 and 2000 that led to the production of the report of the Independent Panel. Austin was responsible in particular for the drafting of the inquests section of the report.

In the inquest touching the death of B – Represented a nursing home in an inquest into the death of a resident who had died after not having been administered medicine. No finding of neglect.

In the inquest touching the death of C – Represented a nursing home in an inquest into the death of a resident who had died following suggestion of a lack of ongoing treatment. No finding of neglect.

In the inquest touching the death of B – Represented the manager of a care home in an inquest following the death of a resident who had fallen and suffered fatal head injuries.

In the inquest touching the death of D – Represented a nurse who had worked in a nursing home and who was alleged not to have administered medication to a resident.



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In the inquest touching the death of N – Represented the nurse in charge of a ward in which a patient died following complications relating to the administration of his care.



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