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Sir Jeffrey Jowell KCMG KC (Hon)



"Jeffrey draws on an incredibly rich and diverse legal experience that spans multiple jurisdictions in different capacities."

– LEGAL 500, 2026

Year of call:	**1965**
Appointed to silk:	**1993**
Degree:	**BA.LLB. (Cape Town), MA (Oxon), LLM.; SJD (Harvard)**
Languages:	**French (fluent)**

Sir Jeffrey Jowell combines an active practice of unusual variety with a distinguished academic career. From 2010-2015 Jeffrey was the inaugural Director of the Bingham Centre on the Rule of Law. His practice continued during that time and he returned to full-time practice in October 2015.

Sir Jeffrey is recognised as a leading silk in both the key legal directories, Chambers UK and Legal 500 for his expertise in offshore law and public international law. Previous quotes include:

- Sir Jeffrey draws on an incredibly rich and diverse legal experience that spans multiple jurisdictions in different capacities. One of the hallmarks of his hands-on approach is his ready willingness to provide pragmatic legal support, often times at short notice, on complex issues of varying sensitivity. It is aways a privilege to work with him. - Legal 500, 2026
- Sir Jeffrey is the elder statesman of PIL. His judgement is impeccable, he has fantastic charm, his name on a pleading adds incalculable weight and gravitas. - Legal 500, 2024
- Sir Jeffrey Jowell KCMG QC's expertise in the area was reflected when he was knighted (KCMG) for services to democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe. - Legal 500
- Outstanding – an absolute star - Legal 500
- His written and oral advocacy is beautifully crafted – he is a tremendous authority - Legal 500

The Times Law 100 2012 - Jeffrey is featured in The Times' list of the 100 most influential lawyers. He was listed in The Times newspaper's inaugural 'Law 100: the UK's most powerful lawyers' list, where he was described as "a leading authority on public, constitutional and administrative law".

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The scope of Sir Jeffrey's work includes constitutional law, judicial review, human rights and other aspects of public and international law. He advises extensively on the drafting of national constitutions, the relationship between the UK and dependent and overseas territories, and the design and application of internal regulatory schemes. He has recently appeared on these matters in the courts of Commonwealth countries, the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the UK Privy Council and the UK Supreme Court.

His advice is enhanced by the practical experience he gained through his role (between 2000–2011) as the UK's member of the Council of Europe's Commission for Democracy through Law ("The Venice Commission") where he assisted with the constitutional and public law of a number of countries.

He has held public office such as Member of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution; Non-Executive Director of the Office of Rail Regulation ('ORR'). He is a member of the Foreign Secretary's Advisory Committee on Human Rights and is a trustee of various charities and foundations in the UK and abroad, including the Sigrid Rausing Trust and the UK branch of the South African Constitutional Court Trust. He is co-chair of the Leadership Council of the World Justice Project.

Sir Jeffrey is Professor Emeritus of Public Law at University College London where he was Dean of the Law Faculty and a Vice Provost. His authority as an academic commentator is reflected in many citations to his work in the judgments of courts in this country and abroad. His many publications include the standard text on Judicial Review (with Lord Woolf et al): de Smith's Judicial Review (8th ed. 2018) and (with Professor Colm O'Cinneide), The Changing Constitution (9th ed. 2019).

He is a Bencher of the Middle Temple and has been awarded a number of honorary degrees and awards including Hon. Fellow of UCL, Hon. Fellow of Hertford College Oxford, Honorary Doctorates from the Universities of Cape Town, Athens and Paris, and Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Sir Jeffrey is an accredited CEDR Mediator.

EXPERIENCE

Public & Regulatory

Sir Jeffrey is instructed by private and government solicitors in the UK and abroad, and by international organisations on issues of constitutional, administrative and human rights law. He has advised on the constitutions of the Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Gibraltar, Burma, Sri Lanka, Georgia and The Gambia. He has acted as an expert witness or an advocate in cases about international human rights and fair trial standards in a number of jurisdictions and has been described in an extradition case as an "authoritative and persuasive witness". He regularly advises on public law matters in British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, most recently for Jersey, Guernsey, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands. He has previously been involved in the constitutional settlements of Serbia, Bosnia, the Maldives and Luxembourg. He has appeared in the courts of a number of Commonwealth countries including Malawi, the Cayman Islands and Bermuda. He assisted with the South African constitution and its administrative law statute. He appeared in the Supreme Court case, R (Privacy International) v Investigatory Powers Tribunal and in the recent Privy Council case, The Corporation of Hamilton v. Attorney General of Bermuda.

> ***"A leading authority on public, constitutional and administrative law."***
>
> — THE TIMES LAW 100, 2012

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Cases

R (on the application of Privacy International) v Investigatory Powers Tribunal and others

[2019] UKSC 22

He acted for the appellants in this leading UK Supreme Court case on ouster clauses.

Chief Justice of the Cayman Islands v The Governor of the Cayman Islands

[2012] UKPC 39

He appeared in the Privy Council in this case.

The Corporation of Hamilton v Attorney General and Governor of Bermuda

[2025] UKPC 50

He acted for the Appellant.

Central Planning Authority of the Cayman Islands v National Conservation Council

CICA (Civil) Appeal No. 022 and 025 of 2022, 1 SEPT. 2023.

He acted for the Appellant.

John Hewitt v Tara Rivers & Attorney General of the Cayman Islands

Grand Court (Cause No. 198 of 2013)

In 2013, he appeared in this case which is likely to stand as a major authority on electoral law in Commonwealth jurisdictions.

Mediation

Sir Jeffrey is a CEDR accredited mediator. His wealth of experience derives not only from his professional practice across the public law and human rights arena, but also from his distinguished career as a high profile academic and administrator. He has also developed an impressive portfolio of constitutional work for national governments abroad and he is well known for his strong diplomatic skills in this field, often negotiating with the UK Government on behalf of British Overseas Territories.

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Rule of Law

Sir Jeffrey has been involved in practical rule of law projects in many different ways. He was the founder-director of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law (a London-based international body); and the UK Member, and then a Vice President of the Council of Europe's Commission for Democracy Through Law (the 'Venice Commission', which provides advice to countries in Europe and beyond on rule of law issues) where he chaired the Commission's well-known document on the Rule of Law. He has advised a number of countries on their constitutions, on their law-making, electoral, law-enforcement and regulatory systems and on techniques to ensure access to justice, rights and judicial independence. He is a leading authority on administrative law, including the necessary powers of the state and ways to ensure good and lawful governance. He is a co-chair of the Leadership Council of the World Justice Project and jointly chaired a panel for the European Law Institute which has led to their Charter on the Fundamental Constitutional Principles of a European Democracy.

Public International Law

Sir Jeffrey has advised and litigated in many countries on different issues concerning constitutional and international human rights standards. He has represented a number of Commonwealth countries and British Overseas Territories and Dependencies on their relative powers and constitutional duties. He has acted as counsel or expert witness in cases involving international fair trial standards. He has recently appeared in the European Court of Human Rights and in the courts of countries in the Caribbean on such matters, and in the Privy Council and the UK Supreme Court.

> ***"Sir Jeffrey is a highly respected and senior barrister. He undertakes his work with consummate professionalism."***
>
> — LEGAL 500, 2025

Cases

Day and Bush v The Governor of the Cayman Islands

[2022] UKPC 6

He acted for the Respondents.

Kezerashvili v Georgia

Application No. 11027/22

Acting for former Georgian Defence Minister David Kezerashvili before the ECtHR, which upheld his claim that his right to a fair trial under Article 6 of the European Convention was violated in the course of the criminal proceedings brought against him in Georgia. The judgment may be found here.

Maduro Board of the Central Bank of Venezuela v Guiado Board of the Central Bank of Venezuela

[2021] UKSC 57

He represented the Maduro Board.

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Offshore

Sir Jeffrey has worked on different issues offshore for countries, attorneys-general and civil society. His work has included advice and/or litigation on public law matters in places such as Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Hong Kong, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Southern African Development Community's Tribunal in Namibia, and South Africa, some of which has led to and related litigation in the UK Privy Council and Supreme Court. He has advised a number of countries on their anti money-laundering and sanctions duties and been involved with some in their negotiations with the FCDO in respect of privacy rights in respect of registers of beneficial ownership. He has advised a number of British Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies on a number of aspects of their relationship with the United Kingdom, including post-Brexit arrangements and treaty-making. He has recently advised on the new constitutions or constitutional amendments of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Cayman Islands, Georgia, Sri Lanka and The Gambia. Previous work includes advice on public law and human rights issues in Singapore, Malaysia, Gibraltar, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and South Africa.

"One of the hallmarks of his hands-on approach is his ready willingness to provide pragmatic legal support, often times at short notice, on complex issues of varying sensitivity. It is aways a privilege to work with him."

— LEGAL 500, 2026

Cases

R (Sir David Barclay and Sir Frederick Barclay) v The Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor and others

[2014] UKSC 54

In 2014 Jeffrey appeared successfully on behalf of Guernsey and Jersey intervening in the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.

VAT registration number: 681495992

Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board