



德 DES VOEUX  
輔 CHAMBERS

Independent Counsel in

**FAMILY LAW**

# Family Law

Des Voeux Chambers has a strong presence in the practice of family law in Hong Kong.

Members bring a combination of legal skills and emotional intelligence to guide lay clients through matrimonial settlements and divorce and separation cases. Members specializing in family law have handled complex family and divorce issues, identifying practical solutions, expediting outcomes, and minimalizing the impact to vulnerable individuals, especially children. Given Hong Kong's diverse international make-up, many cases are multi-jurisdictional, and some of our members have recently played a major role in litigation spanning across Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and Singapore. Members also act for interveners and third parties claiming proprietary intent in property *prima facie* falling within the matrimonial pool.

## What the directories say:

*Characterised as being a very experienced practitioner who is popular among family law solicitors, one of DVC's members is well-known for "being able to address all different aspects" of family law and for being able to "operate across the family spectrum for financial and child-related issues." Another member "devotes her entire practice to family law matters covering all branches of the discipline," and is respected for being "one of the most experienced handlers of children's matters."*

**Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific (2018)**

*Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific 2017 describes one advocate as "very experienced in children's matters" and separately another member is "widely recognised as one of the most experienced lawyers handling matters at the junior bar" as well as "a firm advocate who fights her corner appropriately."*

**Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific (2017)**



**John Scott QC, SC**

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John Scott QC, SC is Head of Des Voeux Chambers. Mr. Scott is an accomplished trial advocate having acquired over 30 years experience in a wide range of commercial disputes. He has earned a reputation for being “an extremely good all-rounder and a very persuasive advocate.” \*

In matrimonial matters, he has acted in substantial MPS and ancillary relief hearings dealing with aspects of valuation of shares in listed and private companies and the valuation of trust property.

**John Scott SC** has been recognised by Doyles as a Leading Senior Counsel for Hong Kong Family, Divorce and Matrimonial matters in 2018

***“John Scott SC, the head of Des Voeux Chambers, is characterised by sources as “\*an extremely good all-rounder and very persuasive advocate,” particularly respected by juniors for his “good, always patient leadership.” His handling of construction-related disputes, including arbitrations, attracts particular notice, and he is also increasingly selected for regulatory work, lately representing the Securities and Futures Commission in Market Misconduct Tribunal proceedings which determined that Mayer Holdings and nine of its executives had committed a breach of disclosure requirements by not reporting anomalies in the company’s accounts as soon as practicable after these were discovered by auditors.”***

**Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific (2018)**



**Liza Jane Cruden**

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Since call to the Bar Liza Jane has had a commercial and chancery practice that includes matrimonial proceedings. She has extensive experience in diverse property law matters with an emphasis on real and personal property, trusts, and matrimonial cases.

She undertakes advisory and advocacy work in the wide range of ancillary relief and children matters. These cases often raise complex property, company, trusts, multijurisdictional and third party interests legal and procedural issues. They regularly require skilled handling of expert witnesses from different disciplines, such as the medical profession, accountants, surveyors, valuers and social services.

Liza Jane is Treasurer of the Hong Kong Advocacy Training Council, has long been an advocacy trainer for the Hong Kong Bar Association and trained advocates in other jurisdictions, including on handling vulnerable witnesses and experts. She appears at all levels of Court as well as in arbitral, statutory, administrative and disciplinary tribunals. Her ADR experience includes mediation.



**Mairéad Rattigan**

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Mairéad was called to the Hong Kong Bar in 1990 and has developed a very busy matrimonial practice. She is consistently ranked by Chambers and Partners and Doyles Guide as one of the most experienced family practitioners at the Hong Kong Bar, Doyles Guide has rated her as Preeminent Junior Counsel for the last three years running.

Mairéad has appeared in numerous reported cases across a broad spectrum of family matters from Children's Proceedings to complex financial and multi jurisdictional disputes, she also regularly advises and acts for trustees and other third parties in such disputes. She has acted as an expert on Hong Kong family law in proceedings in various jurisdictions outside Hong Kong and is a qualified Collaborative Practitioner. She is a contributing author of Family Law and Practice in Hong Kong and is a member of the Bar's Special Committee on Family Law.

For the 3rd year in a row, **Mairéad Rattigan** has been acclaimed by Doyles as a Preeminent Junior Counsel for her expertise in Hong Kong Family, Divorce and Matrimonial Law (2016, 2017 and 2018)

***Mairéad Rattigan of Des Voeux Chambers operates across the full family law spectrum, handling both financial and child-related issues, one interviewee characterising her as a "very experienced" practitioner who is "very popular among family law solicitors because she can address all the different aspects." She is further described as a "very fair and pleasant opponent" and "someone you'll hear no criticism of" in the family/matrimonial sphere. She acted for the respondent father in N v W, a notably intractable custody and appropriate split of time case with complex financial dimensions.***

**Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific (2018)**

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**Frances Irving**

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Frances was called to the Bar in Hong Kong in 1997, having worked as a Social Worker for many years, first in Scotland and then Hong Kong, primarily in matters relating to children's welfare.

Frances has developed a busy practice exclusively in the family jurisdiction and for the third year running has been recognised by Doyles as a Leading Junior Counsel in the Family, Divorce and Matrimonial arena, and by Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific, wherein she was cited as "one of the most experienced handlers of children's matters".

In addition to matters concerning children, Frances has experience in a broad range of ancillary relief matters, including jurisdiction and forum disputes, third party interests and nuptial settlements. She was one of the team of counsel who acted in the Court of Final Appeal case of **LKW v. DD**.

She is a member of the Working Group on Children and Ancillary Relief Procedures in Family Proceedings, Chaired by The Hon Madam Justice Bebe Chu, and a member of the Committee of the Hong Kong Family Law Association.

Frances is a contributing author to Family Law and Practice in Hong Kong and is also a Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers.

**Frances Irving** has been recognised by Doyles as a Leading Junior Counsel in the Family, Divorce and Matrimonial arena for 3 consecutive years, that is from 2016 - 2018 inclusive.

***Frances Irving of Des Voeux Chambers devotes her entire practice to family law matters, covering all branches of the discipline, but focusing most closely on child and welfare issues, one interviewee describing her as "one of the most experienced handlers of children's matters" and adding: "She's great on that." She acted for the respondent father in JDYS v EYCK, a shared care dispute in which her client sought to have the case referred to the Court of Appeal.***

**Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific (2018)**



## Yang-Wahn Hew

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Yang's accounting know-how and his extensive experience as a commercial, company, and chancery practitioner, have led to his developing a natural interest in and focus on the financial aspects of matrimonial cases, in particular interim maintenance and ancillary relief.

He has accordingly acted for and advised the husband, the wife, or alleged nominees in matrimonial cases of various sizes, including several "*big-money*" cases with an international dimension.

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## Christopher Chain

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Christopher Chain was awarded the Bar Scholarship and called to the Hong Kong Bar in 2008. He has a broad civil practice with extensive experience as a trial and appellate advocate.

Aligning with his extensive practice in company, commercial, and trust matters, Christopher has experience in handling all aspects of matrimonial finance.

Christopher has appeared in and advised on cases involving maintenance pending suit, periodical payment orders, lump sum orders, and property adjustment orders (whether on behalf of the husband, the wife, or third parties claiming interest in matrimonial assets).

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**Patrick Siu**

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Patrick has been regularly instructed in ancillary relief applications and children-related matters. In particular, he has acted for the successful appellant wife in *PLTO v. KLK* (2014) 17 HKCFAR 414, resulting in an ancillary relief to the wife of HK\$832.5 million, dealing with such issues as the treatment of offshore discretionary trusts and the proper approach to separation and post-separation accruals. He has also been involved in *L v. W* FCMP178/2013, one of the first published decisions about the test of setting aside leave for ancillary relief after divorce outside Hong Kong.

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**Alexander Tang**

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Alexander Tang is a contributor to the standard textbook in this area, Family Law and Practice in Hong Kong.

He has appeared in a number of matrimonial cases, in particular in relation to jurisdiction, *forum* and anti-suit issues (see for example *Z v. Z* (HCMC 6/2011, 3 October 2012).

He has also acted in a number of ancillary relief disputes, including claims in relation to the setting aside of transactions under MPPO s.17.

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## **Ebony Ling**

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Ebony is a Bar Scholar and Charles Ching Scholar. She was called to the Bar in 2012 after graduating from her BCL degree at the University of Oxford and ranking first in her LLB class at the University of Hong Kong.

She has been instructed in a wide range of cases involving areas such as matrimonial, commercial, company, land, judicial review, and arbitration matters.

In the family court, Ebony has appeared in cases concerning divorce and children matters, as well as applications under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Ordinance (Cap. 481).



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## **Jacqueline Law**

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Jacqueline is a Bar Scholar and a Charles Ching Scholar. She obtained her BCL degree (ranking first in Commercial Remedies) at the University of Oxford, after she received a First in LLB from the University of Hong Kong, ranking second in her class. Apart from developing a broad civil practice in line with Chamber's profile, she has a particular interest in matrimonial matters since reading law, her efforts earning her the subject prize in Matrimonial Practice and Procedure during her PCLL studies.

Since joining Chambers in 2014, Jacqueline has provided advice and representation in the Family Court to husbands, wives and separating unmarried parents in matters ranging from variation of maintenance orders (interim and final), enforcement of undertakings, application for litigation funding, avoidance of disposition, to preliminary issue trial on ownership of matrimonial home and financial provisions for children of unmarried couples.

Jacqueline is a contributing editor to Hong Kong Civil Procedure and has delivered CPD Seminars on family law, planning law and the law of unjust enrichment.

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## Michael Lok

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Michael Lok enjoys a broad civil and commercial practice, with an increasing interest in the area of family law. Michael has appeared before the Family Court on a number of occasions, including the participation of a trial on ancillary relief as led junior. Michael's commercial practice is particularly relevant to matrimonial disputes involving disputes over property rights and complex shareholding and/or trust structures. For instance, Michael is presently representing a number of interveners (including the subsidiary of a PRC listed company) to dispute the ownership of certain potential matrimonial assets including real estate property as well as company shareholding.

After obtaining his LLB degree from the London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE) with First Class Honours and coming top of his year, Michael read for the BCL at Oxford, from which he graduated with Distinction and top of college. Michael was awarded the Bar Scholarship and the Charles Ching Memorial Scholarship by the Hong Kong Bar Association.

Michael also serves as Contributing Editor of the Hong Kong Civil Procedure ("White Book"), and was appointed Non-Clinical Lecturer of Law at the Law Faculty of the University of Hong Kong. Michael has also delivered CPD seminars on issues involving matrimonial/family law.

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## Eva Leung

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Eva joined Des Voeux Chambers in 2014 after graduating from Oxford (BA) and CUHK (BBA). She has handled cases relating to matrimonial matters, including a full trial on ancillary relief (*WMY v. CSK*, FCMC 17011/2011, unrep., 30 June 2016, led by Douglas Lam SC).

Eva has also appeared before the family court in matters concerning ancillary relief and has advised on matters concerning child custody and general divorce proceedings. Given Eva's background in tax law, her capability in the family law arena extends to being able to handle complex issues which arise in the context of financial settlements, and the tax implications that eventuate as a result.

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**Ellen Pang**

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Ellen appears regularly in the family court for ancillary relief and children cases. She has experience in conducting trials at the family court in her own right. She has previously been instructed to appear in proceedings conducted in Chinese.

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**Cherry Xu**

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Cherry obtained her LLB degree from the University of Hong Kong with First Class Honours, ranking top of her year. She proceeded to read BCL at Oxford University and graduated with a distinction in competition law. She has been awarded various scholarships and awards including the Rhodes Scholarship in 2013 and the Charles Ching Memorial Scholarship in 2016.

Cherry is developing a broad practice in civil and commercial law. She has handled various family law matters, ranging from matrimonial disputes to probate matters. With a keen interest in the area, Cherry is looking to expand her practice in family law cases.

Cherry is a native Mandarin speaker and is fluent in English and Cantonese.

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## **Terrence Tai**

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Terrence joined DVC in 2016 after he completed a JD at the University of Hong Kong (ranking 2nd in his class) and a BCL at the University of Oxford (with distinction). Terrence was awarded the Bar Scholarship and the Charles Ching Memorial Scholarship in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

Terrence is developing a broad civil practice and has appeared regularly in Court as sole advocate or as a junior. He has experience handling family and matrimonial matters, contentious mental health applications, and cases involving trust and probate issues.

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## **Sharon Yuen**

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Sharon joined DVC in 2017 after completing her BBA (Law) and LLB at the University of Hong Kong with First Class Honours, and LLM at Harvard Law School. She is developing a broad civil practice and has appeared regularly in Court as a sole advocate or led junior. In particular, she has experience handling various family and matrimonial matters, including child custody, trust and probate issues. She is interested in expanding her practice in this area.

Sharon is fluent in Cantonese, English and Mandarin (both written and oral).

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### **Des Voeux Chambers**

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