

MIDDLE EAST HUB

CONNECTING YOU TO THE  
ARABIAN GULF AND BEYOND

**hcr**  
harrison clark  
rickerbys solicitors

# A PASSION FOR PEOPLE

**Our passion for people is at the heart of everything we do. It's the engine that keeps us ticking and inspires us to do our best. We're not satisfied unless we're making a real difference to people's lives, and we'll keep working hard to ensure we achieve the best outcome possible for you.**

## Who we are

As an award winning, full service UK law firm, we provide the full range of services that you would expect to organisations, business leaders and individuals. We are entrepreneurial in our outlook so we're flexible and responsive to the needs of our clients, delivering the best outcomes for them. Many of our lawyers come from City firms so you benefit from their experience at a reasonable cost.

We have nearly 850 lawyers and support staff, including more than 150 partners, and have been awarded the Law Society's Lexcel quality mark in recognition of our compliance and client care standards. Clients value our honesty and our friendly approach. We truly partner with our clients and demonstrate our genuine commitment to them and what they're trying to achieve, in all that we do.

We are pragmatic and won't 'sit on the fence' – clients have confidence in our advice because of our demonstrable experience and the relationships we build with them. Our roots go back to 1796 in Cheltenham and 1904 in Worcester, when our predecessor firms were founded. Our growth has been in response to client demand, and we now have ten UK locations, including our international HQ in London, and our Cambridge office.

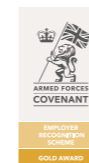
We know that people are at the heart of every business – we value the personal relationships we make, and we know that business success is as much about having the right people as the right product or service.

Our offering stretches across borders, too. We have six international hubs covering America, Australia, China, India, the Middle East and Europe. Our team includes dual-qualified lawyers and several of our lawyers are members of the International Bar Association.

We are also a member of Law Exchange International (LEI); an association of independent law firms serving clients doing business in the world's major commercial markets. The association complements our international hubs and gives us access to the expertise of 37 independent law firms across five continents and 31 countries, who all share our commitment to excellence.

In an increasingly connected world, businesses of all sizes operate across borders. This can involve a myriad of legal intricacies and complex regulations due to the unique laws of each country.

## Our awards



## Where we work

### International reach

- 1 America
- 2 Australia
- 3 China
- 4 Europe
- 5 India
- 6 Middle East



### UK offices

- 1 Birmingham
- 2 Cambridge
- 3 Cardiff
- 4 Central England
- 5 Cheltenham
- 6 Hereford
- 7 London
- 8 Thames Valley
- 9 Worcester
- 10 Wye Valley



Our team speak more than **35** languages including Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu and most European languages.

“

If you're looking to do business in the UK or enter the Middle East market, having the right combination of international experience and local know how is essential to getting a good deal and understanding the risks. Our international group brings together specialist experts from across the firm working in a diverse range of countries.

”

Raj Pahuja, Head of Middle East Hub



## Raj Pahuja

### Head of Middle East Hub

Raj is an international business lawyer who advises on a broad spectrum of complex commercial and transactional corporate work in a variety of sectors, from sports, media and entertainment to technology, energy and manufacturing.

Raj qualified in New York (2000) and England (2002) and has significant experience of doing business in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (“GCC”) across multiple sectors, having lived and worked in both the UAE and Bahrain for over 12 years where he worked for some of the leading law firms and also in-house at Expo 2020 Dubai.

Raj has significant experience in the GCC and some of his highlights include:

- Conducting an extended and politically sensitive major due diligence on a large, high profile infrastructure project for a sovereign client
- Acting for a major cloud computing provider advising on a number of strategic matters, including the establishment of cloud computing infrastructure in Bahrain and the Middle East region
- Acting for a steering committee on a US\$1.7 billion financial restructuring of a Kuwaiti bank, he led instructions.

Raj is a trusted advisor to international companies looking to enter the region and to domestic companies looking to expand. In addition, Raj has advised corporate and government entities on high profile and sensitive matters and has a deep understanding of the procedures of doing business in the region.

## Nicolas Groffman

### Head of International

Nicolas is head of International and also head of the commercial team in the Thames Valley office of HCR. Nicolas practised law in China for 16 years before moving to the UK in 2015. He regularly speaks and writes on international transactions, specializing on cross border contracts, especially in the sectors of film and media, defence, and education. He has years of experience dealing with projects in the Gulf, with recent experience including:

- Specialist investigative due diligence on business people and their companies in the UAE and Jordan
- Significant experience in education; notably advising two UK schools on due diligence on counterparties in Egypt and assisting The City School on a cooperation contract with a famous UK school
- Advice for a US entity contracting with a Dubai capital introduction company
- Intellectual property assistance in KSA, UAE, Qatar and Oman (and advising on Arabic names).

Nicolas speaks fluent Chinese and has written for the India Defence Journal on Sino-Indian espionage and defence, and has advised Gulf companies on their exposure to China-related risk.





## Case studies

### Our Middle East expertise

A number of our Partners have a solid network in the Middle East, with a range of contacts throughout the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, and Saudi to name a few. The combined level of expertise they bring ensures your transactions, whether from the Middle East to the UK or vice-versa, are grounded in reliability and practicality.

#### Expo 2020 Dubai

The team regularly advised Expo 2020 Dubai on various software contracts including software licenses, software development agreements, software maintenance agreements, SaaS agreements and third party EULAs.

They also advised them on a ticketing development solution, negotiated the procurement of a cloud service and advised on the migration of their data centre to a cloud storage network. Master service agreements and partnership agreements were negotiated and drafted as well as giving advice on complex IP provisions for bespoke software.

#### Arabian Royal Family Estate

We have represented the minority shareholder in a central London property agency based in Berkeley Square which manages the multi-billion London estate of an Arabian Royal Family. The client sought an order compelling the majority shareholders to purchase his shares at a specified price. The dispute was referred to arbitration by the recently retired senior Chancery Division Judge of the High Court, and HCR instructed James Potts QC of Erskine Chambers, Chancery Lane. The case settled before a final hearing at our client's target price of £4 million.

### Technology

Our work in technology has seen us advising a variety of businesses. This has ranged from advising a supplier of IT-related services in relation to an e-voucher solution for the FIFA World Cup 2022 to advising a UAE-based communications company consultancy regarding the expansion of their business in the UK.

We've also advised a Dubai-based start-up on its proposed applied blockchain business for luxury assets and acted for a global, Dubai-headquartered foreign currency exchange business in relation to an internal investigation, prosecution of staff involved in corruption, successfully defending it from UK FCA and SFO enforcement action.

### Advising Middle East businesses

Our experience of advising in the Middle East spans a number of sectors. Our team have advised a sovereign client on the re-structuring of an airline and acted for a US global IT company on the purchase of business operations in Bahrain, Dubai and KSA.

### Advising UK based businesses

Our team have acted for a UK based service provider in relation to MDLBEAST in KSA. We have also acted for a UK business in setting up operations in Oman and have advised an international client in relation to an agreement involving Abu Dhabi airport.

### Other examples of our work

Our real estate work involves contacts in Dubai and has sourced property for a variety of Middle East clients, including those from Qatar, Saudi, Kuwait and Oman. In the UK, our real estate team covers all areas including commercial property, energy and renewables, conveyancing, property development and advice around planning, highways and the environment.



## Our services

From corporate and commercial matters to navigating complicated employment and immigration law, we pride ourselves on having a practical, commercial approach. We handle a wide range of international issues for businesses, including cases involving restructuring and insolvency, employment and staff migration, intellectual property and dispute resolution. We also work with private international individuals who have legal issues in the UK.

As a full service law firm, we provide solutions for you, your business and your family. Here's a snapshot of what we think our clients, both established in the Middle East and those looking to do business there, will most want support with.

### Banking and Finance

When you need funding to drive your business forward, our banking and finance team have the network and experience to deliver the lending solution best suited to your company and needs.

Our team will help navigate the waters of the Middle East financial market while providing clarity at every stage.

### Corporate

We immerse ourselves in your world and get to know your organisation inside out so that during a restructure, merger, acquisition or sale, we won't sit on the fence – we'll give you a clear view of the risks and opportunities, and provide the advice you need to make each decision.

### Technology

In a rapidly changing world, keeping on top of technology law is essential. Whether advising on intellectual property rights and protection or the latest cryptocurrency, our technology sector experts will be able to guide you through the challenges you're facing and ensure you know all the facts before making a decision or investment.

Your business may be diversifying, or you may simply want to ensure you own what you're selling – our lawyers have advised across a range of businesses, from film and media to telecommunications.

### Dispute Resolution

Disputes can arise at any time in the lifecycle of a business; and it's always best to be prepared for them. Whether you're doing business in the Middle East or looking to set up in the UK, we're on hand to help. Our large team of litigation and dispute resolution lawyers will ensure you understand the issues you face, what risks are involved and help you decide upon a strategy to allow you to move forward.

From commercial and corporate disputes to reputation management, our team provide a comprehensive service to ensure disputes are resolved as quickly and easily as possible.

### Employment and Immigration

We provide a strategic and focused approach to all employment issues, whether for companies or senior executives, we will empower you to make the right decision for your people.





## Commercial

We can steer you through everything from day-to-day commercial matters to contracts, agreements, risk management, and asset protection. We can also help you with distribution, franchise and manufacturing agreements and help you limit your liabilities through creative, comprehensive, watertight agreements that are tailored to your business.

## Commercial Property

If you're looking for advice and assistance in the Middle East or the UK, our expert team of commercial property lawyers will be right behind you every step of the way, buying and selling a commercial property, development and energy and renewables are all areas covered by our team.

So, whether your new investment is at home or abroad, we'll be able to provide you with the guidance you need to get your project over the line.

## Construction and Engineering

Just as important as your real estate needs are your construction needs – our construction and engineering team have vast knowledge across a range of regulations, dealing with project-related contracts and disputes.

For businesses looking to build in the Middle East, and those already based in the Middle East who want to build in the UK, our construction and engineering lawyers act for a wide range of clients in the private and public sectors such as developers, contractors, consultants, manufacturers and funders. Our UK clients are wide-ranging, and we have an international reach via our membership of LawExchange International.

## Restructuring and Insolvency

When you or your business finances are in troubled waters, we can offer a lifeline. Whatever financial problems you are experiencing - directly or through your suppliers - we'll help you find the best way forward, giving you a fresh start, director protection and safeguarding jobs where possible. Working across all sectors and industries - insolvency practitioners, lenders and individuals all ask us for advice.

## Education and Charities

For more than 50 years, we have been at the heart of the education and charities sector and have gained a reputation as a key player in education law. Our work covers the full spectrum of legal affairs which affects educational institutions, providing clear advice to help solve their problems and achieve their aims and objectives.

Our education team are acknowledged as specialists, having provided tailored legal advice and fostered collaborative relationships with a range of educational institutions.

On an international scale, in 2021, we helped set up the first purpose-built branded school with full boarding facilities in Vietnam. This ground-breaking project was led by Head of International, Nicolas Groffman.



## Defence

If you're a defence and security specialist, or a member of the armed forces, you need someone who speaks your language. We understand the challenges you face and have the clearance to operate across the entire defence industry.

Our knowledge and experience will help you avoid unnecessary delays and wasted costs. In international trade, our specialist teams advise on export credit guarantees, finance and licensing, international IP rights, tax and insurance considerations, cross border litigation and dispute resolution.

We also deal with export licences, providing advice on licencing and potential embargoes and sanctions, and have expertise around the UK Bribery Act; ensuring you have the necessary procedures in place to avoid incurring liability under the Bribery Act when trading overseas.

## Health and Social Care

The health and social care sector is often faced with significant and rapid changes in the law, and it's vital you have the right legal advice and support when you need it, along with a team who understand your industry as much as you do. We're passionate about supporting businesses across healthcare, social care, dental care, veterinary and pharmacy sectors – and we're constantly refining our services to meet the needs of the industry.

We also support health and social care businesses through our real estate healthcare team. The team work to advise dental practices and other care practices across a range of sale and purchase agreements, expense sharing agreements, partnership agreements and all associated real estate work.

## Film, Media and Entertainment

The media, film and entertainment industries continue to go through significant change. We have specialist lawyers with decades of experience advising people and businesses in these industries, advising a diverse range of clients from actors to sportspeople and clubs, production companies and individuals visiting or performing in the UK and EU.

We provide expertise across ownership and usage rights, IP protection, project financing, reviewing contracts, tax advice and negotiation amongst a range of others. So, whether you're looking at starting a new project in the Middle East or transferring your existing one to the UK, our specialist team will be on hand every step of the way.

## Sports Law

The Middle East and the UK have always enjoyed a shared love of sport, and ensuring you've got a winning legal team behind you is as important as having a winning team on the pitch.

Our experience in sports law covers supporting athletes, clubs, sponsors and organisers from community to global level – giving you a formidable teammate whoever the opponent.

Our sports specialists comprise commercial, contract, corporate and dispute resolution experts. This multidisciplinary team can advise on everything from financial, regulatory and property support to international support for events, visas and overseas transfers.





### Services for you

Along with services for your business needs, we also provide advice, support and assistance for individuals and their families too.

### Family Law

If you're starting a new relationship, or coming to the end of one, having a lawyer who can advise, support and – most importantly – understand you, is essential in order to achieve the right outcome. We can help you protect your wealth in the case of divorce and arrange pre- and post-nuptial agreements to help plan for every eventuality.

Our team have significant experience across all aspects of family law – from mediation to finances on divorce and children's matters. We work closely with you to help make the process as stress-free as possible.

### Private Client

Ensuring your loved ones are looked after and provided for after you've gone is an important step to take. Our expert wills, trusts and probate lawyers can help you plan for the future and advise you if you are in the position of being the executor of a will.

We work to help you make a will, set up trusts and ensure your wealth is passed to those you want it to go to. We can help you set up a trust corporation or a family investment company, and have a specialist team who deal with older and vulnerable clients to make things easier when it's needed.

### Private Wealth and Family Offices

We understand that our clients have individual goals and priorities when it comes to their private wealth. Our specialists take the time to understand the intricacies of your situation and wealth, offering bespoke solutions to meet your objectives.

Our private wealth experts are on hand to provide specialist legal guidance and support to help individuals, trustees and family offices navigate what can be complex legal and tax matters to ensure that your tailored objectives are being met.

### Estate Planning

Estate planning, (both UK and offshore), succession planning for businesses and related shareholder and partnership issues, administration of estates, Family Investment Companies, complex landed estates and property advice, advising on cross border matters, including domicile and residence, management of family reputation and relationships, including mediation services and criminal defence, investigations and immigration.

### Residential Property

We keep up to date on the changes in residential property law so that we can give you the very best and most accurate advice. Our experienced team have a vast knowledge of residential property matters, and we work hard to get you the best results.

We are flexible and adaptable with experience that extends beyond sales and purchases. We give legal advice on other, non-contentious, residential property matters including re-mortgages, transfer of equities, lease creation or extensions and applications, drafting and registration work. Whatever your needs, we understand the process, and we're here to support you through it.





## Added value

We recognise it's important to add value for our clients – you want more than a legal advisor – you want a partner who can help you move forward with the challenges you face.

We provide legal updates to our clients through a variety of events, both online and in person, and newsletters. These cover a range of areas, particularly those affecting businesses, such as banking and commercial issues.

### Connections

With a wide range of contacts throughout the UK and the world thanks to our membership of LawExchange International, we're able to connect you with the communities you want to work in and with.

Our contacts range from international companies to start up and early stage tech businesses - so whether you want to branch out, diversify or change direction, we'll be able to introduce you to new areas of business and point you in the direction of new ideas. Being at the heart of change is a cornerstone of our ethos, and we are dedicated to helping you achieve your goals.

### Corporate social responsibility

Giving back to the communities we live and work in is as important to the Middle East as it is to the UK. We're aware that our responsibility goes beyond our office doors – that's why we regularly take part in initiatives which help others. Our Charitable Foundation has given more than £250,000 since it was set up in 2007 – going to people and causes where they can really have an impact.

We've also committed to net-zero, removing carbon from our operations and wider business activities consistently each year, with an aim to reach a net-zero position by 2040.

### HCR Flex

HCR Flex is a model which developed in response to a growing number of organisations who may previously have benefitted from in-house counsel, or now need to top up their in house resource.

With HCR Flex you'll receive reduced day rates and benefit from a long-term resource pool embedded in your business – we'll always have your commercial drivers in mind while being able to reduce your exposure to risk, forewarn you of potential problems and increase turnaround times.

### Why choose HCR?

- Many of our lawyers come from City firms so you benefit from their experience at a reasonable cost.
- We are responsive, energetic and give you a view that will move you forward, rather than simply outline your legal options
- We are accessible, you will be able to contact all the people on your team via their mobile number, email and our website
- Our size, expertise and experience is a good match to the needs of your business which means that you will get cost effective advice from people with the expertise you need
- Our mind set and approach is always to be agile and flexible, but this will be especially useful to you as you adapt to your new situation
- We will be in your corner and on your side, working with you on the next stage of your journey.

### NEWSLETTERS

Our newsletters provide thought leadership and legal updates from our experts in an easily digestible format. If you choose to subscribe to them, these are delivered straight to your inbox. All previous issues of our newsletters can be viewed on our website.

#### Banking Bulletin

Our briefing note looking at recent developments in English banking law.

#### [Issue 21](#)

#### Commercially Minded

Advice from our leading commercial lawyers on everything from business contracts to sports law.

#### [October 2023](#)

#### Tech Law

Our team bring the latest news to help you navigate the risks ahead – from data breaches to cybersquatters, NFTs and more.

#### [Issue 10](#)

#### Webinars

Our webinars are an easy, straight forward way to stay up to date with the latest legal news. These online broadcasts feature our expert lawyers answering the questions which matter most to you, and explain key issues in an accessible way. As with our newsletters, our webinars can be viewed on our website.

[The vital role of expert witnesses in complex litigation](#)

## Why our clients choose us

We've helped all sorts of companies become established in the UK, from large international corporates to publishing businesses and renowned sports brands. We have particular experience working with businesses across the Middle East, India and China, as well as significant knowledge of the GCC market, and have helped companies in the UK do business in, and export to, the GCC market.

**“Harrison Clark Rickerbys has a broad regional spread, with experience acting for owner-managed businesses, listed companies and multinational groups. Instructed in matters ranging from private equity work to cross-border M&A, the team is capable of drawing upon support from adjacent practices in property, employment and IP law.**

**The group possesses a particular focus on corporate transactions in the healthcare industry, with additional experience handling deals across the manufacturing, technology and retail sectors.”**

Chambers and Partners

**“It is always encouraging that whatever we ask for, we are always treated as though we are the only and most important client on their books. The partners and staff are very skilled and personable. That's why we have used HCR for the best part of 20 years.”**

Corporate client quote, Legal 500

**“Harrison Clark Rickerbys advises clients on corporate matters such as sales and purchases, reorganisations and raising investments. It has a recognised focus on the technology sector, acting for both mature and early-stage technology companies. In addition, the firm focuses on the property development field, advising clients on a wide range of sales, refinancings and restructurings.”**

Chambers and Partners

**“The team has a breadth of knowledge and experience that marries the best of the skills found within big London firms with the empathy and client care of the best regional firms.”**

Corporate client quote, Chambers and Partners





## Meet the team



### **Raj Pahuja**

**Partner, Head of Middle East Hub**

**T:** +44(0)2039 498 294

**M:** +44(0)7493 972 357

**E:** [rpahuja@hcrlaw.com](mailto:rpahuja@hcrlaw.com)



### **Nicolas Groffman**

**Partner, Head of International**

**T:** +44(0)3301 075 803

**M:** +44(0)7816 592 934

**E:** [ngroffman@hcrlaw.com](mailto:ngroffman@hcrlaw.com)

## Birmingham

T: 0121 454 0739  
F: 0121 455 7211

## Cambridge

T: 01223 461 155  
F: 01223 316 511

## Cardiff

T: 02922 749 200  
F: 02922 749 201

## Central England

T: 01604 233 233  
F: 01604 627 941

## Cheltenham

T: 01242 224 422  
F: 01242 518 428

## Hereford

T: 01432 349 670  
F: 01432 349 660

## London - International HQ

T: 0207 489 6320  
F: 0207 681 1261

## Thames Valley

T: 0118 911 1206  
F: 0118 900 7874

## Worcester

T: 01905 612 001  
F: 01905 744 899

## Wye Valley

T: 01989 562 377  
F: 01989 561 400