

Ruth Higgins SC


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Ruth Higgins SC is a leading commercial silk specialising in competition law, class actions, energy, media, corporate criminal and corporations matters, and practising nationally.

She has been included in *Best Lawyers Australia* since it commenced in 2008, and in *Chambers Global* since 2011. Ruth was described in the 2022 edition as a "[go-to for complex commercial matters](#)" and "a fabulous advocate with a fabulous mind". She is listed in Doyle's Guide as a preeminent silk in competition law, and in commercial litigation and insolvency law.

Competition law: Ruth has successfully acted for TPG, Pacific National and AGL in contested merger proceedings against the ACCC. She advised and acted in the Payments Amalgamation authorisation, and regularly advises merger parties. She has acted for NSW Ports, Epic, Apple, Cement Australia, the Australian Jockey Club, and many others in contested Part IV proceedings. For the ACCC and the Commonwealth, she successfully acted in the High Court in *Flight Centre* and the *CMFEU* case concerning agreed civil penalties, alongside other cases. Ruth appeared in the first two modern criminal cartel prosecutions and is regularly briefed in such matters.



Consumer and regulatory matters: Ruth has acted for parties including Google, Telstra, Qantas, Woolworths, Westpac and the ACCC, ASIC, and APRA. Ruth's wider regulatory experience includes advising CBA and acting for Tabcorp and Westpac in respect of allegations under the AML/CTF Act, and acting for banks and other institutions defending proceedings flowing from the Financial Services Royal Commission.

Class actions: Ruth has acted for various defendants in major class actions, including: EML; KPMG; Woolworths; Westpac; VW, Audi and Skoda in respect of diesel emissions; in the Takata air bags proceedings for Nissan; Infigen in respect of a bushfire class action, and for IOOF in the Provident debentures class action.

Energy law: Ruth has acted in the Federal Court, Australian Competition Tribunal and in private arbitrations, for clients including: AGL; Hornsdale; ActewAGL; BP; Origin; Epic Energy; Energy Australia; South Australia Power Networks, and Hydro Tasmania. She also acts for the AER. Ruth accepts appointments as an expert in energy disputes, and has chaired an expert panel under the National Gas Rules.

Corporate crime: including insider trading, bribery of foreign public officials and related areas.


Corporations law: In insolvency related matters, Ruth is acting for the Administrators of Virgin Australia, and advises and acts for the Commonwealth, including the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation and the Attorney-General (FEG), in such matters. She has extensive experience in schemes of arrangement, including acting in the Boart Longyear proceedings.

Public inquiries and commissions: Ruth was Senior Counsel for the CBA in the Banking Royal Commission; for CPH in the IGLA's inquiry into the Crown Casino; as counsel assisting the ACCC East Coast Gas Enquiry; and has acted in private and public hearings of the ICAC.

Ruth is Senior Vice President of the NSW Bar Association, a director of the Law Council of Australia and the NSW Bar Association, and is Chair of a Professional Conduct Committee and Co-Chair of the Climate Change Panel of the NSW Bar Association.

She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law, an Assistant General Editor of the *Australian Law Journal*, and a Fellow of ACICA and on its panel of Arbitrators.

Ruth is the author of various books, including *The Moral Limits of Law* (OUP, 2004), three collections of essays co-edited with Justin Gleeson SC, and a forthcoming monograph, *Law's Candour* (all



through Federation Press). She is the contributing editor to *Trade Practices Law* (Thomson Reuters).

Ruth won the Glasgow University medal in law. Thereafter she completed a doctorate in legal philosophy at Balliol College, Oxford University, lectured at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and was a visiting Scholar at Columbia University. She has recently been elected a Visiting Fellow at each of New College and Harris Manchester College, Oxford University.

Rankings

Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific Guide 2023 – Band 1 in Competition and Antitrust, Band 2 in Restructuring/Insolvency, and Band 2 in Dispute Resolution - '*Ruth is just exceptional. She's across the details and sharp. She's excellent with the client, easy to work with and has good commercial judgement.*' One source provided the following feedback: '*Probably the best I've worked with. She's fantastic - client-friendly and technically incredible.*'

Chambers & Partners Asia Pacific Guide 2022 – Band 2 in Dispute Resolution Senior Counsel and Spotlight Table for Competition and Antitrust – Ruth is widely acknowledged as '*a go-to for complex commercial matters,*' one source calling her '*a fabulous advocate with a fabulous mind,*' while another reports: '*Just watching her on her feet with the judge and the respect she garners in that context is especially valuable to a client.*' Long established as a barrister of choice in the competition sphere, she is increasingly noted for her prominence in the insolvency field and for her appearances in major inquiries and class actions.

Legal 500 Guide - Tier 1 Leading Silk for Competition Law and Crime and Regulatory (Including White Collar Crime)

Doyles Guide (Australia Wide) – Preeminent Competition Law Senior Counsel

Doyles Guide – Leading Commercial Litigation & Dispute Resolution Senior Counsel

Doyles Guide – Recommended Insolvency & Restructuring Senior Counsel

Best Lawyers – ADR Lawyer of the Year (2020)

Best Lawyers – Bet the Company Litigation

Best Lawyers – Litigation