

Nick Ruskin

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Nick Ruskin is a partner in the firm's Labor, Employment, and Workplace Safety practice. He approaches workplace issues in an efficient, forthright and practical way. His enthusiasm for these areas of law is a hallmark of his practice. Nick has a preference for resolving disputes rather than engaging in unnecessary, technical and usually dissatisfying long game litigation.

His experience lies in healthcare, education, the public sector, retail and service industries with particular knowledge in employment claims including workplace complaints and investigations, termination and discrimination law claims, labour disputes and advocacy before Tribunals.

Nick has been engaged from time to time as an external consultant to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva, New York and Bangkok and has addressed an ILO forum at the United Nations on Australian labour standards.

He is active in human resources circles. He was Convenor of the Employee Relations Interest Group of the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) (Victoria) for over two decades. He was awarded the 2013 AHRI Medal for services to the human resources sector.

Nick is a regular and popular speaker and commentator at professional conferences on labour relations and employment law.

He is an accredited mediator.

He is on the ER/IR National Advisory Panel of AHRI. He was a member of the Legal Profession Reference Group, an advisory body to the President of the Fair Work Commission, Justice IJK Ross.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to legal practice, Nick worked as labour relations practitioner for several organisations and regularly appeared before industrial tribunals.

Before joining the firm, Nick was a partner and national practice leader of a leading employment law practice in Australia and New Zealand.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognised by *Chambers Asia-Pacific* for Employment: Victoria in Australia, 2022-2026
- Recognised by *The Legal 500 Asia Pacific* as a Recommended Lawyer for Labour and Employment in Australia, 2026
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in Australia*™
  - Employee Benefits Law, 2021-2023, 2025-2027
  - Labour and Employment Law, 2008-2023, 2025-2027
- Listed by *Doyle's Guide* as a
  - Leading Employment (Employer Representation) Lawyer in Victoria, Australia, 2013-2026
  - Leading Workplace Health & Safety Lawyer in Victoria, Australia, 2018-2019
- Recognised by *Lexology Index* (Formerly *Who's Who Legal: Australia and New Zealand*) as a Recommended Lawyer for Labour, Employment & Benefits, 2025
- Recognised by *Who's Who Legal* as a
  - Global Leader in Labour & Employment in Australia, 2021-2022
  - National Leader in Australia for Labour, Employment & Benefits, 2020, 2022-2024

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Member of Australian Human Resources Institute
- Law Institute of Victoria
- Pro-bono lawyer to several organisations

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Nick is a regular contributor to human resources and legal journals and is on the editorial panel of the legal publication *Inhouse Counsel*.

Nick has also presented on employment law topics, including casual employment (part of the Closing the Loophole series), for *The Education Network*.

EDUCATION

- LL.B., University of Melbourne, *(Honours)*
- M.A., University of Melbourne

- B.A., University of Melbourne, *(Honours)*

ADMISSIONS

- High Court of Australia
- Supreme Court of Victoria

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 2 July 2026, Workplace Wrap—July 2026
- 18 June 2026, Victorian Work From Home Bill Introduced
- 26 February 2026, Recent Developments in Bargaining
- 2026, Global Employer Guide
- November 2025, HR Perspective: 2025 Year In Review and the Year Ahead
- 30 June 2025, Workplace Wrap—July 2025
- 7 April 2025, Recent and Emerging Employment Law Changes Impacting Australian Employers
- February 2025, Australian CPD Series 2025
- February 2025, Australian CPD Series 2025: State of the Workplace
- February 2025, Australian CPD Series 2025
- February 2025, Australian CPD Series 2025: State of the Workplace
- 5 December 2024, State of the Workplace
- 22 August 2024, Loopholes Laws Open for Business: Are You Ready for 26 August 2024?
- 1 July 2024, Workplace Wrap - July 2024
- March 2024, HR Perspective: Workplace Reform Rolls On...Again
- 22 February 2024, Workplace Reform Rolls on… Again
- 23 November 2023, HR Perspective: 2023 - Understanding a Year of Changes and What Comes Next
- 12 September 2023, More Than Just Loopholes: Significant Changes Proposed Under the Federal Government's Third Tranche of Labour Law Reforms
- July 2023, International Reductions in Force: A Case Study
- May 2023, HR Perspective (Australia): Fair Work Act Update
- 31 March 2023, Federal Government Proposes More Fair Work Act Changes

- 7 December 2022, Secure Jobs, Better Pay Bill is Now Law
- 4 November 2022, Secure Jobs, Better Pay Bill Introduced Into Parliament
- March 2022, Protecting Your Business: Non-Compete Updates and Retention Practices
- 11 February 2022, High Court Overturns Federal Court Decisions on Independent Contractors and Affirms Importance of Contractual Terms
- 8 December 2021, Vaccine Mandates and the Importance of Consultation
- November 2021, HR Perspective (Australia): Key Trends and Topics for 2022
- 8 October 2021, Mandatory Vaccination Directions for Victorian Workers
- 5 August 2021, High Court Overturns Federal Court's Decision in Rossato: Casuals are Casuals Even When They Have Expectations of Continuing Employment
- 30 June 2021, Workplace Wrap – June Update
- 26 March 2021, Changes to Casual Employment and Offsetting Arrangements Under The Fair Work Act
- 11 December 2020, It's On The Road – The Workplace Omnibus Reform Bill 2020 Has Started Its Journey
- 1 September 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) Further Changes To JobKeeper: What Do Employers Need To Know Now?
- 14 August 2020, What's In A "Day"? – High Court Majority Overturns *Mondelez* Personal/Carer's Leave Decision
- 5 August 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) Pressing Issues Facing Employers
- 29 July 2020, Beware – The Law May No Longer Tolerate So Called 'Independent Contractor' Arrangements
- 30 June 2020, COVID-19 (Australia): Much Has Happened on the Employment Front During COVID-19
- 26 May 2020, WorkPac Pty Ltd v Rossato: Managing Your Casual Workforce
- 1 May 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) JobKeeper Legislation – How Does it Change Things? (Second Edition)
- 27 April 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) Employer Guide to the JobKeeper Scheme (Third Edition)
- 14 April 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) Employer Guide to JobKeeper Payments (Second Edition)
- 9 April 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) JobKeeper legislation – How Does it Change Things?
- 3 April 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) Guide to JobKeeper Payments
- 1 April 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) JobKeeper Payment Program – What Do I Need to Know?
- 25 March 2020, COVID-19: (Australia) Stand Down What Does it all Mean?
- 17 March 2020, COVID-19: Coronavirus Q&A – Australia

- 11 March 2020, It's Time-Sheet O'clock - Don't be Alarmed
- 17 February 2020, Recapping the Modern Award Review: What is Happening now?
- 8 May 2019, Dentists: Employee Vs. Independent Contractor?
- 26 February 2018, When Medical Opinions Collide
- 5 December 2016, They Are Unhappy Out There
- 9 September 2013, Australia: Industrial Relations Future Under a New Liberal Government

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, "Comparison of terms facilitating flexibility in minimum terms and conditions of employment", *Practical Law/Westlaw*, 7 May 2025

NEWS & EVENTS

- 16 April 2026, More Than 80 K&L Gates Lawyers Across Asia-Pacific Recognised in 2027 Best Lawyers, Ones to Watch Editions
- 11 December 2025, *Chambers Asia-Pacific* 2026 Guide Recognises K&L Gates
- 11 February - 20 February 2025, 2025 CPD Program–Australia
- 16 December 2021, Chambers Asia-Pacific 2022 Guide Recognises K&L Gates
- 10 August 2021, K&L Gates Acts for Dicker Data in AU$68 Million Acquisition
- 27 April 2021, Workplace Restructuring in COVID Times
- 26 May 2016, K&L Gates, Lawyers Earn Honors in Chambers Global, Regional Guides
- 6 May 2015, K&L Gates, Lawyers Recognized as Leaders in Chambers Global Guides

OTHER MEDIA MENTIONS

- Quoted, "4 legislation changes HR needs to be across in 2024", *HRM Online*, 13 February 2024
- Quoted, "Best practices for a 4-day work week", *HRM*, 10 November 2023
- Quoted, "Three Secure Jobs Bill changes that are about to come into effect", *HRM*, 26 April 2023
- Quoted, “How the Secure Jobs, Better Pay Bill will impact flexible work,” *HRM*, 23 January 2023

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Labor, Employment, and Workplace Safety

- Employment Disputes
- Employment Investigations
- Global Employer Solutions

INDUSTRIES

- Life Sciences

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Advised a global services firm in relation to its purchase of a business against the background of an industrially active workplace, complex workplace arrangements and significant safety issues.
- Acting for Government Departments in litigation arising from the mandatory vaccination requirements imposed on State Government employees.
- Advising an Australian not-for-profit in regards to legal and strategic advice to the rectification of underpayments dealings with the Fair Work Ombudsman.
- Advising various hospitals on employment, discrimination and contact matters.
- Advising a leading global consulting firm on various employment matters including conducting workplace investigations.
- Engaged by the International Labour Organisation in Geneva to co- draft the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/ AIDS and the World of Work.
- Acting for the Federal Government in a number of cases including *Amcor Limited v Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union* [2005] HCA 10.
- Appearing for leading law firms in the Fair Work Commission about the scope of industrial regulation.
- Representing a high profile public figure in a much publicised sexual harassment claim.
- Appearing for medical research institutes in the Fair Work Commission in successfully opposing the award coverage of institutes under higher education awards.
- Acting for Immutable, an NFT trading platform and game development studio, regarding post-employment restraints, claims arising from restructuring and redundancy and review of template employment agreements.
- Advising various clients in respect to employment and industrial relations laws responding to the dynamic working conditions enforced by our governments and regulators, as they responded to COVID-19.
- Acting for leading Australian law firms who sought to alter the Legal Services Award 2020, due to COVID-19.
- Advising various clients to achieve and maintain award compliance involving working with the Fair Work Ombudsman to report underpayments and rectify issues for clients.

- Supporting clients to respond to bullying complaints, in challenging environments, managing multiple internal and external stakeholders.
- Supporting Victorian Government entities to manage their workforces, including dismissal disputes under public service statutory schemes, discrimination claims at federal and state levels, general protections claims and investigations into misconduct.
- Advising Victoria University on issues relating to transformative changes, successfully advocating in arbitration before the Fair Work Commission.
- Acting for call centers in industrial and employment disputes.
- Representing a leading retailer in a contentious employment dispute.
- Representing vehicle parts manufacturers during industrial dispute.
- Representing mining and energy companies in general protections proceedings.
- Representing Universities in test cases before industrial and anti discrimination tribunals.