

## Maria Scotland

1995 Gray's Inn, scotland@deanscourt.co.uk



Education

Professional Associations

Appointments

### Areas of Specialism

Family Law

Family Financial Remedy

Private Children Law

### Profile

Maria practices exclusively in family law with a specialism in high-end/ big money financial remedy applications and (private law) children work.

Maria is often instructed in multi-jurisdictional cases, involving International clients and clients with out-of-jurisdiction assets, in particular in the Middle East (the UAE, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabi, Oman and Qatar, with a number of her recent cases being published and establishing precedence in law.

Maria is recognised in Spears' 500 Guide (2023 & 2024): as a Top Recommended Family Law Barrister within the exclusive guide. Maria is also an author at Spears', with her recent article on Divorcing in Dubai: Should wealthy Expats worry about new UAE family laws? can be accessed [here](#).

Maria is ranked in the Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners in family law (including divorce & financial remedy). She is one of the leading family law juniors and is the joint head of the Family Team at 5SAH.

Maria is a qualified arbitrator in financial matters and an accredited civil mediator.

Maria has been consistently acknowledged in the **Pro-Bono Recognition List of England & Wales**, undertaking over 25 hours of pro-bono each year on behalf of Advocate.

### Family & Children

Maria practices exclusively in family law with a specialism in high end/ big money financial remedy applications and (private law) children work.

Maria is well known at the Bar and has won an award for her work from the Bar Council. She is extremely warm and engaging with members of the public and clients alike. As someone who is divorced and a single mother to two young daughters, she understands all too well the emotional as well as financial impact family breakdown and court proceedings has upon clients, their children and family alike. However, her warm approach with clients belies a tenacious and dogged approach with the other side and in court. She is trusted by several loyal instructing solicitors and members of the judiciary and has had a loyal following throughout her practice at the family bar since 1995.

Her money/ financial practice concerns cases where the parties' wealth is substantial or else the issues complex. She is regularly involved in cases where the asset wealth is several million, involving issues of serious non-disclosure, assets outside of the jurisdiction, international issues, and family Trusts. She has a wealth of experience where clients, who were domiciled in England & Wales, are divorced and have their financial affairs dealt with by the Family Court in London whilst living as an expatriate in the UAE, Australia, America and other Arab countries. Maria's money work includes acting for the husband/ boyfriend, wife/ girlfriend or else third-party intervener including on behalf of the Crown (in asset recovery cases). Maria also undertakes Trusts of Land Act 1996 (TOLATA) matters, concerning parties who were never married.

Maria is also a strong advocate in private children law disputes (including financial claims on behalf of a child under Schedule 1). She is professional but empathetic, bringing to court proceedings the "human touch".

### International Family

Maria is often instructed in multi-jurisdictional cases, involving International clients and clients with out-of-jurisdiction assets, in particular in the Middle East (the UAE, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabi, Oman and Qatar, with a number of her recent cases being published and establishing precedence in law.

## Additional information

Maria is a qualified arbitrator in financial matters under the Institute of Family Arbitrators Scheme.

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### Notable Cases

#### **SA v TA & others [2026] EWHC 756 (Fam)**

##### **Practice Area:**

Maria appeared for a father seeking to relocate his three children from their mother's care in England to Saudi Arabia, relying on concerns about the mother's parenting and the children's wishes, though the application was opposed by the mother and the children's Guardian. The court refused the relocation but allowed the children to spend most school holidays in Saudi Arabia with their father, subject to a £10,000 bond, with assistance from expert evidence on Saudi law provided by Byron James.

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#### **Re A (a child) (supervised contact) (s.91(14) CA 1989 orders) [2021]**

##### **Practice Area:**

Maria acted for the appellant mother in the Court of Appeal. This is an important case in which the court revised the 1999 guidelines applicable for section 91(14) Children Act 1989 (s.91(14)) orders to set out a modern approach to the previous leading authority relating to s.91(14). This is now the leading authority for s.91(14) applications/ orders. The past leading authority was Re P (Section 91(14) Guidelines) (Residence and Religious Heritage) [1999] 2 FLR 573 and the main judgment in that case was handed down by Lady Justice Butler-Sloss. Although the guidelines were said to have stood the test of time, they were formulated 22 years prior, and the forensic landscape had since changed. The case also recognised the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which at the time of the judgment was yet to come into force.

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#### **Re T (CA) [2024] EWCA Civ 697, [2024] 4 WLR 55, [2025] 1 FLR 77**

##### **Practice Area:**

Maria acted for the appellant mother in the Court of Appeal. This was an important case, coming in the wake of recent guidance upon Transparency in the Family Courts as it was the first case when the court ordered that the parents should be identified by name in a judgment relating to an application concerning their children.

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#### **AM v AF [2026] 511**

##### **Practice Area:**

Maria acted for the applicant mother in her application under the inherent jurisdiction seeking the return of her two young children from England to the United Arab Emirates.

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#### **HK v NK [2024] EWHC 1987 (Fam)**

##### **Practice Area:**

The Respondent mother based in England: NK, represented by Mr James Turner of KC and Maria Scotland, in a case where the applicant father lived in the UAE and sought the return of two children from England to the UAE. Facts included past domestic abuse of mother and children by father.

Read more >>

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#### **Addou v Bennabi [2024] EWHC 2702 (Fam)**

##### **Practice Area:**

Maria appeared for the Respondent father, who had abducted a child from England to a non-Hague convention country and refused to return the child to the care of his mother in England, in breach of several court orders to do so. He was found guilty of contempt.

[Read more >>](#)

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### **[Addou v Bennabi \[2024\] EWHC 2703 \(Fam\) \(sentencing / contempt proceedings\)](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

Maria appeared for the Respondent in sentencing following findings of/ contempt of court proceedings.

[Read more >>](#)

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### **[AA v DBS UA-2022-001706-V \[2024\] UKUT 332 \(AAC\)](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

Maria instructed for the appellant in a successful appeal of the DBS decision to include his name on the vulnerable children and adults barring list: Given under section 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 ("SVGA").

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### **[T v G \[2024\] EWHC 246 \(Fam\)](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

Led by James Turner KC, Maria Scotland appeared for the Respondent mother in a case where the mother had removed the child from his home in the USA and retained him in England. Father seeking return of the child to the USA. Court refusing.

[Read more >>](#)

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### **[T \(A Child\) \(No.2\) \(Transparency: Publication of the Party's Names\), Re \[2024\] EWHC 161 \(Fam\)](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

Maria Scotland appears for the Applicant mother in a case where the High Court wished to publish its' judgment naming the parents based on public interest due to the level, of parental alienation. Mother successfully appealed the decision to publish including her name.

[Read more >>](#)

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### **[T \(A Child\) \(s9\(6\) Children Act 1989 orders: Exceptional Circumstances: Parental Alienation\), Re \[2024\] EWHC 59 \(Fam\)](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

Maria Scotland acted for the applicant mother in a case where the court found that the mother had alienated the children against father over many years, which could not be reversed.

[Read more >>](#)

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### **[Re T \(Abduction: Protective Measures: Agreement to Return\) \[2023\] EWCA Civ 1415](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

Led by James Turner KC, Maria Scotland successfully appeared for the Appellant (mother) before the Court of Appeal in a case where the mother had removed a child from the USA to live in England. Father sought the return of the child back to the USA. First instance High Court Judge ordering the return of the child. The decision was reversed on appeal

[Read more >>](#)

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### **[Brisset v Brisset \[2009\] EWCA Civ 314](#)**

#### **Practice Area:**

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## Brisset v Brissett [2009] EWCA Civ 679

### Practice Area:

#### Lord Justice Wilson in *Brisset v Brisset* [2009] EWCA 679

The performance of counsel was outstanding. Indeed the hearing was short because counsel's submissions, written and oral, were so clear, so succinct and so realistic.

#### Lord Justice Sedley in *Brisset v Brisset* [2009] EWCA 679

I agree with the judgment of Lord Justice Wilson, not least in relation to the high standard of representation and advocacy before this court.

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### What the Directories say

"Maria is always available to deal with questions. She is very flexible and always happy to try and be creative."

Chambers & Partners, 2026

"Maria has excellent knowledge and thorough preparation. She prepares excellent documents and deals well with clients in a firm and friendly manner."

The Legal 500, 2023

"Maria's approachable and personable attitude makes her a great court advocate. Clients like her."

The Legal 500, 2023

"Her drafting is outstanding and her advocacy persuasive."

Legal 500, 2021

"Maria has the ear of the court."

Chambers & Partners 2024

"She's no-nonsense and pragmatic."

Chambers & Partners, 2025 - Family: Matrimonial Finance

"Very sparky, easy to deal with and highly knowledgeable."

Chambers & Partners, 2025 - Family: Matrimonial Finance

Deans Court Chambers: 24 St. John Street, Manchester, Greater Manchester M3 4DF  
Telephone: 0161 214 6000 Email: [clerks@deanscourt.co.uk](mailto:clerks@deanscourt.co.uk)