



Donald Sham

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Education

University of Hong Kong, 2017,
LL.M., Arbitration and Dispute
Resolution (Distinction)

University of Hong Kong, 2010,
Postgraduate Certificate in Laws

University of Hong Kong, 2009,
Bachelor of Laws, (LLB), Hons

Professional Admissions

Hong Kong
England & Wales

Donald is a disputes resolution partner based in the Hong Kong office. He is dual-qualified as a solicitor in Hong Kong and England & Wales. He is trilingual (English, Mandarin and Cantonese) and has been handling matters in both Chinese and English on a daily basis for over 15 years. He joined the firm as a trainee in 2010 and was promoted to partner in 2021.

Donald is consistently ranked by both *Chambers* (2024-2026) and *The Legal 500* (2022-2026) and has won multiple awards and accolades for his legal work.

Lauded as a “superb litigator” by *The Legal 500* (2025), Donald’s experience spans a broad range of contentious matters, including court litigation, international arbitration, insolvency proceedings, regulatory enquiries and fraud investigations. Donald recently appeared as sole advocate in a 46-day bilingual death inquest hearing relating to a ferry collision off Lamma Island in Hong Kong. He also regularly sits as arbitrator in international arbitration proceedings. He has extensive experience in handling cross-border matters involving multiple jurisdictions and applicable laws.

Donald serves clients from a wide range of sectors and has been commended by *The Legal 500* for his “broad range of sector expertise that spans pharmaceuticals, financial services, transport, energy and technology”. He also has experience in disputes relating to other sectors, including construction, data, garments, precious metals, logistics, insurance, cryptocurrency, and consumer goods.

Donald’s clients and peers laud him as “knowledgeable and pragmatic”, “very impressive, very professional, and very responsive”, “very on the ball and a good operator”, “very familiar with arbitration and litigation procedure”, and a provider of “clear and commercial advice” with “rich practical experience in the field of international arbitration”.

Donald is a Fellow of both the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb) and the Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators (FHKIArb). He is on the list of arbitrators of the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC), Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA), Hong Kong Maritime Arbitration Group (HKMAG), China Maritime Arbitration Commission (CMAC), Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration (SCMA), Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC), and South China International Arbitration Center (HK). He is a Committee Member of the CIArb East Asia Branch (EAB) and the Hong Kong Maritime Law Association (HKMLA).

Donald was a lecturer in the Master of Laws (Arbitration and Dispute Resolution) programme of The University of Hong Kong (HKU) in 2017-2020. He acts as guest lecturer from time to time and regularly publishes bilingual articles on the development of arbitration law in Hong Kong.

Experience

Court Litigation

- Appearing as sole advocate in a 46-day bilingual death inquest hearing relating to a ferry collision off Lamma Island in Hong Kong
- Acting for a HK land developer in relation to disputes arising from the construction of a commercial building in HK and related civil, criminal and regulatory investigations and proceedings
- Acting for a global bank against another bank in relation to a high-stake trade finance dispute over US\$ 170 million
- Acting for an investment company in recovering debts before the Hong Kong court with a successful Mareva injunction application, plus ancillary Norwich Pharmacal application in the BVI
- Acting for a Hong Kong lender in recovering debts under a ship finance agreement
- Acting in the various Hong Kong court proceedings arising out of the collision between "STAR CENTURION" and "ANTEA" that led to the Court of Appeal decision in [2022] HKCA 1089 relating to the interpretation of the Convention on Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims 1976
- Acting in the various Hong Kong court proceedings arising out of the collision between "LAMMA IV" and "SEA SMOOTH" on 1 October 2012, including acting for Capt. Chow Chi Wai, skipper of the "LAMMA IV", in his acquittal of 39 counts of alleged manslaughter charges following a 60-day jury trial (HCCC 458/2013)
- *Giorgio Armani SpA v Elan Clothes Co Ltd* [2019] 2 HKLRD 313, [2019] HKCFI 530 (Anti-suit injunction in aid of arbitration proceedings)
- *Chu Kong v Lau Wing Yan* [2019] 1 HKLRD 58; [2018] HKCA 1010 (Successful appeal: stay of proceedings in favour of arbitration)
- *T v A & V* [2018] 3 HKLRD 730, [2018] HKCFI 1756 (Review of tribunal's jurisdiction: effect of assignment and subrogation under PRC law)
- *NewOcean Petroleum Company Limited v OW Bunker China Limited and Cosco Petroleum Pte Limited* (unrep., CACV 156/2016, 29 December 2016) (CA) (First appellate decision in Hong Kong in relation to disputes arising from the OW Bunker liquidation)
- *W v P* (unrep., HCCT 55/2015, 19 January 2016) (Striking-out application to set aside an arbitral award)
- *Cargill International Trading Pte Limited v Loyal Base Development Limited* (unrep., HCCL 12/2015, 24 November 2015) (Injunction proceedings in relation to a letter of undertaking)

- *Shagang South-Asia (Hong Kong) Trading Co. Ltd v. Daewoo Logistics* [2015] EWHC 194 (Comm).
- *Hua Tyan Development Ltd v Zurich Insurance Co Ltd* (2014) 17 HKCFAR 493 (CFA); [2013] 4 HKLRD 107 (CA); [2012] 4 HKLRD 827 (CFI) (Court of Final Appeal decision on a marine insurance dispute)
- *X Chartering v. Y* (unreported, 3 March 2014, HCCT 20/2013) (Successful enforcement of a London arbitral award)
- *The ORIENTAL DRAGON* [2014] 1 HKLRD 649 (Ship manager's right of arrest)
- *The KING COAL* [2013] 2 HKLRD 620 (Assignee's right of arrest)

International Arbitration

- Acting for a HK Listco in relation to disputes arising out of a high-value tenancy agreement in an UNCITRAL arbitration
- Acting for a wholly owned subsidiary of PRC company in defending a claim brought by and pursuing a counterclaim against an Italian supplier/fashion house arising out of an agreement for the retailing of garments and other accessories in the PRC in an ad hoc arbitration seated in Hong Kong pursuant to the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules
- Acting for a US brand owner to oppose an HKIAC emergency arbitration commenced by distributor in mainland China, leading to the full denial of the emergency relief sought
- Acting for a subsidiary of a PRC Listco in an UNCITRAL arbitration in relation to the retail of garment and fashion products
- Acting for a US pharmaceutical company in a bilingual HKIAC arbitration
- Acting for a subsidiary of a PRC state-owned trading company in its successful defence in an HKIAC arbitration in Hong Kong against a claim from a buyer in relation to the quality of steel billets supplied under a HK law governed sale of goods contract
- Acting for a subsidiary of a PRC state-owned trading company in a CIETAC HK arbitration in Hong Kong in relation to a PRC law governed sale of goods contract
- Acting for a subsidiary of a PRC state-owned trading company in an LCIA arbitration in London in relation to a PRC law governed sale of goods contract
- Acting for an Indian technology company in a SIAC arbitration
- Acting for a Hong Kong lender in recovering debts in a HKIAC arbitration pursuant to the Expedited Procedure
- Acting for shipping companies and P&I Clubs in many maritime disputes arbitrated under HKMAG and LMAA rules

Arbitrator Appointments

- Acting as a sole arbitrator in a HKIAC arbitration in relation to disputes arising out of a capital repayment agreement

- Acting as a sole arbitrator in an *ad hoc* arbitration seated in Hong Kong in relation to disputes arising out of a voyage charterparty
- Acting as a sole arbitrator in a HKIAC arbitration conducted under the Expedited Procedure in relation to disputes arising out of a cooperation agreement
- Acting as party-appointed co-arbitrator in an HKMAG arbitration seated in Hong Kong in relation to a charterparty dispute
- Acting as sole arbitrator in an *ad hoc* arbitration seated in Hong Kong in relation to disputes arising out of a loan agreement
- Acting as sole arbitrator in an *ad hoc* arbitration seated in Hong Kong in relation to disputes arising out of a voyage charterparty
- Acting as party-appointed co-arbitrator in an HKIAC arbitration seated in Hong Kong in relation to disputes arising out of a voyage charterparty

Regulatory Investigations

- Assisted a licensed individual in handling a written notice issued by the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) under Section 183 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance, requiring the individual to attend an interview and provide certain documents and information regarding suspected insider trading.
- Assisted a Hong Kong-listed company in responding to a written notice issued by the SFC under Section 183 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance, requiring the company to provide certain documents and information related to a series of contracts signed by its former subsidiary.
- Assisted a Hong Kong-listed company in responding to a written notice issued by the SFC under Section 183 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance, requiring the company to provide certain documents and information regarding its listing project.
- Assisted a Hong Kong-listed company in responding to a written notice issued by the SFC under Section 179 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance, requiring the company to provide certain documents and information concerning a series of prepayment arrangements for goods transactions.
- Assisted a Hong Kong-listed company in taking a series of actions to meet the resumption conditions set by the Stock Exchange, after the company was suspended due to inadequate due diligence on certain loan transactions.

Honors and Awards

- Ranked in China (including Hong Kong) Shipping: Litigation (International Firms) – *Chambers Greater China Region, 2026*
- Ranked in China (including Hong Kong) Shipping: Litigation (International Firms) – *Chambers Global, 2026*
- Recognised as Up and Coming in China (including Hong Kong) International Arbitration (International Firms) – *Chambers Greater China Region, 2026*

- Recognised as Up and Coming in China (including Hong Kong) International Arbitration (International Firms) – *Chambers Global*, 2026
- Listed as a Next Generation Partner in Hong Kong Dispute Resolution: International Arbitration – *The Legal 500 Asia Pacific*, 2022-2026
- Winner of “Deals of the Year” (cross-border dispute resolution) - *China Business Law Journal*, 2024-2025
- Ranked in the A-List 2024-25: Rising Stars (International) by *China Business Law Journal*, 2025
- Named one of Hong Kong’s Rising Stars – *Asian Legal Business*, 2025
- Recognised as Up and Coming in China (including Hong Kong) Shipping: Litigation (International Firms) – *Chambers Greater China Region*, 2024-2025
- Recognised as Up and Coming in China (including Hong Kong) Shipping: Litigation (International Firms) – *Chambers Global*, 2024-2025
- Named to the Arbitration Powerlist: Hong Kong – *The Legal 500*, 2023
- Named one of Asia’s 40 Under 40 – *Asian Legal Business*, 2023
- Named one of Hong Kong’s 10 Most Influential Lawyers Under 40 – *Hong Kong Business*, 2022
- Recognised as a Rising Star in Hong Kong Dispute Resolution: International Arbitration – *The Legal 500 Asia-Pacific*, 2021
- Recommended as one of the Leading Admiralty, Maritime & Shipping Lawyers in Hong Kong – *Doyle’s Guide*, 2021, 2025-2026
- Winner of the President’s Prize – *Chartered Institute of Arbitrators*, 2016

Professional and Community Affiliations

- Member of The Law Society of Hong Kong
- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Committee Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (East Asia Branch)
- Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators
- Member of the List of Arbitrators, Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre
- Member and Arbitrator of the Hong Kong Maritime Arbitration Group
- Member of the List of Arbitrators, China Maritime Arbitration Commission
- Member and Panel Arbitrator of the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration
- Member and Panel Arbitrator of the Asian International Arbitration Centre
- Executive Committee Member and Former Secretary of the Hong Kong Maritime Law Association
- Member and Panel Arbitrator of the South China International Arbitration Center (HK)