Caroline Hobson

Partner

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London

Antitrust and Competition
Foreign Direct Investment
Antitrust Litigation and Enforcement
Life Sciences and Healthcare
Healthcare
Technology
Global Cartel Defense
Government Contracts
CooleyREG
Consumer Protection

Caroline's practice focuses on providing clients with strategic competition law and regulatory advice. She represents clients seeking merger control and foreign direct investment (FDI) clearances, and has extensive experience with UK and European Union merger control processes, and the coordination of global merger and FDI filings. She also guides clients on competition law risk management and compliance strategies in respect of pricing, distribution, licensing and joint venture arrangements. She has advised on numerous UK and EU competition investigations, sector inquiries and market investigations, and has secured and defended the interests of clients during dawn raids conducted by the UK and EU competition authorities.

Caroline's experience spans a wide range of industries, with particular focus on advising clients in the consumer products, technology, media and telecommunications, transportation, financial services, and life sciences sectors. She combines her competition knowledge to advise on broader regulatory areas, including digital, utility, aviation and consumer regulatory regimes.

Caroline has significant experience advising clients, in particular life sciences companies, on public procurement law and supporting them throughout government tender processes, as well as representing them in challenging adverse procurement decisions. She also counsels clients on the application of UK and EU sanctions and export control laws.

Before joining Cooley, Caroline was partner and co-leader of the UK competition and trade group at CMS.

Caroline's recent representative matters* include:

- Advised a multinational energy company on all merger control and FDI aspects in the sale of its stake in a gas distribution operator to a consortium
- Led Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) abuse of dominance investigation on behalf of a pharmaceutical company into the supply of lithium that concluded after four months with the successful negotiation of commitments to resolve the CMA's concerns
- Provided extensive day-to-day competition law and compliance advice to pharma and medical device clients on issues including pricing, joint venture arrangements, litigation matters, technology development, licensing arrangements and development of managed service arrangements
- Advised a significant ad-tech provider on all stages of the CMA's digital advertising market study,

including representation before the CMA, and representing the same client in similar investigations in France and Germany
- Represented a fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) company in an abuse of dominance claim brought in the Competition Appeal Tribunal that was successfully struck out
- Advised a private group of companies in the property, construction and hospitality sector on the competition and regulatory aspects of its planning application for Heathrow Airport expansion and its participation as an interested party in the judicial review of the UK government's decision to designate the Airports National Policy Statement
- Counselled an electric vehicle charging provider on competition and procurement issues in its rollout of EV charging infrastructure in the UK
- Represented a European bank in the FCA's syndicated loans investigation, which closed with no further action

*Representation handled prior to joining Cooley

Education

College of Law, Guildford LPC, 1996

University of Cambridge BA, honours, 1995

Admissions & Credentials

England and Wales

Brussels (List B)

Rankings & Accolades

Chambers UK: Competition Law (2018 – 2027)

The Legal 500 UK: Leading Lawyer in Corporate and Commercial – EU and Competition (2026 – 2027)

Memberships & Affiliations

Law Society Competition Section

Competition Law Association

Procurement Lawyers' Association