



Professor Benjamin Hughes

"He is adept at adopting a very fair and gentle approach while remaining firm at the same time."

Chambers & Partners, Asia-Pacific

✉ bh@fountaincourt.co.uk ☎ +44 (0)20 7583 3335

Benjamin Hughes is an independent arbitrator and adjunct professor of law at the National University of Singapore.

He also serves on the Investment Committees of Omni Bridgeway, a leading funder of international commercial disputes, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Hainan International Arbitration Centre.

Since leaving law firm practice in March 2013, Ben has been appointed in approximately 150 international arbitrations with several billion dollars in dispute. Previously, he practised with Shearman & Sterling (in the US and Singapore), and was the founding co-chair of the international dispute resolution practice group at Shin & Kim, one of Korea's oldest and largest full-service law firms.

While Ben's experience as arbitrator spans a broad range of commercial sectors, applicable law, arbitration rules and jurisdictions, he is particularly recognised as a leading arbitrator in the Asia-Pacific region. He has lived, studied and worked in the region for almost 30 years, and is fluent in Korean and conversant in Mandarin. In addition, having studied and practised law in both civil and common law jurisdictions, Ben is uniquely suited to hear disputes between parties from various legal and cultural backgrounds.

Ben has handled complex conflict of law and jurisdictional issues, joinder and intervention applications, and disputes involving multiple contracts and applicable laws. He has also acted as emergency arbitrator and as sole arbitrator in expedited and fast track proceedings and is a panel arbitrator of numerous arbitral institutions.

Recent Highlights

Chair in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Cambodian and Chinese parties arising under a contract for the construction of a mixed use residential and commercial tower and related agreements.

Chair in DIFC-LCIA arbitration seated in Dubai between Greek and Iraqi parties arising under a contract for port dredging and jetty rehabilitation.

Chair in ICC arbitration seated in London between Singaporean and Canadian parties arising under a distribution

agreement and related agreements.

Chair in ICC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between two Chinese parties arising under a joint venture agreement.

Co-arbitrator in HKIAC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between US and BVI parties arising under a contract for the supply of medical equipment.

Expertise

International Arbitration

Notable International Arbitration cases

Chair in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Cambodian and Chinese parties arising under a contract for the construction of a mixed use residential and commercial tower and related agreements.

Chair in DIFC-LCIA arbitration seated in Dubai between Greek and Iraqi parties arising under a contract for port dredging and jetty rehabilitation.

Chair in ICC arbitration seated in London between Singaporean and Canadian parties arising under a distribution agreement and related agreements.

Chair in ICC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between two Chinese parties arising under a joint venture agreement.

Co-arbitrator in HKIAC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between US and BVI parties arising under a contract for the supply of medical equipment.

Chair in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Hong Kong and Singaporean parties arising under a long-term contract for the sale and purchase of commercial refrigerated propane.

Co-arbitrator in ICC arbitration seated in Singapore between Thai and Myanmar parties arising under a joint venture agreement.

Chair in ICC arbitration seated in Singapore between two Singaporean parties arising under a contract for the construction of a combined cycle power plant.

Co-arbitrator in ICC arbitration seated in Taipei between Taiwanese and Belgian parties arising under a contract for the construction of an airport runway and related facilities.

Co-arbitrator in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Korean, Japanese and Philippine parties arising under an EPC contract for the construction of a power plant.

Co-arbitrator in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Mauritian and Korean parties arising under a share subscription agreement.

Sole arbitrator in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Japanese and Cayman Island entities arising under a partnership agreement.

Co-arbitrator in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between US and Philippine parties arising under a distribution agreement and related agreements.

Co-arbitrator in HKIAC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between US and Chinese parties arising under a technology licensing agreement.

Emergency Arbitrator in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Japanese and Indian parties arising under a contract for the delivery, installation and commissioning of electric transformers.

Co-arbitrator in ICC arbitration seated in Seoul between Maltese, Singaporean and Korean Claimants and a Korean respondent arising under a share purchase agreement and related shareholders' agreement.

Chair in HKIAC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between Korean and Chinese parties arising under a hotel management agreement.

Co-arbitrator in SCC arbitration seated in Stockholm between Italian and Korean parties arising under an agreement for the sale and purchase of a floating dock.

Sole Arbitrator in SIAC arbitration seated in Singapore between Malaysian and Indian parties arising under an agreement for the provision of waste heat recovery power generation in cement plants.

Directory Quotes

"Identified by one source, not only as 'one of the best arbitrators in Asia', but also as 'one of the pre-eminent

arbitrators of the future', other sources specifically citing him for 'very effective witness conferencing' and as a favoured co-arbitrator 'because he is prepared, truly neutral, contributes and has a very good sense of humour'."

Chambers & Partners, Asia-Pacific

"Benjamin Hughes is a favourite among peers, who describe him as 'the most sought-after American arbitrator based in Asia' and 'a great practitioner'."

Who's Who Legal (Arbitration)

"Independent practitioner Benjamin Hughes is widely regarded as 'an outstanding arbitrator with a particularly strong market reputation for Korean matters and as a person [whom] Korean clients can trust.' Interviewees clearly indicate that he remains 'a shoo-in for Korea-related appointments,' but are also quick to point out that, having relocated from Seoul to Singapore and notably broadened the geographical scope of his practice, 'his reputation now transcends country'."

Chambers & Partners, Asia-Pacific

"One source identifies him as 'one of the new wave of arbitrators who are bringing a breath of fresh air to the space.' They also emphasise the 'nice mix of the academic and commercial' in his approach, 'the way he tries to create a consensus' in proceedings and the 'efficient and decisive' manner he adopts in conducting them."

Chambers & Partners, Asia-Pacific

"Benjamin Hughes is 'the next star in Asia' according to commentators, who describe him as 'a pleasure to appear before' and as someone who 'delivers well-reasoned awards'."

Who's Who Legal (Arbitration)

"Independent Seoul-based practitioner Benjamin Hughes is consistently identified by sources as the pre-eminent international arbitrator on the South Korean scene, and is active across the region on a broad commercial range of commercial issues... He is very highly regarded by interviewees, one of whom notes: 'We have encountered him on several cases in the past few years and have found him to be excellent,' while another notes specifically that he is 'a very good chairman who is really good at running expert witness conferencing sessions'."

Chambers & Partners, Asia-Pacific

"Benjamin Hughes is recognized by clients and peers as one of the foremost arbitrators in Asia."

Who's Who Legal (Arbitration)

"Independent Seoul-based practitioner Benjamin Hughes is acclaimed by one source as 'the leading international arbitrator in the Korean market,' while another explicitly confirms his status as an arbitrator in high demand, noting that he is 'someone who has really internalized the region's linguistic and cultural considerations,' which gives him a 'deep and significant understanding of Asian business parties'."

Chambers & Partners, Asia-Pacific

Directory Rankings

Chambers & Partners – Global

- Dispute Resolution: Most in Demand Arbitrators – Singapore
- International Arbitration: Most in Demand Arbitrators – Asia-Pacific Region

Chambers & Partners – Asia Pacific

- Dispute Resolution: Most in Demand Arbitrators – Singapore
- International Arbitration: Most in Demand Arbitrators – Asia-Pacific Region

Education

- JD, New York University School of Law (2002)
- MA course (no dissertation), Seoul National University College of Law (1999)
- MA, East Asian history, Harvard University (1997)
- BA, Trinity University (1989)

Academic Distinctions

- Dean Robert McKay Scholar, NYU School of Law
- Global Legal Fellow, NYU School of Law (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
- Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, Korea (SNU College of Law)
- SNU Academic Scholarship, SNU College of Law
- Harvard-Yenching Institute Fellowship, Harvard University
- Fulbright Grantee, Korea
- President's Academic Scholarship, Trinity University

Memberships

- Arbitrator, The Arbitration Chambers, Singapore
- Investment Committee Member, Omni Bridgeway
- Board of Directors, Hainan International Arbitration Centre
- International Arbitration Committee, Korean Commercial Arbitration Board
- Editorial Advisory Board, Asian international Arbitration Journal
- Adjunct Professor, National University of Singapore Faculty of Law (2019)
- Associate Professor, Seoul National University Law School (2015-2019)
- Visiting Scholar, National Taiwan University (Spring 2018)
- Visiting Associate Professor, National University of Singapore (Fall 2018)
- Fellow, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Fellow, Singapore Institute of Arbitrators
- Fellow, Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators

Panel Arbitrator of:

- American Arbitration Association/International Centre for Dispute Resolution
- Australian Centre for International Commercial Arbitration
- Beijing Arbitration Commission
- China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission
- Chinese Arbitration Association
- Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre
- Japan Commercial Arbitration Association
- Jinan Arbitration Commission
- Korean Commercial Arbitration Board
- Asian International Arbitration Centre
- Shanghai International Arbitration Centre
- Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration
- Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration
- Singapore International Arbitration Centre

Languages

- Korean
- Mandarin Chinese (basic)
- Spanish