


Browne Jacobson welcomes former ICO lawyer to support growing UK&I data privacy and tech practice

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UK & Ireland (UK&I) law firm Browne Jacobson has boosted its tech credentials with the appointment of specialist [data privacy partner Francis Katamba](#) to the firm.

Francis, who is Manchester based but will support the firm's UK & I client base, will play a vital role in enhancing Browne Jacobson's capabilities in the data privacy and compliance space, underpinning the firm's wider digital disruption strategy.

Francis, joins Browne Jacobson from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) where he was the organisation's senior commercial lawyer and key advisor, advising the ICO's on its most complex domestic and international commercial transactions.

Prior to his role at the ICO, Francis held inhouse roles as Head of Privacy & DPO at a financial services regulator and senior legal counsel in Vodafone's procurement business where he advised on complex outsourcing and technology related matters across EMEA.

Francis began his career at magic circle law firm, Freshfields, and worked in their London and Tokyo offices before moving to Allen & Overy in Hong Kong where he also worked closely with their Shanghai and Singapore offices. Before moving inhouse, he spent the first decade of his career working for international law firms in Europe and Asia and speaks Chinese, Japanese and French.

He has experience in drafting, negotiating, and advising on a diverse range of IT, consultancy, insurance, outsourcing, secondment, data processing, confidentiality, research, property, sponsorship, events, licensing, and other bespoke commercial agreements. As senior commercial lawyer at the ICO, he also played a leading role in advising on the introduction of the new UK standard contractual clauses and International Data Transfer Agreements. Outside of work, Francis is interested in computers and technology and has a MSc in cybersecurity.

Francis will work closely with partners **Jeanne Kelly**, **Richard Nicholas**, **Anthony Nagle**, and **Declan Cushley** to help further develop the bridge between the firm's UK&I based commercial teams that are focused on digital disruption, a key strand of the firm's overall vision for growth. The appointment follows on from the opening of Browne Jacobson's first overseas office in Ireland last year and the appointment of strategic adviser to its tech sector, **Mike Rebeiro**.

Partner Declan Cushley, who **leads the firm's strategy for the corporate sector** and is also **one of the founding partners of the firm's Dublin office** commented: "In addition to his significant role at the ICO, Francis has had a varied legal career which includes in-house roles at some big brand names, and roles at A&O and Freshfields where he worked on international projects. This diverse experience, coupled with his extensive background in data and cyber law, further strengthens the firm's position as a leading legal advisor in the data protection field and in end-to-end technology. Francis' experience within the financial services sector also positions him perfectly to support the firm's broadening data capabilities across its other target market groups."

Jeanne Kelly, who is **one of the founding partners of Browne Jacobson's Dublin office**, and considered one of Ireland's leading data experts, said: "Francis is a well-respected lawyer who will be invaluable in meeting our broad range of clients' needs, in what is becoming an increasingly complex and data-driven environment, due in part to the challenges presented by new emerging technologies. Francis will help our clients find strategic and creative solutions to these challenges so they can safely navigate the age of digital disruption but also advise how they can take advantage of the many positive business and industry opportunities that come with it."

Francis added: "I am excited to join a firm that is dedicated to delivering outstanding legal services, is known for its client centric approach, is on a mission to drive positive change across the legal landscape, underpinned by its commitments to O Shaped and to building an equal, diverse and inclusive culture.

"I am also delighted to have the opportunity to collaborate with many of the firm's talented, specialist data privacy and tech lawyers to continue to provide comprehensive and innovative data protection solutions to Browne Jacobson's impressive, broad client base."

Browne Jacobson's commercial and technology group provides end-to-end technology advice and services across complex sourcing transactions, business critical it projects, IP protection management and patent litigation, data, privacy and cyber issues, adopting new technologies and digital disruption (such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, internet of things (IOT), big data and predictive analysis, augmented and virtual reality technologies, cloud, etc.), tech litigation, regulatory compliance, and tech aspects of M&A, corporate and financing transactions.

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