

Joe Hingston

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Joe Hingston is an experienced junior criminal law barrister. Most recently, he has defended in cases of murder, international gun and drug smuggling, armed robbery and people trafficking. Joe was instructed in four separate murder trials in 2022, each multi-handed cases of complexity.

Joe specialises in representing those accused of organised and serious crime. He is instructed as junior alone in matters such as attempted murder, complex offences under the Modern Slavery Act and importation of drugs. Many of these cases have features of organised crime or gangs.

In addition to trials on indictment, Joe has experience in advising individuals and corporations on criminal investigations and representing interested parties at Coroners' inquests. In recent years he has advised frequently on instigating private prosecutions.

Joe is able to receive instructions directly from members of the public under the Direct Access scheme.

Joe dedicates his time to a number of pro bono initiatives. He is Chair of trustees for [APPEAL](#), an "access to justice" charity law practice which fights miscarriages of justice.

He was previously a founding trustee of [Just for Kids Law](#).

Before being called to the Bar, Joe worked for a number of years in the United States assisting in the representation of individuals facing the death penalty. He has consulted on numerous death penalty projects with the charity [Reprieve](#) and lecturing on the subject.

Joe is a Pupil Supervisor and supports a number of initiatives which encourage inclusivity and diversity at the Bar.

Expertise

Crime

The core of Joe's practice is criminal defence, which in recent years has encompassed instructions in defending cases of murder and serious organised crime, both as led junior and junior alone.

Joe has been instructed in a number of high-profile murder cases, often representing the first Defendant in multi-handed trials. Those cases have included a variety of complex issues, including cause of death, crime scene reconstruction, evidence from anonymous witnesses, and joint enterprise. He has been prosecuted by Treasury Counsel in almost all murder cases.

Joe has been instructed to defend in wide ranging allegations of serious crime. He is currently instructed as lead junior in a case said to relate to a major international crime organisation involving the alleged importation of many hundreds of kilos of class A drugs and large quantities of unlawful firearms.

He is also instructed in a number of cases falling under the umbrella of Operation Venetic, arising out of the taking down of the EncroChat telephone system by French and Dutch police.

Outside of these areas, Joe defends in cases spanning the almanac of criminal offences, including allegations of serious violence often involving multiple defendants, complex forensic evidence, "dangerousness"; firearms, where the issue of duress is raised; and road traffic offences which have resulted in fatalities.

Joe has recently expanded his practice to include acting on behalf of a number of national animal welfare charities and advising them on the prospects of instigating private prosecutions against various individuals and bodies.

Notable Crime cases

Murder and serious violence

R v Kwateng (Central Criminal Court)

Represented the first defendant in a multi-handed allegation of murder. The fatal stabbing of a gang rival took place in a busy street in south London in broad daylight. The entire episode was captured on CCTV. There was extensive litigation in respect of gang affiliation, including videos, rap lyrics and police intelligence. The defendant was acquitted of murder and manslaughter.

R v AM (Central Criminal Court)

Represented one of four defendants charged with a gunshot murder in a residential street in south London. The defendant was said to have been the assigned 'getaway' driver in the shooting. The case involved extensive

digital and CCTV evidence. The defendant was acquitted of murder and manslaughter.

R v Rahman (Central Criminal Court)

2-handed murder trial. Represented first defendant. Case concerned gang rivalry in the local Bengali community. Sensitive cultural issues.

R v Azad (Reading Crown Court)

7-handed murder trial. Represented first defendant who was said to have been the principal in the stabbing of a rival in a residential street with swords.

R v JW (Central Criminal Court)

Junior alone instructed to represent youth charged with attempted murder of individual on a busy commuter train in gangland retribution.

R v JC (Central Criminal Court)

Junior alone instructed to represent youth charged with attempted murder. The background was a bitter postcode gang rivalry in east London.

Firearms, drugs and serious organised crime

R v DC

The Defendant was said to be a member of a well known Organised Crime Group based in Ireland. The prosecution maintained that over the entire enterprise hundreds of kilos of cocaine had been imported to Ireland from the continent. The consignments also included firearms and ammunition. The Defendant was said to have been in charge of the logistics for transportation in the UK and onward importation into Ireland. The case was particularly sensitive because of considerable press interest from Ireland.

R v Rivers

Leading junior in defence of alleged member of a London gang who travelled to Bournemouth to commit armed robbery of a jewellery store in broad daylight.

R v Bruce

Represented member of a London organised crime group trafficking drugs and vulnerable individuals to the south west. Acquitted after trial.

R v Musa

Acquitted of human trafficking and labour exploitation. Defendant was said to be member of crime family who trafficked and exploited scores of workers over five years.

R v Farah

Junior alone. Defendant accused of committing twelve armed robberies of banks and building societies across north London over a 4-week period. Complex issues regarding mental health.

R v HK

Defence of money trafficker said to be sending money to Turkey to benefit terrorist organisations in Syria.

R v Pellett

Defence of a UK Border Agency officer charged as the principal defendant in the importation of drugs and firearms into the UK. Case garnered significant press attention.

R v MB

Defendant acquitted of tobacco smuggling on a significant scale. Prosecution relied upon on-board 'thermal' data never previously deployed in criminal trials.

R v HM

Represented first defendant in cocaine, ketamine and cannabis national supply ring. Case was complex such that it required three separate trials. Acquitted. Led junior. Operation Aramac.

R v McGrath

Defendant charged with multiple counts of blackmail and section 18 wounding. Eight-week trial with Crown alleging Defendant was a "one-man mafia". Acquitted of all but one count of blackmail.

R v PW

Major drug supply operation between north west and north east organised crime groups amounting to "millions of pounds worth of class A drugs". Acquitted after trial. Led junior.

R v DH

Junior alone. Drug supply and money laundering conspiracy involving eighteen defendants linked to a notorious criminal fraternity in Derbyshire. Suspended sentence secured for client.

R v Sanas

Charged with international trafficking and serious sexual offences. Two linked trials took place amidst heightened media interest.

Business Crime & Fraud

Instructed in cases of complex financial crime involving individuals and corporations in the public and private sector. Recent instructions include trials on indictment in respect of crypto currency frauds and confiscation orders dealing with crypto assets.

Adept at dealing with consequent applications for ancillary orders and confiscation proceedings.

Represented company directors, accountants, trustees and solicitors.

Notable Business Crime & Fraud cases

R v CR

Representation of the first Defendant, a director of a company in relation to allegations of VAT and duty fraud offences brought by HMRC relating to the supply of diesel. One of the longest diesel fraud trials ever prosecuted by HMRC (Operation Electron)

R v Patel

Defence of international money laundering scheme operating out of a money exchange bureau.

R v LB

Representation of probate solicitor who defrauded her clients of over £4million. Case attracted considerable press attention.

R v MH

Junior alone in one of the Crown Prosecution Service's first prosecutions under the Bribery Act 2010. Involved a £multi-million contract with a public body.

R v AO

Conspiracy to defraud large amounts of money over the internet from individuals in the United States

R v TS

Representing solicitor charged in well-publicised large scale conspiracy to facilitate sham marriages.

Education

- Lord Denning Scholarship

Publications

[Andy Malkinson – Time for a Radical Rethink – The Circuiteer](#)

Recommendations

2024

Legal 500

Crime: *'Joe is highly organised, his judgement is superb and his client care skills are sublime. Joe's advocacy is well measured and well above his level of seniority.'*

Ranked: Tier 3

2023

Legal 500

Crime: *'Joe is a hard-working counsel, taking his time to find the best solution of clients. Excellent advocate and puts forward measured, well-reasoned legal arguments.'*

Ranked: Tier 3

Fraud:Crime : Tier 4

2022

Legal 500

Crime: *"A fluent, charming and committed junior. He puts clients at ease and commands the confidence and trust of juries."*

Ranked: Tier 3

Fraud:Crime: Ranked: Tier 3

Awards

