

Laura Hocknell

Call 2005



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Laura is a hard-working and down to earth criminal defence practitioner. She is frequently instructed in complex and serious fraud cases, often involving voluminous and complicated evidence.

Recommended in Chambers & Partners 2016.

In the last few years, she has been instructed to represent the chair of a Tenant Management Organisation accused of fraud, the Chief Financial Officer charged with multiple counts of VAT fraud, in a five month 'missing trader' fraud and as junior counsel for the first defendant in allegations of conspiracy to make corrupt payments by members of the Royal Household.

Laura has experience in defending in all types of sexual allegation. She has obtained acquittals for a man accused of raping his two daughters over many years, a 17 year old who was alleged to have raped a vulnerable teenager, a defendant said to be part of a 'grooming gang' alleged to have targeted a 13 year old girl with learning difficulties, and a defendant charged with drugging and raping a teenage boy.

Laura is a Door Tenant at Mountford Chambers.

Expertise

Crime

Notable Crime cases

Murder and Attempted Murder

R v Joshua Folurunso [2018] Central Criminal Court. Instructed as junior alone on charges of assisting an offender following targeted gang related 'execution.' Coverage: BBC News.

R v Erroll Hanson [2017] Southwark Crown Court

Led by Queen's Counsel in murder trial. The defendant was a man of good character, diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, who stabbed a burglar over fifty times. Acquitted of both murder and manslaughter. The case received significant media attention.

Coverage: The Times

(<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/homeowner-errol-hanson-who-stabbed-burglar-50-times-is-cleared-of-murder-b203hcwzf>), The Mirror –

(<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeowner-who-stabbed-burglar-more-11725255>), The Daily Mail – (<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5197493/Homeowner-killed-drunk-burglar-cleared-murder.html>).

R v Ullah [2015] Leeds Crown Court

Junior counsel for second defendant in murder trial involving double shooting of two brothers.

R v Ronald Edwards [2011] Chelmsford Crown Court

Led junior in murder trial. The defendant, a man of 65 and of previous good character, stabbed his long term partner twelve times. Acquitted of murder.

R v Whyte [2009] Court of Appeal Criminal Division

Led junior on appeal against conviction for murder in gang related shooting. Complicated issues raised in respect of Crown's simultaneous application to quash a co defendant's acquittal. Appeal allowed.

R v JM [2019] Northampton Crown Court

Instructed to represent defendant charged with attempted murder and possession of firearm in allegation of gang related violence.

R v EN [2019] Inner London Crown Court

Young man with learning difficulties caught with 1kg of heroin and charged with possession with intent to supply. Acquitted after trial.

R v Giorgio Dikila [2018] Inner London Crown Court

Young man acquitted after trial of possession of multiple firearms with intent to endanger life.

R v John Dawson and others [2017] Southend Crown Court

Defendant charged together with others with s18 GBH following a break in into a block of flats and stabbing of a young man in a case of mistaken identity. Defendant was alone in being acquitted of s18 after trial. He received 15 months for a s20 offence; the other defendants were sentenced to 5 and 6 and a half years respectively.

Operation Unsafe [2018] Chelmsford Crown Court

Led junior in allegation of importation of over £8million of amphetamine oil.

R v Mubasher Iqbal [2015] Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court

Instructed in eleven handed allegation of conspiracy to launder proceeds of crime. The Crown's case is that the members of an extended family have sought to conceal the proceeds of drug trafficking and other offences by purchasing properties and transferring them from one family member to another. Listed for 8-week trial.

R v Usman and others [2011] Bradford Crown Court

Led junior in conspiracy to supply heroin across the North East.

R v JF [2018] Portsmouth Crown Court

Defendant charged with sexually assaulting three of his daughters' friends; all of whom gave evidence against him. Acquitted of all counts.

Business Crime & Fraud

Notable Business Crime & Fraud cases

[London Borough of Lambeth v Peter Shorinwa \[2019\] Inner London Crown Court](#)

Chair of Tenant Management Organisation accused of fraud by abuse of position by authorising large payment to employee. Acquitted after four-week trial. Inside Housing article.

[Operation Roast \[2019\] Nottingham Crown Court](#)

Represented Chief Financial Officer for a number of companies set up to commit VAT fraud over a number of years. Suspended sentence. Coverage: Nottingham Post.

[Operation Banjax \[2019\] Southwark Crown Court](#)

Junior counsel for member of organised crime group responsible for large scale laundering of proceeds of VAT missing trader fraud predicated on alcohol diversion fraud. Total loss to the Revenue said to be £34.2million.

[Operation Kanteen \[2018\] Lewes Crown Court](#)

Represented two defendants in consecutive trials in this series involving allegations of the laundering of over £600,000 defrauded from elderly and vulnerable people.

[R v Montes \[2017\] Southwark Crown Court](#)

Defendant stole over £100,000 of watches from her employer, a billionaire Russian oligarch. Guilty plea, suspended sentence imposed.

[Operation Chert \[2013\] Kingston Crown Court](#)

Led junior for defendant in MTIC fraud – conspiracy to cheat the Revenue and money laundering. The Crown's case in this five-month trial was that the defendant's company had attempted to cheat the Revenue of £23million through fraudulent VAT claims.

[R v Butt and others \[2012\] Liverpool Crown Court](#)

Junior counsel for employee of dental practice charged with conspiracy to defraud the Primary Care Trust. Count 1 stayed as an abuse of process following two days of defence submissions on the basis that there had been no loss to the PCT.

[R v Murphy and others \[2011\] Ipswich Crown Court](#)

Led junior in 3 month SFO prosecution for 'boiler room' fraud with cross jurisdictional issues. The SFO's case was that over £8million had been fraudulently obtained from would-be investors in a sham biodiesel company.

Professional Regulation

Regularly instructed by the General Dental Council to prosecute offences contrary to the Dentists Act 1984.

Public Law

Health and Safety and Environmental Law

Notable Public Law cases

R v JI [2019] Inner London Crown Court

Instructed to represent defendant charged with money laundering and offences contrary to the Cosmetic Products Enforcement Regulations 2013 in respect of sale of skin lightening products.

R v Ben Sweet [2019] Warwick Crown Court

Represented sole trader who manufactured pet foods charged with numerous breaches of health and safety legislation. ☒Coverage: The Coventry Telegraph.

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association and South Eastern Circuit