

# Laurence Harris

Call 2020



[clerks@mountfordchambers.com](mailto:clerks@mountfordchambers.com)



020 7936 6300

Laurence has a thriving practice in the Crown Court, and has represented clients at the early stages of homicide, terrorism, and serious sexual offence cases.

He has a particular interest in fraud, corporate crime, and financial regulation. He helped prepare defences to both corporate investigations and civil fraud claims whilst working at Boutique Law. He has developed this interest since commencing pupillage, assisting in the preparation of money laundering cases and FCA regulatory claims under FSMA 2000. Laurence also has experience of defending extradition claims, often with a human rights dimension. Having also worked as a paralegal on the Infected Blood Inquiry, Laurence is keen to develop his practice at the intersection of criminal and public law.

Laurence has a strong academic background, having graduated with a first-class degree from Cambridge and winning several academic prizes.

## Expertise

### Crime

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## Notable Crime cases

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### R v L (Operation Komodor)—Maidstone Crown Court [2024]

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Instructed for the first defendant in a 5-week trial of a conspiracy to import and supply 1.2 tons of cocaine. Led by Minka Braun.

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### R v B —Kingston Crown Court [2024]

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Instructed as fresh counsel on appeal against a conviction in the youth court for knife-point robbery. Successfully persuaded the Judge to stop the case on the basis of poor-quality ID evidence, despite a positive identification at the ID parade.

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### R v K — Bromley Youth Court [2024]

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Two-handed possession with intent to supply class A case. Successfully advanced the defence of s.45 Modern Slavery Act 2015 at trial.

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### R v S — Woolwich Crown Court [2024]

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Defendant unanimously acquitted by jury of intentional strangulation, threatening to destroy property, and ABH against his ex-partner.

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### R v N (Operation Blanca) – Bristol Crown Court [2023]

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Instructed in a multi-handed eight-week trial relating to a conspiracy to import and export industrial quantities of “spice”. Led by [Jim Tilbury](#).

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### R v M – Winchester Crown Court [2023]

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M had been accused of sexually assaulting a trainee Detective Constable in a police interview room. This case involved sensitive cross-examination of the complainant and detailed analysis of the police investigation into the incident. After four days of evidence, the jury acquitted M within half an hour.

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### R v B (Operation Junonia) – Lewes Crown Court [2023]

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Acted for the second defendant in a trial involving the largest illegal gun factory ever uncovered in the UK. The case involved the seizure of dozens of live weapons from crime scenes across the UK, and the seizure of up to 150 partially-manufactured replica Browning pistols. Led by Dan Frier.

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### R v O – St Albans Crown Court [2023]

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Of the four Defendants running complex cut-throat defences on an indictment of being concerned in the supply of Class A drugs, only O was acquitted.

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### R v D (Operation Harbinger) – Exeter Crown Court [2023]

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Led by Dan Frier in a 22-handed conspiracy to supply over £1 million worth of Class A drugs. Upon reviewing the defence abuse of process skeleton argument, the Crown elected not to proceed to trial against D.

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### R v F – Birmingham Crown Court [2023]

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Having been convicted in the lower court of assaulting his ex-partner, H instructed new solicitors and Laurence to advise and represent him on appeal. Two years on from the date of the alleged offence, F was acquitted and his conviction quashed.

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### R v K – Southwark Crown Court [2022]

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19-year-old K had been charged with assaulting a police officer in Leicester Square during celebrations after the quarter-finals of the European Championships in 2020. The jury acquitted, K having advanced ‘defence of another’ at trial.

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## Business Crime & Fraud

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Laurence has written for LexisNexis on business crime and the intersection of civil litigation and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

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## Notable Business Crime & Fraud cases

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### HMRC v E – First Tier Tax Tribunal [2024]

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Instructed for the Revenue to assist in the preparation of a complex MTIC fraud trial, relating to fraud in the labour market.

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### Insolvency Service v E – Southwark Crown Court [2024]

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Upon acceptance of the defence basis of plea, E – a company director – received a community order for failing to notify creditors of an application to voluntarily strike off a company with the intent to conceal that application,

contrary to s.1006 of the Companies Act 2006. E also avoided being disqualified from acting as a company director.

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### R v B — Central Criminal Court [2024]

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Secured a suspended sentence for B who had been convicted of a £150,000 fraud against Coutts Bank.

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## Professional Regulation

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Laurence acts for both professional regulators and registrants and is able to advise at all stages of proceedings including on appeal. He is on the approved counsel list for the Nursing and Midwifery Council. He has acted in taxi licensing appeals including for drivers banned from platforms such as Uber, Bolt, and Freenow.

## Asset Forfeiture & Civil Recovery

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Laurence maintains a keen interest in the intersection of criminal and civil jurisdictions. He has experience of contested POCA hearings and of resisting applications to activate default sentences before the Magistrates' Court. He is well-placed to advise on the application of Part 5 of POCA, including on crypto-assets. He has also successfully challenged the retention of personal property by the police under the Police (Property) Act 1897.

## Criminal Regulatory

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Laurence accepts instructions to defend company directors and corporates in prosecutions brought by health and safety, and environmental regulators.

## Inquests & Inquiries

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Laurence spent 15 months working as a paralegal on the Infected Blood Inquiry. He can advise core participants, individuals, and corporates on all aspects of inquiry procedure, including on requests for information under rule 9 of the Inquiries Rules 2006 and on the imposition of restriction orders under section 19 of the Inquiries Act 2005.

Laurence advises and acts in hearings before the parole board. Present instructions include representing a prisoner on an IPP sentence who remains in closed conditions, 14 years over tariff. In the event of an adverse ruling, Laurence is well-placed to advise on the merits of judicial review of parole board decisions.

He also accepts instructions through the Attorney General's Junior Junior Scheme.

## International Law

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Laurence accepts instructions to advise and represent requested persons at all stages of extradition proceedings. Prior to commencing pupillage, Laurence worked at Boutique Law, where he helped prepare appeals to the High Court for Part 1 and Part 2 countries. He also gained experience of mutual legal assistance in United States Department of Justice investigations, and FCA civil fraud actions under FSMA 2000.

## Education

GDL and BPTC– City, University of London

BA (Hons) Theology (First Class) – Clare College, Cambridge

## Memberships

Young Fraud Lawyers Association

Defence Extradition Lawyers Forum

## Publications

### **Business Crime**

Civil Litigation and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (Newcastle United v HMRC)

### **Asset Recovery**

Nothing cryptic about it: the new rules in UK crypto regulation and their impact on asset recovery

## Awards and Prizes

The Queen's Scholarship – The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple

Finalist, Rosamund Smith Moot – The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple

City Law School Scholarship – City, University of London

Shortlisted for the Falcon Chambers Prize for Land Law – City, University of London

Astbury Scholarship – The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple

Theological Studies Prize – Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge

Academic Scholarship – Clare College, Cambridge

Bauckham Prize – Clare College, Cambridge

Choral Scholarship – Clare College, Cambridge

## Other information

Laurence is Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He has experience as a charity trustee and a school governor.