

Laurence Harris

Call 2020



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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

Notable Crime cases

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

Presently instructed in a multi-handed conspiracy to import and export industrial quantities of “spice”. Led by [Jim Tilbury](#).

R v M – Winchester Crown Court [2023]

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.

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

Led by Dan Frier, acting for the second defendant in case 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.

R v M – Lewes Crown Court [2023]

M had been accused of a joint enterprise knife-point attack following non-payment of a debt by the complainant. The jury unanimously acquitted M after cross-examination strongly indicated that it was in fact the complainant who was armed with a knife.

R v O – St Albans Crown Court [2023]

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. He retained his good character.

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

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.

R v K – Southwark Crown Court [2022]

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. K maintained that his actions were necessary to protect his friend, whom he believed to have been unfairly arrested and disproportionately detained. The jury acquitted K.

R v F – Birmingham Crown Court [2023]

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.

R v M – Central Criminal Court [2022]

A acquitted of theft from a motor vehicle and criminal damage, running the defence of mistaken identification.

R v B – Inner London Crown Court [2022]

Laurence represented a 19-year-old of previous good character caught with 18 wraps of heroin, 17 wraps of cocaine, cannabis, £2000 cash and a machete on his person. The Judge treated B as 'lesser role' after extensive mitigation and imposed a suspended sentence.

R v P – Guildford Crown Court [2022]

Secured a suspended sentence for P who, despite multiple previous drink driving convictions, had been convicted of driving dangerously three times over the relevant speed limit, failing to provide a specimen for analysis, and failure to stop after the eventual accident.

Laurence also maintains a particular interest in protest law and has represented protestors from Extinction Rebellion and Just Stop Oil. He is able to give pre-and post-charge advice on protest offences such as obstruction of the highway and aggravated trespass, on the availability of human rights defences, and on the impact and interpretation of *DPP v Ziegler*[2019] EWHC 71 (Admin).

Asset Forfeiture & Civil Recovery

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 challenged the retention of personal property by the police under the Police (Property) Act 1897.

Inquests & Inquiries

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.

Professional Regulation

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.

International Law

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

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.