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Sarah Gaunt

Call: 1992

Barrister

Mediator (CEDR accredited)

Legally Qualified Chair (Police Disciplinary Hearings) (South East Region) (appointed 2019)

Testimonials

An experienced advocate who is excellent in complex, paper-heavy, serious crime

Legal 500 - 2021 - South Eastern

She has an excellent knowledge of the law in relation to cybercrime cases

Legal 500 - 2021 - Midlands

**She cross-examines with deadly effect.
Incredibly industrious and deadly in cross-examination.**

Legal 500 - 2020

I would like to thank you for your fantastic work on this case. I have so much appreciated your calm level headed advice at all stages especially in the fortnight leading up to trial. This case must rank as one of the most difficult I have charged and followed through from start to finish. It was most horrific and distressing and I just want to thank you all for your help in bringing this most serious of offenders to justice.

Senior Crown Prosecutor - June 2019

A hardworking, efficient and unflappable advocate, who is undaunted by unusual and complex cases.

Legal 500 2017 - Midlands

Areas of Experience

- Serious & Complex Crime
- Cybercrime
- Financial Crime & Fraud
- Serious Sexual Offences
- Homicide
- Professional Misconduct & Disciplinary

Contact Clerks

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Contact Sarah

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Fair, hardworking, efficient and unflappable.

Legal 500 2017 - London & South East

Past work includes cybercrime, serious sexual offences and fraud cases

Legal 500, 2018

This was a complex investigation which led officers from Nottinghamshire Police to various locations throughout the country. It was an impressive team effort. I would like to thank David Allan and Sarah Gaunt. We worked really closely together on this challenging case to achieve the best possible results

Officer in charge, Nottingham Constabulary

Practice Profile

Sarah Gaunt is a senior criminal practitioner who has represented both the prosecution and the defence. Grade 4 (highest grade) on the general prosecution list and on both the Rape and International Justice and Serious Organised Crime specialist panels. Practice areas include International Justice and Serious Organised Crime; Cybercrime; Fraud; Money Laundering; Serious violent and Sexual offences. Sarah reviewed the Vulnerable witness teaching programme to be delivered to the Caribbean and has given a multitude of seminars on cybercrime to specialist practitioners over recent years. Sarah also sits as a Legally Qualified Chair (Police Disciplinary Panels) in the South East region. Sarah is committed to equality and diversity and has provided input to various forums and research into this area.

In 2015 Sarah became a CEDR qualified mediator

In 2020 Sarah completed the London School of Economics certified course in "Cryptocurrency and Disruption".

Sarah has been engaged and remains engaged in the Undercover Police Inquiry (since September 2019).

Work Undertaken

- Serious & Complex Crime
- Cybercrime
- Financial Crime & Fraud
- Serious Sexual Offences
- Homicide
- Professional Misconduct & Disciplinary Tribunals
- Serious Crime Cybercrime
- Fraud

Publications

"THE DEVIL FINDS WORK FOR IDLE HANDS" COVID-19's UNWANTED CYBER SIDE EFFECT

Legal and communications best practices to reduce cyber-crime fallout

Appointments & Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- International Bar Association
- Midland Circuit
- Facilitator in Vulnerable witness training
- Advocacy tutor for Lincoln's Inn

Notable Cases

CASES OF LEGAL SIGNIFICANCE

R V FEELEY

Prosecution counsel. Authority concerning the amendment of Indictments upon re-trial from the Court of Appeal (s7 and 8 Criminal Appeal Act considered). Trial concerned Multiple Complainant historical child rape offences. [2012] EWCA Crim 720; [2012] 2 Cr. App. R 13.

R V OSINIKOVIC AND SMILGINIS

Prosecution counsel at first instance. Conviction upheld in a conjoined appeal which reviewed the circumstances where it is appropriate to seek leave to appeal on the basis of inconsistent verdict(s) [2016] EWCA Crim 550.

INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE AND ORGANISED CRIME CASES

2018 KOLICAJ & Others (Operation Jumfru)

Leading counsel – Prosecution of a 5 defendant, International money laundering operation (circa £7 million) by a UK based Organised Crime Gang (OCG) of Albanian origin. Transfer of monies to and through multiple European destinations, particularly Northern Greece and Romania. The evidence adduced emanated from National and International sources during a multi-agency cooperation over a long running investigation over a substantial period of time. (CPS International Justice and Organised Crime Division (London)) (NCA). News articles - [The London Economist](#) and [ITV News](#)

2017 R V HUSSAIN (Operation Grabbets)

An Iranian linked, Money Exchange Bureaux, Money Laundering operation. (CPS International Justice and Organised Crime Division (London)) (NCA)

2015 R V OGUNDE and others (Operation Starving)

Leading Counsel - 15 defendant cybercrime fraud/money laundering trial involving the dark web, international email hacking, internet and mandate fraud. (CPS International Justice and Organised Crime Division (Birmingham)) (NCA). [Click here](#) for news article.

2015-16 R V OPENE (Operation Starving (2))

Sole counsel - cybercrime fraud and money laundering offences (Trial 2 Operation STARVING) (Serious and Organised Crime) (CPS International Justice and Organised Crime Division (Birmingham)) (NCA)

R V CURI, CURI and MATAJ (Operation Aphis)

Sole prosecution counsel in approximately £1 million Class A conspiracy to supply and money laundering offences (Operation Aphis) (Serious and Organised Crime, London)

R V KWABENA and GAMBRAH (Operation Buncle)

Sole prosecution counsel in class A and B Drugs Conspiracy, Firearms and Money Laundering case. Central

Criminal Court where the Prosecution was described by the Judge as being “Immaculately prepared and presented”. (Serious and Organised Crime, London)

R v FAULKNER AND FENLON

Prosecution counsel in multiple ATM robbery conspiracy involving multiple defendants and breaches of previously imposed SCPO's. (Serious and Organised Crime)

R V HORNE and BULL JONES

Sole prosecution counsel in multiple complainant rape/sexual offence trial where defendant randomly attacked women in Milton Keynes in a sustained series of attacks over a period of time which had caused local fear amongst women and their ability to be able to walk at night alone. One Complainant gave evidence via live link from Italy due to her inability to attend court in the UK, which was one of the first trials in the UK to receive evidence via this route. (Serious and Organised Crime).

COMPLEX CRIME – CYBERCRIME CASES

2019-2020 R V YANPOLSKY

(Operation Zizane)– Junior Counsel - Large cybercrime prosecution. Complex sabotage cyberattacks on processing system for card payments, involving unauthorised theft of data to enable unauthorised access and amendment of data. Repeated hacking over a four-week period and malicious coding leading to a lengthy outage, multimillion pound loss and the disruption to the use of 6.3 million payment cards for a significant period. Issues and expert evidence relating to IP addresses, malware, hacking, identity theft and no-trace remote access. (Cyber CCU, London)

2019 R V KHAN and Others

Leading Counsel – Large cybercrime prosecution. 4 defendant cybercrime-based conspiracy to defraud UK banks/Money Laundering through the use of sophisticated malware. A prosecution resulting from evidence seized in Mollachiev below. Expert evidence relating to IP addresses, cryptocurrency (retention, process and use) and internet banking procedures. Forfeiture included the forfeiture of crypto assets. (Cyber CCU, London, Birmingham Crown Court)

2017-18 R V MOLLACHIEV & BAZEAV

Sole Counsel- Large cybercrime prosecution involving a Conspiracy to defraud various UK banks/Money Laundering (circa £2 million), through the use of malware, bots and botnets. Linked to Russia, Chechnya and a worldwide cyber criminal network. Complex expert evidence adduced including that relating to IP addresses, the use of PGP keys, remote computers and other sophisticated anonymising no-trace technology. A paper heavy case which included the Russian translation of circa 17,000 pages of webchats. (Cyber CCU, London). [Click here](#) for news article.

COMPLEX CRIME DRUG CONSPIRACY CASES

2018 R V WEBSTER (and others) (Operation Starbreeze)

Leading prosecution counsel in 11-defendant substantial “County Lines” drug supply conspiracy (CCU Nottingham).

2018 R V IQBAL (and others) (Operation Logic)

Leading counsel in 8 defendant “County Lines” drugs supply conspiracy.

HOMICIDE/SERIOUS VIOLENCE CASES

2019 R V SAUNDERS

Sole prosecution counsel in an Attempted Murder.

2019 R V KHAN and KHAN

Sole prosecution counsel in Blackmail and Firearms case which terrorised several families within the vicinity of Luton. [Click here](#) for news article.

2018-19 R V LUBASI

Sole prosecution counsel. Serious life altering injuries inflicted due to a street stabbing which received national newspaper coverage. Substantial sentence imposed. A further conviction for a night time robbery where identification was disputed also resulted in conviction. News articles - [BBC](#) and [The Nottingham Post](#)

2018 R V MACLACHLAN-SIM

Sole Counsel – Attempted murder. Re-trial prosecution concerning ex-fenestration of girlfriend in a controlling relationship from 4th floor window, after which she received life changing disabling injuries. (Warwick). [Click here](#) for news article.

2018 R V TOYNBEE AND OTHERS

Sole Counsel – Conspiracy to commit GBH, a multidefendant case where serious violence had been inflicted with an axe.

2017 R V DWAYNE JOHNSON

Junior Counsel – Successful prosecution for murder where Defendant stabbed a host at a party following an argument and claimed self-defence (Nottingham). [Click here](#) for news article.

R V ROGERS

Sole Counsel - Racially aggravated Murder, sole Prosecution counsel in successful prosecution. Issues concerned causation, Diminished Responsibility and Loss of Control raised. (Luton). News articles - [BBC](#) and [ITV News](#)

R V GILDER

Leading counsel. Attempted murder. Prosecution concerning the ex-fenestration of an 18m old disabled child from a second-floor window.

R V M, MANSLAUGHTER

Sole prosecution counsel in a drug related “one punch” manslaughter (Lincoln).

R V DOBLYS

(Court of Appeal) For Respondent (Sole Counsel). The imposition of a sentence of 16 + 4 extended year sentence where the defendant was convicted of Manslaughter following meeting the Complainant, taking her to a hotel room and “raping her to death”.

FRAUD/MONEY LAUNDERING/FINANCIAL CRIME

2019 R V DAVIES

Sole prosecution counsel in a fraud committed over several years where funds had been fraudulently claimed from public funds in respect of fictitious foster care.

2019 R V THOMPSON (Operation Amble)

Sole prosecution counsel in an allegation of fraud by a bank employee with managerial responsibilities.

2018 R V HOLMES and KALU

Sole prosecution counsel in substantial theft by school accountant and partner (Serious Fraud Department).

2018 R V FERARA and others (Operation Tremblor)

Sole prosecution counsel in a multidefendant conspiracy to steal committed over a large geographical area by an organised group.

R V BRIGHTMAN, BRIGHTMAN and JENKINS

Sole prosecution counsel in Internet based “boiler room” fraud. Multiple complainant case involving particularly vulnerable complainants targeted from a “sucker list”.

R V DOHERTY and others

Junior counsel in 13 Defendant National and International car ringing case.

R V ROBINSON

Prosecution counsel in prosecution of Police Officer convicted of Fraud / Misfeasance in a Public Office offences committed whilst on duty.

SERIOUS SEXUAL OFFENCES/TRAFFICKING (and linked offences)

2019 R V L

Sole prosecution counsel in a 30-count indictment alleging multiple historic sexual and related offences. The Complainant had effectively been imprisoned and substantially controlled by her stepfather from a young age, prostituted via the internet, being sexually exploited both domestically and internationally. The abuse which had been inflicted over multiple years had resulted in a vulnerable complainant.

2018 R V H & C

Sole prosecution counsel in a numerous count sexual indictment which included a conspiracy to rape. The Complainant was aged 2 and unable to give evidence. The defendants were asperges syndrome and suffered from further mental and physical impairments (including in respect of one limited sight). Both complainants were supported at trial with intermediaries and Social Workers. Psychological evidence was also adduced in respect of asperges in so far as it related to the culpabilities of the defendant(s). The resultant conviction required a complex and difficult sentencing exercise due the seriousness of the offence and the defendants' disabilities. The sentencing approach was ratified by the court of appeal.

2018 R V C and others

Sole prosecution counsel in 4 defendant multiple occasion rape case committed over a period of time where the Autistic Complainant (aged 13) was groomed via the internet. A variety of special measures implemented at trial resulted in the Complainant giving fair and effective evidence despite only being able to cross examined on a limited basis. Intermediary used.

2018 R V H

Sole prosecution counsel in multi complainant, interfamilial historic sex case with vulnerable complainants.

2018 R V W

Sole prosecution counsel in an interfamilial multi complainant historic rape case, with vulnerable complainants.

2017 R V S

Sole prosecution counsel in a multiple sexual count indictment, spanning several years, concerning a celebrity's allegations against his public-school housemaster

R V T

Sole prosecution counsel in prosecution where Complainant aged 4-5 and gave sole evidence on both the fact of the offence occurring and the identification of the Defendant. Court of appeal upheld the conviction. Intermediary used.

R V H

Sole prosecution counsel in successful prosecution where both Defendant and Complainant had severe learning/mental disabilities (at 0.2 and 0.1% population respectively). Case required multiple intermediaries one assisting through an interpreter. Honour Crime and case containing racial sensitivities. Intermediaries and Psychologists required for both Complainant and Defendant. The defendant also required an interpreter.

R V S

Sole prosecution counsel in Multiple Complainant rape concerning multiple child complainants committed over a significant period of time.

R V D

Sole prosecution counsel in rape trial where Complainant suffered from severe learning difficulties. Historic allegation concerned teacher at her special school.

R V C

Sole prosecution Counsel in successful prosecution of child exploitation case where defendant absent. Complainant had learning difficulties.

R V T, R VJ etc.

Sole prosecution Counsel where Complainant suffering from a diagnosed psychiatric condition (Borderline personality disorder, bi-polar, depression, autistic spectrum)

R V A

Sole prosecution counsel in case involving deaf Complainant and witnesses. Deaf interpreters required.

R V B

Sole prosecution counsel in case involving 50,000 indecent images/video's and other sexual offences.

R V G

Sole prosecution of historic rape concerning a 42 year delay where Defendant now physically and mentally impaired.

R V BROWN

Defence counsel in acquittal of defendant in child sexual offences.