



Barrister profile

Mark George QC



Practice

Mark George QC is a highly experienced defence trial advocate of more than 30 years' call, with considerable expertise in murder, manslaughter, major drug importations and serious sexual cases. Before he took silk he was regularly briefed in serious cases of historic sexual assault, often representing teachers and carers. His extensive experience also includes many appearances in drug importation cases involving massive amounts of illegal drugs as well as other serious cases involving amongst others allegations of attempted murder.

Mark also has considerable experience of hearings before the Parole Board where he represents prisoners, particularly before lifer panels and has advised in many cases involving serving prisoners and their rights in areas such as sentence calculation and security categorisation. Mark has also undertaken judicial review work relating to prison law.

In addition to criminal work, as a junior Mark also undertook inquests on behalf of bereaved families often following deaths in custody. In December 2008 he represented the family of a man killed on a night out in Liverpool in 2003.

Mark is a member of Garden Court North Chambers in Manchester.

Notable Cases

R.v. Hughes [2010] EWCA Crim 1026 Life sentence quashed and hospital order under s. 37/41 of the Mental Health Act 1983 substituted.

R. (Mohammed Ali) v. Director of High Security [2009] EWHC 1732 (Admin) Category A prisoners designated as either "high" or "exceptional" escape risk are entitled to be given sufficient reasons for the decision to maintain that status so as to enable them to decide whether to challenge that decision.

R.v. Thompson - Stafford Crown Ct - September 2009 Represented soldier charged with murdering his 21 month old stepson. The prosecution accepted plea to manslaughter.

R.v. Hughes [2009]; [2010] 1 Cr. App. (S.) 25 EWCA Crim 841 Successfully argued that reference by Att. General does not extinguish defendant's right to subsequently appeal on grounds of fresh evidence.

R.v. Ian Price - Birmingham Crown Court - March 2009 Acquitted of attempting to murder his wife by rigging up a device to start a fire during the night.

R. v. Little - Chester Crown Court - November 2008 Partial acquittal of teacher charged with serious sexual assault on pupil who developed a crush on him.

R. v. Cooper - Sheffield Crown Court - October 2008 Successfully defended man charged with attempted murder.

R.v. Noel Matthews - Stafford C.C. - July 2008 Jury failed to agree in case alleging multiple sexual assaults on step-daughter. No re-trial.

R.v. Brereton and others - Sheffield C.C. - April 2008 Application to dismiss indictment against environmental protesters arrested in relation to campaign against widening of M1 motorway - upheld by judge.

Year of Call

1976

Email Address

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Telephone

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Queen's Counsel

2009

Education

BA Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic studies (Cantab)

Practice Areas:

Mark George QC is a member of the following Practice Areas:

- Crime
- Inquests
- Prison Law

Garden Court Chambers

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R.v. Bakish Khan and others [2008] EWCA Crim 531 The Times 07/04/08 (can a police officer who knows the officers giving evidence serve on the jury).

R.v. Robinson Manchester Crown Court 26.01.08 Guilty plea to offence under s.113 Anti-Terrorism, Crime & Security Act 2001 (sending noxious thing likely to cause harm or intimidate) by alleged member of the SNLA who had sent packages containing caustic soda to two people. Sentenced to 6 years imprisonment.

R v Omar Altimimi [2007] (offences under Terrorism Act; first trial in Manchester involving allegations of conduct linked to "Middle Eastern" terrorism).

R v S (Andrew) [2007] 1 W.L.R. 63; [2006] 2 Cr. App. R. 437 (introducing evidence of the bad character of the complainant).

R v Ablewhite & ors [2006] Nottingham Crown Court (unreported, the Staffordshire guinea pig farm case).

R v Holliday; R v Lebouillier [2005] 1 Cr.App.R(s).349 (70) (nuisance phone calls by animal rights activists).

R v AB [2005] (VHCC case).

R v James Carragher [2004] (VHCC case, leading counsel) (buggery and indecent assault).

A-G's Ref . Nos 58/66 of 2002 (R. v. Coudjoe and others) [2003] EWCA Crim 636 (on the levels of sentence for street gangs involved with firearms and drug supply).

R.v. Khan (Umer) sub nom. R.v. Dad and others [2002] EWCA Crim 945; [2003] Crim L.R. 684 (regarding hostile witnesses).

Mark was junior counsel in the case of **R.v. Khan (Sultan) [1997] A.C. 558; [1996] 2 Cr. App. R. 440** in which the Crown sought to rely on evidence obtained from a covert listening device placed in a private home. The case exposed the lack of statutory regulation of surveillance at the time and forced the government to introduce legislation to put such activities by the police and security services on a statutory footing. This was achieved first through the Police Act 1997 (Part III) and then by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Recommendations

Crime - Northern Circuit (2010): "Mark George QC is a 'very thorough and safe pair of hands' for criminal defence work" Legal 500 2010.

New silks in Crime - Northern (2010): "An 'excellent attorney' who just recently took silk, Mark George QC of Garden Court North has regularly appeared on behalf of teachers and carers accused of serious sexual assaults."

Leading Junior in Crime - Northern (2009): "Solicitors praise Mark George for 'his mastery of a brief, knowledge of the law and rapport with the clients'. His practice is predominantly trial-based, and covers all serious criminal matters. He acted in R v Omar Altimimi, the first trial in Manchester involving allegations linked to Middle Eastern terrorism." Chambers and Partners 2009.

Articles and Media Comment



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R v Major and Restraining Orders (LexisNexis Current Awareness, December 2010)

Reversing the burden of proof (LexisNexis Current Awareness, December 2010)

Reasonable grounds for suspicion (LexisNexis Current Awareness, December 2010)

Use of British-supplied drug in Arizona execution (BBC Radio 5 Live, October 2010)

Anonymity for those accused of rape (BBC Radio Manchester, June 2010)

Memberships

Member of Manchester Prison Law Practitioners Group (MPLPG)

Background

Mark determined to become a lawyer after seeing TV footage in the mid 1960s of American police officers beating civil rights demonstrators. He wanted to represent people fighting for their rights against the power of the state.

Having qualified as a lawyer he joined what is now Garden Court Chambers. Many of his first cases involved defending protesters arrested after a large anti-Nazi demonstration against the National Front in South London in 1977. Subsequently he has represented many protesters from political groups as well as miners, print workers, environmentalists and animal rights activists.

Mark is determined to provide each client with an excellent service. He will take time to explain all the options to the client including the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the case and will be concerned to make sure that the client understands what is happening in the preparation of his/her case. He has a strong empathy with his clients and whilst providing a thoroughly professional service will also make the client feel relaxed and able to discuss his/her concerns. Mark will provide as strong and resolute a defence as possible and will endeavour to obtain the best possible outcome for every client. He is known for the thoroughness of his preparation in all cases.

Mark is an opponent of the death penalty and has a strong interest in death penalty cases in the United States. In 1998 he worked pro bono in a capital murder trial in Texas where he assisted the local attorneys with the preparation of the case for trial. This involved being temporarily admitted as a member of the Texas Bar. Since that time he has been involved with Amicus, an organisation which trains young lawyers to undertake internships in the US assisting in death penalty trials and appeals. He regularly teaches at the Amicus training sessions in trial procedures in capital cases, jury selection and mitigation issues. He has also written a number of articles for the Amicus Journal on aspects of US death penalty law. In 2008 Mark became a trustee of the charity.

Profile updated January 2011



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