



Peter Rowlands

YEAR OF CALL: 1990



Peter Rowlands has an established reputation as a tough and committed advocate and experienced leader in criminal defence work. He has a wide-ranging practice from homicide where he acts as leading junior or sole counsel to serious sexual offences, major drug importations, fraud and money-laundering. Peter is ranked for crime in Chambers UK 2019 and the Legal 500 2019.

"His deft and intelligent cross-examination is a joy to observe."

LEGAL 500, 2020

"He defends in gang and organised crime-related cases."

LEGAL 500, 2019

Extremely thorough and committed, a skilled tactician and incredibly eloquent."

"One of his greatest assets is his ability to really connect with my lay clients. There are no airs and graces meaning clients are rapidly placed at ease and feel supported and understood. His thorough case preparation, unrivalled knowledge of the law and relaxed character enables clients to firstly understand and then thoroughly trust his advice and guidance."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (CRIME)

If you would like to get in touch with Peter please contact the clerking team:

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CRIMINAL DEFENCE

Peter Rowlands has an established reputation as a tough and committed advocate and experienced leader in criminal defence work.

He has a wide-ranging practice from homicide where he acts as leading junior or sole counsel to serious sexual offences, major drug importations, fraud and money-laundering, including contested confiscation proceedings.

He has been mentioned in the Legal 500 as having developed a particular expertise in murder and armed kidnapping cases and has maintained a ranking in Chambers UK Bar Guide for many years. He also has a high standing in cases involving major drug conspiracies, firearms, extortion and multiple rape. He recently represented one of the Hatton Garden burglars, both at the trial stage and in contested confiscation proceedings.

NOTABLE CASES

R v Collins & Others

Represented Terrence Perkins, one of the organisers of the notorious Hatton Garden burglary, both at the trial stage and during protracted confiscation proceedings.

R v B

Defendant accused of gross negligence manslaughter in historic allegation involving the death of his employee in a cement mixer. The case involved detailed abuse of process arguments and complex technical evidence.

R v P

Defendant was accused of attempting to murder her mother, a magistrate, by administering to her a deadly poison, abrin, said to be more toxic than ricin. This case has become known as the 'Breaking Bad plot', named after the American television series in which the anti-hero puts ricin in the coffee of one of his rivals. More information can be found on the [Garden Court Website](#). The case was widely reported in the media including by [the BBC](#), in [The Guardian](#) and in [The Daily Mail](#).

R v O

The first prosecution of an alleged member of the PKK under s.5(1) Terrorism Act 2006 and a case which led to inclusion in the sentencing guideline for s.5 offences:

[\[2016\] 1 W.L.R. 3156](#) [\[2016\] 2 Cr. App. R. \(S.\) 32](#) [\[2016\] Crim. L.R. 670](#)

R v S

An alleged threat to blow up a PIA commercial airliner on route from Pakistan to Manchester.

R v M

A multi-handed firearms case over 9 weeks arising out of gang rivalries in East London where an alleged gang member fired at pursuing police officers.

R v H

Murder by stabbing with mitigating mental health features that fell short of establishing the loss of control defence.

R v J

The defendant was acquitted of murdering his girlfriend by strangulation, the primary issue being one of intent. The case involved a number of bad character and hearsay issues arising out of extensive diaries kept by the deceased. See also [\[2013\] EWCA Crim 2839](#); [\[2016\] 1 Cr. App. R. \(S.\) 55](#)

R v B

A case of a police officer charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice by allegedly wiping the hard-drive of a CCTV camera in connection with a serious assault.

R v W

Historic case of kidnap and torture of young woman by allegedly aggrieved boyfriend.

R v K

Defendant charged with multiple allegations of rape against 10 year old child.

R v B

Leading counsel in a multi-handed conspiracy to rob cash in transit vans with the use of firearms.

R v R

An allegation of a multi-handed fire-bombing campaign in Bristol and Swindon, aimed at punishing an inter-faith marriage. The defendant who was the alleged ringleader had an unusual psychological deficit which led to a lengthy voire dire and expert evidence concerning the admissibility of extensive interviews without an appropriate adult.

R v D

A nine-handed gang kidnapping and prolonged rape involving a 14 year old defendant who was said to have led a group of youths on a revenge attack upon a former girlfriend of a similar age.

R v L

Leading counsel in multiple knife-point rape of prostitutes; the trial involved argument concerning the admissibility of unproven rape as bad character evidence and of previous 'false' complaints.

R v D

An allegation of anal rape of 4-year-old girl by 12-year-old defendant, involving complicated expert medical evidence and calling for highly sensitive cross-examination.

R v G

Leading counsel in organised football hooliganism conspiracy

R v D

Leading counsel in 5-handed cut-throat murder involving multiple issues of bad character

R v B

Defended a 78-year-old defendant tried on multiple counts of historic rape

R v W

Death by dangerous driving involving expert evidence on the maintenance and condition of farm vehicles

R v F

Leading counsel for the organiser of a kidnap gang involved in the armed snatch of 10-year-old boy for ransom where co-defendants gave evidence for the Crown: see *R v Fields* [2007] EWCA 3348.

R v B

Leading counsel in a large-scale, multi-handed drugs and firearms conspiracy (VHCC)

R v S

Leading counsel in a multi-handed conspiracy to kidnap and torture

R v P

Defending a school-teacher accused of historic sexual allegations against a 12-year-old pupil

R v A

Assassination shooting of a rival gang member (see Appellate: *R v Jones and others*)

FINANCIAL CRIME AND CONFISCATION

Peter acts as leading junior or sole counsel to fraud and money-laundering, including contested confiscation proceedings.

NOTABLE CASES

R v H

A significant charity fraud involving the embezzlement of over half a million pounds from an Afghan charity by the organisers. This case involved a video link with Kabul, Afghanistan and complex financial evidence.

R v A

A case concerning a fraud on a Jersey financier through the medium of a series of construction companies and losses approaching one million pounds.

R v F

Multi-handed conspiracy to export khat from Kenya to the US via London worth an alleged \$2.6m over several years.

R v A

Leading counsel in multi-handed £120m VAT conspiracy to smuggle gold jewellery into the UK which went to 3 re-trials and numerous complicated points of admissibility.

R v S

Leading counsel in series of conspiracies across the UK to evade duty on cigarettes and rolling tobacco

R v Z

£10m conspiracy to defraud Virgin Media through the widespread commercial distribution of pirated set-top box software.

R v C

Leading counsel for defendant accused of Cheating the Revenue on a massive scale by the use of 16 companies to abuse PAYE and CIS schemes for tax repayment which led to complicated confiscation proceedings.

R v S

Leading counsel in a 10 week multi-handed conspiracy to import 87 kilos of heroin where the defendant was also indicted on separate counts of running a cocaine pressing factory.

R v H

An allegation of persistent fraud by a barrister on his clients leading to a 33 count indictment.

R v N

Leading counsel in a £20 million hawalha banking money-laundering conspiracy. The case raised an interesting point in confiscation proceedings concerning the availability of unpaid criminal funds as an asset in the hands of the defendant: see *R v Najafpour* [\[2010\] 2 Cr. App. R. \(S.\) 38](#)

R v M

£5 million fraud involving an alleged plot between the defendant and a solicitor to defraud creditors following bankruptcy

R v O

An 11-handed nationwide car-ringing conspiracy.

R v G

The Millennium Dome lighting fraud (VHCC)

CRIMINAL APPEALS

Peter has an increasing amount of appellate work relating to both conviction and sentence, frequently on referral, following proceedings in the Crown Court. He has represented many appellants with mental health issues which were inadequately diagnosed in the court below.

NOTABLE CASES

***R v Najafpour* (2009) EWCA Crim 2723; (2010) 2 Cr. App. R. (S) 38**

A debt owed to an offender which is irrecoverable is an asset of no value for the purposes of calculating the available amount under s.9 POCA 2002.

***R v Spry* (2008) 26th September CCA Case No 0802133 A1**

Need for proportionality in sentence for child cruelty in cases where there has been prolonged psychological damage to a number of victims but a relatively low level of physical injury.

***R v Bridgewater* [2008] EWCA Crim 1845**

Application of Sentencing Council Guidelines in rape cases to 77-year-old appellant where there has also been the mitigating factor of delay.

***R v Ilomuanya* [2005] EWCA Crim 58, [2006] Crim L.R. 422**

Admissibility of alleged drugs paraphernalia in cases of supply or importation where merely an invitation to speculate.

***R v Jones and others* [2005] EWCA Crim 3115; [2006] 2 Cr App R (S) 1**

Determination of the minimum term following conviction for murder; consideration of aggravating and mitigating features: minimum term of 25 years in a 'cold-blooded execution' with other aggravating features.

Attorney General's References (Nos.99-102 of 2004) [2005] EWCA Crim 294; [2005] 2 Cr App R (S) 82

Distributors of drugs within UK should generally speaking receive slightly shorter sentences than those responsible for importation; comments on tariff generally.

***R. v Turpin (Nicholas Victor)* [2001] EWCA Crim 1600; [2002] 1 Cr App R (S) 77**

Threshold for custody in cases of possession of indecent images of children

***R v Bolingbroke* [2001] 1 Cr App R (S) 277; Times 16 August 2000**

Appropriate term for possession and distribution of child pornography.

BACKGROUND

Peter was educated at Keble College, Oxford and qualified as a solicitor at the College of Law. He was called to the Bar in 1990. He is a member of the Middle Temple, the Criminal Bar Association, the Criminal Appeal

Lawyers Association and Justice.

EDUCATION

- BA Hons, Keble College, Oxon

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- Criminal Bar Association
- Criminal Appeal Lawyers Association
- Justice

LANGUAGES

- French (proficient)

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