



Henry Blaxland KC

YEAR OF CALL: 1978 | YEAR OF SILK: 2002



Widely recognised as a leading criminal silk, Henry Blaxland KC's practice encompasses fraud, terrorism, homicide and sexual offences. He is often instructed in appellate matters.

Henry is a Master of the Bench of the Middle Temple.

Henry is ranked as Star Individual in Chambers and Partners, London (Bar), Crime and as a Leading Silk in the Legal 500. He won Crime Silk of the Year at the Legal 500 Awards 2019 and was shortlisted for Crime Silk of the Year at Chambers UK Bar Awards 2017.

Henry was featured as Times Lawyer of the Week in 2021.

Henry has practised in criminal defence work for his entire career at the Bar. He has appeared in many high-profile homicide trials at the Old Bailey. His principal areas of work now comprise fraud, with a specialism in confiscation, and terrorist cases with an international dimension.

He is widely known for his appellate practice, acting in cases referred to the Court of Appeal by the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC). He also appears for appellants in extradition cases.

"Henry is a highly polished performer and one of the leading barristers in his field."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024 (FINANCIAL CRIME)

"Henry has almost unparalleled expertise. He is knowledgeable, sensible, calm and has the ear of the court as well as the utter trust of both the lay client and the solicitor."

LEGAL 500, 2024 (CRIME)

"He is an excellent barrister with immense attention to detail, who has an amazing way with clients."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024 (CRIME)

"A class act who is great to work with and brings real gravitas to cases. He has sound judgement, is a very good advocate and has a nice and gentle manner."

CHAMBERS UK, 2022 (FINANCIAL CRIME, BAND 1)

"Henry is a consummate advocate at the top of his game. The fluency and easy charm of his advocacy style makes everything he does look effortless and yet is very effective."

LEGAL 500, 2022 (FRAUD)

"His advocacy is of course second to none; he commands the confidence of the Court and his manner with witnesses is equally firm and sympathetic. His manner instils confidence in the client."

LEGAL 500, 2022 (CRIME, TIER 1)

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

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You can also contact Henry directly:

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CRIMINAL DEFENCE

General crime

Over the years Henry has acted for defendants charged with murder, manslaughter, serious armed robbery and drugs offences. His work also covers the entire gamut of criminal defence. He successfully represented the principal of a therapeutic community for disturbed children in a five-month trial at Bristol Crown Court and appeared for a defendant charged with conspiracy to rape and murder based entirely on the content of internet chat-room discussions (*R v Hedgcock*). He succeeded in getting the indictment against the DJ Jonathan King for historic sexual offences stayed as an abuse of process. He recently acted for John Letts, charged with funding terrorism by sending money to his son in Syria.

Terrorism

He has been instructed in a number of high-profile terrorism cases. He acted for Errol Incedal, whose case was heard in secret and for John Downey, charged with involvement in the Hyde Park bomb in 1982. He also acted for Shajul Islam, a medical doctor accused of the kidnap of two journalists for a terrorist purpose in Syria. He successfully defended Mohammed Gulzar, alleged to be one of the masterminds behind the transatlantic airline plot, and Waheed Ali, one of only three people prosecuted for involvement in the 7 July London tube bombing.

NOTABLE CASES

Past notable cases can be viewed below. [Click here to see a list of recent notable cases.](#)

General crime

R v Kiki Muddar

Defendant charged with the murder of the eight year old daughter of a woman she befriended. The case was widely reported, including by the [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#) and [The Independent](#).

R v Kemi Adeyoola

Much-publicised trial at Central Criminal Court acting for 17-year-old girl charged with the murder of an 84-year-old woman, who had written a "blue-print for murder" diary.

Terrorism

R v Anis Sardar

Defendant charged with murder of an American soldier in Iraq in 2007 as a result of fingerprints recovered from a roadside bomb. This case was reported by the [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#), [The Telegraph](#) and the [Evening Standard](#).

R v Bherlin Gildo

The prosecution offered no evidence against man charged with terrorist offences following abuse of process submission. This case was reported by the [Guardian](#) and in [The Telegraph](#).

R v John Downey

Successful abuse of process submission for man charged with 1982 IRA Hyde Park bombing. This case has been widely reported, including by [the BBC](#), [The Guardian](#) and [The Independent](#).

R v Shajul Islam

Medical doctor charged with involvement in the kidnap of two journalists in Syria. Prosecution offered no evidence. This case was reported by [The Telegraph](#), [the BBC](#) and [The Guardian](#).

R v Mohammed Chowdhury

Terrorist plot to plant a bomb in the London stock exchange. This case was reported in [The Guardian](#).

R v AY (Court of Appeal)

Decision on ambit of 'reasonable excuse' for possession of terrorist material.

R v Waheed Ali

Defendant alleged to have been involved with the 7/7 London tube bombers.

R v Hyrbyair Marri

Defendant alleged to be involved with a terrorist organisation in Pakistani Baluchistan.

R v Al-Daour

So-called 'cyber terrorism' incitement case.

R v Abdul Saleem

First defendant in trial of Omar Brooks and others for inciting terrorist murder in speeches at Regents Park Mosque.

R v Gulzar

The acquitted defendant in the terrorist conspiracy to detonate bombs on transatlantic airlines.

R v Atilla Ahmet

Terrorist incitement case.

EXTRADITION

Mucelli v Sec of State for the Home Dept

Extradition judicial review concerning an Albanian national.

FINANCIAL CRIME AND CONFISCATION

Henry is ranked for Financial Crime in Chambers and Partners 2018.

He has developed a specialism in serious fraud and money laundering cases. He represented former broker Darrell Read, who was acquitted of conspiracy to defraud arising from the allegations of fixing the Libor rates. He has appeared in cases in which accountants and solicitors have been prosecuted. He defended a solicitor accused of conspiracy to defraud arising from the coal mining business in South Wales, in which the co-defendants included a leading insolvency QC, two partners in a solicitors firm and two company directors. The judge dismissed the charges following complex legal submissions.

Henry has also represented a solicitor charged with involvement in the attempted fraudulent take-over of Sheffield United Football Club. He has appeared in large scale VAT carousel fraud cases, including Operation Emersed (in which he represented the principal defendant) and Operation Euripus, the largest such fraud to be prosecuted. He successfully argued against a claim for a £5m confiscation order (*R v Bhabdeep Chahal*) both at first instance and on the prosecutor's unsuccessful appeal.

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R v Clockwork Apparel and others

Defendant charged with involvement in commercial scale trading in counterfeit clothing. Appeal to Supreme Court on preliminary point of law. Remitted to Crown Court culminating in acquittal of all defendants.

R v Urumov

Defendant charged with defrauding Russian bank out of \$170 million. The case has been reported in the financial press, including by [Bloomberg](#).

R v Darrell Read

The defendant was charged with conspiracy to defraud by manipulating the Libor rate and was the sixth broker to be found not guilty by a jury. The case was widely reported, including by the [Guardian](#), [Financial Times](#) and [BBC](#).

R v Frances Bodman

Successful application to dismiss for solicitor charged with conspiracy to defraud arising from the conduct of mining company Celtic Energy. This case was reported by [the BBC](#).

R v James and Miranda Sanders

Highest value insider dealer prosecution brought by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). This case was reported in [The Guardian](#).

R v Mohammed Amir

Pakistani cricket match fixing case. This case was widely reported, including by [The Telegraph](#), [the BBC](#) and [The Independent](#).

R v Bhabdeep Chahal

Operation Duma carousel fraud.

R v Hashib Apabhai

Operation Euripus carousel fraud. Reported case in Court of Appeal on application of bad character provisions.

R v Craig Johnson

Principal defendant in Operation Emerged - major carousel fraud which lasted over a year.

CRIMINAL APPEALS

A significant part of Henry's practice has involved representing appellants in cases referred to the Court of Appeal by the CCRC. He has been instructed in some of the most celebrated miscarriage of justice cases in the last 20 years, including Sam Hallam, Suzanne Holdsworth, the Carl Bridgewater murder case, Derek Bentley, James Hanratty and the M25 three.

He has an almost unrivalled experience of this type of work and has been centrally involved in the development of the Court of Appeal's jurisprudence. He has appeared in two of the leading cases concerning the court's approach to the prosecution of victims of human trafficking. He acted for Mohammed Amir, the young Pakistani fast bowler accused of involvement in match fixing.

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R v Sam Hallam

Widely publicised miscarriage of justice appeal. This case was reported in [The Guardian](#).

***Hayes v Chief Constable of Liverpool* [2011] EWCA Civ 911 (Court of Appeal Civil Division)**

Leading case on ambit of power of arrest in Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

R v Suzanne Holdsworth

Successful appeal of woman convicted of the murder of a child she was babysitting. More information about this case can be found on the [Garden Court Chambers website](#).

***R v Whomes and Steele* (Court of Appeal) [2006]**

CCRC reference appeal for the defendants convicted of the 'Essex Boys' Rettendon Range Rover murders.

***R v Don Pendleton H.L.* [2002] 1 WLR**

Successful appeal in CCRC reference. The leading case on the test in cases involving fresh evidence.

R v Dudley and Maynard

The 'torso murders' - notorious 1970s gang-land murder case referred to Court of Appeal by CCRC.

***R v Derek Bentley* [2001] 1 Cr App R 21**

The Craig and Bentley murder case and now the leading authority on the Court of Appeal's approach to

developments in the law since conviction.

R v Danny McNamee

Appeal of the man alleged to be an IRA master bomber, said to have made the notorious Hyde Park bomb.

R v Johnson, Rowe and Davis [2001] 1 Cr App R 115

The appeal of the M25 three and the leading authority on the relationship between the Court of Appeal's jurisdiction to quash convictions and the determination of a breach of Article 6 by the European Court of Human Rights.

R v Craven [2001] 2 Cr App R 12:

CCRC reference of conviction for murder, in which fresh DNA evidence became available following the referral to the court.

R v Cole 90 Cr App R 478

The leading case on the interpretation of the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 re the reading of witness statements.

Goswell v The Commissioner of Police

Appeal against record award of damages against the Police.

R v Colin Wallace

Appeal against conviction for manslaughter by former army information officer in Northern Ireland who alleged dirty tricks by MI5.

R v Hickey & Ors

The Carl Bridgewater murder appeal.

R v Georgiades 89 Cr App R 206

Mens rea in the offence of possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

He has always concentrated on civil liberties and human rights work. In the 1980s and 1990s he represented defendants in major criminal trials arising from the miners' strike, the protest against the Poll Tax and the riot at Campsfield House immigration detention centre. In 2010 he was involved in the much publicised successful defence of political activists charged with causing £180,000 worth of damage to an arms factory at the time of

the Israeli invasion of Gaza.

He has appeared for appellants in the Privy Council facing the death penalty. He represented a witness appearing before the Bloody Sunday tribunal, chaired by Lord Saville. Henry also practises in extradition and has appeared in the Divisional Court for appellants resisting their extradition to the USA and to Albania.

Inquest into the death of Jimmy Mubenga

Henry acted for Mr Mubenga's widow. The jury returned a verdict of unlawful killing, which led to the criminal prosecution of the G4S guards who were restraining him. The case was widely reported, including by the [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#) and [The Independent](#).

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***DPP v Ziegler and Others* [2019] 1 Cr.App.R.32**

Leading case on issue of lawful excuse in obstruction of the highway.

***R v Joseph* [2017] 1 Cr.App.R. 33**

Final word from the Court of Appeal on the approach to the prosecution of victims of trafficking.

***R v THN and others* [2013] 2 Cr.App.R. 23**

Further development of the law concerning defendants as victims of trafficking.

***R v M, B and G* [2011] 1 Cr.App.R 12:** Leading case on abuse of process in context of human trafficking.

YOUTH JUSTICE & CHILD RIGHTS

Henry frequently represents children and young people charged with serious criminal offences at trial. In his appellate practice he has been at the forefront of the development of the law regarding the non-prosecution of victims of trafficking, particularly as it affects children. He appeared for the applicant Joseph McGill in the appeal of *Grant-Murray & Ors* [2017] EWCA Crim 1228 which concerned the trial protections for young defendants and the compatibility of the mandatory sentence of detention at Her Majesty's Pleasure with Articles 3 and 5 ECHR as well as the application of the joint enterprise principle in respect of young defendants.

PUBLICATIONS

'Sappers and Underminers: Fresh Evidence Revisited' - *Criminal Law Review* (2017), issue 7, (pp537-542).

EDUCATION

BA English Literature (York)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Criminal Bar Association

Criminal Appeal Lawyers Association

The Fraud Lawyers Association (FLA)

LANGUAGES

French (reasonable)

German (basic)

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