



GARDEN COURT CHAMBERS

# Keir Monteith QC

YEAR OF CALL: 1994 | YEAR OF SILK: 2019



Legal 500 2022, Leading Silk

Keir Monteith QC is a highly sought-after leading silk who represents clients facing heavyweight criminal allegations. He has been instructed in numerous murders, industrial scale Class A drug importations and conspiracies, multi-million pound frauds, multi-million pound confiscations, and escape from custody cases.

Keir is ranked for criminal law in Chambers UK 2019.

In July 2021, Keir became a Simon Fellow at the University of Manchester. The Fellowship will bring Keir, who is a training tutor for the Judicial College, together with other Criminology, Legal and Humanities researchers to inject expertise and ambition into the judiciary's recently-announced plans to tackle racial bias. This work will be founded on a deep understanding of racism as both structural and interpersonal and will seed research projects premised on installing fairer treatment in the justice system.

"A brilliant mix of creativity and being really 'on it' with the detail. I call him

when I need to win the unwinnable cases."

CHAMBERS UK, 2021 (CRIME)

---

"An incredibly talented silk. Closing speech has juries in awe hanging on every word. He can change hearts, minds and the tables on any prosecutor."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (CRIME)

---

"Very captivating in court."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (FRAUD)

---

"He has an exceptional way of looking at problems from a different perspective and winning even the slightest of victories. Every client that has been represented by Keir cannot express their gratitude enough and I am always confident when instructing him that he will only ever give his best."

CHAMBERS UK, 2020

---

"He combines righteous anger in a closing speech with an assured charm. Highly experienced in handling complex fraud cases."

LEGAL 500, 2020

---

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

[crimeclerkmailbox@gclaw.co.uk](mailto:crimeclerkmailbox@gclaw.co.uk) | [+44 \(0\)20 7993 7600](tel:+44(0)2079937600)

## CRIMINAL DEFENCE

---

Keir represents clients facing heavyweight criminal charges throughout the UK. His skill as an advocate is second to none, and he achieves seemingly impossible acquittals. Keir's commitment comes from a firm belief in the absolute principle that everyone, no matter what the evidence may appear to be, is innocent until proven guilty. He is meticulous in his preparation and provides a first-class service for all his clients.

He has been instructed in numerous murders, industrial scale Class A drug importations and conspiracies, multi-million pound frauds, multi-million pound confiscations, and escape from custody cases.

## **NOTABLE CASES**

In 2019 Keir represented CH in *R v CH* at Shrewsbury Crown Court, where the client was found not guilty of 10 allegations of multiple rape and assault by penetration. CH had faced allegations of multiple rapes from 3 separate complainants over a 5 year period. If convicted he would have faced a sentence in double figures. Keir advised that a defence computer expert should be instructed and downloads obtained from social media accounts. After careful analysis of this information, Keir further advised that representations should be made to the prosecution. As a result the case was dropped and 10 not guilty verdicts were recorded.

In 2018 Keir has represented the lead defendant in the Heathrow baggage handlers case [[RvJ](#)]. An importation allegedly involving 100 kilos of Class A drugs. He was also instructed in a high profile 3 month immigration corruption case [[R v H](#)] which attracted national publicity; secured acquittals for a chemist who was alleged to have shipped out boxes of drugs from the company's pharmacy and represented the lead defendant in a large scale conspiracy to import 30 kilos of cocaine [[The Birmingham Barber case](#)] and the first defendant in a 200 to 500 kilo cannabis [conspiracy](#).

In January 2017, Keir obtained five acquittals in a long-running multi-handed conspiracy to rob trial at the Central Criminal Court [[RvK](#)]; represented N in a high profile gross negligence manslaughter [[RvN](#)] and in April obtained a not guilty verdict in a perverting the course of justice allegation [[RvG](#)]. In July 2017 he represented M in a high profile Misconduct in Public Office case [[The Sheffield helicopter case](#)] and secured an acquittal. He was also instructed in *RvFB* an allegation of a gang land murder. The client was found not guilty.

In 2016 Keir represented a 15-year-old who faced allegations of a conspiracy to commit GBH, which was said to be the catalyst for a mob of 17 to murder a 16-year-old. The defendant was first on the indictment. Keir was a leading junior and the rest of the defendants and the prosecution were represented by silks and juniors. The defendant was acquitted.

Keir represented [Adam Deacon](#) in an important case. The jury agreed with Keir's submission that as Mr Deacon was mentally unwell at the time of the alleged offences he should not be held criminally responsible for his actions. They found Mr Deacon not guilty.

In 2015 Keir was leading junior in an Operation Elvedon Misconduct in Public Office case in which a

Belmarsh prison officer was accused of selling so called sensitive information to a journalist. The appeal was heard by the Lord Chief Justice and an application has now been lodged before the European Court of Human Rights. The case received national press coverage, including [the BBC](#), [the Guardian](#), [Press Gazette](#) and [Chartered Institute of Journalists](#).

### ***R v Jabir***

A multi-handed allegation of possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life and two counts of assisting an offender. The defendant was linked to a broad daylight shooting in London. Jabir pleaded guilty to two counts of assisting an offender. Following a 'half time' submission by Keir, the Judge dismissed the possession of firearm allegations against Jabir and also the two other co-defendants. (Reported by the Independent).

### ***R v Baptiste***

Acted as leading junior in a four-handed allegation of murder with a linked allegation of conspiracy to commit grievous bodily harm with firearms. The firearms included a MAC-10 Submachine gun capable of firing over 1,000 rounds per minute that had been used in a murder. The trial involved controversial disclosure issues involving an anonymous witness.

### ***R v H***

Keir was trial counsel (without a leader or junior) where both the prosecution and two defendants were represented by a QC and a junior each. This was a multi-handed case involving allegations of kidnapping and an armed robbery of a bank in Birmingham. Despite the presence of DNA evidence in a vehicle central to the crime, and cell site evidence placing the defendant near the scene, his client was acquitted of all counts. (Reported by the BBC).

### ***R v Dubb***

A multi-handed allegation of murder. Two vehicles containing up to 10 people descended on a bar in Bilston. One of the men produced a gun and fired a shot into the crowd outside the bar, which resulted in a death at the scene. The defendant was acquitted at 'half time'. (Reported by the Birmingham Post).

### ***R v Sammuels***

Keir led in a double-handed armed robbery allegation relating to a number of off licences, where the suspects used handcuffs and guns to commit the robberies. The defendants faced a further allegation of conspiracy to rob. The prosecution evidence ranged from identification and facial mapping to surveillance, DNA (from gun and balaclava) and analysis of alleged residue from exploding bank notes.

### ***R v Harriot***

Keir led in a drive-by shooting involving allegations of gangland violence where a pump action shotgun was repeatedly fired at a car containing passengers, on a separate occasion fired at an occupied house and a further allegation of threats to kill. The defence used a combination of duress and identification for their arguments. The client was acquitted of both shootings, and the threats to kill.

Some of Keir's other cases include:

- **representing a solicitor in a trial that consisted of over one million documents and a post-trial investigation into whether the main prosecution witnesses had committed perjury;**
- **a law student on allegations of perjury;**
- **the largest radio game show deception (reported by the *Daily Mail*);**
- **allegations of a multi-handed fraud conspiracy relating to eBay, where the client was acquitted (reported by the *Manchester Evening News*);**
- **one of the first sexual allegations based almost entirely on email evidence, involving an undercover officer in America and the UK. This case also concerned PII applications relating to Strap security.**

## **FINANCIAL CRIME AND CONFISCATION**

---

Keir is a highly sought-after leading junior who represents clients facing serious financial criminal cases throughout the UK. In 2014, he was briefed in over £200 million worth of fraud cases. Currently leading in an alleged £17 million VAT fraud, 12 handed immigration fraud and obtained leave to appeal sentence in an Amazon/Ebay fraud.

### **NOTABLE CASES**

#### ***R v Kasim***

Keir acted as leading counsel for the first defendant in a significant acquittal in a multi-handed £40 million money laundering and complex mandate fraud conspiracy prosecuted by the National Crime Agency (NCA). The case had international dimensions, the majority of the money being transferred to Hong Kong. After legal argument, despite the Crown assertion that there was a realistic prospect of conviction, the defendant was acquitted. This was reported in the National Press and Keir was interviewed on the Today Programme.

Keir led in a multi-million pound multi-handed tobacco importation where the abuse of process submission Keir submitted succeeded, and allowed others who had pleaded guilty to make an application to vacate their pleas.

#### ***R v CK***

A £100,000 multi-handed money laundering trial in which three co-defendants pleaded guilty. Following

representations by Keir, the Crown dropped the case against his client.

### ***R v Anandan***

A £137 million international money laundering fraud using a number of Bureau de Changes over a period of years. The Crown's case was that it was a sophisticated and well-organised operation and that the defendants were able to offend undetected, even when dealing with professional money-lending institutions that had their own money-laundering officers. It was stated that the defendant was the de facto manager of one of the branches and was responsible for ordering currency and arranging money transfers.

### ***R v Butt***

Keir led in a £20 million NatWest fraud case where the prosecution and two of the defendants were all represented by a QC and junior each. This trial took place at Southwark Crown Court. The case was split into three parts, and involved an allegation that the defendant and others defrauded the National Westminster bank in the amount of £20,220,629. The client was acquitted of the most serious allegation. Throughout the case Live Note was used. (Reported by the BBC).

Keir led in a Microsoft counterfeiting case where, as a result of presenting around 10,000 pages of documents from a linked case, the trial was stopped and then abandoned.

## **CRIMINAL APPEALS**

---

Keir is regularly instructed in the Court of Appeal and is able to compile compelling written advocacy. One example is the case of Trim, where Keir obtained leave five and a half years out of time, and the sentence was reduced from an indefinite sentence of imprisonment for public protection to a community order.

In the case of Robson, after being advised by trial counsel and two other lawyers that there was no appeal against his murder conviction, Keir, acting pro bono, drafted the Grounds of Appeal and, seven years out of time, took the case to the full court. He obtained leave to appeal and the conviction was quashed.

### **NOTABLE CASES**

#### ***R v PK* [2017] EWCA Crim 486**

Exceptionally, conviction quashed despite plea of guilty, appeal 9 years out of time and recent adverse caselaw [*R v Ordu*]. Keir persuaded the Court of Appeal that a defence would "quite probably" have succeeded at trial. Reported in *Criminal Law Review*.

**R v RN** [2016] EWCA Crim 1564 (ongoing)

Leading junior in Operation Elvedon misconduct in public office case in which a Belmarsh prison officer is accused of selling sensitive information to a journalist. The appeal is predicated on Article 10 arguments. An application is now before the ECtHR.

**R v Samuels** [2014] EWCA Crim 1852

Keir's oldest and most loyal client, on a life licence at the time of the offence, had a trial and was convicted. Initially sentenced to nine years but after Keir's submissions this was reduced to six years. See also R v Samuels [2005] EWCA Crim 3051 for details of his previous application to the Court of Appeal.

**R v Cope** [2014] EWCA Crim 2187

Despite Mr Cope's trial counsel writing an advice that said he did not have grounds for an appeal, Keir made an application almost a year out of time. This was granted and the sentence was reduced by one year.

**R v Miah** [2013] EWCA Crim 1891

Despite the reduction in sentence being just three months, Keir was able to persuade the Court of Appeal that an important point of principle was at stake and it was necessary for the court to intervene.

**R v Uyiakpen** [2008] EWCA Crim 1457

Appeal against conviction for possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply. Conviction quashed.

**R v Robson** [2006] EWCA Crim 2749

A conviction for murder was quashed and a verdict of manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility was substituted where the trial judge had delivered a jury direction on diminished responsibility along the same lines as that which was held to be a misdirection in R v Dietschmann (2003) UKHL 10, (2003) Crim LR 550.

**R v Crosse** [2005] EWCA Crim 53: The Lewes prison tennis ball case

The appellant tried to throw a tennis ball containing class A and C drugs over the prison wall. After a successful abuse of process submission in the Crown Court regarding the Class A drugs the eventual sentence was successfully appealed as well.

**R v Pepper and others** [2005] EWCA Crim 1181

Guidance on extended sentences under the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 s.85. This case also involved Strap security.

**DPP v Jones** [2002] EWHC 110 (admin)

Right to protest and public order notices.

***R v Hatami*** [2001] EWCA Crim 1653

Appeal against conviction for unlawful wounding where the alleged victim was stabbed in the back and leg and was initially on life support. Part of the incident was captured on CCTV and was witnessed by a number of people in broad daylight. Conviction quashed.

***R v Heggart Archbold*** [2002], p. 1,257,

The issue of disclosure and the old 'custom' of blacking out telephone numbers on CAD reports should stop.

---

## PROTEST RIGHTS

Keir also specialises in civil liberties law and defending protesters, including allegations of large-scale conspiracies to commit criminal damage or violent disorder, allegations of harassment and other violence. He has also been instructed in many successful anti-EDO cases including the infamous 'super-glue four' case, the 'die-in' at Churchill Square in Brighton and allegations of criminal damage and actual bodily harm at one of the many EDO protests. In each case, all the defendants were acquitted.

---

## YOUTH JUSTICE & CHILD RIGHTS

A significant part of Keir's practice has concentrated on representing children accused of serious offences. In the multi-handed case of *R v S*, heard at the Old Bailey, Keir represented a defendant who was just 15 at the time of the alleged offences but was first on the indictment. The prosecution alleged that the defendant was the catalyst for a gang of 17 to murder a 16-year-old and that the defendant had also conspired to commit GBH. He was acquitted. Keir has also had success in the Court of Appeal. He obtained leave five and a half years out of time for a defendant who was just 18 at the time he committed a very serious offence. Keir persuaded the Court of Appeal to reduce the sentence from an indefinite period of imprisonment for public protection to a community order *R v D* [2014] EWCA Crim 241. Keir has also organised and chaired webinars on the topic of so called gang evidence, combatting the use of rap lyrics to prosecute defendants and he continues to campaign on these topics and many more.

---

## BACKGROUND



After three years of practice, Keir became one of the founding members of Acre Lane Chambers and joined Garden Court in 2002.

Keir is an elected executive member of the Criminal Bar Association, has worked for Oxfam and the NSC.

## EDUCATION

---

- Law Degree
- Bar Finals

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

---

- Howard Legal for Penal Reform
- Criminal Bar Association
- Fraud Lawyers Association

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

[crimeclerkmailbox@gclaw.co.uk](mailto:crimeclerkmailbox@gclaw.co.uk) | [+44 \(0\)20 7993 7600](tel:+44(0)2079937600)



57-60 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LJ

Email: [info@gclaw.co.uk](mailto:info@gclaw.co.uk)

Tel: +44 (0)20 7993 7600

DX: 34 Chancery Lane