

Alistair Webster KC

Call to Bar: 1976

Silk Year: 1995



Alistair took silk, at the age of 41, in 1995. He is amongst the most experienced of counsel working in the fields of commercial crime, crime and regulation.

He has been a Recorder of the Crown Court for over 20 years and is a Master of the Bench of Middle Temple. He is on the SFO panels both for prosecutions and asset restraint. Alistair is highly recommended in the legal directories year on year:

"Alistair Webster KC is a highly experienced silk who excels in complex cases involving allegations of loan, tax and pension fraud, among other matters. He regularly represents the SFO in both fraud and proceeds of crime cases." - Ranked in Tier 1 – Financial Crime – Regional Bar - Chambers & Partners 2024

"His legal knowledge is second to none and he brings a case to life with so much charisma." - Ranked in Tier 1 – Financial Crime – Regional Bar - Chambers & Partners 2024

"Fantastic with juries and judges. He's the best and most natural advocate - he's simply superb." "A brilliant trial lawyer." - Chambers & Partners 2022

"He is a very skilled silk." "He is a tactical genius." - Chambers & Partners 2021

"A highly experienced silk who excels in complex cases involving allegations of loan, tax and pension fraud, among other matters. He regularly represents the SFO in both fraud and proceeds of crime cases." "He is a very good advocate." - Chambers & Partners 2020

"A very experienced campaigner." "Extremely able and committed, he is good both in written argument and in his advocacy." "He's got a real range of expertise - he's great on his feet, commands the courtroom but also very, very good with clients in sensitive situations. He's always available and able to go over ideas. He's a pleasure to work with and gets great results." "Extremely able and committed, good in both written argument and advocacy." - Chambers & Partners 2018

Contact details:

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Practice areas:

Business Crime & Financial Regulation
Criminal Law
Civil Law
Regulatory
Inquests & Inquiries
Judicial Review Law

Lectures:

Alistair has lectured all over the world covering an extensive range of Financial Crime and Regulation areas

Professional appointments:

Appointed as Kings Counsel 1995
Crown Court Recorder
Master of the Bench (Middle Temple)

Tenacious, fearless and a highly skilled cross-examiner. - Legal 500 2017

"A barrister with great interpersonal skills who gets the best out of clients and the judiciary, and is noted for his attractive advocacy style." "Very user-friendly, and his advocacy shines." "He produces excellent performances in the Court of Appeal." "He is very clever, very hard-working and he has very good judgement." "A fantastic QC." - Chambers & Partners 2017

"An exceptional jury advocate, who is able to very quickly break down complex cases for juries." - Legal 500 2016

Quotes from past guides include: *"Outstanding intellect"; "Outstanding lawyer"; "First class strategist and tactician"; "Accessible and responsive"; "Eloquent, brave and effective".*

Alistair's recognised excellence and client care across the spectrum of criminal and criminal related cases has made him an extremely popular choice for clients paying for the costs of their own advice and representation.

As he is one of the country's most experienced KCs, it is hardly surprising that his wealth of experience and record of success put him in demand. His breadth of experience means that he has dealt with aspects of fraud not only in the criminal courts, but also in the High Court, the Administrative Court, and the tax tribunals. Added to his experience in proceeds of crime and restraint orders, he is thus able to offer a rare combination of services across the board and to advise with an eye to the consequences beyond the immediate issues presented to him.

Alistair has regularly appeared in the biggest cases to come before the courts, ranging from income tax and VAT frauds through to regulatory offences in areas such as Health & Safety, Trading Standards and Environmental prosecutions.

He is on the Serious Fraud Office's panels for both fraud and proceeds of crime which makes him, we believe, unique outside London.

He has successfully represented, on a privately paying basis, solicitors, company directors and other professionals charged with a multitude of offences as varied as fraud by abuse of trust, corporate manslaughter, money laundering and offences arising from regulatory non compliance.

He has successfully challenged both restraint orders and search warrants in relation to cases involving the SFO and SOCA.

NOTABLE CASES

Economic/Environmental Crime:

Lead counsel for SFO prosecution of nationwide solar panel fraud.

Allansway -Successful abuse of process application in large EA prosecution with significant costs recovery;

Sheehan Contractors - Defence of company and director charged with breach of environmental permit conditions;

Ongoing challenge to validity of Bonded Warehouse regulations (Admin Court);

Advising various companies and individuals on the legality of search warrants, trading standards issues and restraint proceedings.

R v McClintock - Northern Ireland High Court. Defence of property developer charged with obtaining large commercial loans to purchase properties.

R v L – Successful discharge of restraint orders obtained against the owners of businesses in the UK, France and Singapore.

Re: A – Prosecuting, from investigation stage, large-scale fraud for the Serious Fraud Office.

Hindocho – Defence of accountant in fraud trial.

Pacific Computers – Successful reclaim action in Tax Tribunal.

iSoft - Successful defence of former FD of Footsie company charged with inflating trading figures through over-aggressive revenue recognition policies.

Price – Successful defence in lengthy pension fraud.

Other major fraud trials:

Kent Pharmaceuticals - Represented the principal defendant in a £24m prosecution alleging market rigging in the generic pharmaceuticals market. Following acquittal, negotiated an advantageous result in the civil proceedings.

MTIC – Defended in London City Bond case and in operations Venison, Manpower, Inertia and MFB.

Prime Banking and Banking Fraud - Defended Cypriot businessman charged with worldwide prime banking fraud.

Money laundering – Successful representation of solicitor, stayed as abuse.

Fraud by abuse of position - Successful representation of solicitor.

Tax Fraud – negotiated POCA deal with the Revenue to allow company to continue trading.

Public Law:

Alistair represented senior management in the Waterhouse Enquiry into abuse in care home in

N. Wales. He recently conducted the Rennard Enquiry, on behalf of the English Liberal Democrat Party. He has regularly lobbied and briefed ministers in relation to justice issues and has advised Hacked Off in relation to various issues.

Mainstream Crime:

Younis - successfully overturned convictions for double conspiracy to murder (firearms / organise crime background).

Gibbons - Successful prosecution of burglar who murdered naval officer by running over him in his own car;

Advising suspect in ongoing arms control investigation.

R v Patel - Defended son of rich businessman charged with large scale importation of cocaine.

R v Pumbien - Defended owner of rest home charged with the abuse of patients and perverting the course of justice.

Grynhaus - Successful prosecution of leading rabbi for child abuse.

Eteson - Double manslaughter.

Gordon Park: The Lady in the Lake;

Barrow Legionnaires Disease case;

Micheal Hamer (the Joe Geeling murder);

Hardacre (series of violent rapes and murder); numerous murders; gross negligence manslaughters, including the death of a schoolboy in Glenridding and medical manslaughter.

Michelle Dickinson (poisoning of children – the longest murder trial to date in Liverpool).

Bamford: murder of British Heiress in Zimbabwe prosecuted in Manchester Crown Court.

Many gangland killings, including Chris Little; large drugs conspiracies;

BNP member accused of explosives offences;

Defence of solicitor charged with multiple passport offences.

R v Doheny and Adams: leading case on DNA and expert evidence.

Alistair has presented cases on behalf of the CCRC and regularly advises in relation to prospective appeals.

REGULATORY WORK

Alistair has advised Solicitors upon their diverse duties and liabilities and advised the HSE and CPS Complex Case Unit in relation to a number of serious cases including the prosecution of various professionals for manslaughter.

Alistair presents tribunal and High Court cases for the GMC.

Alistair is familiar with accountants' disciplinary procedures.

Amongst those advised by Alistair are Hacked Off, the Professional Cricketers Association and the League Managers Association.