

Alisdair Williamson QC



Call: 1994
QC: 2017

Contact Details:
3 Raymond Buildings
Gray's Inn
London WC1R 5BH
Tel: +44 (0)20 7400 6400

Email Address:
alisdair.williamson@3rblaw.com



"Majestic" **Chambers UK**

'Technically brilliant – one of the very best.' **The Legal 500**

Details of practice

Recognised for many years as one of the foremost barristers in his area, Alisdair practises in serious crime and professional discipline. He is well-known as specialist defence counsel in homicide, fraud, and difficult, complex sexual offences. He has acted in many very high profile cases, including the successful defence of Coronation Street actor Michael Le Vell. He is a former Times Lawyer of the Week and also practises in professional disciplinary tribunals, inquests, and licensing.

Alisdair is currently instructed to defend in a claim of professional negligence against solicitors in the high profile case of footballer Ched Evans following his acquittal of rape charges, subsequent to his conviction and appeals. He is instructed to defend a high profile solicitor before the SDT in allegations of sexual misconduct. He has just successfully represented one of the lead officers in the police discipline case arising from the death of Sean Rigg. (Click here to read the article from the BBC). He is also instructed in cases of murder, money laundering, and fraud around the country.

He has a successful appellate practice in both the Court of Appeal, where he is asked to take over cases in which he was not previously instructed, and in the form of judicial review.

He is ranked in **Chambers UK** and **The Legal 500**.

Fraud and corruption

Alisdair has been at the forefront of fraud work throughout his practice. Whether it has been advising in high-profile cases, strategic management of crises to prevent litigation, or representing high net worth individuals at every stage of the criminal process, Alisdair's experience and expertise is in constant demand. He has defended in a variety of VAT, missing trader, income tax and regulatory frauds. His background degree in economics enables him to master the financial details and nuances. Solicitors and lay clients value his approachable style and analytic ability.

Alisdair has extensive defence experience of tax evasion, missing trader and other VAT frauds, frauds on public bodies such as the NHS, and frauds in the obtaining of contracts from government departments.

Homicide

Alisdair is heavily sought after as leading counsel for the defence in allegations of murder. He has experience of the successful defence of very young defendants, gang crime, and loss of control manslaughter cases. He is currently instructed in murder cases around the country.

Professional discipline

Alisdair has widespread experience defending senior police officers in allegations of corruption. He has allied experience of judicial review proceedings, and among other claims and cases, he appeared for the successful defendants in the leading case on judicial review of police conduct and disciplinary proceedings **R (Chief Constable of the Derbyshire Constabulary) v The Police Appeals Tribunal (Green and Stewart – Interested Parties) [2012] EWHC 2280**.

Alisdair has an enviable record in representing police officers in disciplinary hearings and before the Crown Courts and he well understands the unique pressures of these situations for his client.

Alisdair also acts for lawyers, doctors, and dentists before their professional disciplinary bodies. He has particular expertise in allegations of sexual misconduct against professionals.

Licensing

Alisdair acts for operators and residents at all levels. He recently acted on appeal for a well-known South London nightclub against which review proceedings had been brought following crime and disorder. He was successful. Clients value his tenacity and diplomacy.

General Medical Council/General Dental Council

Alisdair acts for doctors and dental professionals before the disciplinary panels of the GMC and GDC.

Directory recommendations

'A brilliant cross-examiner with an instinctive feel for the right approach in every case.' **The Legal 500 2019: Crime**

'Technically brilliant – one of the very best.' **The Legal 500 2019: Police Law**

"So personable, with a sharp legal mind and a great manner with instructing solicitors and clients." **Chambers UK 2018: Crime**

"He has a fantastic manner. His witness handling is outstanding." **Chambers UK 2018: Professional Discipline**

"A majestic practitioner". **Chambers UK 2017: Crime**

"A leading barrister in defending rape cases – calm, measured and a brilliant cross-examiner". **The Legal 500 2017: Crime**

'His quality of advocacy in cross-examination is of the first order'. 'Always the first choice for defendants facing allegations of rape or sexual assault.' 'He's got a very reassuring manner with clients and an excellent jury manner.' **Chambers UK 2017: Crime**

'He's very good at getting his head around a case quickly, and from there he makes the right strategic calls.' 'A highly experienced, unflappable advocate, he's always calm and able to think on his feet.' **Chambers UK 2017: Professional Discipline**

'Unflappable and good at dealing with challenging clients.' **The Legal 500 2016: Crime**

"He receives attention for the quality of his client care and for his abilities in cross-examination. "He is very thorough in his preparation of cases and is very good with clients, including potentially difficult ones." "He is an absolute master of the art of cross-examination. He has an ability to deal with everyone, from clients to solicitors and judges." **Chambers UK 2016: Crime**

'He is a brilliant cross-examiner and an excellent jury advocate.' 'He's very understated, but he's an experienced tactician and very good at making clients feel comfortable.' 'He is very good with all aspects of the process. He grasps what the client needs and what the strong points of the defence are, and liaises with the police well.' **Chambers UK 2015: Crime**

"He is a brilliant cross-examiner and a compelling advocate." "He is energetic, highly effective and a pleasure to deal with." **Chambers UK 2014: Crime**

"very tough and knows what he is talking about" ... "plays well to the jury and has that bearing that juries expect of a senior advocate". **Chambers UK 2013: Crime**

"a great presence at the Criminal Bar, with a strong reputation for handling murders and sexual offences." **Chambers UK 2012: Crime**

"A highly expert cross-examiner who has dealt with a number of cases of great seriousness." **Chambers UK 2011: Crime.**

Education/professional qualifications

MA (Oxon) - Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Open Exhibitioner)
Dip Law (City) with Commendation
Called to the Bar 1994 (Astbury Scholar)

Other information

Professional memberships:

The Criminal Bar Association
The Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers
Fraud Lawyers Association
South Eastern Circuit
Criminal Bar Association Working Party on section 41 Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act

Undertakes work for the Bar Council Pro Bono Unit
Pro Bono Privy Council work

Direct access

Alisdair Williamson is qualified to accept instructions direct from clients under the Bar Council's Public Access Scheme. This means that members of the public who seek specialist advice can come direct to him. In addition, he welcomes instructions from solicitors, in-house law departments, qualified foreign lawyers, and clients licensed by the Bar Council to give instructions direct to barristers under the Bar Council's Licensed Access Scheme.

For further information please contact our Clerks.

Notable cases

Crime

R v WM (2019)

Alisdair's client was acquitted of murdering his mother in a case of complicated psychiatric, evidential, and forensic issues.

R v W (2019)

Successful defence of man found with £500,000 in cash hidden in his flat. Charged with money-laundering, he explained that he was a semi-professional gambler and the money was his winnings from poker and horse racing.

R v P (2018)

After successfully appealing the defendant's conviction arising from the judge's wrongful refusal to allow time for an expert to complete their report, Alisdair secured complete acquittals for a police officer accused of historical sexual abuse of his partner's daughter. Complicated issues of memory contamination from Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR).

R v T (2018)

Successful defence of police officer accused of historical serious sexual offences against step-daughter.

R v F (2018)

Successful defence of man accused of historical sexual offences against his partner's three children.

R v C (2018)

Legally and factually complex defence of loss of control for man accused of murdering his wife over her sexual humiliation of him.

R v H (2018)

Successful defence of a woman accused of serious, historical sexual assaults on her son. A highly unusual, difficult and emotionally charged case in which Alisdair secured his client's acquittal.

R v W-C (2018)

Successful defence of businessman accused of buggery and other serious historical sexual offences against his cousin during the late 80s.

R v B (2018)

Successful defence of headmaster and former scout master accused of a series of historical, serious sexual offences.

R v U (2017)

Successful defence of young defendant accused of a leading role in fatal stabbing. Found not guilty of murder, manslaughter and conspiracy to commit GBH.

R v M (2017)

Successful defence of man accused of raping his sister 35 years ago. The case raised complicated issues of doli incapax and also the presumption of incapacity of rape by reason of age. He was acquitted of rape and of ABH but convicted of an indecent assault for which he was fined.

R v L (2017)

L was acquitted of attempted murder. He had stabbed through the heart the leader of a gang who had harassed L and damaged his property. Convicted of GBH.

R v L, V and S (2016)

Successful defence of man accused of double gang-rape in the mid-eighties

R v O (2016)

Secured the acquittal of a man accused of raping his brother's wife over an extended period, and historical sexual assault of his niece

R v C (2016)

Successful defence of a man accused of raping an unconscious woman. Complex pharmacological and mental health issues

R v A (2015)

Successful defence of a man accused of historical childhood incestuous sex offences by his sister. (Direct Access)

R v J (2015)

Man accused of historical sexual assaults by a male friend of the family. Acquitted.

R v J (2015)

Successful defence of man accused by former wife of a historical campaign of rape and assault.

R v E (2015)

Secured the acquittal of a police officer accused of serious abusive behaviour, sexual and physical, on previous partners

R v M (2015)

Secured the acquittal of a PC who had previously served with distinction as a Firefighter and who had been accused of the physical and indecent assault of recruits to the Fire Service.

R v C (2015)

Police Officer accused by colleague of serious sexual assaults. Acquitted.

R v GC (2014)

Successful defence of serving DS against allegations of child rape going back to the 1970s.

R v WH (2014)

Secured acquittal of man accused of gang rape during the 1970s.

R v GJ (2014)

Defended an allegation of child sex abuse dating back 30 years. The defendant was acquitted.

R v C (2013)

Secured the acquittal of a police firearms officer accused of attempting to anally rape and digitally penetrating, his partner.

R v Michael Turner (Michael Le Vell) (2013)

The successful defence of actor Michael Le Vell in his prosecution for child rape and other serious sexual offences.

R v D and Y (2013)

Successful defence of a 14 year old boy accused of, when 13, raping his co-defendant's 15 year old girlfriend.

R v Ezekiel and another (2013)

Counsel for the Crown in the successful prosecution of the former leader of Thanet Council for Misconduct in Public Office.

R v G (2012)

Secured the acquittal of defendant accused by well-known author of rape and GBH during their marriage

R v Studholme (2012)

Leading junior counsel for the only defendant acquitted of conspiracy to supply London's largest ever seizure of cocaine.

Fraud**R v H (Southwark Crown Court)**

Leading counsel international conspiracy to defraud and money-laundering.

Re W-C (Chancery Division)

Proceedings in respect of an accountancy services firm.

R v S (Ipswich Crown Court)

Leading counsel multi-million pound international conspiracy to defraud.

R v B (Leeds Crown Court)

Leading counsel multi-million pound international VAT missing trader fraud.

R v C (Chichester Crown Court)

Regional Development Office fraud.

R v W (Isleworth Crown Court)

Money laundering web.

R v JF (Croydon Crown Court)

Leading counsel million pound fraud on the Home Office.

R v A (Southwark Crown Court)

Large scale bribery for the award of local government contracts.

R v H (Lewes Crown Court)

Million pound income tax fraud and ancillary JR proceedings.

R v B (Southwark Crown Court)

A complex and large-scale multi-million fraud on the mobile phone networks.

R v W (Inner London Crown Court)

Industrial scale money-laundering through domestic casino networks, and property transactions in Spain.

R v S (Kingston Crown Court)

Leading counsel multi-handed money laundering.

R v AJ (Croydon Crown Court)

Leading counsel multi-million pound fraud against DEFRA.

R v E (Maidstone Crown Court)

Prosecution of the former Mayor of Thanet for corruption and Misconduct in Public Office. #

R v Hamper (2012)

Leading junior counsel in the successful defence of a woman accused of conspiracy to defraud and conspiracy to launder the proceeds of cocaine supply.

R v John and others (2012)

Leading junior for 3rd defendant in largest DEFRA prosecution for fraud relating to animal medicines.

Inquests

Inquest into death of ST (2016)

Represented three Custody Sergeants in widely reported death in custody case

Inquest into death of DB (2015)

Represented a police officer whose vehicle crushed a member of the public after being left unattended. Complex issues of latent defect in the braking system, an unlawful killing conclusion was avoided following representations on behalf of the officer.

Professional discipline

In the matter of Sean Rigg (2019)

Successful representation of officer cleared of any wrong doing arising from the death of Sean Rigg in 2008. Police discipline hearing held 10.5 years after the tragic events.

R v P (2018)

After successfully appealing the defendant's conviction arising from the judge's wrongful refusal to allow time for an expert to complete their report, Alisdair secured complete acquittals for a police officer accused of historical sexual abuse of his partner's daughter. Complicated issues of memory contamination from Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR).

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R (Chief Constable of the Derbyshire Constabulary) v The Police Appeals Tribunal (Green and Stewart – Interested Parties) [2012] EWHC 2280

Re H (2016)

Successful representation of Police Custody Sergeant at discipline proceedings for failure to secure medical attention for a detainee with two broken legs.

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Secured the acquittal of a police officer accused of serious abusive behaviour, sexual and physical, on previous partners.

R v M (2015)

Secured the acquittal of a PC who had previously served with distinction as a Firefighter and who had been accused of the physical and indecent assault of recruits to the Fire Service.

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