

Harry Bentley

"A dedicated advocate who has excellent legal knowledge and a thorough understanding of the law. He has always demonstrated attention to detail at all times so far as preparation and advice is concerned together with excellent advocacy skills."

Legal 500 UK 2021



Year of Call: 2007

020 7353 5324

Harry Bentley's principal areas of practice are criminal defence and professional disciplinary tribunals. He has been involved in many high profile, complex and serious prosecutions both as sole counsel and as junior counsel. These cases range from the murder of police officers through to multi-million pound frauds and large scale drug conspiracies. He has particular experience defending in conspiracy prosecutions in a wide range of circumstances including cases of slavery, controlling prostitution and breach of immigration laws. He has been instructed in a large number of heavy frauds over the years such as Operation Cotton (land banking conspiracy) and Operation Autovia (Construction Industry Scheme & VAT conspiracy).

Harry's professional disciplinary practice is varied. He has significant experience presenting cases and advising regulatory tribunals including the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) in a wide variety of cases such as sexually motivated conduct, dishonesty and breaches of duties. In addition to presenting cases he also regularly appears on behalf of the Royal College of Nursing as a defence advocate in interim order hearings, reviews and full hearings. He has also appeared on behalf of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

Harry is ranked as a leading junior in Crime for both Chambers UK and Legal 500.

What others say:

"A knowledgeable and highly responsive barrister who instils confidence." – Chambers UK 2021

"A fantastic barrister." – Legal 500 2020

"Exceptionally good. He's very conscientious and diligent, and is strong on his feet." "Harry's approach to cases is thorough and clinical but his approach to clients remains kind and empathetic to levels not often seen at the Bar." – Chambers UK 2020

"He provides very methodical and considered opinions and is never flustered by the most complex cases." – Legal 500 2019

Location

2 Hare Court
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“He impresses quickly with his obvious ability and is a delight to work with.” – Legal 500 2017

“A very dedicated and effective junior – very straight-talking.” – Chambers UK 2016

“He really is exceptional for his years of call. His ability to get to the crux of the issue quickly is fantastic, especially when in fraud you have thousands of pages of disclosure.” – Chambers UK 2015

Business Crime & Financial Services

One of Harry’s main practice areas over the years has been serious fraud. He has experience in complex confiscation proceedings in both negotiated settlements and contested hearings.

Notable Cases:

R v S

Acted as sole counsel in a multi-handed conspiracy to defraud investors in a diamond investment scheme worth nearly £750,000.

R v H

Acted as sole counsel in a multi-handed conspiracy to defraud investors in a fraudulent carbon credit scheme worth over £1.7 million.

R v P

Led by David Whittaker in an FCA prosecution of a multi-handed conspiracy to defraud investors in a multi-million pound fraudulent land banking scheme.

R v N

Acted as sole counsel in a multi-million pound multi-handed conspiracy to defraud HMRC through the Construction Industry Scheme.

R v W

Led by David Whittaker in a fraudulent bio-fuel investment scheme involving Jatropha plantations in Cambodia worth £23m.

R v M

Led by David Whittaker in a multi-million pound MTIC fraud.

R v Y

Led by David Whittaker in a multi-handed conspiracy to defraud a Christian philanthropist businessman and a German Church of over £15 million.

R v C

Led by Samatha Cohen in a multi-handed conspiracy to defraud investors in a fraudulent *en primeur* wine

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investment scheme worth over £1m.

Criminal Defence

Harry has appeared in many high profile serious crime cases including several murders and conspiracies.

Notable Cases:

R v E

Led by Narita Bahra QC, defending a client charged with two counts of encouraging terrorism contrary to section 1 Terrorism Act 2006. It transpired that the client was a young man whose mental health deteriorated during the covid pandemic and went undetected. Narita and Harry's positive engagement with the opposition resulted in a just outcome.

R v WB

Led by David Whittaker QC, WB was charged with conspiracy to murder and conspiracy to commit GBH. The case had its roots in gang crime and was one of a number of tit-for-tat murders and violent assaults in Salford, Manchester. Previous incidents had included the murder of Paul Massey who was standing for Mayor of Salford and a grenade attack on a family's home. In the instant case, the victim had been tracked using a GPS tracker attached to his car before being attacked with a machete in the street. WB was acquitted of both counts following a 6-week 'Covid' trial.

R v T

Led by Narita Bahra QC. The defendant was accused of murdering his disabled mother and dismembering the body by decapitation while suffering from a drug induced psychosis. Extensive psychiatric evidence was called over a number of days by both the prosecution and defence.

R v AA

Led by Narita Bahra QC. The defendant was one of three young men charged with the high profile murder of an 18 year old outside Cardiff University Student's Union.

R v M

Led by David Whittaker QC defending a murder by intentional drowning of a young mother by her boyfriend.

R v K

Leading counsel in a multi handed trial involving a 6 month county lines Class A drug conspiracy.

R v K

The defendant was charged with 12 counts of historic rape. The trial involved three vulnerable witnesses including the defendant himself who suffered with a mental health disorder.

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R v L

Led by Andrew Radcliffe QC. The defendant was charged with attempted murder of a family friend following an argument over a rake. The case received widespread media attention as the defendant had a previous conviction for murdering a 3 year old child in 1979.

R v H

The defendant was charged with the murder of her partner by stabbing him with a kitchen knife twice at a hot tub party. The defendant had previously suffered over two years of domestic violence at her partner's hands. Led by Ms Sallie Bennett-Jenkins QC. [Click here](#) to read about the case in the national press.

R v I

The defendant was one of six individuals involved, in the mass manufacture and production of anabolic steroids, in specialist laboratories within the UK. The Prosecution sought to rely upon evidence against the client, of his company and business dealings, spanning over 9 years. Led by Ms Narita Bahra of 2 Hare Court.

R v RM

The defendant, a head teacher was cleared of 3 counts of fraud after being accused of fraudulently claiming for expenses and taking money from the schools petty cash. Her alleged fraudulent spending was uncovered during an audit of the school's accounts following her departure in 2014.

R v C

The defendants were charged with false imprisonment, actual bodily harm and robbery against a letting agent. The victim alleged that he had been lured to talk about business at their residence before being burned with an iron, whipped with a belt and threatened with a knife. The next morning he was forced to go to a bank to apply for a £20,000 loan. The defendants were acquitted of false imprisonment and ABH charges.

R v A

Acted for a prison officer whose childhood sexual abuser was transferred to the prison where she worked causing post traumatic stress disorder and an acute psychotic episode leading to allegations of assault. Successfully raised the defence of 'M'Naghten' insanity followed by the judge immediately imposing an absolute discharge disposal.

R v R

Led by Sallie Bennett-Jenkins QC in one of the largest slavery prosecutions in the UK to date. The case involved allegations starting 25 years ago made by multiple vulnerable complainants.

R v B

Led by Sallie Bennett-Jenkins QC in the defence of an Italian national who was charged with the murder and dismemberment of a serving police officer. The two men had met over the social media app Grindr before the murder. The case received a large amount of media attention.

R v W

Led by Orlando Pownall QC in the defence of a wealthy nightclub owner's son. The defendant had suffered bullying and emotional abuse at the hands of his father over many years until he stabbed him in the chest one

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evening. Psychiatric evidence was called of the defendant suffering with Adjustment Disorder.

R v F

Acted as sole counsel charged in a multi-handed conspiracy to steal ancient Chinese jade and Rhinoceros horn artefacts from museum across the U.K. The defendant suffered with mental health issues and learning disabilities requiring an intermediary during the trial.

R v TJ

Acted as sole counsel for the first defendant in a multi-handed conspiracy to control prostitution worth over £1m arising out of one of the most popular internet based escort agencies in the North of England.

R v G

Acted as sole counsel for the defendant involved in a multi-handed conspiracy to supply cocaine. The defendant was arrested whilst handing a kilogram bag of cocaine through a car window. Following a hung jury the defendant was acquitted at his retrial.

R v R

Led by Narita Bahra in a case of a multi-handed conspiracy to commit violent disorder. The defendants were alleged to have driven from the Midlands to London following the burning of the Guru Granth Sahib in India.

R v R

Acted a sole counsel for the first defendant in a multi-handed conspiracy to facilitate the breach of immigration laws by transporting non EU nationals out of the United Kingdom into other EU member states.

R v T

Led by Nicholas Corselli in a multi-handed conspiracy to supply Cocaine and Cannabis by a successful art dealer and music producer.

R v M

Led by Brendan Kelly QC in a multi-handed case of the killing of a drug dealer. The defendants were originally charged with murder but the Crown Prosecution Service ultimately accepted pleas to manslaughter. The defendant gave evidence for the prosecution and received a substantial discount to his sentence.

R v W

Led by Robert Fortune QC in a multi-handed joint enterprise murder of by a group of teenagers. The defendant was 14 years old and successfully acquitted.

R v S

Led by Ish Sheikh in a case involving a murder and two attempted murders in a church cemetery at night in Ilford.

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Professional Discipline

Harry both presents cases on behalf of regulators and defends professionals in a number of different regulatory settings.

Notable Cases:

NMC v B

Successful defence of an advanced nurse practitioner alleged to have acted outside of her scope of practice by inappropriately prescribing and administering iron injections in a primary care setting. Only one admitted charge went past the fact stage and was deemed not to be misconduct.

NMC v S

Represented the registrant against allegations arising from the death of a teenager from appendicitis.

NCTL v R

Successful application for a prohibition order in a case a teacher failing to disclose a relationship with a student to her employers.

NCTL v P

Successful application for a prohibition order where a teacher committed mortgage fraud using their employer's letterhead and then lied on applications to future employers.

NCTL v F

Successful application for a prohibition order against a teacher who sent sexually motivated text messages to former pupils.

NCTL v J

Successful application for a prohibition order against a teacher in a relationship with a convicted sex offender.

NCTL v J

Successful application for a prohibition order in a case where a teacher struck a vulnerable pupil in a classroom.

Accreditations

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Appointments & Memberships

- Association of Commonwealth Lawyers
- Criminal Bar Association
- Fraud Lawyers Association

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