

## Patrick O'Connor KC (Associate)



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### Profile

Patrick practiced for over 50 years in the broadest range of criminal and civil work: trials and appeals, inquests into deaths in custody and public inquiries. He was known for his imaginative creativity and his energetic commitment to the proper interests of the client.

He was recognised in glowing terms by the professional directories: *"A really stellar reputation"; "a hugely talented major player boasting a wealth of experience"; "formidable advocacy and tigerish cross-examination"; "strength, wisdom and experience"; "a compelling force in court" and "a really fine and lengthy track record and a wonderful skills base to work from; he is first-class."*

In criminal appeals, he conducted many leading 'miscarriage of justice' and 'cutting edge' cases: including the *'Guildford Four'*, for Gerry Conlon and his father, Giuseppe: the *'Birmingham Six'*: the *'Carl Bridgewater'* case, for Jimmy Robinson: and the *'M 25'* appeal, for Raphael Rowe: and *R v Tymen*, the first ever successful criminal appeal based on European Community Law.

His House of Lords and Privy Council criminal appeals included: *Abbott v R* (duress in murder), *B. v DPP* (strict liability in crime), "one of the most important of the last century" (Professor Smith), *R v Looseley*, the guideline case on 'entrapment' and the limits upon incitement: *R v Kennedy*, causation in manslaughter by drug supplier: and *R v Maxwell*, the leading 'abuse of process' authority.

He defended in many high profile political and 'terrorist' criminal trials, including the '*Bradford 12*', the *Orgreave* miners, the *Harrods* bombing and the '*Real IRA*' BBC and Ealing bombings: and the first major Islamic terrorism trial, '*Operation Crevice*'. He acted at trial and on appeal in the *Massereene Barracks* murder case in Northern Ireland.

In civil proceeding, Patrick pioneered actions against the police, achieving record damages and the first damages award for police 'torture': *Treadaway*. He won the first two civil claims for victims' families against unconvicted murderers: '*Halford v Brookes*' and '*Francisco v Diedrick*', who were in consequence both later tried and convicted.

He represented the family of *Zahid Mubarek*, who was murdered by his cell-mate in Feltham YOI, winning a landmark House of Lords order for a public inquiry, under Article 2, ECHR, *R [Amin] v SSHD* [2003] 3 WLR 1169: and in the Mubarek public inquiry. He represented the Conlon family at the '*May Public Inquiry*', into their miscarriages of justice. He acted for the Iraqi parties to the '*Al Sweady*' public inquiry into allegations against the British Army in Iraq, in which the conduct of his team was praised by the Chairman.

He acted, pro bono, in several Privy Council 'death penalty' cases. In 2000, Lord Steyn praised his dedication to this work in *Higgs*. Patrick was granted a '*lifetime achievement*' award for his *pro bono* work at the Bar Conference in 2018. At their inquests, *pro bono*, he represented the bereaved families of the victims of deaths in police custody. He obtained 'unlawful killing' verdicts in both '*Ibrahim Sey*', and '*Richard O'Brien*' inquests. He acted for a group of the bereaved in the *London 7/7 bombings* Inquest and their JR of the Home Secretary's refusal of a public inquiry.

He won three of the rare successful JR challenges to CPS decisions not to prosecute: '*Treadaway*', '*O'Brien*' and '*Simon Jones*', the Shoreham Docks case.

Patrick acted for *Lorraine Osman*, in the longest ever fight against extradition from the UK; for the solicitor victim of Revenue powers of search and seizure, *Tamosius v IRC*; and for the child claimants in early environmental litigation, against lead in petrol, '*Budden v BP Oil*'. He acted in two ship-wreck salvage cases, encompassing complex issues of jurisdiction and international law.

He has regularly conducted lectures and seminars, and written for publication, including three authoritative articles in the *Criminal Law Review*, which have received judicial approval.

In 2002, Patrick visited and jointly reported for the Human Rights Committee of the Bar Council on the Israel/Palestine conflict.

He wrote highly regarded publications for 'Justice', in January, 2009, on *'The Constitutional Role of the Privy Council and the Prerogative'*. and on 'Neo-liberalism and Human Rights', European Human Rights Law Review, Issue 6, 2018.

He lectured and wrote in 2020 for Inner Temple on the life of *'Helmuth von Moltke'*, the dissident lawyer, executed by the Nazi regime in 1945.

Patrick continues to research, lecture and write.

## **Education**

LLB (Hons.), University College, London.

He is authorised counsel before the ICC in The Hague.

He has been called to the Bar of Bermuda and Northern Ireland.

He is a Bencher of Inner Temple.

At the Bar Conference in November, 2018. he was awarded the first ever 'lifetime achievement' award for Pro Bono work.

## **Languages**

French

## **Related practice areas**

Criminal Law

Actions Against the Police and Public Authorities

Inquests and Public Inquiries

International Law

International Criminal Law

International Human Rights Law