

Harriet Johnson



Call: 2010

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Profile

Harriet acts in cases involving the most serious allegations of criminal and civil wrongdoing, with a particular focus on holding the state to account where it has failed women.

Harriet is meticulous in her approach to case preparation and is valued by her instructing solicitors for legal and tactical insight that is far beyond her call. An advocate first and foremost, Harriet has earned praise from clients and the bench alike for her ability to, as one judge put it “spin straw into gold”.

Outside of the bar, Harriet is a founder member of Women In Criminal Law and former Chair of the board of trustees at Women In Prison. She is a regular media contributor who is frequently called upon to provide legal insight and commentary on a range of contemporary topics, but in particular concerning violence against women.

Harriet's first book, “Enough: the violence against women and how to end it” (Harper Collins 2022; 2023) was an Amazon bestseller and was named by Waterstones as one of its books of the year for 2022.

Education

BA (Hons) Philosophy and Political Science, Trinity College, University of Dublin

LLB (Hons) BPP Law School

Bar Vocational Course, College of Law

South-Eastern Circuit Florida Criminal Advocacy Scholarship

Languages

French

Related practice areas

Criminal Law

Business Crime

Actions Against the Police and Public Authorities

Inquests and Public Inquiries

Criminal Appeals

Crime

Harriet defends in the most serious criminal allegations. Recent cases include securing the acquittal of a woman who, when attacked by her abusive husband, stabbed him multiple times. Harriet has particular expertise in cases involving complex matters of human trafficking and where criminal offences are alleged to have been committed as a result of coercive control. Most recently, Harriet acted for the only defendant to be acquitted of all charges in a multi-handed, cut-throat murder case.

Harriet has particular technical expertise in forensic pathology and neuropathology.

Actions Against the Police

Harriet has a specialist practice in private law actions against public authorities, often acting on behalf of women. She is regularly instructed in actions against the police, in particular in claims of failure to investigate allegations of serious sexual violence under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights as well as in claims of false imprisonment, assault, misfeasance, and malicious prosecution.

Inquest and Inquiries

Harriet has acted in inquests involving issues relating to terrorism, prisons, drugs, unsafe premises, gender-based violence, domestic abuse, and suicide. She currently acts for a number of the families of the deceased in the Manchester Arena Inquiry into the terrorist attack in 2017 wherein 22 people lost their lives.

Harriet's experience in civil actions against the police and prisons makes her ideally placed to conduct inquests where it is anticipated a civil claim might arise. As well as her legal insight, clients value Harriet's sensitivity and steady hand during what is inevitably a stressful process for family members.