

Harriet Johnson



Call: 2010

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Profile

Harriet acts in cases involving the most serious allegations of criminal and civil wrongdoing. Amongst others, she is currently instructed by:

- Seven of the bereaved families in the **Inquiry into the Manchester Arena Bombing**
- The parents of **Shana Grice**, who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend after police ignored her complaints of stalking
- **Kirstine Holst**, the Danish journalist and human rights activist, whose campaign to change rape laws in Denmark includes an application to the European Court of Human Rights

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”.

Harriet is a fierce advocate of women’s rights, and in 2016 founded Doughty Street’s annual **#DoughtyStWomen** events: a series of conferences for lawyers, charities, academics and

activists that invites delegates to consider what more the law can do for women. Harriet is a founder member of Women In Criminal Law, a joint Chair of the board of trustees at Women In Prison.

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 and Appeals

Business Crime and Investigations

Actions Against the Police and Public Authorities

Inquests and Public Inquiries

Financial Crime

Harriet has experience defending companies and private individuals in the criminal courts and in the VAT tribunal. Harriet is an authority on financial regulation and in 2015 was headhunted by solicitors acting for a multinational financial institution being investigated by the SFO. She subsequently spent several months working closely with the institution's directors.

Harriet has acted in multi-million pound fraud cases both as sole counsel and as part of a larger defence team. Clients value her attention to detail and ability to keep vast quantities of specific information at her fingertips while at all times keeping sight of the bigger picture.

Violent Crime

Harriet defends in the most serious allegations of violent crime. Recent instructions include securing the acquittal of a woman who, when attacked by her abusive husband, stabbed him multiple times. Most recently, Harriet acted for the only defendant to be acquitted of all charges in a multi-handed, cut-throat murder case. While his co-defendants began life sentences, Harriet's client left court a free man.

Harriet has particular experience in forensic pathology, neuropathology, and blood spatter evidence.

Actions Against the Police

Harriet has developed a specialist practice in private law actions against public authorities. She has a particular expertise in claims arising out of the misuse of police search and seizure powers. She is regularly instructed in actions against the police, in particular in claims of false imprisonment, assault, misfeasance, malicious prosecution, negligence, and breaches of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Drugs

Harriet has a wealth of experience in large and complex drugs cases. Her recent instructions have ranged from high-level cases built on thousands of hours of police intelligence, to acting for one of the NCA's most wanted, alleged to be running organised crime and drugs operations across the north west of England.

Harriet is the co-author of *The Drugs Offences Handbook*, published by Bloomsbury. Her contributions include highly technical analysis of forensic evidence, covert evidence and police powers of search and seizure.

Professional Discipline

Harriet has a detailed knowledge of regulatory law and professional discipline. Her expertise in criminal defence cases – where she often represents professionals who face regulatory proceedings at the conclusion of trial – means that she is well placed to deal with professional discipline matters involving quasi-criminal allegations.

Inquest and Inquiries

Harriet has acted in inquests involving issues relating to terrorism, prisons, drugs, unsafe premises, and suicide. She currently acts for a number of the families of the deceased in the Manchester Arena Inquiry, which focuses on 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.