

## Sarah Vine KC



Call: 1997

Silk: 2022

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### Profile

Sarah is ranked in Tier 1 for criminal law in Legal 500 and as a new silk in Chambers and Partners. Immediately prior to taking silk Sarah was instructed for the lead defendant in the EncroChat litigation which resulted in the **first judgment of the Court of Appeal** on the interception of communications in Operation Venetic and in **the only ever judicial review of a European Investigation Order** under which all of the intercepted communications were transmitted to the UK from abroad.

Sarah's economic crime practice involves not only trial work but also pre-charge challenges to investigatory powers. An ability to be pro-active from the inception of an investigation is something she regards as essential in the context of any modern criminal defence practice, but particularly those involving professional and corporate suspects.

Sarah's exceptional skill with vulnerable witnesses and defendants was recognised by the fact that she was selected as a facilitator to train other advocates under the ICCA's Advocacy & the Vulnerable programme.

Her published work includes case updates for Taylor on Appeals, consultation responses in respect of proposed changes to the prosecution of sexual offences and CPS charging guidance on deception and consent, and occasional articles for The Guardian. She regularly provides information and guidance to journalists writing about the conduct of rape trials.

A focus on her clients' bespoke needs, often from the very early stages of a criminal investigation, means that Sarah is rarely now available to conduct publicly funded work save in exceptional cases. She believes that achieving the best outcome for a client involves her having the time available to give to their cause. As a consequence, those that instruct Sarah usually do so at an early stage.

## **What the directories say**

### **2024**

Legal 500: *"Sarah is a very serious player. She has a great courtroom presence, is a brilliant cross-examiner and a very humane and funny individual. She has served time defending in the most difficult and unpopular cases so she is as tough as they come and has seen it all."*

Chambers & Partners: *"A truly wonderful advocate. Both her written and oral advocacy are unquestionably excellent."*

*"Her emotional intelligence with juries is there for all to see."*

### **2023**

Chambers & Partners: *"An outstanding and fierce advocate whom you want in your corner."*

Legal 500: *"It is difficult to express the relief one feels with Sarah by your side on a tricky case. She has the ability to really identify the key issues and plan to deal with them one by one."*

*"Sarah is an incredibly hard worker, and diligent in her preparation. Her use of English in her written pleading phenomenal, which makes any written argument succinct and effective.*

*Sarah also has an easy and affable charm which puts clients at their ease, which professional clients love her for. "*

## **Related practice areas**

Criminal Law

Economic and Business Crime

- ***R v V***; instructed to represent the man alleged to be the architect of the system used to launder the proceeds of the UK's largest importation of class A drugs.
- ***R v C & others***; representing the first defendant in the lead Encrochat case. Contested hidden assets hearing in multi-million pound POCA proceedings.
- ***R v SM***: Securing a wasted costs order of over £40,000 against the CPS in connection with disclosure failings.

Sarah is also instructed to resist applications for protective orders (account freezing, restraint, cash forfeiture)

## Homicide and Serious Organised Crime

- ***R v AU & ors***: Representing the lead defendant in attempted revenge murder of two burglars;
- ***R v MP & ors***: Instructed for the only acquitted defendant in the 8 handed 'Tik Tok' revenge murder case;
- ***R v CS***; Defendant acquitted in an allegation of drugs-related murder;
- ***R v CMD***: Vulnerable child defendant acquitted at half-time in conspiracy to murder for gain.
- ***R v JD***; representing the lead defendant in offences involving organised trafficking of firearms and class A drugs by alleged members of the Salford-based 'Anti-A Team'.
- ***R v CT***: Conspiracy to transfer prohibited weapons. Sarah's submissions on the evidence persuaded the Crown to drop the case against her client prior to trial.

## Sexual Offences

- ***R v YD***: First successful defence of an allegation of "stealthing" (deceptive removal of condom).

- ***R v GP***: Man accused of long-term sexual and violent abuse of multiple family members.
- ***R v NZ***: Successful defence of a GP previously convicted of sexually abusing patients, accused of further offences by multiple former patients.
- ***R v DA***: First acquittal for an allegation of importation of a 'child sex doll'.
- ***R v DC***: Acquittal at half time as a result of cross-examination of complainant in an allegation of gunpoint rape against a background of sexual exploitation and drugs supply.

Sarah is also instructed to resist applications for protective orders (Sexual Harm Prevention Orders, Sexual Risk Orders; Notification Orders/Requirements)

## Appellate Work

- ***R (C) v DPP*** [2020] 4 W.L.R. 158; challenge to the legality of the European Investigation Order under which all EncroChat material was transmitted to the UK for the purposes of Operation Venetic.
- ***R (X) v Manchester Crown Court***, challenge to the decision to extend custody time limits by over 4 years.
- ***R v A & others*** [2021] 1 Cr. App. R. 22; leading case on admissibility of EncroChat material.
- ***R (Proimage) v Lancashire Magistrates' Court & ors*** [2021] EWHC 3244 (Admin); challenge to the legality of warrants issued under the Trade Marks Act 1994.
- ***R v Hajdarmataj*** [2019] EWCA Crim 303; Rape conviction overturned on the basis of disclosure failings in respect of non-conviction bad character evidence.

## Advisory Work

Sarah has advised both individual and corporate clients on pre-charge strategy, protecting privacy rights and police use of 'common law disclosure' against an accused person. This early input frequently results in matters being resolved in the client's favour without any publicity.