

Louise Willocx



Call: 2023

Email: l.willocx@doughtystreet.co.uk

Profile

Louise has a busy criminal practice, appearing in the Crown Court, Youth Court, and the Magistrates' Court on a daily basis. She has a particular interest in working with vulnerable clients and has taken part in several Youth Court training sessions to ensure her young defendants are assisted with skill and care.

Louise combines her domestic criminal practice with extradition and international law, and has extensive experience advising and litigating in international crime and human rights.

Prior to coming to the Bar, Louise worked as a judicial assistant at Colombia's transitional justice tribunal advising on international criminal law in high-profile cases against the FARC leadership. She also worked as a legal assistant for an extradition silk for two years, drafting submissions and conducting research in high profile cases.

Education

Bar Course – Inns of Court College of Advocacy, UK (2023)

PGDL – BBP University, UK (2021)

Master of Laws – Yale Law School, USA (2019)

Bachelor of Philosophy – KU Leuven, Belgium (2018)

Bachelor and Master of Laws – KU Leuven, Belgium (2016 and 2018)

Languages

Dutch

Spanish

French

Related practice areas

Criminal Law

Extradition

International Criminal Law

Business Crime

Criminal law

- **R v BB** – Obtained a writ of habeas corpus and an emergency release order before a High Court Duty Judge. The prison had refused to process the release of BB as no staff was available after hours. The prison's unlawful detention would have led to BB missing the birth of his child, were it not for the successful overnight application for release.
- **R v LQ** – Secured acquittal of harassment causing fear of violence, and exposure. Resisted a restraining order and a binding over order.
- **R v MC** - Persuaded the Crown through multiple written representations to discontinue a charge for assault occasioning grievous bodily harm and affray.
- **R v LE** – Established self-defence and secured acquittal of assault, despite the incident being video-recorded with the defendant admitting on video that she hit the complainant.
- **R v CK** – Obtained a suspended sentence for non-fatal strangulation, criminal damage, assault by beating, and on an unrelated occasion, theft of a specially adapted funeral van, and dangerous driving with the van to escape from the police.
- **R v MG** – Secured a community order for a sophisticated forgery of medical documents by a therapist.

- **R v SH** – Currently instructed before the Court of Appeal, contesting the punitive element of a community order for cultivating cannabis.
- **R v AJ** - Currently instructed in a possession with intent to supply Class A and B drugs case.
- **R v TB** – Currently instructed in a robbery and attempted robbery in which the defendant has severe mental health issues.
- **R v AB** – Currently instructed in a sexual assault matter.
- **R v JF** – Currently instructed for a vulnerable defendant charged with threatening with an offensive weapon in a private place.
- **R v AH** – Currently instructed to resist a cash forfeiture order.

Louise has a particular interest in working with children and young defendants. She has completed the ICCA Advocacy for Children in Conflict with the Law training and has taken part in several training sessions on child defendants organised by the Youth Justice Legal Centre to assist children with the utmost skill and care. Recent instructions include:

- **R v ST** – Successfully defended a child defendant charged with possession of a bladed article. Secured an 18-month Youth Rehabilitation Order with Intense Supervision and Surveillance for unrelated matters including armed robbery, ABH, and assault on an emergency worker using prison napalm. Currently instructed in a possession with intent to supply Class A drugs case, raising the modern slavery defence.
- **R v JO** – Secured acquittal for possession of an offensive weapon. The vulnerable child defendant was alleged to have carried a large machete when he committed a robbery in a modern slavery context.

Extradition

- **Poland v AG** – Polish extradition request discharged by the DJ under s.20 Extradition Act 2003, by arguing that the Polish authorities may have summoned the RP in violation of international law and denied him a retrial. Instructed to resist the appeal.
- **Portugal v DD** – Currently instructed, the requested person is wanted for murder.
- **Kukuca v Slovakia** – Currently instructed an appeal against an extradition order for embezzlement relying on s.20 and Article 8.
- **Belgium v ZK** – Currently instructed, the requested person is wanted for human trafficking, sexual abuse, and participation in a criminal organisation.

- **Poland v JT** – Currently instructed, the requested person is wanted for human trafficking, forced prostitution and kidnapping.
- **Germany v SP** – Currently instructed, the requested person is wanted for “aggravated gang theft”.
- **Merticariu v Romania** – Assisted with research in the successful Supreme Court appeal.

Prior to joining chambers, Louise worked as a legal assistant for an extradition silk for two years. In this role, she conducted research and provided first drafts for submissions, advice, and Interpol requests, including for appeals before the High Court and the European Court of Human Rights (e.g. *Hafeez v. UK*).

International Law

Louise advises the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP, Colombia’s transitional justice tribunal) on international criminal law in high-profile cases against FARC leaders. She is currently advising on the possibility of bringing charges for environmental crimes and anti-personnel mines, both under international criminal law and under the Peace Accord between the Government and the FARC.

This role follows her successful Yale Robina Fellowship at the SJP as Judge Lemaitre Ripoll’s Legal Assistant. Spending a year at the Court in Bogotá, she advised on a range of international criminal law questions and assisted in drafting the precedent-setting pre-trial ruling in the macro-case against the FARC for kidnapping, which included Ingrid Betancourt’s case. She also delivered workshops to demobilised FARC members making field trips and assisted in liaising with victims to pursue restorative justice. Louise performed all of this work in Spanish.

Further, Louise has recently worked on a range of cases with an international dimension:

- Drafted an advise to a Kenyan NGO for war veterans advising on redress for sexual abuse by UK military personnel stationed in Kenya;
- Drafted submissions on war crimes and crimes against humanity to the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar;
- Assisted in drafting submissions to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on the climate emergency’s effects on children’s rights;

- Assisted in drafting an advice on international legal remedies for a denial of access to justice in Trinidad and Tobago;
- Conducted legal research for a terrorism prosecution in the Seychelles;
- Conducted legal research for a murder appeal in Bermuda; and
- Conducted legal research for an advice on religious freedom and discrimination.

Additionally, Louise teaches human rights seminars at her *alma mater*, KU Leuven.

Prior to coming to the Bar, Louise also developed a broad expertise in international criminal law and international human rights law:

- Advocated as a member of the Yale Lowenstein Human Rights Clinic on behalf of three men who were arbitrarily detained in Afghanistan in the context of the American war on terror. Submitted briefs and appeals to the Special Rapporteurs on Torture and on Arbitrary Detention, the UN Human Rights Committee, and the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention;
- Represented clients during deportation interviews in an immigration detention centre in Texas as a student attorney in the Dilley Pro Bono Project;
- Reviewed and analysed French-language claims in the investigation into the Central African Republic as a pro bono legal consultant to the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court;
- Contributed to Professor Jan Wouters' book "International Law: A European Perspective" as a research assistant; and
- Interned at the Belgian Embassy in Washington D.C.