

Sarah Elliott KC



Call: 1996

Silk: 2014

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Profile

Sarah is ranked as a Leading Silk in Legal 500 2024 who say:

‘Sarah is a brilliant cross-examiner, particularly of vulnerable, un-cooperative or reluctant witnesses. She is brilliant before a jury and makes truly exceptional speeches. She is also adept at presenting complex legal arguments in a persuasive and attractive manner.’

Sarah is also a ranked individual Silk in Chambers and Partners 2023 who say:

“Talented defence silk Sarah Elliott KC has a plethora of experience of appearing in high-profile general crime cases. She is particularly sought out by solicitors for matters concerning complex homicide and rape.”

“She is fearless when it comes to taking on difficult cases and running difficult defences. She works phenomenally hard and is an extremely gifted trial advocate.”

Solicitor sources for previous editions have described her as:

“Produces brilliant cross-examinations and amazing closing speeches. She is both great on the detail and good at stepping back and looking at the wider perspective. “

“Sarah is a fierce advocate who understands juries impeccably” “She is a tough opponent and takes the right points firmly”

“on the most wanted listed for heavy weight crime.”

“Sarah Elliott is hugely well prepared for every case she does. She knows the case better than anybody else in court. She’s developed a specialist sex practice. Without a doubt, she’s absolutely top notch”

Sarah is recommended as a Leading Silk in the Legal 500 who say:

“Her manner and skill before a jury are a master class”. “The go-to silk for sex cases”

“Her core strengths are having an incredible attention to detail; but also an ability to step back from a case and provide overall strategic advice. Her cross-examination of witnesses perceived as being vulnerable is incredibly skilful. It is an incredibly difficult art; but Sarah is a master of it.”

“Sarah is a superb cross-examiner. She is forensic in her approach to examining witnesses and she is brilliant at exploiting points that may assist the defence case. Sarah knows how to make the pitch perfect closing speech — she is exceptional at presenting her client’s case to a jury. She is also a very sensible tactician and her approach strategic approach to cases is invaluable”

The current edition says:

Sarah is a brilliant cross-examiner, particularly of vulnerable, un-cooperative or reluctant witnesses. She is brilliant before a jury and makes truly exceptional speeches. She is also adept at presenting complex legal arguments in a persuasive and attractive manner.’

She has also been described in the directories as:

“A superb jury advocate, who knows the law from back to front.” “one of the very best trial advocates around”

“leaving clients reassured by her manner and juries persuaded by her arguments”

Sarah is available for advice at all stages of criminal proceedings and regularly provides consultations for individuals and their families at the very earliest stages of an investigation, pre-police interview and pre-charge.

She also is available for advice in criminal appeals or potential appeals and ‘second opinion’ work.

Consultations can either be in person or via video conferencing/Skype.

Sarah accepts both privately and publicly funded instructions and accepts cases under the **Public Access** scheme.

She is also available by private instruction for a wide variety of criminal work and at all stages of proceedings.

Please contact our Senior Crime Clerk **Matt Butchard** for further details.

Related practice areas

Criminal Law

Criminal Appeals

Homicide and Related Grave Offences

Sarah specialises in defending the most difficult and demanding of homicide cases which require a particularly careful approach.

In 2023 her instructions include representing a **university lecturer accused of murdering his wife** and acting in the Court of Appeal CCRC referral in **R v Firkins** (2003 double murders in Cornwall in which she originally was junior trial counsel in 2005).

Recent homicide and related grave offences cases include:

- In 2023 she **secured a verdict of diminished responsibility** for a teenager accused of murdering his grandmother, (leading **Kate O'Raghallaigh**),
- In 2022 she defended a 19 year old student of good character accused of participating in a London gang related killing (leading **Kate O'Raghallaigh**), and acted for a vulnerable defendant with serious cognitive impairment accused of murdering a fellow resident in a hostel (leading **Maryam Mir**).
- In 2019 she represented a woman accused of beating a man to death, (leading **David Rhodes**) and secured a suspended sentence for a woman accused of the attempted murder of her 3 month old baby.
- In 2018 she secured a manslaughter conviction by reason of diminished responsibility for a client charged with murdering his grandmother by trying to behead her, leading **Daniella Waddoup**.

- In 2017 she represented a man accused of causing brain damage to his flat mate by beating him and making a video of drinking the victim's blood.
- Also in 2017, she secured a manslaughter conviction for a man accused of the incredibly brutal murder of a criminal solicitor.
- In 2016 she secured an acquittal for a man accused of the 'mercy killing' of his father.
- Also in 2016, she defended a man extradited from Ireland for the murder of his landlord and concealment of his body. The accused was a convicted child sex offender who alleged the landlord asked for sex in lieu of rent.

Serious Sexual Offences

Sarah is one of the leading silks at the Bar for defending sexual allegations. She is counsel of choice for solicitors and those accused of sexual offences because of her proven track record in achieving successful outcomes in all types of cases, from multiple rape allegations to possession of indecent images, and at all stages of proceedings from pre-charge to appeal.

She is known for her tactical skill and determination in achieving positive results for clients while providing them with a sympathetic and sensitive approach.

Sarah is regularly asked to provide pre-charge advice and can assist solicitors and clients through all of the early stages of proceedings. She is able to advise on the consequential effects of allegations of sexual offending and on reputation management. She is available for post-trial appeal advice and 'second opinion' work.

In 2023/24 Sarah is representing:

- A man accused of being involved in a paedophile ring to rape young children
- A man accused of repeated rapes of his sister when they were children 45 years ago
- An individual in public life accused of historic rapes of a child
- A man accused of drugging a number of young men in order to commit sexual offences upon them

In 2023:

- Sarah has secured the acquittal of a man accused of a filmed date rape
- Successfully represented a teenage boy accused of repeated flashing on the Finchley Road

In 2022

- Sarah secured the acquittal of a successful businessman accused of a historic sexual relationship with his niece when she was a child.
- successfully represented a national captain sportsman accused of discreditable conduct by the governing body for that sport through relationships with younger competitor.

In 2021/22 Sarah:

- Successfully represented a leading insurance broker accused of sexually assaulting an employee at the industry awards dinner (leading **Liam Walker KC**).
- Secured the acquittal of a man accused of sexual assault of his daughter on CCTV in the Israeli embassy.
- Ensured the discontinuance of the prosecution of one man in a married couple both charged with indecent images and negotiated an acceptable plea to substantially reduced charges for his husband.
- Successfully represented the appellant in R v BQC [2021 EWCA Crim 1944] in the Court of Appeal resulting in the quashing of 26 convictions (leading **Farrhat Arshad**).

In 2020 Sarah:

- Successfully defended a young man with Asperger's accused of the rape of a woman he met on a dating app.
- Successfully negotiated pleas to fewer charges and a less restrictive SHPO for a middle aged man charged with multiple serious sexual offences against a 15 year old.
- Successfully defended a religious minister accused of historic sexual allegations.
- Secured the offering of no evidence against a young foreign student accused of rape where the complainant was highly intoxicated, after pursuing pre-trial disclosure issues.

- Obtained a suspended sentence for a man who had pleaded guilty to arranging to meet a 13 year old for penetrative sex.

In 2018 Sarah:

- Secured the acquittal of a man on allegations of sexual touching of his step daughter.
- Persuaded the CPS to accept a plea to common assault rather than the sexual assault charge, thereby avoiding the notification requirements of the sexual offences register.