

Imran Shafi KC


Call 1996 | Silk 2021



Clerks

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Appointments

Recorder (2020)

Memberships

Criminal Bar Association

Criminal

Imran is widely regarded as one of the leading criminal barristers on circuit, if not nationwide. He is instructed in the most serious criminal matters and has appeared in numerous groundbreaking cases. A dozen or so of his Court of Appeal cases are reported in the leading criminal textbooks.

In recognition of his ability and experience, he was appointed King's Counsel and a Recorder of the Crown Court.

Solicitors and clients seek him out for his legal knowledge, his performance in court and his incredible work ethic. He strives to do his utmost to represent his clients to the best of his ability and achieves great results. Unsurprisingly, he is very much in demand, client's securing his services at the earliest opportunity, often pre-charge.

He is renowned for his track record of having cases discontinued, dismissed and successfully applying to exclude evidence.

He has a great rapport with everyone from clients to solicitors through to Judges. Treating everyone with courtesy and respect.

In recent years, his practice has increasingly featured 'paper heavy' fraud and complex money laundering allegations. His meticulous preparation, logical approach and ease with accounting and financial evidence lends itself well to defending in this specialist area.

In addition to his recognised strength in fraud, he is frequently retained to defend in, murder, terrorism, serious drugs conspiracies, gang violence and large-scale immigration facilitation cases.

Imran's instructions are increasingly private, however he does still accept instructions in serious publicly-funded work.

Criminal Cases

MURDER

Operation Firestorm (2023): Gang attack in which victim fatally stabbed in the streets of Preston. Defendant acquitted of murder and convicted of the lesser alternative of manslaughter.

Operation DelayMike (2023): Prosecuting wife for husband's murder, complex causation issues arising. Defendant pleaded guilty to murder on day two of trial.

Operation Kitewind (2023): Multi-defendant stabbing and robbing of a drug dealer.

Operation Cantus (2023): Defendant admitted stabbing deceased in the heart and liver in front of five witnesses. Acquitted of murder.

Operation Perasilk (2023): Multi-defendant stabbing and robbing of drug dealer.

Operation Colindale 2 (2022): The notorious accidental shooting of law student, Aya Hachem in Blackburn in a botched plan to target business premises. Nationally reported.

Operation Leaming (2022): Murder and subsequent dismemberment of body

Operation Legato (2022): Stabbing of 16 year-old Rhamero West

Operation Dumore (2022): Successfully argued loss of control, following a three-week trial defendant acquitted of murder and attempted murder. Defendant had attended the home of the victims and repeatedly struck both in the head with an axe killing one and causing devastating injuries to the other.

Operation Algorithm (2022): Defendant accused of murder by stabbing.

Operation Elderberry (2021): Six defendants accused of beating a man to death outside a busy nightclub.

Operation Clumber (2020): Young man accused of murder by stabbing a rival found not guilty following a successful case of self-defence.

Operation Flyberry (2019): Conspiracy to murder by shooting. Persistence and a forensic analysis of the unused material led directly to the prosecution dropping the count of conspiracy to murder.

Operation Yale (2019): Nine defendant murder. Gangland shooting. Defendant found not guilty following a two-month trial.

Operation Sweden (2019): Six defendant murder following a brutal beating in the street. Attracted significant national media coverage.

R v KM (2019): Attempted murder by shooting.

Operation Lando (2019): Murder by stabbing.

Operation Picketgreen (2015): Murder of wife and child destruction of unborn baby.

Operation Dayton (2015): Gangland drive-by shooting. Three-month trial.

Operation Prospermouth (2012): Murder of wife.

Operation Tundra (2011): Murder with alleged homophobic murder. Successfully secured manslaughter conviction following a four-week trial.

R v Dev (2005): Murder of father, body placed in a suitcase and kept in the boot of a car for months. Two-month trial at the Old Bailey.

R v Lydiate and others (2000): Salford Gangland conspiracy to murder rival gang members. Three-month trial.

TERRORISM

Operation Semi-Portable (2022): Defendant and three others accused of right-wing terrorism and firearms offences.

Operation Gibus (2020): Defendant and his brother accused of ISIS membership and related terrorist offences.

Operation Disorientating 2 (2017): D arrested attempting to fly to Turkey and then on to Syria to join and 'martyr' himself with ISIS. Lowest level of sentence commensurate with C of A guidance imposed.

R v NN and others (2014): First Syria-related terrorism prosecution. Case dropped against this defendant.

R v Farooqi and others (2014): First application of its kind by the LAA and Prosecution to confiscate the family home and other properties belonging to the family of a convicted terrorist. Application successfully resisted.

FRAUD

Operation Finglas (2019): Large scale tachograph fraud and associated money laundering. Successful submission of no case to answer, all other defendants convicted.

Operation Baumea (2018): Fraud by the systematic abuse of sham companies set up with the sole intention of obtaining hundreds of thousands of pounds in credit. Case dropped following comprehensive and targeted disclosure request.

Operation Orcanet (2018): Large scale importation and supply of counterfeit designer clothing.

Operation Good (2018): Sophisticated multi-defendant immigration conspiracy. Defence deriving from the Modern Slavery Act advanced.

Operation Warbird (2018): Immigration facilitation utilising sham colleges and issuing CAS. Three month trial.

R v JT (2017): Fraud by breach of trust and false accounting over many years by employee of a multi-national company. Successful application to dismiss.

Operation Bellman (2017): Multi-defendant immigration fraud by the facilitation of cheating on an industrial scale in college exams. Following four weeks of evidence a successful submission of no case to answer was upheld. The subsequent prosecution appeal was dismissed and the resultant judgment is now a key authority on immigration facilitation.

Operation New Orleans (2017): Fraudulent evasion of duty on over a million pounds of cigarettes. Defendant acquitted following a four-week trial.

Operation Nevdon (2016): Represented senior partner of large solicitors practice charged with fraud on the legal aid agency. Three-month trial.

Operation Highbank (2016): Represented lead defendant of ten in this ebay/paypal fraud with a value over a million pounds. Two-month trial.

Operation Drake (2016): Multi-faceted property fraud, trial listed for three months and hundreds of complainants identified.

Operation Dastardly (2015): Fraudulent importation of 4.5 million cigarettes. Indictment successfully stayed on day four of trial following targeted disclosure requests.

Operation Mask (2015): Defendant one of ten accused of defrauding a wealthy and vulnerable widow of half a million pounds in bogus care costs. Case against this defendant dropped.

Operation Kenyeti (2013): Represented the lead defendant of ten in this conspiracy to facilitate illegal immigration, money laundering and mortgage fraud. The trial lasted six months.

Operation Kingfisher (2013): Prosecuted five defendants charged with a multi-million housing benefit fraud, money laundering and multi-million mortgage fraud. All defendants (including a pharmacist) convicted.

R v Doctor WM (2012): Protracted and systematic fraud on the NHS by a dentist. Four-week trial.

Operation Korab/Razorback facilitation conspiracy (2012): Twenty one-defendant international immigration facilitation conspiracy.

Operation Fordingbridge (2010): Conspiracy to handle stolen and counterfeit electronic goods in huge quantities. Five family member charged following discovery of an 'Aladdin's' cave of stolen goods. This defendant was the only one to be acquitted.

Operation Fern (2010): Six defendant multi-million mortgage fraud. Defendant acquitted following a six-week trial.

Operation Contact 7 (2010): Nine-defendant conspiracy to defraud, 'cash for crash'.

Operation Colon (2010): Nine-defendant conspiracy to defraud. Selling bogus person injury claims to solicitors firms.

Operation Dram (2010): Five-defendant construction fraud, hundreds of complainants. Defendant acquitted following a four-month trial.

R v Mina and others (2009): Ten-defendant ebay fraud. Defendant acquitted following six-week trial.

R v Butt and others (2001): Multi-million post office fraud.

MONEY LAUNDERING

Operation Bayweek (2018): Hugely complex prosecution of alleged laundering of the multi-million proceeds of the sale of non-UK duty paid cigarettes. Two trials listed in 2018 and dozens of defendants.

R v Vargas (2017): Represented the manager of a Money Transfer Bureau indicted with using fake and stolen identification in order to transfer the proceeds of crime to Colombia.

Operation Solar (2016): Represented one member of a family of suspected drug dealers alleged to have laundered millions over many years. Unusual in its reliance upon police intelligence as the main source of the prosecution evidence.

Operation Forrester (2015): Thirteen-defendant international conspiracy to supply multi-kilos of cocaine and launder the proceeds through the 'Hawala' banking system.

Operation Yates 2 (2015): Money laundering prosecution arising from Operation Yates 1, a conspiracy to import over one hundred kilos of heroin from Pakistan.

Operation Crocodile (2013): Conspiracy to launder over 12 million pounds of the proceeds of crime through the 'Hawala' banking system.

Operation Enigma (2012): Twelve-defendant 200 million money laundering through a Money Transfer Bureau and the 'Hawala' system. One of the largest prosecutions of its type, listed for a four-month trial.

SEXUAL OFFENCES

Operation Evolution (2018): 12 defendant serious violent disorder and attempted murder in and around the City of Leicester. Three month trial, leading junior.

Operation Argent (2018): Conspiracy to Rob and conspiracy to supply class A drugs. Serious organized criminality. Leading junior.

Operation Harehills (2016): Halifax 'grooming' trial. Dozens of defendants tried in four separate trials. Defendant the only one acquitted following a three-week trial at Leeds Crown Court.

Operation Kellerabbey (2015): Keighley 'grooming' trial. Two months at Bradford Crown Court.

Operation Corona (2014): Conspiracy to manage dozens of brothels nationwide.

Operation Span (2012): Rochdale 'grooming' trial.

DRUGS

Operation Embossed (2022): Representing the lead defendant in the leading Encrochat (Operation Venetic) case. Technical and involved admissibility arguments pursued all the way to the Court of Appeal, the resulting judgement is a leading authority.

Operation Vulpine (2021): 13 defendant conspiracy to produce cannabis at two enormous industrial premises.

Operation Venetic (2020): Serious multi-kilo class A drugs conspiracy prosecution arising from the wider Operation Venetic.

Operation Rockhopper 2 (2018): Multi-kilo, multi-defendant conspiracy to supply cocaine in the West Country.

R v JMF (2018): Exporting class A drugs to the U.A.E.

Operation Intruder (2018): Multi-defendant, multi-kilo supply of class A drugs in the West Midlands.

Operation Gamber (2018): A dozen defendants engaged in the multi-kilo supply of cocaine and heroin in the North West and Stoke areas.

Operation Hoisin (2017): Organised Crime Group cultivating and importing vast quantities of cannabis.

Operation Wingpond (2017): Police Inspector stealing huge quantities of drugs from a police property store he was tasked with supervising.

Operation Kellington (2017): Conspiracy to supply commercial quantities of Heroin and Cocaine. Over a million pounds worth of drugs recovered.

Operation Quentin (2016): Ten-defendant conspiracy to supply multi-kilos of cocaine from Liverpool to the Midlands and West Country. This defendant was the only one to be acquitted.

Operation Airdrie (2015): Ten-defendant conspiracy to produce and supply industrial quantities of adulterant to 'bash' drugs. Indictment successfully stayed as an abuse five weeks in to trial.

Operation Trooper (2014): Successfully applied to dismiss all charges against the lead defendant in a serious conspiracy to supply class A drugs. The five co-defendants had already pleaded guilty.

Operation Exbridge (2014): Successfully defended one of ten defendants in this wide-ranging conspiracy to supply class A drugs.

Operation Alamos (2014): Successfully defended one of nineteen defendants in this complex conspiracy to import and supply class A drugs.

Operation Yates (2013): Multi-defendant 160kg Heroin importation utilising the postal system.

Operation Lennon (2013): Twenty-defendant multi-national conspiracy to import the party drug 'M-cat' in industrial quantities.

Operation Bionic (2011): Importation of tons of cutting agents, one of the first prosecution under section 46 of the serious crime act 2007 (encourage or assist an offence).

Operation Zambezi (2011): Ten-defendant conspiracy to supply class A drugs and money laundering. The principal defendant was a schoolteacher who was convicted and sentenced to 21 years. My client was acquitted following a three month trial.

Operation Folkestone (2010): Ten-defendant drugs and money laundering conspiracy. VHCC prosecuted by leading and junior counsel. Defendant acquitted.

SERIOUS VIOLENCE

R v. BJ (2017): Section 16A Firearms act 1968, possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence. Defendant acquitted.

R v. RN (2016): Serious group section 18 assault. Successful application to dismiss.

R v SR. and others (2015): Successful defence of a serious group section 18 assault with baseball bats.

R v. AM and others (2013): Armed robbery of cash in transit. Case dropped following successful challenge to the identification evidence.

R v. MH and others (2013): Gang affiliated conspiracy to kidnap and blackmail with firearms. Successful submission of no case to answer.

R v. MI and others (2013): Successful defence of a group section 18 with bats.

Operation K-order (2010): Serious gang/drug related kidnap and shooting. Six week trial.

Operation Prime (2010): Kidnap of a wealthy Chinese student and ransom demand from his shipping merchant parents. Eight-week trial.

R v. A and others (2006): Multi-handed serious section 18 assault, defendant acquitted.

R v B and others (2005): Victim kidnapped in Pakistan and ransom demand made in the UK.

COURT OF APPEAL (REPORTED CASES)

R v Abdullah and Others (2010) All ER D: Appeal against conviction. Section 74 PACE

Attorney General's Reference (No 43 of 2009): *R v. Bennett* EWCA Crim 1925, 2009 All ER (D) 49, Times Law Reports 8th October 2009: IPP unduly lenient, replaced with life imprisonment.

R v. Zelkel McCabe (2009)

EWCA Crim 1007: Appeal against sentence, imitation firearm.

Sarwar and Sons Knitwear Limited v. Chief Constable GMP EWHC 1651 Admin (2009), 1 WLR 1023, 2008 All ER (D) 272: Cash forfeiture authority.

R v. Khyber Khan (2008) All ER (D): Appeal against conviction and sentence Murder.

R v. Masoud Tabnak (2007) EWCA Crim 380, 1 WLR 1317, 2 Cr App R 4, Times Law Reports 26th February 2007, 2007 All ER (D) 223: Leading Criminal/Immigration authority.

R v. Vernet-Showers and Others (2007) EWCA Crim 1767, 2007 All ER (D) 285: Eight day conjoined appeals in relation to historic 'Participating Informant' Heroin Importations from Pakistan.

R v. J and Others (2006) EWCA Crim 2925, (2006) All ER (D) 76: Unduly lenient sentence, Conspiracy to Supply Class A

R v. Din and Others (2004) EWCA Crim 3364, (2005) All ER (D) 421: Sentencing authority in relation to Credit Card Fraud

R v. Walsh and Another (2004 All ER (D) 300: Appeal against sentence, Violent Disorder and Possession of firearm

Recommendations

Imran has been ranked in **Chambers and Partners 2025** in the Crime category, and Tier 2 in **The Legal 500 2025** Crime (General and Fraud)

"Imran's calm and meticulous approach is persuasive and devastating in equal measure. Thoroughly planned advocacy leaves no weaknesses to be exploited by his opponents."

The Legal 500 2025

Imran has been ranked in **Chambers and Partners 2024** in the Crime category, and Tier 2 in **The Legal 500 2024** Crime (General and Fraud)

Imran has been ranked in **Chambers and Partners 2023** in the Crime category, and **The Legal 500 2023** in Crime (General and Fraud)

"Imran Shafi QC has an excellent reputation as defence counsel in highly complex criminal cases."

Chambers and Partners 2022

"Personable, great rapport with clients and the court. Fantastic tactician and very fine judgement. Sharp intellect, lateral thinker."

The Legal 500 2022

"Encyclopaedic knowledge which he deploys to the very great benefit of his clients. Peerless in legal argument."

The Legal 500 2021