



Steven Swift

Call 1991






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Appointments

- Grade 4 Prosecutor
- Serious Crime Group Panel Prosecutor
- Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Panel Prosecutor

Memberships

- Northern Circuit
- Criminal Bar Association

Education

- Lancaster University: LLB Hons (1985-88)
- Inns of Court School of Law (1990-91)
- Liverpool John Moores University 2017 LLM (Distinction): Research

Criminal

With over 30 years' experience at the Criminal Bar, Steven is highly regarded and has a successful heavyweight criminal practice. He is regularly instructed in the most serious, complex and high profile criminal cases.

He balances robust and effective cross-examination with a calm and persuasive manner that is highly effective with juries. He has an ability to reassure and inspire the confidence of clients.

Steven welcomes the challenge of complex and demanding cases and is keen to provide advice and guidance from the earliest stages of the proceedings in order to ensure continuity of representation and the most effective presentation of a client's case.

Grade 4 Prosecutor, Serious Crime Panel Prosecutor, Rape and Serious Sexual Assault Prosecutor.

He has a diverse caseload of grave and complex cases including:

Fraud:

- Steven is a member of the highly commended financial crime and fraud team within Chambers. He has considerable experience in cases of corporate, financial and commercial crime and is predominantly instructed on behalf of the defence.

Recent cases:

- Acting for one of the Directors of a vehicle parts manufacturer prosecuted by the DfT after extensive investigations and judicial reviews. All defendants acquitted on the direction of the Court.
- Representing the former Dean of Education at a North West University facing multiple allegations of systematic invoice fraud; acting on behalf of the Directors of a regional transport company in respect of alleged VAT fraud.

dissertation into the impact of pre-recorded cross-examination (Section 28) in respect of young and vulnerable witnesses upon the trial process and the changing approach to cross-examination.

- Visiting Lecturer – Lancaster University (Advocacy)

- Expertise in Proceeds of Crime and HMRC restraint hearings.

Murder/manslaughter:

- Most recently instructed in the matters of the murder of Brianna Ghey (2024) and Ashley Dale (2024). R v Holt (Client acquitted of murder in respect of the stabbing of a doorman), R v Coyle (Representing the mother of a child who was killed as a consequence of being “caged” and secured by ligatures), R v Turner (Representing a defendant who pleaded guilty to killing his mother).

Armed robbery and serious offences of violence.

Importation and supplying of Class A and B drugs.

- Regularly instructed to defend in cases of drugs importations, conspiracies to supply and “County Lines” prosecutions.

Rape and sexual offences (recent and non-recent):

- Steven has developed a significant practice in this area with particular expertise in historical allegations and “child grooming gangs”.
- Steven has extensive experience in the cross-examination of young and vulnerable witnesses. He has conducted many cases within the ambit of “Section 28” pre-recorded cross-examination.
- Presentation of workshops to the Police, Social Services and University Academics in relation to the use of pre-recorded cross-examination.

Road Transport & Motoring:

- Regularly representing clients facing criminal charges arising from road traffic and transport matters including : Manslaughter; Death by Dangerous/Careless Driving; Causing serious Injury; Dangerous and Careless Driving; Falsification of Tachograph ; Tachograph and Driver Hours infringement.
- DVSA (VOSA) prosecutions.

Professional Regulatory: Experience of representing healthcare professionals before the General Medical Council and Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Steven has considerable experience in cases concerning complex medical issues arising from cases concerning the death of children, child cruelty, neglect and infliction of serious injuries requiring extensive advice and consultation with medical experts from different specialist fields from the early stages of proceedings.

Pre-trial conferences frequently take place with pathologists, radiologists, psychiatrists and other medical experts to ensure a thorough understanding of the evidence, its potential impact on a case and the most favourable way of presenting complex and dense material to a jury.

Trading Standards.

Cases

Notable Cases:

In the matter of the murder of Brianna Ghey (2024) – Defended 16-year-old Eddie Ratcliffe.

In the matter of the murder of Ashley Dale (2024) – Successfully defended a client charged with perverting the course of justice.

Securing the acquittal of a Junior Doctor facing allegations of sexual assault by a patient during the course of a consultation. (2024)

Successfully prosecuting a Merseyside Police officer charged with misconduct after abusing his position to establish intimate relationships with victims of sexual and domestic abuse. (2023)

R v Coyle.

Representing the mother of a child who was killed as a consequence of being “caged” and secured by ligatures.

R v Turner.

Representing a defendant who pleaded guilty to killing his mother.

R v Leighton Holt.

Charge of murder following an incident in the St Helens town centre when altercation developed between the defendant and several bouncers/ door staff. CCTV evidence showed defendant was pursued by the door staff and thereafter surrounded. Defendant produced a knife and used the same in self defence. Verdict of not guilty after two juries failed to agree.

R v Smedley.

Representing the former Dean of Edge Hill University facing multiple allegations of systematic fraud.

R v Smalley.

Leading junior representing a defendant who faced multiple counts of rape and serious sexual offences dating back over forty years against eleven complainants. This was a six week trial necessitating sensitive extensive and detailed cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses, three of whom fell within the ambit of the Section 28 provisions giving rise to pre-recorded cross-examination.

R v Chiu.

Conspiracy concerning the importation of the largest volume of “legal highs” to be prosecuted. Offences committed via online sales, importing drugs from China and changing the description of the chemical compounds.

R v Keane.

Defendant charged with murder following an earlier section 18 conviction and subsequent death.

R v Davies.

Defendant facing multiple non-recent rape allegations dating back to the 1980's. The defendant was suffering from the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. Legal arguments in respect of the defendant's ability to have a “fair trial” resulted in the grant of an intermediary appointed on behalf of the defendant throughout the trial process. Acquitted

R v Amin.

Representation of a lead defendant facing allegations of rape and child sexual offences within a “grooming ring”. Acquitted

Appeared as Leading Counsel for the defendant in the case of *Hedgcock & Others* 2007 EWCA Crim 3486: point of principle relating “to the correct approach to be taken by a jury in a criminal case to an invitation by the Crown to draw an inference adverse to a defendant from primary facts.” (LJ Laws) .

Cited with approval recently in: *Goddard & another* 2012 EWCA 1756, *Darnly* 2012 EWCA Crim 1148.

R v Hill A-G Ref 61 of 2014.

Court of Appeal hearing concerning the principles of imposing suspended sentences in historic sexual offences.

R v Smith – Court of Appeal.

This case resulted in a successful appeal against sentence for a soldier suffering from “combat stress” and post-traumatic stress disorder following deployment in both Iraq and Afghanistan. His sentence of imprisonment for the offence of arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered was significantly reduced in light of developing psychological evidence and research into the trauma and stress developed by soldiers in combat zones.

R v Kynaston – Liverpool Crown Court.

The defendant was charged with Death by dangerous driving. The defendant was the driver of a lorry carrying compacted scrap metal which overturned and crushed to death the driver of a car which was travelling alongside the lorry. The case required significant cross-examination and scrutiny of the regulations relating to safe systems of loading and transportation of scrap metals. Expert evidence was called relating to size of load transportation and driving speeds. This case led to a private members bill being backed by the Transport Select Committee to regulate top heavy loads.

R v Harman (E.coli outbreak) – Preston Crown Court.

Butcher facing allegations of breaching food safety regulations following an outbreak of E.coli food poisoning amongst a large number of customers. The case required a detailed understanding of food hygiene regulations, conferences with defence experts and extensive cross-examination of experts called on behalf of the prosecution.

R v Brookhouse – Warrington Crown Court.

Representation of lead defendant in a case concerning multi-million pound drugs importation.

R v Smalley – Liverpool Crown Court.

Leading junior representing a defendant facing multiple historical allegations of rape made by twelve complainants.

R v Holland – Bolton Crown Court.

“Baby shaking” case. Successfully defended a young father facing allegation of inflicting grievous bodily harm against his son.

R v Meighan (& others) – Manchester Crown Court.

Junior counsel – successfully defended a client charged in respect of attempted murder allegation. Contract killing.

R v Balogh – Liverpool Crown Court.

Case concerning attempted murder/attempt infanticide by mother of a newly born baby abandoned at a hospital.

Beyond the Bar

- Mini & Juniors coach at Waterloo RUFC
- U15 girls rugby coach at West Park RUFC
- RUFC Referee Level 2
- Cycling