

Michelle Heeley KC

Call: 2001 | Silk: 2017

"Michelle is incredibly hard-working and very responsive. She has a wonderful manner with clients and strong advocacy."

Legal 500 2024



Michelle Heeley KC took Silk in 2017, to become at the time the youngest criminal Silk in the country. She was appointed Leader of the Midland Circuit in 2021, the youngest Leader in history.

Michelle is regularly instructed by the Complex Casework Unit and prosecuting division for the Serious Organised Crime Agency to prosecute large scale, multi handed cases involving complex legal issues. Michelle is renowned for her team player attitude, taking responsibility for the case as a whole when required.

Michelle undertakes private defence work, and has represented defendants from all aspects of life, ranging from former England football players, national journalists, to teachers charged with serious sexual allegations She is noted for her particular expertise in rape cases and in dealing with Vulnerable witnesses. As part of her Circuit responsibilities Michelle trains other Advocates in the questioning of vulnerable witnesses.

Michelle is regularly instructed in legal aid matters, in particular murder cases, both prosecution and defence, particularly those involving youths, she is noted for her ability to deal with young and vulnerable clients and witnesses.

Michelle regularly undertakes advisory work in respect of cases being considered for appeal, she will draft skeleton arguments on appeal, and then take the matter to the full court.

Michelle is also instructed in cases defending Police officers charged with criminal offences. She is renowned for her client care skills and ability to relate to people from all walks of life.

Michelle often deals with inquests from which criminal proceedings could or do arise. She is well versed in the best manner to protect clients from potential criminal liability.

Shortlisted Legal 500 Criminal Silk of the year 2022

Expertise

Birmingham

103 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

London

Fifth Floor
7 Savoy Court
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

Bristol

30 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

Crime

Michelle has practised in criminal law for over 20 years. She undertakes the most serious of cases, both prosecuting and defending.

Michelle has particular expertise in sexual offences, and was a lead trainer in respect of the questioning of vulnerable witnesses. Michelle is renowned for her skills in working with vulnerable defendants and witnesses.

Michelle is regularly instructed to prosecute murders, terrorism offences, gun and drugs supply conspiracies and rapes.

Michelle also defends, undertaking both Legal Aid and Private cases, with a particular focus on defending children charged with murder, and defending in privately funded sexual offences.

Michelle undertakes review of cases for appeal, advising and drafting on grounds, if appropriate, before appearing in the Court of Appeal.

Regulatory

Michelle was appointed Silk in 2017 at the age of just 38 and is now Leader of the Midland Circuit, the youngest person in history to hold that post. She is regularly instructed to deal with heavy weight cases, she uses the skills gained in her serious crime practice to tackle the more specific requirements of Regulatory crime. She is noted for her ability to handle sensitive cases and to deal with witnesses and clients who require a considered manner, particularly those with mental health difficulties.

She is thorough in her preparation and known for her ability to present complex issues in an easily comprehensible style.

Michelle's licensing experience covers: Dealing with applications for licences for sex shops and lap dancing venues, Appearing on behalf of Staffordshire Council opposing licensing applications by Sainsbury's to sell alcohol from their service stations, Appearing on behalf of Licensees in cases of transfer or application for new licenses, Dealing with appeals on behalf of both Licensees and Residents in cases involving personal and public entertainment licenses, Representing local councils subject to appeal in the Magistrates court, Negotiating with councils as to acceptable conditions for new licenses or those subject to review, Representing the Environmental Health Department to present their views of new or reviewable licenses.

Michelle has over 20 years experience working in Health and Safety, she deals with cases where life changing injuries, or fatalities have occurred, usually involving falls from height, or accidents with factory machinery. Michelle is used to liaising with family members of the deceased and is renowned for her client care handling skills.

Police Misconduct

Michelle is a leading Silk, rated in both the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners. She regularly defends Police Officers in both criminal and disciplinary proceedings at the very highest level.

Due to working across a number of disciplines Michelle can deal with cases that cross jurisdictions, for example, inquests resulting from deaths in custody, as well as criminal charges resulting from alleged incidents, as well as Misconduct proceedings that may arise.

Michelle is a regular speaker at the No 5 Police Misconduct Seminar and has lectured on topics such as the development of the offence of Misconduct in Public Office, and best practise in inquests.

Birmingham

103 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

London

Fifth Floor
7 Savoy Court
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

Bristol

30 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501

Michelle has conducted cases at all levels of the criminal justice system, including multiple cases of murder, and for numerous high-profile clients. She fully understands the need for sensitivity and discretion. She has represented officers at all levels, these range from serious legal arguments before the Court of Appeal, sexual offences, death by dangerous driving in the Crown Court to, if requested, defending officers accused of common assault in the course of their duty. She sits as a Recorder of the Crown Court.

Michelle has also dealt with more technical offences such as alleged Data Protection breaches as well as more common factual disputes such as domestic violence. She believes that there is no one way to approach a case and Michelle brings along a wide skill set and incisive intellect to each one. She has extensive experience in dealing with complex legal arguments, drafting skeleton arguments and presenting them in court.

Michelle is also able to deal with expert evidence. She grasps difficult issues quickly and presenting them in a manageable way.

Known first and foremost as a tenacious fighter she is also renowned for her client care, being able to put clients who aren't used to being in court at their ease.

Awards



Accreditations

- Shortlisted Criminal Silk of the Year 2022

Appointments

- Recorder 2012
- Silk 2017
- Leader of Midland Circuit 2021

Birmingham

103 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 3AG

DX: 16075 Fountain Court Birmingham
Telephone: +44 (0) 121 606 0500

London

Fifth Floor
7 Savoy Court
London WC2R 0EX

DX: 449 London Chancery Lane
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 420 7500

Bristol

30 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4ND

DX: 7838 Bristol
Tel: +44 (0) 117 917 8501