

Rhia Abukhalil

Call: 2019



Rhia is a public law and criminal defence barrister. Her practice spans crime, inquests, actions against police, prison law, and Court of Protection. Her knowledge and experience of working within the criminal justice system makes her particularly skilled at dealing with quasi-criminal public law matters.

Expertise

Inquests & Inquiries (Public Law)

Rhia regularly appears in the Coroners' Court. She recently represented an individual at an inquest who was the sole suspect in a criminal investigation into the death. Relying on her knowledge of criminal investigations and proceedings, she was able to carefully navigate the potential pitfalls of the case, which ended with a narrative conclusion rather than one of unlawful killing.

She is also currently seconded part-time to Barts Health NHS Trust. With Barts she has been involved in the inquest process at all stages, including representing the Trust at inquests and pre-inquest review hearings.

Whilst her time at the Trust has given her experience in representing public bodies at inquests, Rhia welcomes instructions from all types of interested persons, including families of the deceased. She is able to advise concisely and sensitively on a broad range of issues. She has a particular interest in hearings where there is some overlap with criminal proceedings or other aspects of the criminal justice system, such as deaths in prison.

Crime

Rhia spent the first 4 years of her career practising exclusively at the Criminal Bar. She is an experienced trial advocate who is able to cross-examine witnesses robustly. She builds a strong rapport with both her lay and professional clients and she is able to advise in a manner that is easy to understand.

Birmingham

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She is particularly experienced in cases involving violence, drugs, and sexual offences.

Notable Cases

R v LB

Defendant acquitted of S20 Grievous Bodily Harm after a successful submission of no case to answer. The issue related to identification evidence.

R v ME

Defendant acquitted of Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm after a 4-day trial. The jury had heard evidence from the complainant and 3 eyewitnesses.

R v AB

Defendant acquitted of PWITS Class A after submissions were made to the jury regarding the definition of 'possession'.

R v BH

Defendant acquitted of 2 counts of Sexual Assault where the issue was reasonable belief in consent.

Prison & Police Law

Rhia appears regularly in front of the Parole Board. She has a strong grasp of the relevant case law and procedure, as well as the human rights considerations involved. She has amassed a lot of experience representing IPP prisoners and is skilled at navigating the particular issues involved.

Rhia is also keen to develop her practice and undertake actions against the police. She has significant experience cross-examining police officers from her criminal defence practice, and she also has a solid understanding of PACE codes of conduct.

Court of Protection

Rhia's ongoing part-time secondment with Barts Health NHS Trust will give her an insight into Court of Protection considerations within the hospital setting. She has also shadowed a broad range of COP hearings within chambers and looks forward to expanding her practice into this area.

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Education

Rhia has experience of Section B, F and I appeals as well as Refusal to Issue appeals in front of the SEND Tribunal. She frequently represents families and the Local Authority. She is able to work sensitively towards resolution for the child or young person involved.

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