

Sharon Bahia

Call: 2000

"Sharon is a very able advocate, always on top of her case, and excellent at cross-examination and submissions."

Legal 500 2023 Professional Disciplinary Law



Sharon Bahia is a strong criminal practitioner, who both defends and prosecutes in equal measure.

Sharon spent her first 10 years of practice on the then Wales and Chester Circuit.

Expertise

Crime

Instructions regularly involve a range of offences, including serious sexual assaults, multiple rapes, historic sexual abuse, people trafficking, armed robbery and death by dangerous driving.

She has appeared as both junior and lead counsel in enquiries involving care homes, drug and people trafficking and gang violence.

Over the past eight years, her practice has extended into police disciplinary matters, following representing officers on a private basis in Crown Court proceedings.

Serious Sexual Offences

Sharon has prosecuted and defended in serious sexual offences matters, ranging from date and marital rape to historic sexual abuse cases. Such cases often involve multiple complainants and the cross-examination of young and vulnerable witnesses. Her experience in this area led to her being instructed off-circuit [at Manchester Crown Court], as a leading junior in *Negloveanu*. This case involved a 33 count indictment, containing multiple offences of people trafficking, rape, violence and conspiracies to pervert the course of justice upon 6 young Romanian women.

She has also prosecuted and defended cases allegations of a defendant abusing their position by committing sexual offences with a child. Recently, she argued successfully in the Court Of Appeal, that 'sexting' through BBM messaging ought to be treated in an

Birmingham

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entirely different manner, leading to a reduction in sentence from an 18-month immediate custodial sentence to a suspended period of 9 months imprisonment.

On a variety of occasions, she has both prosecuted and defended in cases concerning the possession and distribution of indecent images, ranging from levels 1 to 5.

Restraint and Confiscation

Sharon has conducted complicated confiscation hearings in cases of Drug Trafficking, money laundering, dishonesty conspiracies and substantial benefit fraud. She has been involved in contested restraint applications, pre and post charge, from the first appearance in the Magistrates' Court to subsequent appeals.

Police Work

Initially, by representing police officers in the Crown Court and Magistrates' Court alike, Sharon's practice naturally incorporated representation at internal disciplinary level.

Cases that she has appeared in have ranged from officers accepting 'Gross Misconduct' [but still managing to keep their job] to successfully defending contested hearings, involving numerous honesty and integrity allegations. She has now gained the confidence of numerous Police Federation representatives within the West Midlands Federation, often making her their counsel of choice.

During the last 8 years she has also represented police officers in the Crown Court who have been charged with all manner of criminal offences, including dangerous driving, rape, sexual assault on a child under 13, assault occasioning actual bodily harm and theft.

Regulatory

Sharon practices the following areas:

Misconduct & Compliance

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Awards



Memberships

- CBA
- Midland Circuit

Qualifications

- University of Wolverhampton – 2:1 LLB (Hons)
- BVC Cardiff: Very Competent

Notable Cases

Operation Harris

junior counsel in a 33 count indictment, abuse of Kenyan Street children by British defendant posing as a charity worker.

Operation Coughar

junior counsel in various drug conspiracies involving undercover police officers

R v Bogdan Negloveanu

Leading counsel for the defence, people trafficking case, 6 Romanian Complainants, 33 counts.

R v Heaton

Prosecution counsel in death by careless driving whilst over the prescribed limit. Issue in the case concerned technical expert evidence re: back calculation.

Operation Jasmin

junior defence counsel in 10 defendant care home enquiry, allegations of willful neglect.

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Operation Alabaster

junior counsel for the prosecution, 6 Somali defendants involved in street fight with Jamaican men, culminating in offences of attempted murder, GBH and witness intimidation.

R v Prosser

prosecution counsel in historical (1970's) sexual abuse upon step-daughter, including 8 rapes, and recent allegations of sexual assault upon granddaughter.

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