



Ed Butler

Year of call: 2007

Having completed pupillage and initially practiced from Chambers in London, Ed worked for a firm of criminal defence solicitors in the West London/ Thames Valley areas for 11 years. Since joining Chambers in 2021 Ed has continued to develop his practice, appearing in serious and complex cases as both a led junior and a leading junior. His practice now includes both prosecution (including RASSO) and defence work throughout London and the South East. He has more than 15 years of experience at the bar during which he has defended in many serious, complex and high-profile cases in both the Crown Court and the Court of Appeal.

Ed is an approachable and diligent advocate. He works hard to master the detail of a case, and adopts a collaborative approach with lay and professional client alike so that he fully understands the details of his client's case before entering Court.

Current/recent instructions include cases of homicide, terrorism, serious sexual offences and serious organised crime.

Ed has particular expertise representing clients charged with serious sexual offences against both adults and children, and is experienced in dealing with young and vulnerable witnesses. In 2017 he was approved as a facilitator for vulnerable witness training by the South Eastern Circuit.

Recent Work

In 2024 Ed was instructed as leading junior Counsel before the Recorder of London in a high-profile terrorism trial at the Central Criminal Court. Following a 5-week trial Ed's client was acquitted of all but the least serious count on the indictment, for which she ultimately received a community order.

In 2025, Ed (led junior) represented the first defendant in the trial arising from the arson attack of a warehouse distributing satellite equipment to Ukraine on behalf of the Wagner group of mercenaries acting on behalf of the Russian

state. This was the first prosecution of its kind to include offences contrary to the National Security Act.

Ed recently concluded the trial of a young defendant charged with two counts of causing death by dangerous driving. The case arose from a multi-vehicle and multi-stage collision on the M40 in which two people sadly lost their lives. The issues in the case were both causation and the standard of driving. Ed's client was convicted of simple careless driving and fined £600 with 6 penalty points.

In July 2026 Ed defended a 17-year-old defendant charged with the manslaughter of an 82-year old man who was pushed over following an altercation outside a shop in Slough. The defendant was 16 years old at the time. Following a trial the defendant was unanimously acquitted

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyvng81e38o;](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyvng81e38o;https://www.windsorexpress.co.uk/news/crime--courts-and-inquests/708166/closing-arguments-in-slough-teen-s-manslaughter-trial-for-fatal-push-on-pensioner.html?flip=true)

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Appellate work

Significant appellate work has included appearing for the appellant in the major reported decision in *R v Wangige* [2020] EWCA Crim 1319, in which a conviction for causing death by dangerous driving was quashed on the basis that the prosecution should have been stayed as an abuse of process. In 2018 Ed was also instructed post-conviction to advise and represent a client on an appeal against conviction on the basis of errors by his previous legal team. The conviction was quashed, and the defendant was acquitted at the subsequent re-trial.

Ed also appeared as junior Counsel in 2018 in which a conviction for manslaughter was quashed as a result of the wrongful admission of bad character evidence against the defendant.

In July 2026 Ed appeared before the King's Bench Division of the High Court and successfully resisted an application for a voluntary bill of indictment in an allegation of causing death by careless driving. The charge had been dismissed in 2024 after a Judge at the Central Criminal Court had found that there was insufficient evidence that the incident had happened in a public place. In 2026 the prosecution sought to reinstate proceedings on the basis that the Judge had made a basic error of law and on the basis of further evidence. The application was refused on the basis that the Judge had

correctly applied the law and that the delays in obtaining and presenting the new evidence were such that it was not in the interests of justice to allow the application (*R v McCann* [2026] EWHC 1795 (KB)).

Legal 500 2024: *“Ed is hard-working, super intelligent, and has an excellent grasp of the law and evidence.”*

Legal 500 2025: *“He is a persuasive and charming advocate and handles sensitive cases with skill and assurance.”*

Other

Ed is co-chair of Chambers’ pupillage committee and is a registered pupil supervisor. He regularly takes on pupils and enjoys a collaborative working relationship with them.

Away from work, Ed is a keen amateur footballer, cricketer and musician, and is a lover of foreign travel.

Appointments

Recorder (South East-Circuit) – 2020.

Homicide

R v MF – Central Criminal Court 2013 – Two-handed murder and attempted murder (led junior).

R v AI – Central Criminal Court 2015 – Murder of wife by husband (led junior).

R v WS – Central Criminal Court 2016 – Seven-handed murder, wounding with intent (led junior, 8-week trial).

R v SK – Reading Crown Court 2015 – Attempted murder by doorstep shooting (junior alone).

R v TB – Reading Crown Court 2015 – Attempted murder by stabbing, defendant 16 year-old schoolgirl (junior alone).

R v JP – Reading Crown Court 2015 – Attempted murder by stabbing, defendant 17 years old (junior alone).

R v HM – Central Criminal Court 2016 – Four handed attempted murder by stabbing (junior alone).

R v JS – Reading Crown Court 2017 – Murder (junior alone, plea to diminished responsibility).

R v KN – Luton Crown Court 2017 – Four-handed murder, defendant 17 years old (led junior).

R v DC – Isleworth Crown Court 2018 – Four-handed conspiracy to murder, kidnap and falsely imprison (junior alone, first on the indictment).

R v SA – Guildford Crown Court 2019 – Three-handed attempted murder (junior alone, first on the indictment).

R v WC – Central Criminal Court 2020 – Attempted murder of wife by husband (junior alone)

R v AAM – Central Criminal Court 2021 to 2024 – Murder by shooting between rival drug dealers. Three trials, the second of which was abandoned when the a co-defendant procured a false statement from a prison officer purporting to support his case (led junior)

R v DQ – Warwick Crown Court 2025 – Double death by dangerous driving where causation major issue. Conviction for simple careless driving led to fine and 6 penalty points.

R v YM – Reading Crown Court 2026 – 17 year old defendant (16 at the time) acquitted of manslaughter of an 82-year-old man who was pushed over during an altercation outside a shop, and suffered a traumatic brain injury (leading junior)

Serious sexual offences

R v KL – Guildford Crown Court 2012 – Alleged offending against two complainants by taxi driver.

R v MT – Reading Crown Court 2013 – Multiple allegations of historic child-rape.

R v JS – Reading Crown Court 2014 – Campaign of familial rape.

R v DD – Kingston-upon-Thames Crown Court 2014 – Alleged campaign of indecent assault and rape over an 8-year period.

R v GW – Reading Crown Court 2015 – Alleged two-handed rape, client 17 years old at the time.

R v RH – Isleworth Crown Court 2015 – Alleged historic rape and other offences by step-brother.

R v SC – Guildford Crown Court 2016 – Alleged rape of 8-year-old.

R v JA – Reading Crown Court 2017 – Alleged historic campaign of familial rape.

R v JH – Reading Crown Court 2017 – Alleged historic campaign of abuse by café owner against schoolboy.

R v ZF – Reading Crown Court 2017 – Large scale familial sex abuse case. Six complainants, four defendants, in excess of 10,000 pages of unused material covering 25 years of family proceedings and social services involvement (led junior, ten-week trial).

R v AC – Reading Crown Court 2017 – Alleged sexual abuse (including rape) of three un-related child complainants.

R v LR – Isleworth Crown Court 2018 – Historic sexual offences against two complainants dating from 1970s.

R v TG – Reading Crown Court 2020 – Sexual offences, including rape, within the family.

R v JS – Isleworth Crown Court 2021 – Sexual activity with a person with a mental disorder, where complainant suffered from mixed dementia and the case turned on significant expert evidence concerning mental capacity.

R v RA – Guildford Crown Court 2023 – Alleged sexual assaults by a nurse-practitioner against three patients in the context of inappropriate examinations.

R v MD – Guildford Crown Court 2023 – Sexual assault of a child under 13, causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity (section 28 case);

R v JK – Winchester Crown Court 2024 – Assault by penetration of a child under 13, sexual assault of a child under 13 (section 28 case);

R v AB – Harrow Crown Court 2025 – Historic sexual abuse between half-siblings, dating back to the 1970s/1980s. Two trials after the first jury could not agree on verdicts, mixed verdicts at the re-trial.

R v AS – Woolwich Crown Court 2026 – Historic sexual abuse by a martial arts instructor, where the mother of the complainant was said to have been involved in the abuse and, having pleaded guilty, was called as a prosecution witness.

Serious organised / Complex crime

R v RB – Reading Crown Court 2012 – Importation of commercial quantities of ketamine.

R v AC – Kingston-upon-Thames Crown Court 2012 – Fraud by finance director against company using four mechanisms and accounting techniques.

R v LF – Winchester Crown Court 2013 – Conspiracy to commit cash in transit robberies by professional gang (six-week trial).

R v OM – Southwark Crown Court 2014 – Multi-million pound mortgage fraud by solicitor (contested confiscation hearing).

R v DF – Lewes Crown Court 2014 – Conspiracy to import cocaine from the U.S.A.

R v YU – Southwark Crown Court 2015 – Money laundering relating to the proceeds of a complex banking fraud.

R v HS – Maidstone Crown Court 2015 – International conspiracy to import class A, B and C drugs and evade cigarette duty.

R v SN – Isleworth Crown Court 2017 – Conspiracy to intimidate a witness.

R v RD – Croydon Crown Court 2019 – Six-handed kidnap and imprisonment of a 15-year-old boy by a county lines drug gang (six-week trial).

Terrorism

R v NB – Kingston Crown Court 2021 – Possession of documents likely to be of assistance to a person preparing or committing an act of terrorism.

R v DT – Central Criminal Court 2024 – Sunday School Teacher accused of disseminating terrorist material, teaching “Jihad” to children. Acquitted of all but one count for which she received a community order (leading junior).

R v NKM – Central Criminal Court 2025 – Aggravated arson said to be at the behest of the Wagner group of Russian Mercenaries (led junior).

Appellate Work

R v HM – Court of Appeal 2016 – A-G’s reference and cross-appeal against life sentence imposed for attempted murder (junior alone).

R v SD – Court of Appeal 2017 – 13 months imprisonment reduced to 9 months imprisonment (already served) for violent disorder arising out football hooliganism.

R v WS – Court of Appeal 2018 – Conviction for manslaughter quashed on the basis of the trial Judge wrongly admitting bad character evidence (led junior).

R v JL – Court of Appeal 2018 – Conviction for assault by penetration quashed on the basis of serious errors by previously instructed counsel at the original trial (junior alone – client acquitted at re-trial).

R v LR – Court of Appeal 2018 – Immediate sentence of imprisonment quashed and replaced with a suspended sentence for historical sexual offence.

R v JG – Court of Appeal 2018 – Extended sentence of imprisonment on the basis of a finding of “dangerousness” quashed and replaced with a determinate sentence for rape.

R v JS – Court of Appeal 2019 – 30 months’ imprisonment reduced to 16 months imprisonment (already served) for assisting an offender.

R v JW – Court of Appeal 2020 – Major reported decision where conviction for causing death by dangerous driving quashed. The Court held that the prosecution should have been stayed as an abuse of process on the basis of a principle similar to *autrefois acquit* where appellant already prosecuted for offences arising out of the same incident.

R v OCM – Court of Appeal 2025 – 68 months’ imprisonment reduced to 52 months’ imprisonment for child sexual offences and an unrelated offence of possessing a knife.

R v CM – King’s Bench Division 2026 – Successfully resisted an application for a voluntary bill of indictment for causing death by careless driving.