Daniel Higgins



Junior Counsel - Above 15 Years
CALLED 2003

"Excellent presence and presentation to the judge and jury, experienced - a good and sensitive cross-examiner."
LEGAL 500, 2027

Daniel is a criminal barrister with a formidable reputation, whether he's defending or prosecuting serious offences.

Daniel's analytical approach to cases, along with his approachable manner, together instil confidence in his clients. He has an engaging courtroom style – and his handling of witnesses, particularly experts or those with vulnerabilities, is exceptional.

When defending, Daniel appears in the most serious of cases, instructed in his own right in allegations of attempted murder, rape and other serious sexual offences (often committed against children), large scale drugs conspiracies and financial crimes. He is also led in allegations of murder and other serious offences.

Background and Expertise

Daniel is a Level 4 prosecutor on the CPS General Crime and Serious Crime Panels. He is regularly instructed by the Special Casework Unit, and prosecutes multi-handed cases concerning financial crime, wide-ranging and complex drugs conspiracies, serious violence

and sexual offences.

Daniel often appears in cases concerning allegations of serious and complex fraud, money laundering and other financial crimes. The evidence in these cases is often voluminous, but he is able to focus on issues and present evidence and arguments clearly and concisely. Before coming to the Bar, Daniel worked for a large financial organisation, developing guidelines for investment funds and operating compliance programmes. This gives him an insight into how such organisations work.

Daniel undertakes appeal work, often when instructed by people who have been represented by others at first instance. In the Court of Appeal, his success has resulted in convictions being quashed, and sentences reduced.

Although Daniel is most often engaged in serious and complex cases in the Crown Court, he understands the importance of every allegation to the client – and that has brought him considerable success in allegations of road traffic offences. These allegations are often a client's only experience of the court system, so it is vital that they have someone who understands their needs and can present their case in the best way.

Notable Cases

Drugs

R v MG, 2026

Daniel defended the 'banker' in an OCG, responsible for the importation, and onward distribution, of over 200 kilograms of cocaine. The head of the OCG ran the operation from outside the jurisdiction. The prosecution challenged the defendant's basis of plea, and, following a two-day 'Newton' hearing, Daniel was able to persuade the Judge that the defendant's role was less involved than alleged. Further, regarding confiscation proceedings, through comprehensive written submissions, Daniel was able to persuade the prosecution to accept a benefit figure in the region of £10,000 to reflect personal benefit rather than be part of the £4,000,000+ joint benefit.

Luton Crown Court

R v DN, 2025

Daniel defended the head of an OCG, responsible for the importation, and onward distribution, of circa 300 kilograms of cocaine. Daniel provided detailed and tailored advice before the defendant appeared in the Magistrates' Court, and written and oral submissions in the Crown Court, which

meant that the defendant, despite having been ‘at large’ for a number of years whilst proceedings continued and concluded against others involved in the drugs enterprise, received full credit for his pleas, despite the prosecution submitting that should not be the case.

Portsmouth Crown Court

R v FM and Others, 2023

Daniel acted as junior alone in a four-week trial concerning the supply into Sussex of Class A drugs by a London-based OCG. Daniel’s thorough analysis of telephone and CCTV evidence enabled him to minimise the impact of the prosecution evidence of his client’s association with alleged co-conspirators and allowed him to robustly challenge Police recognition evidence. His forensic scrutiny of observation logs allowed him to undermine extensive surveillance evidence. Daniel’s well-drafted written submissions, amplified by persuasive oral ones, led to the Crown’s bad character application being successfully opposed.

Lewes Crown Court

R v R and Others, 2023

Daniel led the prosecution in a four-week trial of a largescale Class A drugs operation, leading to the convictions of all but one of the five defendants. Daniel presented complex and voluminous expert cell-site evidence in a palatable form for the jury. He also fairly and efficiently dealt with tricky disclosure issues relating to Class A drug customers of the drugs line, as well as with modern slavery and duress defences relating to a juvenile defendant and a defendant with significant mental and physical health issues. Daniel’s thorough and clear presentation of the case received widescale praise.

Snaresbrook Crown Court

R v BS, 2021

Junior alone representing a defendant in a six week long, serious organised drugs conspiracy. Daniel’s defendant, the youngest in the conspiracy, claimed that he was a victim of Modern Slavery, which required a careful and detailed presentation of this defence, hampered by the absence of a positive conclusive grounds decision from the Single Competent Authority and in the face of significant documentary and prison intercept evidence.

Maidstone Crown Court

News report

R v NS, 2021

Junior alone representing a defendant in an eight week long, large-scale County Lines conspiracy. Following a detailed analysis of thousands of pages of telephone and other evidence, and extensive cross-examination of the Crown's drugs and cell-site experts, Daniel's defendant was acquitted.

Snaresbrook Crown Court

News report

R v L and others, 2019

Led junior in a five week long, highly sensitive and complex, prosecution trial of the rarely prosecuted offence of conspiracy to procure a miscarriage through the administration of a drug, before a High Court Judge. Complex legal issues had to be determined, such as the legal definition of 'miscarriage', and whether the mother was a 'victim' and therefore could not be a party to the conspiracy.

St Albans Crown Court

News report here

Operation Topanga, 2019

Led junior in a successful prosecution of over 20 defendants in an undercover Class A drug dealing operation, over a series of four trials, which was instigated following national media interest after members of the local community had sought to combat the issue.

Snaresbrook Crown Court

News report here

R v W & others, 2015 and 2016

Daniel, as led junior, was instructed by Special Casework Unit to prosecute large scale and complex multi-handed Class A drugs conspiracies.

Harrow Crown Court

Drugs

Driving

R v AJ, 2026

Daniel defended in a death by dangerous driving trial, which required extensive cross-examination of the prosecution expert, and advancement of carefully focused submissions to minimise culpability, leading to the imposition of a lower sentence. Daniel also successfully resisted an appeal on behalf of the Attorney-General in the Court of Appeal, which meant that the sentence of 4 ½ years was unaltered.

Luton Crown Court and Court of Appeal

Read more on BBC News

R v SP, 2026

Daniel defended in a death by careless whilst over the prescribed limit driving trial, where the defendant turned across a motorcyclist's path. Following comprehensive cross-examination by Daniel of the prosecution expert forensic collision expert witnesses, regarding distances, reaction times and driver perception, as well as a detailed defence presentation of audio-visual evidence relating to the standard of driving and opportunity for post-incident cannabis consumption, the defendant was acquitted.

Luton Crown Court

R v HU, 2026

Daniel is defending a driver in a death by careless driving whilst over the prescribed limit (trial in 2027), in which careful exploration of the cause of the fatal collision, standard of driving and drink-drive procedures will be pursued.

St. Albans Crown Court

R v MM, 2025

Daniel defended a Premier League footballer in respect of driving offences, and, following careful and focused mitigation, a lower than expected penalty was imposed.

Uxbridge Magistrates' Court

Read more on GBNews

R v MMcM, 2024

Daniel defended a driver in proceedings, in which the prosecution had initiated a perverting the course of justice charge in respect of the nomination of a driver for a speeding offence. Daniel managed to persuade the prosecution to accept a plea to the speeding offence, resulting in just penalty point and a modest financial penalty being imposed.

Bath Magistrates' Court

Driving

Financial Crime

R v AA, 2025

Daniel defended in circa £1m fraudulent trading proceedings, in which it was alleged that the defendant, with others, defrauded a large number of elderly and vulnerable consumers by cold-calling them and giving the impression they were representing "the Gas Board". Following tenacious representations, Daniel persuaded the prosecution to accept a plea to a lesser offence, not involving dishonesty, and the defendant did not receive a sentence of immediate imprisonment.

Croydon Crown Court

R v C & C, 2024

Daniel represented a husband and wife couple accused of fraudulent activity relating to VAT. Daniel provided detailed advice regarding the precise wording of written representations, which resulted in proceedings being discontinued by the CPS and HMRC against both defendants.

Southampton Magistrates' Court

R v HD, 2023

Daniel was junior alone in the successful prosecution of a defendant in a six-week complex fraud. As well as presenting expert voice recognition evidence, Daniel pulled together voluminous telephone evidence into a palatable and comprehensive package for the jury. Additionally, with a defendant who malingered and did everything within her means to try and de-rail the trial, Daniel ensured that proceedings remained effective, through the calling of medical expert evidence and initiating measures to enable the defendant to attend the trial remotely.

Wood Green Crown Court

Operation Bobcat, 2021-2022

Junior alone representing a defendant in an ongoing seven week long complex drug, firearms and money laundering trial. Daniel's defendant is accused of laundering over £1m cash in a safe in her own home, on behalf of the first defendant, during the Indictment period. The case has required a detailed analysis of the content of telephone messages between the defendant and others, EncroChat material, surveillance and visual footage.

Bristol Crown Court

News report

R v W, 2019

Successful prosecution as junior alone, of a police officer who defrauded the Metropolitan Police Service of over £100k, through the submission of forged/altered medical certificates. The Defence were relying upon the Defendant genuinely suffering from a condition known as Fibromyalgia, and therefore wasn't dishonest. Daniel had to cross-examine an expert rheumatologist in respect of this, and also clearly presented various strands of evidence to demonstrate that the Defendant was working actively in order to rebut Defence suggestions of immobility.

Southwark Crown Court

News report here

R v S, 2019

Junior alone representing 2nd defendant in a four week long complex money laundering conspiracy trial. Following extensive cross-examination by Daniel of the 1st defendant in a cut-throat defence, his client was acquitted whereas the 1st defendant and others were convicted.

St. Albans Crown Court

R v M & Others, 2016

Represented an alleged conspirator in a multi-handed £2.5 million international investment fraud. Following a four-week trial, DM was acquitted of the main allegation.

Southwark Crown Court

News story here

Financial Crime

Firearms

R v AF, 2023

Daniel, as junior alone, represented a defendant prosecuted in respect of possessing a loaded firearm with intent to endanger life. Daniel successfully ran the unusual, and difficult, defence of 'necessity' / 'duress of circumstances' and pursued this through a rigorous analysis of CCTV and Body Worn Camera footage. Daniel was also tenacious in his pursuit of disclosure of prison material in order to support the suggestion of threat to life, which his client stated he was suffering from, including evidence of a near-fatal stabbing whilst awaiting trial.

Inner London Crown Court

Firearms

General Crime

R v TM, Ongoing

Daniel is representing, as junior alone, the director of the Cat Survival Trust (a charity that homes non-domestic, 'big' cats such as snow leopards), who is accused of large-scale animal cruelty allegations and rarely prosecuted, breaches of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) regulations. This is a test-case for the legal concept of "commercial gain" within the context of those regulations.

Daniel will have to contend with numerous prosecution expert witnesses, including in zoological veterinary treatment and from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). The trial is estimated to last two weeks.

St Albans Crown Court

See new report on BBC News

Operation Cyclamen, 2021

Led junior in a successful prosecution of 12 defendants for the kidnapping and false imprisonment of a victim, who was taken to a number of different addresses during the course of the lengthy incident.

Crime

Immigration, Nationality and Asylum

R v C and Others, 2016

Junior to Abbas Lakha QC represented the defendant, who, along with others, was accused of conspiring to commit breaches of immigration law following an investigation by BBC Panorama. This involved over 800 foreign students, where visas to remain in the UK to study were fraudulently applied for. This was done through the obtaining of falsified educational qualifications and bank documents, and, in particular, through the use of fake or proxy sitters who would take English speaking exams on behalf of the students.

Southwark Crown Court

News story here

Immigration, Nationality and Asylum

Murder and Manslaughter

R v TW, 2021

Led junior in the successful defence at a re-trial of a defendant accused of attempted murder following the alleged revenge attack for an earlier murder. The case attracted media interest as a member of the defendant's group shot and killed himself when hitting a sawn-off shotgun against a vehicle. Daniel and his leader did not represent the defendant at the original trial, in which the defendant was convicted of certain offences, which undermined the then defence of non-presence. The jury were informed of that during the re-trial, and therefore the presentation of the defence case required considerable tactical decision-making.

Woolwich Crown Court

News report

R v C, 2018

Led junior in high profile six week trial involving the double attempted murder of wife, and endangerment of children, by means of (a) tampering with the domestic gas supply, and (b) tampering with the wife's parachute. Daniel had to undertake detailed and extensive cross examination of experts in gas fittings and tool-marks.

Winchester Crown Court

News story here

R v M and O, 2017

Prosecuted, as junior alone, two defendants accused of attempted murder of a victim who was seeking to assist with the removal of one of the defendant's possessions from a flat. He was struck over the head with a bottle and stabbed a number of times.

St Albans Crown Court

News story here

Murder and Manslaughter

Rape and Sexual Offences

R v WL, 2026

Daniel defended in a rape trial, concerning offending when the defendant – now aged 30 – was aged 13/14 and the victim aged 5. With focused and detailed written and oral mitigation, which comprehensively addressed the appropriate approach to a complicated sentencing exercise, Daniel was able to persuade the sentencing Court to impose a Community Order.

St. Albans Crown Court

R v IA, 2026

Daniel defended in a 2-week trial, in which it was alleged that the defendant committed various offences including rape against his estranged wife, who was a 16 year old bride following an arranged marriage. Daniel's careful and well-constructed cross-examination of the complainant, presentation of multiple text messages, photographs and visa and leave to remain rules/legislation, meant that a motive for false allegations was established and the defendant was acquitted of all counts.

St. Albans Crown Court

R v ZA, 2025

Daniel defended in a 2-week rape trial, concerning allegations from three unconnected victims. Following detailed representations relating to video footage of one of the incidents, Daniel persuaded the prosecution to discontinue that particular allegation. The trial involved careful and

sensitive cross-examination of the victims, who were all particularly vulnerable.

St. Albans Crown Court

R v MD, 2025

Daniel defended in an 11-day trial, in which it was alleged that the defendant, aged 50, raped and strangled the complainant, aged 20, whom he met answering an advert seeking help with maintenance work in her home. Following comprehensive cross-examination, which involved reference to various messages – only provided by the prosecution following tenacious and repeated disclosure requests by Daniel – and videos undermining the complainant's account, the defendant was acquitted of all rape and strangulation offences.

Luton Crown Court

R v AW, 2024

Daniel defended in a 2 week trial, in which the defendant was accused of historic child penetrative sexual offences, with two complainants. There were 100's of pages of disclosure, including diary entries and therapy notes relating to one of the complainants. Daniel was able to use various documents and photographic evidence to demonstrate that the memory of the complainants on various matters was not accurate, and thereby creating doubt as to their evidence relating to the alleged offences. The defendant was acquitted of all offences.

R v H, 2017

Successfully defended in trial involving allegations that the Defendant had carried out serious sexual offences against the younger sister of his (ex) partner. Daniel had to deal with extensive evidence against the defendant, which came from various witnesses of fact as well as electronic evidence, and he was praised by the Judge for his sensitive handling of the case.

St Albans Crown Court

R v G, 2016

Successful prosecution of a serving police officer sexually assaulting a female colleague whilst on duty.

Southwark Crown Court

News story here

Rape and Sexual Offences

Violence

R v A, 2017

Two week prosecution of defendant accused of an offence of causing grievous bodily harm with intent, on the basis that a police officer's leg was broken when it was alleged that the defendant was resisting arrest. Complex legal argument was engaged relating to issues which included the legality of arrest, causation, and recklessness.

St Albans Crown Court

R v B, 2017

Inner London Crown Court

News story here

Violence

Achievements

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- South Eastern Circuit

Appointments

- CPS Panel General Crime (Grade 4)
- CPS Panel Serious Crime (Grade 4)
- CPS Panel RASSO (Grade 4)
- Recorder (Crime) - 2023

Education

- BPP Professional Education
- Bar Vocational Course 2004

- BA in Law (Cantab)

Activities and Interests

- Daniel is an U11 rugby coach, and captains a cricket 1st XI side in the Surrey Championship.
- Daniel is an U15 rugby coach, and plays cricket and hockey.

Recognition

"Excellent presence and presentation to the judge and jury, experienced - a good and sensitive cross-examiner." **Legal 500, 2027**

"Daniel is a highly recommended, experienced counsel." **Chambers and Partners, 2027**

"Daniel's courtroom manner always hits the mark. He is respected by the judiciary, his co-counsel and opposing counsel. His legal arguments and tactical advice are outstanding." **Chambers and Partners, 2027**

"Daniel is very good - he's clever, organised and well prepared." **Chambers and Partners, 2027**

"Daniel has a calm confidence which clients welcome. A man of no bluster, he adopts a thoughtful, effective approach." **Chambers and Partners, 2027**

"Daniel is very hands on, always available and very committed to his cases." **Chambers and Partners, 2027**

"Makes very intellectual submissions. Calm under pressure." **Legal 500, 2026**

"Daniel Higgins got to grips with a very difficult case very quickly. His depth of grasp of evidence is very impressive." **Chambers and Partners, 2026**

"Daniel is the perfect advocate with impressive intellectual abilities but with the common touch." **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"His ability to understand the issues that require careful handling is outstanding. **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"Daniel has an approachable and reassuring style with clients as well as real attention to detail." **Legal 500, 2025**

"Daniel is the perfect advocate with impressive intellectual abilities but with the common touch." **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"Daniel is a hard-working and shrewd barrister. He has a good brain and is a persuasive advocate." **Legal 500, 2023**

"His ability to understand the issues that require careful handling is outstanding." **Chambers and Partners, 2023**

"Daniel is a hard-working and shrewd barrister. He has a good brain and is a persuasive advocate." **Legal 500, 2023**

"Daniel Higgins is an extremely impressive junior. He looks at cases from all angles and leaves the client feeling that they have had a first-class service. He gives his instructing solicitor confidence when leaving the client in his hands." **Chambers and Partners, 2021**

"Incisive in his cross-examination and fearless in his approach to judges." **Legal 500, 2020**

"He is clever, insightful and straight-talking, and an effective advocate." **Chambers and Partners, 2020**

"An extremely able and affable advocate." **Legal 500, 2018**