Justin Rouse KC

King's Counsel
CALLED 1982
SILK 2015

"Justin has a supreme ability in explaining the law and is a majestic advocate."
CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS, 2026

Justin Rouse KC is an experienced and committed criminal Silk specialising in defending and prosecuting those charged with homicide, white collar crime, serious sexual offences and armed robbery.

Justin has amassed substantial experience over a 40-year career both prosecuting and defending and as defence counsel is cited as a leading KC in Legal 500 and Chambers UK. He has advised Parliament on statutory drafting.

Although he is now principally instructed to defend in serious crime, and has developed a strong practice representing young defendants, he acquired some of his skills as a former RASSO certified and grade 4 level prosecutor instructed in serious sex offences, heavyweight crime and complex fraud. He prosecuted the largest trial in the country to be staged under COVID conditions whilst leading Katrina Charles of 9BR Chambers against 14 defence counsel, resulting in murder convictions.

He is currently prosecuting an Encrochat murder trial. He is regularly selected to defend in private sex cases with a strong success rate - winning all such cases in the last 3 years.

His forces background gives him unbridled insight when defending in Courts Martial cases. He has represented forces personnel and police officers across the UK and in Germany on serious offences including rape and grievous bodily harm with an outstanding success rate. He is also privately briefed in cases involving field sports and animal welfare allegations.

In addition to appearing in the Crown Court, Justin can be instructed to appeal a decision to the Court of Appeal and can advise both orally and in writing upon the prospects for success.

He is authorised to receive instructions directly from the public in private cases.

Notable Cases

General Crime

R v H 2018

Defending: Defended gamekeeper accused of unlawfully killing peregrine falcons. Series of submissions relating to trespass, data protection, breaches of PACE codes, breach of RIPA requirements and unlawful search resulted in all charges being dismissed. Justin was instructed by Timothy Ryan of Warners Solicitors.

R v M and C, 2018

Defending: Defended 2 hunt employees facing criminal accusations made by hunt saboteurs. Submissions on entrapment, self defence, prevention of crime (s.3 CLA), data protection breaches, perverting the course of justice. Prosecution were compelled to make further disclosure resulting in their having to abandon the prosecution. Acquittal. Justin was instructed by Tim Ryan of Warners Solicitors.

Crime

Financial Crime

R v CM, 2018

Defending: VHCC fraud involving the Government apprenticeship scheme. Nationwide operation defrauding colleges and the government scheme across Britain. Justin was instructed by Abigail Ashford of Reeds Solicitors.

Southwark Crown Court

R v B and others, 2017

Defending: Allegations of conspiracy to defraud the public – by high-profile limousine company, whose clients include X-Factor stars, royal family and international celebrities. Acting for principal shareholder. Justin was instructed by Lachlan Nisbet of Brabners Solicitors.

Chester Crown Court

R v H, 2016

Defending: Defended £100 million carousel fraud case, including cross-border issues, complex technical material and cross-examination of expert witnesses. Trial lasted 5 months.

Financial Crime

Murder and Manslaughter

R v P & S, 2023

Prosecuting Encrochat assassination. Complex issues of telephone, ballistic, cellsite and vehicle evidence.

R v G, 2023

Defending teenager in knife murder allegation. Dealing with cut throat defences and arguing admissibility of hearsay and analysis of CCTV footage, thereby introducing a new suspect.

R v Ap, 2023

Historic murder. Defending at CCC. Dealing with developments in DNA, resulting in the identification of the D as responsible for the death of a woman in the 1970's. Acquitted of murder.

R v P, 2023

Defending murder: defending man accused of killing his abusive father in the street, during a family visit.

R v SM, 2022

Prosecuting: Prosecuted a homicide in a psychiatric unit requiring the coordination by counsel of the investigation to ensure that full medical, forensic and psychiatric evidence was collated and adduced in the strongest light. Defendant then changed plea to guilty. Justin was instructed by the CPS.

R v L and others 2021

Justin prosecuted against 14 defence counsel in a multi-handed murder. It involved DNA, identification, telephone cell site evidence and complex pathology issues. Woolwich Crown Court.

See article here

R v R and others, 2020-2021

Prosecuting: Led Katrina Charles in prosecuting the largest criminal trial staged under Covid conditions prosecuting a multi-defendant trial involving gang murder of teenager. Youngest defendant was 14 at time of offence. Convictions for murder, manslaughter and knife offences followed. Woolwich Crown Court. Justin was instructed by the CPS.

News report here

R v M, 2020

Defending: The defendant killed his brother following an argument over a will. He admitted the killing to police attending the scene and pleaded guilty. Although there was no psychiatric evidence to support the defendant, it was argued that the Court should accept that there were exceptional circumstances to the case. Resolution of the issues involved a Newton Hearing. The resulting sentence, although favourable, was then appealed. The Court of Appeal accepted the submissions made and the sentence was substantially reduced for the defendant. Justin was instructed by Nick Seeley of Lawtons Solicitors.

R v H, 2019

Defending: Defended a cutthroat murder trial involving two defendants charged with killing a drug dealer. Case required strong cross-examination of co-defendant, the prosecution witnesses and police. Issues of law on joint enterprise, bad character and disclosure. Birmingham Crown Court. Justin was instructed by Nayan Patel of JD Solicitors.

R v T, 2019

Defending: On his way home from a night out, it was alleged that the defendant (a man in middle age of good character) encountered the victim. There was an argument and the defendant went home, armed himself and then returned to the scene to kill the victim. The case involved substantial CCTV analysis, forensic evidence and particularly delicate client management. Justin was instructed by Ravi Dev of JD Solicitors.

Birmingham Crown Court

R v P, 2019

Defending: Led Simon Stirling in nationally reported murder of victim on a Guildford commuter train in front of his son. Psychiatric, diminished and manslaughter loss of control complications. Admissibility issues: data, previous character and vulnerable witness ABEs. Central Crown Court. Justin was instructed by Helen Snell of Murrays Partnership.

News report here

R v TC and others, 2019

Defending: Successfully defended a youth accused of the Clapham South station murder. The defendant, who admitted carrying a hunting knife to the scene before giving it to his co-defendant, was acquitted of murder and manslaughter. Central Criminal Court. Justin was instructed by Olukayode Okenla of Simon Bethel & Co Solicitors.

News report here

R v C, 2019

Defending: Defendant faced murder charge for stabbing his aunt. Found guilty of manslaughter through diminished responsibility. Justin was instructed by Nadia- Jade Semlali of Kaim Todner Solicitors.

Blackfriars Crown Court

News report here

R v TG, 2018

Defending: Defended a 14 year old boy charged with 4 co-defendants in a gang related murder. Cut throat defences run by all defendants. Issues of causation, telephone data analysis and expert evidence on image analysis. Justin was instructed by Paul Millan of Noble Solicitors.

St. Albans Crown Court

R v NS, 2018

Defending: Adult son stabbed mother to death during psychotic episode. Psychiatric and forensic expert evidence. Justin was instructed by Kate Lyon of Taylor Street Solicitors

Guildford Crown Court

R v MZ, 2018

Defending: Defended an 18 year old charged with involvement in gang drugs related murder and violent disorder. Issues of forensic evidence, telephone material and joint enterprise. Acquitted of murder. Justin was instructed by Libi Adek of McMillan Williams Solicitors.

Central Criminal Court

R v R, 2017

Defending: Charges of murder and manslaughter. Successful acquittal of husband who admitted killing his wife by cutting her throat during an argument. Cross-examination of 5 experts. Justin was instructed by Kate Lyon of Taylor Street Solicitors.

Press reports:

Daily Mail

The Sun

The BBC

R v N, 2017

Prosecuting: Two men who shot and killed a teenager. Verdicts: both guilty of murder. Made the subject of Channel 4 documentary "Catching A Killer". Justin was instructed by the CPS.

News story here

Appeal of Popovs, 2016

Prosecuting: Instructed to represent the Crown in the Court of Appeal on a murder trial involving the killing of a son in front of his mother. Issues of fresh evidence, errors in the Summing Up and conduct of counsel. All grounds and sentence appeal successfully opposed. Justin was instructed by the CPS.

R v M and others, 2016

Defending: Murder trial with aggravated burglary. The defendant, with an organised gang, smashed their way into a home and violently assaulted a couple before going on to kill. Complex DNA, telephone material and identification issues were argued. Justin was instructed by Lorraine Brown of

Geoff White Solicitors.

Maidstone Crown Court

R v S and others, 2016

Defending: Only one of five defendants to be acquitted of gangland murder, arising from a drugs feud and involving numerous guns and the shooting of rival. Issues around firearms expertise, telephone evidence and cut-throat defences. Justin was instructed by Lorraine Brown of Geoff White Solicitors.

Sheffield Crown Court

News story here

Murder and Manslaughter

Rape and Sexual Offences

R v GG, 2023

Privately instructed to defend an historic sexual abuse case relating to young complainant. Sensitive cross wxamination required. This entailed a mastery of complex defence involving deployment of voluminous material of exculpatory nature. Acquitted.

Swindon Crown Court

R v A, 2023

Private serious sex case, sensitive cross examination of vulnerable complainant about allegation of assault during lockdown.

R v RH, 2018

Defending: Historic rape case involving a teacher and a 5 year old boy. Abuse said to have continued for 5 years. Required very sensitive cross examination. Acquitted. Justin was instructed by Nick Seeley of Lawtons Solicitors.

Southwark Crown Court

R v M, 2016

Defending: At Harrow Crown Court, successfully defended the only Operation Yewtree jury trial to end

in acquittal. BBC staff member accused of historic sexual assault of subordinate over an entire year. Sensitive press and professional issues surrounding the client's subsequent employment discretely managed. Justin was instructed by Carlton Cabral of Carlton Cabral Solicitors.

BBC article here

R v J, 2016

Defending: High-profile allegation of rape against two former military police officers, said to have raped a female colleague in Germany. Legal argument was mounted to exclude a video interview with the complainant, because she had committed suicide and could not be cross-examined. Case also involved jurisdictional issues. Justin was instructed by Taylor Street Solicitors.

Bulford Court Martial Centre

News story here

R v D

Successfully defended the defendant with an allegation of serious historic sexual malfeasance with 3 stepchildren.

Oxford Crown Court

Rape and Sexual Offences

Achievements

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- BASC

Associated Work

- Sits in the Crown Court as a Recorder. Licenced to try appeals and serious sexual offences.

Appointments

- Recorder

Education

- Inns of Court School of Law (Bar finals)
- BA(Hons) in Law, London
- Winner of the Lord Denning Mansfield Cup for mooting
- Ryde School

Recognition

"A fine advocate and a very experienced lawyer who has an excellent manner with clients, especially when they are in a distressed state. He goes the extra mile, and gives very speedy responses to any queries raised." **Chambers and Partners, 2021**

"Justin is a class act who inspires confidence in his clients (lay and professional), jury and judge." **Legal 500, 2023**

"A great jury advocate with a nice manner, who instils confidence. He's an incredibly experienced orator." **Chambers and Partners, 2023**

"Justin is a true powerhouse silk. He is a superb advocate and he inspires confidence brought about by meticulous preparation. He is also a pleasure to work with." **Legal 500, 2024**

"Justin is a great advocate and strategist." **Chambers and Partners, 2024**

"He's articulate, engaging and someone that all peers and those who work with him admire." **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"He's got a beautiful manner with the jury; he's articulate, engaging and someone that all peers and those who work with him admire." **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"Justin is thorough and efficient." **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

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"Justin is an excellent lawyer. He is meticulous in his preparation and is able to assimilate complex facts and detail quickly." **Legal 500, 2025**

"Justin is thorough and efficient." **Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"He has a commanding presence in court and is well respected by the judiciary and his legal peers." **Legal 500, 2025**

Activities and Interests

- Travel
- Wines
- Diving
- Motor biking
- Reading