



According to the Legal 500, in which he is ranked as a leading Silk in criminal fraud, Alistair “offers clear, responsive advice in the most complex situations”.

In Chambers Guide, 2011, he is described as "an eloquent, courageous and highly strategic advocate with plenty of energy." He is judged by Chambers to be Band 1 counsel in relation to fraud.

His fraud practice is exclusively defence orientated and has included advising and representing clients in SFO fraudulent trading, counterfeiting, duty diversion (he represented the leading defendant in R v Awan & others – the leading “London City Bond case”), tax evasion, MTIC fraud and numerous VAT fraud cases, including the lead defendant in the largest and most complex VAT contra-trading fraud yet to be brought in the UK.

He is currently instructed to defend: the former FD of a major software company in a case in which the FSA allege misleading statements to the market; an accountant charged with conspiracy to cheat the Revenue; a company director charged with a similar offence.

Alistair recently successfully defended the principal defendant in a case in which the SFO alleged market rigging in the generic drugs industry. It is believed to be the most complex case of this type ever prosecuted and involved policy, political, legal and economic issues. The SFO case collapsed after litigation up to the House of Lords. Lesley Burrows, senior partner of Burrows Bussin, leading commercial fraud specialists, instructed Alistair. She says:

“In the Pharmaceuticals Case, where Mr. Webster acted for the first defendant, he rightly consolidated his position in the top flight of commercial fraud silks. He is an outstanding lawyer, an eloquent, brave and effective advocate and a first class strategist and tactician. His ability to gain the trust and confidence of his client through his willingness to listen and clear, responsive advice in even the most complex situations is unparalleled”.

Following the acquittal of his client, he took over the conduct of the civil proceedings which resulted in an advantageous resolution of the case.

Recent successes include the acquittal of a senior solicitor charged with money laundering, a conveyancer charged with fraud, and a company director investigated for alleged false statements to the market in relation to a flotation on AIM, during the course of which he successfully challenged an otherwise highly damaging restraint order. He also successfully completed the negotiation of a proceeds of crime settlement in the Aleef Newsagents case which enabled the company to continue trading.

He has recently led the successful challenge to the arrest and search of a prominent fraud solicitor.

His approach is to find the best solution to the problem facing each client. He says, “*Every case is different and requires a different approach. For some clients, the best resolution is to seek an early compromise so as to minimize the financial and reputational damage likely to occur. For others, it is to go on the offensive, challenging delay by the investigating authorities and taking an aggressive stance. Whatever turns out to be the best course to follow, it is essential to be proactive.*”

Alistair lectures on various aspects of fraud and regulatory work including competition law and bribery.

Regulatory work

Alistair has advised Solicitors upon their diverse duties and liabilities and advised the HSE and CPS Complex Case Unit in relation to a number of serious cases including the prosecution of various professionals for manslaughter.

Alistair advises the Professional Cricketers Association and the League Managers Association

Complex Crime

Since taking Silk in 1995 Alistair Webster QC has been involved in an impressive number of leading cases in most areas of heavy crime, both prosecuting and defending. He has successfully defended in various alleged professional killings, including the murders of Chris Little and William Webb.