

"Offers clear, responsive advice in the most complex situations" 'Meticulous in preparation and a subtle and effective advocate'

Legal 500

" An outstanding lawyer, an eloquent, brave and effective advocate and a first class strategist and tactician."



APPOINTMENTS

Honorary Secretary Northern Circuit 1987–1993

Assistant Recorder 1991

Recorder 1995

Queen's Counsel 1995

Bencher (Middle Temple) 2004

Criminal Bar Association

Honorary Legal Advisor to the Professional Cricketer's Association and League Managers' Association

LICENSED FOR DIRECT ACCESS

Since taking silk in 1995, Alistair has built up a formidable reputation as both a highly effective trial advocate, and also as a man whose ability to master complex and difficult situations and to provide authoritative advice in situations where commerce and regulations and the law provide acute problems for those in the commercial world, whether under a regulatory regime or under the criminal law.

Recent matters with which he has been concerned include:

- Advising and representing a former director of a listed company, leading to the discharge of a significant restraint order initially obtained by the SFO.
- Successfully defending a solicitor charged with money laundering.
- Advising in relation to proceedings against HMRC arising out of misconduct in relation to the obtaining of and conduct of a receivership order.
- Advising a former Young Entrepreneur of the Year in relation to an enquiry by SFO.
- Successful defence of the lead defendant in the **KENT PHARMACEUTICALS** case. This case involved allegations by the SFO in relation to alleged market rigging in the pharmaceuticals case and was one of the most complex prosecutions brought by the SFO.
- Defence of one of the three directors in one of the largest Revenue prosecutions brought to date.
- Defence of the lead defendant in Operation Inertia, a £120 million contratrading fraud.
- Defence of the lead defendant in the Cumbria waste management case.
- Defence of a lawyer charged with conveyancing fraud.

Earlier fraud cases included representing the lead defendant in R v Awan, the case relating LCB which led to a judicial enquiry, and Operation Venison (MTIC prosecution ended as an abuse of process).

Alistair is currently preparing for the trial of the FD of a former FTSE 250 company in an FSA prosecution alleging false statements made to the market (iSOFT).

Of these aspects of his practice, he says, “ *It is the important first step to identify exactly what a client wants to achieve. The next step is to advise as to whether or not the desired objective is obtainable and then how to set about obtaining it. If it’s not possible, or unlikely, then it is often a matter of damage limitation. For example, in two recent cases, recognition that the best outcome was to negotiate deals in relation to the basis upon which the prosecution would proceed and significantly to limit the consequential confiscation orders led to outcomes which were far less damaging than might otherwise be the case.* ”

Effective early advice leads to the best outcomes.

He says that this is particularly relevant to companies considering how to deal with the new **bribery** legislation. The vicarious liability provisions mean that there is good sense in taking early advice as to the robustness of systems necessary to protect against criminal liability.

As mentioned above, Alistair has recently successfully defended the case in which the SFO alleged market rigging in the generic drugs industry. It is believed to have been the most complex case of this type ever prosecuted and involved policy, political, legal and economic issues. 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*”.

He has given well received lectures on various aspects of fraud and regulatory work including competition law and bribery. He is used to dealing with highly complex evidence and has drafted complex arguments on abuse of process etc

Alistair is also a member of 33, Chancery Lane, London, the chambers of Andrew Mitchell Q.C.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Alistair has advised the HSE and CPS Complex Case Unit in relation to a number of serious cases including the prosecution of various professionals for manslaughter. Leading cases include,

Operation Legion (7 charges of manslaughter and HSWA offences arising out of the Legionnaire’s Disease outbreak in Barrow)

Ellis (Teacher who was found guilty of manslaughter)

R v Warren (successful defence of a “sand-yachter” who was charged with manslaughter)

Prosecution of Welsh Water in relation to outbreak of cryptosporidium.

Defence of companies in relation to: legionella outbreak; motorway traffic management.

CRIME

Numerous murder cases for both the prosecution and defence. He has recently been instructed by the Crown in high-profile and difficult cases most notably,

R v Adetoro & others (M61 gunmen)

R v Park (“The Lady in the Lake”)

R v Dickinson (the longest and most complex single defendant murder case tried on the Northern Circuit)

R v Crilly & others (BBC TV “Anatomy of a Crime” documentary)

R v Hamer (prosecution of the murdered of 11-year old Joe Geeling)

R v Connor & others (multiple murders of a family burned to death in their own house)

R v Bamford (murder of British woman in Zimbabwe)

NOTABLE CASES

DEFENCE CASES INCLUDE

R v Doheny (the leading case on DNA evidence)

Various alleged professional killings including the murders of Chris Little and William Webb (both acquitted)

Money laundering

Drugs conspiracies

RECENT CASES INCLUDE

R v Carter (gang related shootings in Birmingham)

R v Azam (alleged racial revenge murder in Birmingham)

R v Cottage (BNP candidate charged with conspiracy to cause explosions)

R v Thompson (successful challenge to conviction for murder. Birmingham)

R v Eduardo (successful defence of allegation of police shooting)

EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL

The Hulme Grammar School, Oldham

Brasenose College, Oxford (B.A. Hons Jurisprudence)

Middle Temple, 1976

Alistair Webster is approachable and unstuffy with the ability to see the good points in a case and to marshal arguments accordingly. He has been described by one leading commercial fraud specialist as "the perfect Silk".

Alistair Webster will accept occasional instructions in appropriate VHCC cases, but only in categories 1 and 2.

Fees otherwise should be discussed with David Wright, senior clerk.