

Lee is considered a “rising star” in business and regulatory crime by Legal 500. He specialises in regulatory law, with a focus on health and safety (including fire), inquests, road traffic (including work in front of the traffic commissioners), seizures by HMRC and Border Force, Ofsted enforcement, professional discipline, environmental law, and trading standards.

Prior to joining chambers Lee worked as a solicitor for some of the country’s leading regulatory practices. He gained experience advising and representing international corporate clients, developed excellent client handling skills, and amassed significant technical knowledge in his specialist areas. He also developed a keen insight into what instructing solicitors require from their instructed counsel.

Due to Lee’s significant experience as a solicitor coupled with his thorough preparation and eye for detail, Lee has quickly established himself as a successful, sought-after junior in regulatory law matters.

In much of his work, Lee is instructed by insurance practices and national law firms to defend corporate clients and individuals. In addition to his solid defence practice, Lee also prosecutes on the Specialist Regulatory Advocates list for Health and Safety and Environmental Law.

Lee has also been instructed in matters of national significance, including the Manchester Arena Inquiry, the Gosport Independent Panel Review and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

In addition to advocacy, Lee provides training and assistance to instructing solicitors and regulatory bodies on a range of subjects and is always happy to get involved in a case pre-charge, when he can influence the direction of investigations.

Lee develops strong working relationships with instructing solicitors and clients alike, using his experience supervising teams of lawyers to ensure successful outcomes.

CASES OF NOTE

Health and Safety and Fire Safety

HSE v MS and CS – secured the acquittal of a director prosecuted by the HSE for breaches of the general duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act and contravention of a Prohibition Notice.

LA v Q and others – represented a company and a director prosecuted in the Crown Court following a fatal fall from height:

<https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/cannock-quartz-fined-ryan-shenton-3736989>

Fire Service v G – represented a former health and safety officer in the Crown Court prosecuted for risk assessment offences spanning a period of 10 years:

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/crime/wakefield-grammar-school-foundation-fined-10-000-over-fire-safety-offences-1-10192909>

LA v G – represented a children’s nursery in the Magistrates’ Court for sentence after a child’s fingertip was severed. Secured an exceptionally low fine for the company.



CONTACT DETAILS

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PRACTICE AREAS

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Criminal Law

Business Crime

Inquests & Inquiries

Professional Discipline

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EDUCATION

LLM (with Distinction)

MSc module in Fire Safety Law (First)

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LLB (Hons)

LA v D – successfully represented a Local Authority in an appeal against a Prohibition Notice.

HSE v G – defended a roofer in the Crown Court following a fall from height in which a worker was seriously injured:

<https://press.hse.gov.uk/2021/07/22/employer-sentenced-after-worker-falls-30-feet-through-skylight/>

Multinational Company – advised a multinational company regarding its responsibilities for vacant commercial and residential properties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.

HSE v H&S consultancy – advised a health and safety consultancy disputing a Fee for Intervention invoice and prepared submissions on behalf of the company.

HSE v I – advised a company in liquidation regarding prosecution for health and safety offences.

HSE v EJ – instructed to advise a company in respect of a police investigation into the death of an employee whilst repairing a forklift truck and subsequently an investigation by the HSE into breaches under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

HSE v S – instructed to prosecute a school following a field trip during which children were lost in snowy conditions and one child was injured when they slid down a hill.

Lee is regularly instructed by the Health and Safety Executive to prosecute cases in the Magistrates' Court and Crown Court, as well as to appear in the Coroners' Court.

Inquest and Inquiry work

Manchester Arena Inquiry – instructed by the Solicitor to the Inquiry as part of the junior counsel team, assisting with preparation for the Inquiry, with particular focus on the criminal aspect of the inquiry. Sat as a noting brief in the criminal trial of Hashem Abedi.

Gosport Independent Panel – appointed by the Secretary of State for Health, as Junior Counsel to Kate Blackwell QC. The panel was constituted by the Minister to examine and report on historical events relating to the care, treatment and deaths of patients of the Gosport War Memorial Hospital in Portsmouth. Assisted generally in preparation of the final report, but also specifically in respect of health and safety matters.

Grenfell Public Inquiry – instructed by Government Legal Department to assist the Home Office with the disclosure exercise following the fire that occurred in 2017.

Inquest touching the death of a prison inmate – represented the director of a private prison in an Article 2 inquest following the stabbing of an inmate by another inmate.

Inquest touching the death of a diver – instructed to appear on behalf of an enforcement body.

Inquest touching the death of a mechanic – instructed to represent a corporate defendant following a workplace accident involving a forklift truck.

Inquest touching the death of an elderly resident of local authority accommodation – represented the local authority in an Inquest that explored the Council's obligations towards an elderly resident.

Inquest touching the death of a motorcyclist – represented the driver of a vehicle involved in a collision with the deceased.



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Inquest touching the death of a student – represented a university following the death of a student in student accommodation.

Disciplinary

GMC v DR – represented a doctor at a fitness to practise panel at the Medical Practitioner Tribunal Service following allegations of dishonesty. The tribunal gave weight to the “good mitigation” in the case and suspended the doctor for just one month.

GMC v DR – advised a doctor in respect of restoration following findings of dishonesty. Doctor restored to the register.

NMC v N – Represented a nurse in an interim orders hearing before the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Avoided suspension, despite serious allegations.

GMC v DR – represented a doctor at a Review Hearing following impairment through misconduct and adverse physical or mental health.

GMC v DR – advised a doctor in respect of restoration following findings of dishonesty. Teaching Regulation Agency – represented a teacher accused of sexual impropriety with a student.

GMC v DR – instructed to represent a doctor in respect of fitness to practise proceedings following allegations of dishonesty

GMC v DR – instructed to represent a psychiatrist in fitness to practise proceedings following the death of a patient

General Crime

Led junior for the Crown in Operation Chronicle – two defendants convicted of murder and sentenced to 19 and 17 years respectively. Led by Craig Hassall QC.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-60080377>

Led junior for the Crown in Operation Teleut, which concerned an international conspiracy to smuggle crystal meth. The defendants were convicted after trial.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-45681608>

Led junior for the Crown in Operation Quartz which concerned the manufacture of amphetamine at one laboratory and a linked conspiracy to produce amphetamine at another laboratory, which was under construction when police raided it. The case involved two trials and complex POCA proceedings.
<https://news.merseyside.police.uk/news/total-of-more-than-60-years-in-prison-foramphetamine-lab-gang-following-nwrocu-and-nca-investigation-374873>

Led junior for the Crown in Operation Lithe. Operation Lithe concerned 29-armed robberies of convenience stores across the North West. A gang armed themselves with weapons including machetes and meat cleavers, and attacked shops, usually at night. All of the alleged robbers were convicted, and lengthy prison sentences handed down. The case involved POCA and Serious Crime Prevention Orders
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-57671263>



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Led junior for the Crown in Operation Woodvill, which concerned a police investigation into unrest in Oldham after a speech was given by Tommy Robinson. A trial is listed in October 2022
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-48323573>

Led junior for the defence in a murder prosecution, in which the juvenile defendant pleaded guilty to manslaughter. Led by Simon Csoka QC.
<https://news.sky.com/story/mohammed-islam-death-boy-15-sentenced-to-four-years-and-nine-months-in-detention-for-killing-stockport-restaurant-owner-12400892>

Led junior for the defence in the country's largest ever drugs conspiracy. Led by Peter Wright QC.
<https://www.thepressnews.co.uk/press-news/dewsbury-men-charged-in-billion-pound-drugs-bust>

R v B – represented a defendant charged with a s20 wounding after striking a partner with a hammer. The defendant was given a suspended sentence of imprisonment.

R v V – prosecuted a prisoner for escaping from lawful custody after jumping from a moving prison van whilst on a dual carriageway. The defendant was convicted.

R v G – The defendant was accused of robbery. Lee made a successful application to dismiss based on identification evidence.

R v W – The defendant was accused of breaching a Sexual Harm Prevention Order by having history-deleting software on his phone. Lee made a successful application to dismiss the offence based on the Crown's misunderstanding of the technical evidence.

POCA

R v M&S – represented two interested parties from whom over £30,000 had been seized during investigations into a relative's criminal offending. The interested parties recovered £27,000.

Op Lithe – led prosecution junior involved in the resolution of POCA applications for multiple defendants.

Op Quartz - led prosecution junior involved in the resolution of POCA applications for multiple defendants.

HMRC v Ahmadi – successfully represented HMRC in cash forfeiture proceedings.

Seizures by HMRC and Border Force

BF v A – successfully represented an importer of alcohol at the First Tier Tax Tribunal following seizure of wine by Border Force. Goods restored.

HMRC v R – achieved restoration of a seized vehicle days before a hearing in the First Tier Tribunal, persuading HMRC that they had no prospects of success.

Advised many companies and individuals in respect of condemnation and restoration proceedings. Have secured restoration either in the first instance or after review in numerous cases, recovering goods worth tens of thousands of pounds. Regularly instructed in these matters.



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Road Traffic

R v M – successfully represented a driver in a trial in the Crown Court in a prosecution for causing death by careless driving.

R v S – represented a driver accused of driving without due care and attention following a collision with a pedestrian. The case was dismissed at the close of the prosecution case.

R v M – represented a driver whose mum forgot to insure his car. Special reasons were found.

R v M – represented a driver in the Magistrates' Court, charged with driving without due care and attention. After cross examination of the injured person made a successful submission that there was no case to answer.

R v A – successfully defended a driver who failed to respond to two requests for information (section 172 Notice) on the basis that it was not reasonably practicable to respond to a request that was not received.

R v CC – achieved an acquittal in the Crown Court for a driver charged with causing death by careless driving.

R v LC – represented a defendant who caused serious injury by driving dangerously. 14-month sentence.

R v G – represented a "totter" in the Magistrates' Court, convicted of his third speeding offence in three weeks and having amassed 15 points. Successfully argued exceptional hardship.

Traffic Commissioner

PS – successfully represented a company before the Traffic Commissioner. Licence retained, despite dishonesty at a previous Public Inquiry.

JS – successfully represented a company before the Traffic Commissioner. Licence retained, despite non-compliance with an undertaking and various requirements of the licence.

L – successfully represented a company before the Traffic Commissioner. Licence retained, despite multiple failings in respect of the licence.

Licensing

LA v HF – represented a Local Authority in an appeal by a taxi driver against a refusal to grant him a licence. Successfully applied to have the case dismissed after the taxi driver's evidence.

LA v TD – successfully represented a Local Authority in PII proceedings relating to evidence to be used in an appeal against a withdrawal of a taxi licence.

LA v M – represented a Local Authority in an appeal against a Review of a premises Licence. Case dismissed and full costs awarded. Later successfully resisted an application to reopen the case and achieved a further award of full costs.

CRL – advised a scrap metal dealer in respect of an application for a licence.

R v M – represented a director in a prosecution for operating without a scrap metal dealer's licence.



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OFSTED / Education

Advised a children's home regarding an appeal following receipt of Notice restricting accommodation.

Advised a children's home regarding a suspension of registration, cancellation and an interview with a Responsible Individual.

Advised a children's nursery regarding an appeal against a suspension notice.

Advised a Training Academy regarding an investigation by The Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Advised a childminder regarding suspension notices and cancellation.

Advised a childminder regarding suspension.

Prosecuted for a local authority in a case involving repeated non-attendance at school.

Trading Standards

R v M & Q – represented a company and director in the Magistrates' Court for trademark offences. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/strangewaystrader-found-hundreds-fake-17581217>

Environmental

L v Housing Authority – represented a Housing Authority in the Magistrates' Court in a private prosecution brought by a tenant under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

LA v Q – represented a local authority in a prosecution of a couple who had breached enforcement notices served under planning legislation.

EA v L – advised a director in relation to an application to dismiss in the Crown Court.

LA v PL – represented a care home and its owner in a prosecution for a breach of a Tree Preservation Order.

Data Protection

ICO v A & Ors – instructed as junior counsel to Paul Greaney QC. Successfully defended a multinational organisation against a prosecution under data protection legislation

Appointments and other relevant information

Due to his professional disciplinary experience Lee has been appointed as an independent investigator by the United Kingdom Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Association (UKBJJA) in disciplinary matters and also as a legal expert assisting the Disciplinary and Arbitration Committees of the International Mixed Martial Arts Federation (IMMAF).

He has also been appointed as a member of Sport Resolutions' Pro Bono Legal Advice Panel.

He is authorised to represent members of the public under the 'Public Access' scheme.



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Directory Recommendations

"Lee is exceptionally adept at analysing the law and explaining it in a comprehensible way to clients, and at combining that analysis with good practical advice. Lee is extremely approachable and always willing to act as a sounding board, a trusted advisor."

Legal 500, 2022

"An excellent and calming manner with clients paired with meticulous preparation and a real practical understanding of the law. Able to articulate complex matters in a way that both lay clients and the Court can really grasp."

Legal 500, 2021

"[Lee's] guidance and counsel was second to none". Client testimonial

"The communication from Lee Hughes throughout our involvement with him has been impeccable with clear and concise explanations throughout the whole process. ...he is highly recommended." Client testimonial



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