Lawrence Rainford

Call to Bar: 2024



Lawrence Rainford is a tenant at Lincoln House Chambers, practising in criminal and civil law. He was called to the Bar in November 2024. Before coming to the Bar, he spent time in a busy criminal defence firm, where he worked on cases from first instruction through to trial. As a result, he understands what solicitors and lay clients need from their counsel.

Lawrence is a persuasive, compelling advocate. His mitigation is particularly effective in cases on the cusp of custody, where careful preparation and measured, persuasive submissions can make the difference between immediate imprisonment and a sentence served in the community. His years preparing defence cases before coming to the Bar show in the thoroughness he brings to every brief. Solicitors find him well prepared, responsive and easy to work with, and lay clients know their case is in capable hands.

Lawrence accepts instructions across a broad range of criminal work in the Magistrates' Court and the Crown Court. He has a particular interest in drugs offences, serious violence, fraud, and cases where the defendant has mental health needs. He handles sensitive and vulnerable clients with care, and he understands how mental health issues can affect fitness to plead, the trial process and sentence. His paralegal background gives him a solid grounding in analysing evidence, including witness statements, expert reports, audio and video recordings and custody records.

Motoring law has been a core part of Lawrence's work from the start. As a paralegal at a criminal defence firm specialising in motor offences, he worked on matters from speeding to causing death by dangerous driving, in both the Magistrates' Court and the Crown Court. In that role he drafted skeleton arguments, defence case statements and witness statements, instructed medical and forensic experts, and analysed forensic collision reports. He now brings this experience to motoring cases of all kinds, from summary offences to the most serious allegations.

Lawrence also has a civil practice, focused on personal injury and road traffic accident (RTA) claims.

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Practice areas:

Crime
Regulatory & Tribunal
Civil Law

His experience of motoring prosecutions, especially analysing collision evidence and expert reports, carries over directly to civil claims arising from road traffic accidents. He previously completed a legal clerkship in Miami, Florida, where he gained civil litigation experience defending automotive manufacturers and suppliers in asbestos-related claims.

Cases of interest:

Public justice cases

R v A – Lawrence successfully secured an acquittal after trial on two allegations of witness intimidation. His cross-examination exposed weaknesses in the prosecution's identification evidence, and the Crown withdrew one charge at half-time. On the remaining charge, Lawrence presented an alibi defence supported by a defence witness and documentary evidence. The court was not satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the Defendant had committed the offence and acquitted him at the conclusion of the trial.

Drug offences

R v H - Lawrence represented a defendant of previous good character convicted of importing cannabis, an offence for which deterrent sentences are often imposed. He relied on expert evidence of the defendant's cognitive function, suggestibility, maturity and possible exploitation. With that evidence, he persuaded the court to suspend the sentence.

R v R & W - Lawrence represented both defendants at sentence for Class A drugs offences, which ordinarily result in immediate custody. Both were 16 or 17 at the time of the offending, and Lawrence made their youth the focus of his mitigation. The court accepted that significant reductions from the adult starting points were warranted. That brought both sentences within the range of suspension, and the court imposed suspended sentence orders for both defendants.

Motoring offences

R v H - Lawrence secured not guilty verdicts on both counts for a defendant accused of driving offences arising from a police pursuit. On the morning of trial, information emerged that someone else had been driving. Lawrence acted quickly, raising the issue with the Crown and the court and pressing for enquiries to continue as the trial got under way. Those enquiries produced a statement in which the true driver admitted responsibility. The Crown then offered no evidence, and the defendant was acquitted on the first day of trial.

Civil cases

A v H - Lawrence represented the Claimant, a rear-seat passenger injured in a multi-vehicle collision, at a trial limited to quantum. Having advised the Claimant that the Defendant's most recent offer was low, Lawrence took the matter to trial on her instructions. In closing, he made detailed submissions on the conflicting medical evidence. The court accepted his submissions on the psychiatric injury and preferred the Claimant's account over the shorter prognosis advanced by the defence. The Claimant was awarded £8,500 in general damages for pain, suffering and loss of amenity, together with interest and costs.

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Education

LLB Law (Hons), First Class

LLM International Business Law, Merit

Bar Professional Training Course, Distinction

Scholarships and prizes

Lord Denning Scholar, The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

Award for "Outstanding Written Submissions" at the Simmons & Simmons Day of Crisis Competition

Memberships

The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

LINCOLN HOUSE CHAMBERS