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Peter Donnison

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Practice Overview

Peter was called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 2012 and became a tenant at 30 Park Place in 2015 following successful completion of pupillage under the supervision of Tracey Lloyd-Nesling and Max Davies.

Peter has a successful and busy practice specialising in Serious Crime and Regulatory matters. Peter's talent has been recognised in his instruction as leading junior counsel, by being led regularly by King's Counsel and by acting as junior counsel alone in the most serious cases including those of murder, manslaughter, attempt murder, complex fraud, drugs conspiracies, serious sexual offences and inquests. He also represents clients at hearings before various regulatory bodies. He has received a Certificate of Commendation from the Home Office and the National Crime Agency for his significant contribution as Junior counsel in Operation Queen, a complex multi handed immigration fraud. He is recommended each year in the leading legal directories.

Peter is appreciated for his diligence, dedication and judgment. His determination, thorough preparation and commitment to his cases has been recognised by those instructing him and he seeks to provide an approachable and professional style, tackling issues head on and dealing with difficulties as they arise.

Peter was educated in Cardiff and Halesowen in the West Midlands before returning to study Law at Cardiff University. He remained in Cardiff for the Bar Professional Training Course where he obtained the highest grade of 'Outstanding' and received a number of awards for his performance. Prior to starting pupillage Peter obtained a distinction in the LLM in Legal Practice for research into the law of evidence, and he worked at Hugh James Solicitors in the Nursing Care Department, gaining valuable experience assisting and speaking for clients at NHS Review Panels. Peter then went on to work for the international development charity Christian Aid as the Wales Regional and Legacies Coordinator, developing his advocacy and speaking at numerous campaigning and fundraising events.

Outside of work Peter enjoys music, running, tennis, hockey and attending his Church. He is also a committed Welsh language learner.

Notable and Reported cases

- R v KG (2025)

Defence junior alone assisting offender in a murder

- R v M (2025)

Court of Appeal - Successfully appealed sentence in historic sex case

- R v R and Others (2025)

Defence leading junior assisting offender in a murder

- R v O (2024)

Defence junior alone manufacturing firearm on 3D printer

- R v S (2024)

Defence junior led by Tom Crowther KC in murder trial involving a stabbing in Newport

- R v S & K (2024)

Leading defence junior in human trafficking trial alleging breach of immigration laws across Europe and facilitating the transportation of hundreds of people across Europe.

- R v CM (2024)

Led defence junior, led by Caroline Rees KC, in double attempted murder trial. Defendant acquitted of all charges faced at trial.

- R v SM (2024)

Led defence junior, led by Caroline Rees KC, in case relating to sexual abuse of a child in protected setting.

- R v AA (2024)

Defence junior alone - Manslaughter and possession of an imitation firearm

- R v Q (2023)

Leading junior counsel in trial for of Conspiracy to produce and supply in excess of 700 KG of Class A drugs.

- R v A (2023)

Led junior, led by Mark Heywood QC in manslaughter of a young child.

- R v B&B (2022)



Led junior, led by Nigel Fryer, in trial of 39 counts of historic sexual offences including rapes in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

- AG Ref (2022) Court of Appeal

Peter successfully mitigated a sentence. Peter was thanked by the Court of Appeal for his “very able mitigation and succinct and focussed oral submissions”.

- Operation Beachway (2021)

Led junior, led by Nigel Fryer, in conspiracy to supply wholesale amounts of over 42KG of high purity Amphetamine.

- Operation Vermont (2021)

Defence junior to Tom Crowther QC in trial for one of thirty Defendants charged with Conspiracy to produce and supply in excess of 700 KG of Class A drugs.

- Operation Empire (2020)

Led junior, led by Nigel Fryer, in this 11 Defendant case concerning a Class A drug conspiracy to supply a total of over 28 Kg of cocaine valued at in excess of £1 million.

- R v LC and Others (2020)

Defence junior to Caroline Rees QC for one of eight Defendants charged with the Murder of a 17 year old in Barry in the summer of 2019.

- R v SE (2019)

Led defence junior to Caroline Rees QC in an Attempt Murder and Child Cruelty case concerning a mother and her new born baby. The case included consideration of complex issues surrounding intention and post natal mental health.

- Operation Queen (2017 - 2019)

Prosecution led junior, led by Carl Harrison, in a complex immigration fraud.

- Yemm and Williams Inquest (2017)

Led junior to Nicholas Bowen QC in the four week Inquests touching the deaths of Cerys Yemm and Matthew Williams in Argoed. The case included issues relating to police taser policies and mental health provision in the community.

Crime

Peter appears at all stages of the criminal court process and has developed considerable experience in this area



since he became a tenant in Chambers. Peter has appeared in a wide range of trials including Murder, Attempt Murder, Manslaughter, Rape, S18 Wounding, Possession with Intent to Supply Class A Drugs, Dangerous Driving, Causing Death by Careless Driving, Robbery, Serious Child Sexual Offences, Fraud and Burglary. Peter has also been Junior Counsel in complex criminal cases including Murder, Manslaughter, Attempted Murder, serious sexual offences, Drugs Conspiracies and Fraud. He also appears in regulatory cases, local authority prosecutions and insolvency service prosecutions. His ability has been recognised by his approval to the highest level of the Advocate Panel within 7 years of practice. Having studied and written about the law of evidence for his Masters Degree in Legal Practice, Peter brings a great interest in and knowledge of, the law of evidence to his cases to the benefit of his clients. As a pupil he also gave administrative assistance to the prosecution for Operation Dino, Car Crash Insurance Fraud. This provided a valuable insight into high profile and complex criminal trials. In addition to prosecuting and defending in the Crown Court and Magistrates' Court, he is regularly instructed in the County Court in relation to anti-social behaviour orders and injunctions, matters for and against the police, licensing reviews and other regulatory matters.

Police Actions & Prison Law

Peter represents clients in wide ranging cases of actions against the police and also represents parties at associated inquests. Peter is regularly instructed in the County Court in relation to anti-social behaviour orders and injunctions, closure orders and criminal behaviour orders including matters for and against the police and housing associations.

Regulatory & Inquests

Peter is pleased to accept instructions for regulatory matters, inquiries and inquests. Peter was instructed to appear as Junior Counsel for the Williams family in one of the most significant Inquests in Wales in 2017, that being the four week Inquests touching the deaths of Cerys Yemm and Matthew Williams. During this time Peter developed significant experience in disclosure. He both prosecutes and defends in matters on behalf of individuals, organisations, local authorities and regulatory agencies and he regularly appears on behalf of clients at tribunals, licensing reviews, trials other regulatory hearings. As part of this work he has experience in regulatory matters including fraud, veterinary medicines, alcohol licencing, food hygiene and environmental safety, companies house prosecutions and education matters such as school non attendance.

In the summer of 2016 he completed a secondment with NHS Legal and Risk as part following which he has received multiple instructions to act for parties at inquests.

Appointments

- HSE Category B List of Specialist Regulatory Advocates
- Serious Crime Panel
- Specialist Fraud Panel
- Level 4 Advocate Panel
- Qualified Pupil Supervisor
- Qualified Advocacy Trainer
- Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Courts), 2021
- Criminal Bar Association Executive Committee Wales and Chester Circuit Representative 2021 to 2023

Education & Qualification

- Called to the Bar by The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn (2012)
- LLM in Legal Practice (Distinction), Cardiff University (2013)



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- Bar Professional Training Course (Outstanding), Cardiff University (2012)
 - LLB Law Degree (2.1), Cardiff University (2008-2011)
 - Practical Certificate in Intermediate Welsh, University of Wales Trinity Saint David (2015)

Recommendations

- "He is exceptionally calm and conveys control and total confidence. He is unflappable in court." "Peter is very technical and remains approachable." "He is extremely committed to each case he conducts, meticulous in his preparation and a skilled advocate." (Chambers and Partners 2025 - Crime)
- 'Peter has a ferocious work ethic and has developed an extensive practice beyond his call. He has a keen eye for detail, which is evident in his case presentation.' (Legal 500, 2025 - Crime)
- Peter Donnison is experienced in the handling of serious criminal cases involving violence, murder, sexual abuse and drug matters. He both prosecutes and defends in criminal proceedings."Peter is great to work with. He also has a great personal touch with clients and is sensitive to their needs and worries." (Chambers & Partners 2024, Crime)
- "He is a very eloquent advocate who can meet the client on their level when giving advice. He is very strong with his analysis and preparation of a case and very sound in cross-examination. Moreover, his drafting skills are second-to-none." (Legal 500, 2024 - Crime)
- "Peter has exceptional attention to detail on complex matters yet gives his advice to clients in a clear and understandable way." "Peter is always extremely well prepared and excellent with delivery in court in difficult and high-profile cases." (Chambers UK, 2023 - Crime)
- 'Peter is industrious, conscientious, and able. He gives coherent and clear advice, which is always sound. He is able to communicate extremely well with clients and is always available for instructing solicitors. He thinks carefully and strategically about cases. His advice to clients is straightforward and practical.' (Legal 500, 2023 - Crime)
- In R v A (2022) Peter was thanked by the Court of Appeal for his very able mitigation and for his succinct and focussed submissions.
- 'Peter is very professional and has vast knowledge of the law. He works extremely hard on his cases and this shines through in the results he has obtained for our clients.' (Legal 500, 2022 - Crime (General & Fraud))
- 'Rising Star: A determined and committed advocate who has been a junior for murder, attempt murder and complex fraud.' (Legal 500, 2021)

Awards

- Home Office Immigration Enforcement & National Crime Agency Commendation in recognition of his work on Operation Queen, a complex Immigration Fraud. He was commended for his "tenacity and work under extreme pressure".
- Buchanan Prize for highest bar course result in his year presented by The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn
- The Lord Williams of Mostyn Achievement Award presented by The Wales and Chester Circuit for the Best Performance in Professional Ethics 2011/12



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- The Tom Glanville Jones Prize presented by Angel Chambers for the Best Performance in Criminal Practice 2011/12
 - Hardwicke Entrance Award presented by the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

Memberships

- Member of the Criminal Bar Association

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