



# Rebecca McKnight

**Year of Call:** 2016

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## Overview

Rebecca McKnight is a criminal barrister who is instructed to defend and prosecute across the spectrum of criminal offences. Recent work includes defending an affray and possession of a blade at trial, a successful appeal against sentence at Bristol Crown Court and defending in a possession with intent to supply Class A drugs matter.

Based in Winchester and living near Reading her practises covers a wide geographical area outside the Western circuit and includes London. She has built a busy criminal defence and prosecution practise, appearing daily in the Crown Court, Magistrates' Court and Youth Court, and has previously conducted some extradition work, as well as applying for and opposing civil measures such as Stalking Prevention Orders.

Rebecca accepts instructions in general crime, regulatory and court martial work. Her respectful and fair approach allows her to form strong relationships with clients and across the criminal justice system.

Rebecca enjoys working in the youth courts and has a straightforward, personable and patient manner which allows clients to be made to feel at ease and to understand the process. She will always fight for the best result possible for clients.

Rebecca prosecutes on behalf of the CPS, Probation and Police. She will occasionally prosecute lists in the Magistrates Court.

Rebecca is currently on part-time secondment as Disclosure Counsel to the Serious Fraud Office.

Prior to being called to the Bar, Rebecca enjoyed a successful career in the Civil Service where her final role was working as Product Owner at the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC). This involved launching a new digital platform for the JAC, as well as being involved in the selection process for judicial candidates.

Outside of life at the Criminal Bar, Rebecca enjoys singing both in the less serious setting of karaoke with friends and in a more formal environment where she occasionally sings with a choir. She loves travelling and spent some time living and working in Vietnam.

## Recommendations

'Rebecca's preparation is detailed and precise. Her advocacy is clear and concise and easily understood... the judiciary have also commented to me about Miss McKnight's excellent trial ability. I can say without hesitation that Miss McKnight is both an excellent lawyer and advocate.' **Senior Crown Prosecutor**

'I have instructed Rebecca on a number of my cases and what strikes me the most is how much she cares about getting the best result for her client. Rebecca goes above and beyond to ensure that her client's understand the charges they face and the process ahead of them. You really are in safe hands when being represented by Rebecca.' **Emily Alexander, Trainee Solicitor, Roach Pittis**

'An excellent result I didn't expect; so thank you.' **Instructing Solicitor**

'You conducted both trials with considerable expertise... Your cross-examination of the complainants was necessarily thorough on your instructions, but you also managed to demonstrate some sensitivity to the distress and discomfort of the witnesses.' **District Judge**

'Miss Mcknight, very well said, your submissions were eloquent and very well thought out, we are grateful for your assistance.' **Magistrate (Chair)**

'You were brilliant, I was so glad it was you representing me, you put me at ease and explained things clearly. You spoke with confidence and I knew you would fight for me.' **Defendant**

## **Academic qualifications**

- BPTC, City Law School, Very Competent
- BA (Hons) in Law, Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge - 2:1

## **Scholarships**

- Droops Scholarship (Lincoln's Inn)
- Hardwicke Scholarship (Lincoln's Inn)

## **Professional qualifications & appointments**

- Level 1, CPS Advocate Panel, General Crime
- Level 2, CPS Advocate Panel, General Crime

## **Professional bodies**

- Member of Lincoln's Inn

# Expertise

## Crime

Rebecca accepts instructions in general crime, both prosecuting and defending, regulatory and court martial work. Her respectful and fair approach allows her to form strong relationships with clients and across the criminal justice system.

Rebecca enjoys working in the youth courts and has a straightforward, personable and patient manner which allows clients to be made to feel at ease and to understand the process.

### **Recent criminal law cases include:**

R v AT Goodyear indication would have meant a further period in custody, successfully persuading the judge that given strong mitigation the defendant could be released that day.

R v JS defended in affray and possession of blade jury trial in the Crown Court.

R v HA defended in an ABH jury trial in the Crown Court

R v GB represented a client in an ABH allegation.

R v MN after discussions with the prosecution they agreed to discontinue an ABH case.

R v TDB Successful application for bail following 2 previous breaches of bail.

R v JMC acquittal for threats to kill after half time submissions of no case to answer.

R v JH acquittal for theft from a vehicle.

R v MS acquittal for assault against an emergency worker.

R v SK written submissions persuaded the Crown to discontinue a case.

R v EC sentence for possession with intent to supply Class A drugs, significant role and fell into category 3. Suspended sentence received by defendant.

R v PB successful submission of no case to answer in a breach of Criminal Behaviour Order.

R v LG successfully opposed a bad character application and res gestae argument and then made a successful submission of no case to answer.

R v RE representations successfully made to the Crown to accept an out of court disposal for a youth involved in a serious affray.

R v OL persuaded the Judge to impose a lower custodial sentence for client, compared to the co-defendants, by distinguishing their circumstances and offending from the others in a very high value theft.

R v MS & NC successfully argued to the Crown, YOT and police that a caution could be given for one of my clients and a referral order for the other in a serious ABH.

## Motoring offences

Rebecca frequently represents individuals accused of motoring offences, from defending them at trial to arguing special reasons and exceptional hardship to prevent disqualification or reduce penalty points.

R v NI client acquitted following trial of speeding and failure to provide identity.

R v JW successful exceptional hardship argument prevented disqualification.

R v RW persuaded the court that there were special reasons present on appeal, no points and therefore they retained their licence.

R v SS represented a client in a Newton Hearing for dangerous driving.

## Articles

3PB crime and regulatory barrister Rebecca Mcknight has written on the new guidelines for strangulation or suffocation/ racially or religiously aggravated strangulation or suffocation.

The new sentencing guidelines will come into force on 1st January 2025. The data in this area is relatively limited given the offences only came into force on 7 June 2022 but practitioners will know that it is becoming increasingly common to see a charge of strangulation or suffocation. There was a clear need for a guideline for these offences.

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As non-fatal strangulation offences are increasingly charged, Rebecca McKnight examines the background to this increase and reviews the injuries in cases of strangulation based on research carried out by Dr Katherine White of the Institute for Addressing Strangulation (IFAS). Further, Rebecca looks at the implications for prosecuting and defending such cases and considers what the future might hold in this area of criminal law.

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