



# Richard Holland

Year of call 2012



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Richard Holland is an experienced criminal and regulatory barrister who appears in cases of significant legal and factual complexity. He prosecutes and defends criminal cases of the utmost seriousness and has particular experience in large-scale conspiracies concerning serious violence, firearms, drugs, and human trafficking. He is used to the pressure of working in such cases and the understandably high expectations both defendants and police/prosecution teams have about the presentation of their cases.

He takes instructions in regulatory matters, including professional discipline, regulatory compliance, inquests, health and safety and licensing. Richard prosecutes on behalf of the General Medical Council, including at Fitness to Practise Hearings before the Medical Practitioners' Tribunal Service. He is also familiar with the policies and procedures of the SRA and the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal.

Richard has in-depth experience in clinical negligence work having worked at Irwin Mitchell Solicitors in the clinical negligence and product liability teams before coming to the Bar. His GMC practice, together with his clinical negligence work, means Richard has a significant cross-over experience in inquests where medical professionals are suggested to have had some role in a death. Richard's cases with the GMC have included presenting allegations of dishonesty and lack of candour concerning the outcome of surgery, the inappropriate and dishonest prescribing to family members, financial misconduct by doctors both at work and outside of it, and poor clinical practice leading to harm to patients.

At ease with professional and lay clients alike, Richard approaches each case with bespoke and timely advice and attention to detail. He thrives in conveying complex issues to juries and uses his written advocacy strategically and effectively, in the knowledge that many legal arguments can be won far before anyone begins speaking in court.

## Expertise

### Crime

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#### Leeds

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## Notable Crime cases

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### R v Leanne Hodgson and others (2025)

Instructed to defend in this case arising out of the widespread disorder following the Southport murders. It was the first case in the country where the CPS sought to charge defendants who had already been sentenced for lesser offences with more serious offences arising out of the same facts. Successfully argued that the indictment should be stayed.

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### R v John Belfield (Operation Ravensburgh) (2025)

Following their successful prosecution in 2023, Richard was led again by [Nicholas de la Poer KC](#) at Manchester Crown Court following the extradition of John Belfield to face his trial, in a further case concerning the gangland torture murder of a rival drug dealer.

Richard presented the majority of the CCTV and timeline evidence

Mr Belfield was ultimately convicted by the Jury and sentenced to a life sentence with a minimum term of 34 and a half years.

For more details:

[Nick de la Poer KC and Richard Holland secure murder conviction of John Belfield. – New Park Court](#)

[John Belfield jailed for torture murder of love rival – BBC News](#)

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### R v Mohammed Umar Khan (2025)

Richard acted for this 15 year old defendant, led by Gul Nawaz Hussain KC, in a lengthy and emotionally challenging trial before Mrs Justice Ellenbogen at Sheffield Crown Court.

The Defendant had brought a knife to school following a threatening incident the week before and was captured on CCTV stabbing a fellow child to death in the school courtyard. He had pleaded guilty to manslaughter but not guilty to murder.

Richard took the lead in researching the authorities and drafting the successful contested application to the Judge to leave the loss of control partial defence to the Jury, who ultimately convicted the defendant on a majority verdict.

The case received extensive national media coverage:

[Mohammed Umar Khan detained for life for Harvey Willgoose murder – BBC News](#)

[Harvey Willgoose murder: How schoolboy's final hours unfolded – BBC News](#)

After the sentencing hearing, and with the defendant's family's permission, Richard reflected on the case on LinkedIn, here:

[Reflections on Mohammed Umar Khan | LinkedIn](#)

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### R v SH (2025)

Richard was instructed by Phil Axon of Allison Law to defend a man accused with other defendants as being part of a so-called “grooming gang” committing historical sexual offences against a vulnerable young girl.

Following Richard submitting an application to dismiss, the Prosecution were forced to drop a number of charges before the trial commenced, meaning his client was the only defendant accused of a single allegation of rape.

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### Operation Europa (2025-2026)

Richard was instructed by Stephen Abigail of the CPS Serious Economic and Organised Crime and International Directorate to prosecute 10 members of Class A wholesale drug dealing operation, including a group who possessed a 9mm pistol which they had hidden under the floorboards of a house in Newcastle.

The defendants were caught following an extensive covert police investigation by Northumbria Police and following the infiltration of the EncroChat messaging system by law enforcement in 2020.

Following a 2 day sentencing hearing in January 2026 at Newcastle Crown Court before HHJ Clemitson, the Defendants received sentences totalling 74 years.

For more details of the case, please see here:

[‘Sophisticated’ drug gang jailed for 74 years after supplying £1.3m of coke in a month – The Mirror](#)

[Everything we know as North East drugs gang jailed for 74 years | Chronicle Live](#)

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### R v Roscoe (2024)

Richard prosecuted this matter, taking instructions at the last minute, relating to the trip made by two men who had travelled from Liverpool to Hull to discharge a shotgun through the door and living room window of a house whilst its residents were sat in the sitting room.

Richard was able to present the significant quantity of CCTV evidence which, combined with cellsite, ANPR and other evidence, presented a compelling circumstantial case.

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### Operation Wide (2023)

[Eleanor Fry](#) led Richard in this nine-handed prosecution of an organised crime group responsible for supplying kilograms of cocaine into York and plotting to establish an industrial sized cannabis grow in an old and isolated BT repeater station.

The prosecution proved the case through a combination of covert recordings (the admissibility of which was successfully argued and defence arguments to exclude it against their particular clients repelled), cellsite, ANPR data and covert observation evidence.

Amongst other matters at trial, Richard called the drug expert evidence and was responsible for ensuring the crucial attribution evidence of phone numbers was unanswerable by the defendants.

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### Operation Ravensburgh (2023)

Led by [Nicholas de la Poer KC](#) in a 5 week trial before Mr Justice Goose, prosecuting 4 defendants for their part in the robbery and

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execution of a rival drug dealer.

The prosecution were able to piece together hundreds of hours of CCTV, thousands of lines of mobile telephone and cellsite data and DNA and other expert evidence of some complexity to prove the case, leading to convictions for conspiracy to rob, murder and manslaughter.

Richard played a full part in the presentation of the case, including leading chapters of the sequence of events and CCTV evidence, and cross-examining one of the defendants.

For more information, please see here:

[Nicholas de la Poer KC and Richard Holland prosecute organised crime group who tortured rival drug dealer to death – New Park Court](#)

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R v Archie McNeil & Neil Murray (2022)

Richard and Ben Campbell prosecuted this case concerning the couriering of up to £25m worth of firearms, drugs and cash across the country. Instructed late, Richard was able to advise the police about the necessary steps to prove attribution of vital telephone evidence and to produce a sequence of events schedule which compellingly presented the prosecution case.

Following this, he was led by Ben Campbell in a trial against two of the defendants, one of whom pleaded guilty shortly before the prosecution opening and the other shortly thereafter.

The two defendants were ultimately sentenced to a combined 50 years' imprisonment.

For more information, please see here:

[Sheffield men jailed for five decades for transporting guns, cash and drugs worth £25m to gangs nationwide](#)

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Operation Callaway (2022)

Instructed by the Complex Casework Unit at CPS Manchester, Richard was led by James Gelsthorpe in the successful prosecution of eight members of a group of organised criminals for their part in the shooting of rival gang members and their wider roles in a lucrative drugs conspiracy.

James and Richard presented the case over the course of six weeks in which it was said that the defendants, who were based in Manchester, had responded to a plan by a criminal organisation based in Burnley to rob them of their cannabis grow valued at £220,000. The prosecution alleged that the defendants had brought a 9mm self-loading pistol up to Burnley and used it to shoot two members of the rival gang.

The case involved the piecing together of numerous strands of evidence, but principally the movement of mobile telephones and cars with which the defendants were associated. All defendants were unanimously convicted of each count they faced and were in due course sentenced to a total of 80 years' imprisonment.

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R v CB & Others (2021)

Led by Andrew Haslam KC, Richard defended one of 5 men accused of Murder following an incident in the Town Hall Gardens in Scarborough, in a four week "Covid-secure" trial at Leeds Crown Court before Mr Justice Griffiths.

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### Operation Salvator (2019 - 2021)

Richard was instructed on behalf of Northumbria CPS to prosecute a series of cases before Newcastle Crown Court arising out of an extensive Northumbria Police undercover operation in Gateshead targeting the suppliers of Class A drugs. All of the cases involved extensive consideration of forensic scientific, telephone and undercover observation evidence.

In Phase 1, R v Nathan Graham and others, Richard prosecuted 9 defendants for conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and other related offences arising out of the “Nathan” drugs line. Following the guilty pleas of all 9 defendants, Richard further prosecuted a Newton hearing against the 2 leaders of the conspiracy, Nathan Graham and Dean Joicey. HHJ Gittins sentenced the defendants to a total of more than 30 years’ imprisonment and, as part of the Judicial Commendations awarded at the end of the case, commended Richard for his part, together with the Police and CPS, for the “detailed and comprehensive preparation” of the case by the prosecution team.

Further details can be found here: [Ringleader behind conspiracy to supply Class A drugs across region jailed | The Northern Echo](#)

In Phase 2, R v Marvin Hughes and others, Richard prosecuted a further 5 defendants for substantive Class A drug supply offences arising out of the “Marvin” line of drug supply. Again, following extensive work and preparation, all 5 pleaded guilty and were sentenced by HHJ Prince, with Hughes receiving over 5 and a half years’ imprisonment for his role.

Richard is due to prosecute with Tom Storey the 4 defendants remaining out of an original 13 in Phase 3 of the operation, concerning a separate alleged drug-dealing line, in a trial in May 2021.

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### R v Jobi Nembhard (2020)

Richard defended this 18 year old client at one of the first trials in Birmingham Crown Court conducted under Covid-secure conditions. Mr Nembhard had committed, as a 17 year old, a series of robberies to steal high-value cars with an imitation firearm in a spree of home invasions in Solihull. Richard was able to secure Mr Nembhard’s acquittal on one of the alleged robberies at the half-time stage during the trial and, at sentence for the remainder, was able to successfully persuade the Court not to impose an Extended Sentence of Imprisonment.

Further details here: [Teen was part of Castle Bromwich home invasion gang who thought they were ‘invulnerable’ – Birmingham Live \(birminghammail.co.uk\)](#)

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### R v Mohammed Salayman (2019)

Richard represented this defendant in a multi-handed trial at Birmingham Crown Court before HHJ Mark Wall KC. The client was accused, together with his brothers, of kidnapping the complainant whilst masked with a balaclava and attempting to murder him by stabbing him. The Prosecution case was that Richard’s client had been one of those involved in the attack, before taking the complainant to hospital and throwing him out of the car. The complainant had purported to have recognised Richard’s client as being involved through his mannerisms, gait, voice and prior association, and then through a video identification parade.

Richard was able to expose, through careful cross-examination of the police witnesses who had attended at the family home in the aftermath of an incident shortly before and during the time the attack took place, and through an extensive and thorough analysis of the telephone and cell-site material, that Richard’s client could not have travelled in a car to take the complainant to hospital after the attack whilst at the same time being sat in his family’s living room with a police officer, throwing the complainant’s identification into doubt.

Following submissions at the half-time stage, the Judge agreed with Richard’s argument that the complainant’s identification was unreliable and therefore his client had no case to answer, and the Judge directed that the Jury find his client Not Guilty of all

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charges.

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### Operation Eton (2019)

Successful prosecution of 6 defendants by Matthew Donkin and Richard Holland, instructed by the Northumbria CPS Complex Case Unit, followed a five-week trial before HHJ Batiste at Newcastle Crown Court.

The defendants faced charges of conspiracy to possess a firearm with intent to endanger life, relating to two shootings in the west-end of Newcastle in January 2018. The prosecution were able to successfully prove that all defendants had conspired to shoot through the windows of a house with a shotgun with intent to endanger life on 4 January, and separately that all three defendants who faced this charge had shot through the windows of another house on 8 January, using a rifle and shotgun, as part of an ongoing feud with another faction.

The case involved the calling of evidence from a wide range of expert witnesses giving evidence on the examination and comparison of firearms and ammunition, DNA and fingerprint comparison, Cell-site and RF surveys, and CCTV image comparison.

For more details, see here:

<https://www.newparkcourt.co.uk/2019/03/08/new-park-court-chambers-members-in-successful-prosecutions-of-organised-crime-groups-in-firearms-feud/>

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## Regulatory

Richard takes instructions in regulatory matters, including professional discipline, regulatory compliance, inquests, health and safety and licensing.

Richard prosecutes on behalf of the General Medical Council, including at Fitness to Practise Hearings before the Medical Practitioners' Tribunal Service.

Richard's cases with the GMC have included presenting allegations of dishonesty and lack of candour concerning the outcome of surgery, the inappropriate and dishonest prescribing to family members, financial misconduct by doctors both at work and outside of it, and poor clinical practice leading to harm to patients.

His GMC practice, together with his clinical negligence work, means Richard has a significant cross-over experience in inquests where medical professionals are suggested to have had some role in a death.

Richard is also familiar with the policies and procedures of the SRA and the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal, including having been led in 2018 in a three-week long hearing relating to alleged overcharging by a senior solicitor. Richard was extensively involved in the preparation, tactical considerations, and pleading of the client's case, as well as the interlocutory applications that preceded the final hearing.

Richard enjoys an esoteric regulatory advice practice. Some of the cases he has advised on have included:

- A local authority considering prosecution under Health and Safety legislation of a fast-food restaurant where a young employee had been scalded in the course of their duties;
- The manufacturer of a set of traps for pest-control whether their design complied with the Pest Control Act 1954, the Spring Traps Approval Order 2018 and local licensing requirements for any potential purchasers;
- A local authority about their options in a prosecution relating to the infringement by the defendants of Planning Enforcement

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Notices;

- A company regarding its regulatory responsibilities and the effect of EU Product Safety Directives when importing mobile telephones from fellow EU countries and replacing chargers so that the products could be sold on the UK market.
- Advising, and drafting responses for, a Turkish Gold and Jewellery supplier as to the evidence required to prove the legitimacy of 3000 gold bullion coins seized by HMRC from couriers as they left Heathrow, ultimately leading to a successful return of the gold by HMRC.
- Advising on appeal and drafting notice of objections for haulage companies and drivers whom the Secretary of State for the Home Office had imposed penalties contrary to section 32 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and Carriers' Liability Regulations 2002 for clandestine entrants entering or attempting to enter the United Kingdom being discovered in the back of commercial haulage vehicles.

## Appointments

- CPS Level 4 Prosecutor
- CPS Specialist Fraud Panel Advocate (Level 2)
- CPS RASSO Panel Advocate
- Specialist Regulatory Advocate in Health & Safety and Environmental Law (List B)
- Attorney General's list of Junior Counsel to the Crown (Regional B Panel)

## Education

- BPTC (Outstanding), BPP Law School (2011-2012)
- MA (Oxon) Jurisprudence (BA – First Class, Hons), St Anne's College, Oxford University (2008-2011)

## Directory Quotes

"Richard is extremely thorough and tenacious and pays close attention to detail. His preparation is first-class, and has a strong command of his brief."

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*Legal 500 2026 (Crime)*

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