

Grace Forbes

"Conscientious and extremely bright." "Grace has a natural ability with a sharp scientific and analytical brain. A force to be reckoned with in serious fraud cases."

Legal 500 UK 2021



Year of Call: 2015

Grace specialises in criminal law, inquests and professional discipline.

She defends in a wide range of criminal cases including serious violence, serious drug supply, public disorder, sexual offences and fraud. Her recent cases include acting as sole junior in a lengthy trial involving allegations of a six-figure fraud conspiracy and as sole junior in a multi-handed fraudulent trading case.

Grace is ranked as a 'Rising Star' (Tier 1 Fraud) in Legal 500 UK 2021 and as a led junior, she is regularly instructed in complex and document-heavy criminal cases, through which she has developed a reputation for thorough case preparation, meticulous written arguments and mature tactical insight. Her cases over the last year include being led in a multi-handed murder, a three-month million-pound commercial fraud trial and a Class A county lines drugs conspiracy.

Grace has experience in private prosecutions and is a member of the Private Prosecutors' Association. She was recently instructed in a case requiring a complex and substantial advice on the prospects of successfully prosecuting a government official for perjury and perverting the course of justice.

Grace also has extensive experience in inquests and professional disciplinary cases. She has represented numerous medical professionals, including those facing serious allegations of dishonesty and sexual misconduct. She has also contributed to a sensitive disclosure exercise in relation to the inquest into the Manchester Arena attack and was instructed in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

Grace was led by Alison Levitt QC in the independent Review into Boohoo's Leicester supply chain. She worked closely with Ms Levitt QC and the report has been published by Boohoo.

Location

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What Others Say:

RISING STAR in Legal 500 UK 2021

“Conscientious and extremely bright.” – Legal 500 UK 2021

“Grace has a natural ability with a sharp scientific and analytical brain. A force to be reckoned with in serious fraud cases.” – Legal 500 UK 2021 (Tier 1)

Criminal Defence

Grace specialises in criminal defence. Her experience extends across the spectrum of criminal law.

She has advised and represented clients accused of serious violence, serious drug supply, sexual offences and fraud. She has experience in navigating the complexities and tactical demands of multi-handed criminal cases, including through acting for those appearing first on the indictment at trial.

She has been recognised as a passionate and persuasive defence advocate with a strong work ethic.

Notable Cases:

R v H and 2 others (2020)

Grace is currently being led by a QC in a multi-handed murder case due to last five weeks. The case has received media attention.

R v R and 2 others (2020)

Grace is currently instructed as sole counsel on behalf of a businessman accused of fraudulent trading. The case involves allegations spanning across three companies and requires detailed analysis of extensive business records.

R v O and 7 others (2020)

Grace is currently being led by a QC in a multi-handed drug supply case. Grace is representing the second defendant who is accused of playing a leading role in a conspiracy to supply of Class A drugs across county lines. The case has involved analysis of extensive cell site, video surveillance and audio probe evidence.

R v I and 6 others (2019)

Grace was recently led in a multi-handed commercial fraud case, valued at over £1 million. Grace acted for the second defendant, a businessman accused of playing a leading role in a conspiracy to commit fraud and money laundering. The first defendant and Grace's client were involved in a “cut-throat” defence, requiring careful tactical

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decisions throughout. The case involved analysis of thousands of pages of evidence. Grace was trusted to mitigate on behalf of the defendant at sentence.

R v K and 8 others (2018)

Grace was instructed as sole counsel on behalf of a defendant accused of participating in a multi-handed fraud and money-laundering conspiracy. The fraud was valued at £800,000 and the trial lasted 10 weeks. The case involved multiple defendants and Grace navigated a potential “cut-throat” conflict between her client and the first defendant, who was represented by a silk and a junior. The defence involved mastering extensive financial and documentary evidence, and cross-examination of a vulnerable witness. The case attracted media attention.

R v A and 2 others (2018)

Grace was instructed as sole counsel to represent a defendant accused of fraud in relation to construction work. Grace’s client was the first of three defendants on the indictment. The success of the defence turned on the difficult cross-examinations of a vulnerable complainant and an expert witness.

R v S (2018)

Grace was instructed as sole counsel to represent a man accused of an offence under s. 66 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Grace’s client had a number of mental health conditions and the case required careful handling of the defendant’s own evidence and a robust cross-examination of Prosecution witnesses.

R v C (2017)

Grace was instructed as sole junior to represent a mother of two accused of supplying a large quantity of Class A drugs. Grace engaged in robust legal argument around a complex issue relating to the law on “intent” and “knowledge” in the context of drug supply that ultimately led to favorable directions being put before the jury.

Private Prosecution

Grace is experienced in private prosecutions.

She has been sought after to advise individuals and entities at the early stages of private prosecutions, and to represent them at trial and in sentence hearings.

She is a member of the Private Prosecutors’ Association and in 2020 she contributed to the *Consultation on Revisions to the Attorney General’s Guidelines on Disclosure and the CPIA Code of Practice* as a member of the Private Prosecutors’ Association Working Group.

She has recently written an article on the hurdles and opportunities faced by private prosecutors in relation to investigatory powers.

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Notable Cases:

B v B and Others (2019)

Grace was recently led by a QC and a junior to advise an individual on the prospects of bringing a private prosecution against a government official. The case involved allegations of perjury and perverting the course of justice. The case required an extensive review of over one hundred files of evidence, careful consideration of potential avenues for obtaining further evidence and a detailed written advice on the prospects of success.

Royal Mail Group Ltd (2018 – 2020)

Grace has been instructed by the Royal Mail Group in numerous private prosecution cases, including those involving allegations of fraud and other serious dishonesty. She has been asked to advise in relation to potential charges and has been instructed in private prosecutions at trial and at sentence.

Professional Discipline

Grace has a substantial professional discipline practice, with a particular focus in the medical field.

She has extensive experience in acting on behalf of both regulatory bodies and individuals, and she is able to draw on that experience to bring a nuanced perspective to her cases.

Grace has represented doctors, nurses and midwives across the broad spectrum of professional discipline, including those facing allegations of sexual misconduct, serious professional misconduct, serious clinical errors and serious dishonesty.

She has been instructed in a number of lengthy professional disciplinary hearings. She has experience in cases involving experts, vulnerable witnesses and extensive medical evidence. She has also advised and represented clients at the sensitive sanction stage of hearings, including those at risk of being removed from their professional register.

Inquests & Public Inquiries

Inquests:

Grace is regularly instructed to represent individuals who have been named as Properly Interested Persons (PIPs) at inquests. She has particular experience in representing medical professionals, including those at risk of criticism.

Grace is able to draw on her substantial experience in criminal law and professional discipline to recognise when an inquest may have implications in either of those fields, and to advise her clients accordingly.

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Notable Cases:

Inquest into the Death of P, (representing Dr. A, Dr. M and Dr. L) (2020)

Grace was instructed to represent three doctors at an inquest that lasted a week and attracted substantial media attention. The case involved questioning multiple expert witnesses.

Inquest into the Death of the death of Baby U, (representing Dr. M) (2019)

Grace was instructed to represent a surgeon in an inquest involving the death of a newborn baby. The case involved a potential conflict between Grace's client and the Trust who had employed them, which required careful handling throughout the hearing.

Inquest in relation to the Manchester Arena Attack (2019)

Grace was instructed to assist with a complex disclosure review in relation to the inquest into the Manchester Arena attack.

Inquest into the Death of H (representing Nurse A) (2018)

Grace was instructed to represent a nurse in an inquest involving the death of a patient who had absconded from a psychiatric hospital. Her client was at risk of serious criticism, a situation which Grace navigated with great care. The inquest lasted two weeks and involved complex legal arguments relating to causation.

Inquiries and Investigations:

Grace also has experience in public inquiries and investigations.

Grace was instructed across multiple strands of IICSA, including in relation to the Child Migration Programme, Rochdale, the Anglican Church and Bishop Peter Ball.

Grace contributed to research into how the criminal justice system handles cases of child sex abuse and was selected by the Inquiry to speak on this issue in a live-streamed seminar. She was also instructed by the Inquiry to assist with complex disclosure exercises involving large volumes of highly sensitive material.

Grace was also instructed for the defence on behalf of a highly successful businessman facing a Serious Fraud Office investigation. The case involved a complex disclosure review involving a large volume of evidence.

Grace also assisted with a sensitive disclosure exercise on behalf of a professional football club in anticipation of a high profile FIFA investigation.

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Accreditations



Appointments & Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- Health & Safety Lawyers Association
- Young Fraud Lawyers Association
- Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers

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- Female Fraud forum

Education & Qualifications

- 2015: Scholarship, Middle Temple Young Barristers' Association, International Internship
- 2014: Bar Professional Training Course, City Law School
- 2013: BA (Hons) Law, Queen's College, Oxford University

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