

Grace Forbes

"Grace is the most talented and committed young junior around. She is unquestionably a rising star. She has acute tactical judgement and an intensive, forensic focus. Grace's total mastery of voluminous and complex papers is amazing."

Legal 500 UK 2024



Year of Call: 2015

Grace Forbes specialises in criminal law, inquests, inquires and professional discipline.

She is ranked as a 'Rising Star' (Tier 1 Fraud) in the Legal 500 UK 2024 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.

She has recently been instructed as a led junior in a multi-handed murder and firearms conspiracy, two three-month million-pound commercial fraud trials and a Class A county lines drugs conspiracy. She also has experience in serious cases that she has been instructed in alone, including representing one of seven defendants in a three month boiler room fraud trial and the first defendant in a complex money laundering case. She is currently instructed in two lengthy upcoming Trading Standards fraud cases involving multiple defendants, complex legal argument and cross examination of expert witnesses. She is instructed to represent one of nine defendants in a s.18 GBH case involving a stabbing, a young defendant accused of rape and a defendant accused of child abduction.

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

Grace has extensive experience in inquests and inquiries. She was one of four barristers instructed in the Independent Review into the Boohoo Group's Leicester supply chain, an inquiry that attracted widespread media interest. She made important contributions to the lengthy report published at the end of the review.

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.

What Others Say:

Location

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RISING STAR “*Grace is the most talented and committed young junior around. She is unquestionably a rising star. She has acute tactical judgement and an intensive, forensic focus. Grace’s total mastery of voluminous and complex papers is amazing.*” – Legal 500 UK 2024

RISING STAR in Legal 500 UK 2022 & 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 is 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 J and 5 others (2023)

Grace was led by a senior criminal barrister in a multi-million-pound consumer product fraud and money laundering trial that was heard over three months at Southwark Crown Court. In a six-defendant trial, their client was the only one to receive ‘not guilty’ verdicts.

R v N (2023)

Grace acted alone to represent a young man accused of sexual assault and witness intimidation. The trial involved unusual evidence relating to regression therapy and required careful witness handling. Her client was acquitted of all counts.

R v B and 7 others (2022)

Grace was led by a KC in a multi-handed murder and firearms conspiracy. Their client was accused of plotting a vengeance killing against the background of allegations of gang involvement in Manchester. The case involved voluminous EncroChat evidence and attracted substantial media attention.

R v S and another (2022)

Grace represented a young, vulnerable woman charged with Possession with Intent to Supply heroin and cocaine. Grace prepared detailed submissions in respect of modern slavery and abuse of process that led to the case being discontinued against her client.

R v L (2022)

Grace brought a successful appeal against £1m confiscation order imposed following a contested Proceeds of

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Crime Act hearing. The win halved the amount that her client had to pay to meet the order and secured his wife's share in the £1m family home that had been held in his sole name. The case involved complex legal argument and was widely reported.

R v M and 2 others (2022)

Grace was instructed as sole counsel on behalf of a businessman accused of high-value fraudulent trading. The case involved allegations spanning across three companies and requires detailed analysis of extensive business records.

R v A (2022)

Grace was instructed on behalf of a young defendant of good character, accused causing Grievous Bodily Harm, with intent. The multi-handed case involved a violent disorder on the streets of Coventry that resulted in a death. Case preparation involved close analysis of hours of CCTV footage and difficult tactical decisions.

R v O and 7 others (2020)

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

R v I and 6 others (2019)

Grace was 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 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.

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

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investigatory powers.

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 – 2022)

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 advised in relation to charging decisions 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 also has experience in acting as Counsel to the Inquest.

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 C (Counsel to the Inquest) (2023)

Grace has been instructed by one of His Majesty's Senior Coroners to act Counsel to the Inquest. The inquest concerns the sudden death of a 17-year-old boy. The inquest has begun and is ongoing. It is expected to have spanned more than 6 weeks by its conclusion. During the inquest Grace has led the questioning of a very large number of witnesses, including medical experts across multiple fields.

Inquest into the death of E, a Child, (representing a Company) (2023)

Grace is instructed to represent a business in a complex inquest into the death of a 4-year-old boy who suffered from cerebral palsy who is believed to have died after becoming entrapped in a cot bed. The inquest is ongoing.

Inquest into the death of S (representing a Prison) (2023)

Grace is instructed to represent a prison in respect of an inquest into the death of a prisoner. The inquest will examine issues including the measures put in place to minimize the spread of COVID 19 within the prison.

Inquest into the death of S (representing Dr. M) (2023)

Grace was instructed to represent a doctor in respect of the inquest into the death of a prisoner who had committed suicide whilst on remand. Grace was required to navigate difficult issues in respect of the roles and responsibilities within the prison. She drafted detailed written submissions on the law that were accepted by the Coroner.

Inquest into the death of R (representing a Medical Practice and Dr. K) (2022)

Grace was instructed to represent a medical practice and an individual GP in respect of an inquest into the death of a young woman who died from a pulmonary embolism. The inquest lasted 2.5 weeks and involved complex and hard-fought legal argument.

Inquest into the death of T (representing Dr. C) (2022)

Grace was instructed to represent a senior GP in respect of an inquest into the death of a young woman who suffered from a complex array of mental and physical disorders.

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.

Inquiries and Investigations:

Grace also has experience in public inquiries and investigations.

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Grace is currently instructed in the UK COVID-19 inquiry.

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.

Accreditations



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Appointments & Memberships

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