

Max Mills

Call: 2018



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Max Mills represents individuals, companies and government departments in a multi-disciplinary practice encompassing Business Crime and Financial Services, Inquests and Public Inquiries, Criminal Regulatory and Professional Discipline.

He is uniquely placed to act in complex cases on the cusp of criminal, regulatory and public law, and is often instructed to provide strategic advice during the early stages of proceedings in both the criminal and civil jurisdictions.

Appointed to the Attorney General's C Panel in 2023, Max is currently instructed as part of the inquiry team in Module 3 of the Covid-19 Inquiry and as part of the Ministry of Defence's counsel team in the Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan. In 2021, he was part of the counsel team for the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice in the inquests into the deaths arising out of the terrorist attack at Fishmongers' Hall.

Max has acted in large-scale financial services investigations conducted by the Bank of England – into Standard Chartered in 2021 and into Credit Suisse in 2023 – which each resulted in record fines being imposed. He is regularly instructed to represent individuals and corporate clients in matters where financial regulation and white-collar crime intersect.

Before coming to the Bar, Max qualified as a solicitor at an international commercial law firm, where he acted in cross-border civil fraud trials and regulatory investigations across a number of industries, before he was seconded to deputise for the General Counsel of a FTSE 250 company.

Max is also ranked in the Legal 500 UK Guide as a leading junior in Inquests and Inquiries.

Expertise

Business Crime & Financial Services

Max specialises in Business Crime and Financial Services. He brings to this area of practice his experience of working at an international commercial law firm and in-house at a FTSE 250 company. Max is able to provide strategic advice to individuals and corporate clients

facing the full spectrum of criminal and regulatory action in the financial sphere.

Notable cases:

Credit Suisse

Instructed by the Bank of England as an Investigator in an investigation into Credit Suisse for significant failures in risk management and governance in connection with its exposures to Archegos Capital Management. Max's role included conducting interviews with senior individuals involved in the client relationship and participating in month-long settlement negotiations with the legal representatives of Credit Suisse and UBS (which acquired Credit Suisse in June 2023). Credit Suisse was fined £87m, the largest ever imposed by the PRA.

Operation Adonis

Led junior, representing an investment fund director in a £4m binary options trading fraud in a six-week trial at Southwark Crown Court.

Operation Totem

Instructed by the Serious Fraud Office as Deputy Lead Disclosure Counsel in the prosecution of three investment fund directors for fraudulently running a Cayman-based legal financing fund which, at the time of collapse, owed investors £120m.

Standard Chartered

Instructed by the Bank of England as an Investigator in an investigation into Standard Chartered for failing to be open with the PRA in respect of a tailored PRA liquidity expectation. Max acted in all the settlement negotiations with SC's representatives and SC was fined £46.5m, which – at the time – constituted the largest fine imposed in a PRA-only enforcement case.

Criminal Defence

Max has established a Criminal Defence practice years ahead of his Call. In recent years, he has been instructed to defend in long-running, multi-handed trials involving allegations of murder, large-scale supply of drugs, kidnap, armed robbery and firearms. He is commended for his meticulous analysis of cases and his client care skills.

Notable cases:

Operation Virtuous

Led junior in an eight-handed conspiracy to supply cocaine valued in excess of £100m, featuring EncroChat evidence, in a six-week trial at Winchester Crown Court.

Operation Arbus

Led junior in a twelve-handed kidnapping, false imprisonment and blackmail carried out by a nationwide organised crime group, in a twelve-week trial at Newport Crown Court.

Operation Nervurr

Led junior in a four-handed conspiracy to murder in a ten-week trial at the Central Criminal Court.

Inquests & Public Inquiries

Max has a diverse practice in Inquests and Public Inquiries. He has represented a range of Interested Parties in inquests from bereaved families, to medical professionals and NHS Trusts, to Government Departments. He has advised on and acted in judicial review proceedings arising out of inquests. In the field of Public Inquiries, he is currently instructed in the Covid-19 Inquiry and in the Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan.

Notable cases:

Inquest into the death of RF

Instructed to represent an NHS Trust in an Article 2 inquest before a jury, following a judicial review challenging the decision of the CPS not to bring criminal proceedings in respect of the death at HMP Woodhill.

Inquest into the death of MM

Instructed to represent a GP in a two-week Article 2 inquest before a jury following the death of a prisoner at HMP Forest Hill as a result of a combination of prescribed and illicitly-obtained medication.

Inquest into the death of LC

Instructed to represent an NHS Trust in an Article 2 inquest before a jury following the death of a 13-year-old girl by hanging.

Inquest into the death of MA

Instructed to represent an NHS Trust in a three-week Article 2 inquest before a jury following a death in HMP High Down.

Fishmongers' Hall Inquests

Instructed by the Government Legal Department to represent the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice in the inquests into the terrorist attack at Fishmongers' Hall.