

Peter Lownds

Call: 1998

"Peter masters the most complex paper-heavy cases quickly. He is great with lay clients and an absolute pleasure to work with."

Chambers UK 2025 (Financial Crime)



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Peter Lownds has a mixed practice covering complex criminal cases, professional disciplinary proceedings, and inquests.

His criminal practice often involves acting for professionals. He has substantial experience in representing clients facing allegations of fraud or high-level involvement in drugs supply. During the first half of this year, he has successfully defended a professional businesswoman accused of involvement in a substantial business fraud, and also secured an acquittal for a man charged with managing the commercial supply of Class A drugs.

Peter is frequently also instructed in disciplinary proceedings. He has defended doctors, dentists, teachers, and police officers. He also acts for regulatory bodies and has presented cases against vets, optical professionals, teachers and for NHS England. He has particular expertise in defending cases concerning allegations of dishonesty and sexual misconduct. His disciplinary cases this year have included defending a doctor accused of sexually harassing nurses and representing a doctor facing multiple allegations of dishonest misrepresentation.

He is regularly instructed to represent interested parties at inquests. He has acted for families, health authorities, housing providers and doctors. Earlier this year he represented the family of a man who died after he was restrained on the floor of a pub. His other recent inquests include representing a psychiatrist at an inquest concerning the death of a child deliberately killed by a man who drove his car into a group of school children, and representing another doctor in circumstances in which a father shot and killed his partner and their children before shooting himself.

Peter regularly undertakes pro-bono work for the Death Penalty Project and is a committed volunteer for the homeless charity Crisis.

Peter accepts [Direct Access](#) instructions.

Expertise

Business Crime & Financial Services

Peter is a former civil litigation solicitor with City firm Slaughter and May. He has substantial experience in defending serious and complex cases involving allegations of fraud, money laundering, corruption, and high value confiscation.

He is listed as a leading junior in Financial Crime by Chambers UK.

His fraud experience encompasses all types of cases including advanced fee, false identity, mortgage, benefit, and Ponzi and pyramid schemes.

Earlier this year he successfully defended a professional businesswoman accused of involvement in a substantial business fraud following a three-month trial in which all the other defendants were convicted.

He also recently acted for a business owner accused of involvement in a boiler room fraud. The case concerned the selling to private investors of a US-based investment product that involved lending money to pay- day loan companies. The trial included a major conflict with the other leading defendant and complex confiscation proceedings.

Peter's other recent high-profile cases include representing a Russian banker charged with accepting bribes from a US based consultant representing oil and gas companies seeking loans from a European bank. The case lasted over seven years and included substantial issues of disclosure. He has also represented the owner of a Northern Soul record supply business accused of widespread fraudulent trading over a five-year period and breach of copyright and trades mark offences. The case included a challenge to the admissibility of the record examination conducted by the prosecution's expert.

His imminent trials include representing a company director accused of being involved in an alleged six-year long "cash for crash" insurance fraud, and defending a businesswoman accused of participation in a substantial international time-share fraud.

Notable Previous Cases:

2023

K v X (Southwark CC)

Acting for client acquitted in a multi-million-pound consumer product fraud and money laundering trial.

2021

R v I (Southwark CC)

Acting for a business owner accused of involvement in a boiler room fraud concerning the selling to private investors of a US based investment product involving the lending of money to pay-day loan companies.

2019

R v D (Southwark CC)

Representing a director charged with fraudulent trading concerning the activities of a food distribution company.

2018

R v P (Cardiff CC)

Acting for a wholesale Northern Soul music manufacturer and seller accused of fraudulent trading and breach of copyright and trades mark offences.

R v B (Teesside CC)

Acting for retired magistrate accused of money laundering his son's drugs receipts.

2017

R v R (Central Criminal Court)

Acting for a senior banker in an immensely factually complex banking corruption case concerning allegations of bribes being accepted in regard to applications to a European bank from oil and gas companies in the old Soviet Republics.

2016

R v P (Southwark CC)

Acting for a company owner charged with involvement in multimillion pound international banking fraud involving the theft of monies from the bank accounts of extremely wealthy individuals.

R v R (Blackfriars CC)

Representing the owner of rail engineering consultancy company charged with evading all income tax, national insurance, and VAT for 13 years.

R v H (Nottingham CC)

Acting for a business director charged, together with his wife (a retired District Judge), with the forgery of a will and other documents to facilitate the theft of two country cottages.

2015

R v B (Southwark CC)

Acting for the assistant to the managing director in a high value City-based diamond trading fraud that involved the selling of overpriced coloured diamonds to investors.

Criminal Defence

Peter is listed as a leading junior in Criminal Law by both Chambers UK, and The Legal 500.

Drugs Supply

He is frequently instructed on behalf of people accused of being concerned in the commercial importation or supply of class A drugs. He has considerable experience in pursuing disclosure disputes and in presenting abuse-of-process applications. He is also skilled at challenging the prosecution's interpretation of telephone evidence.

Notable cases include successfully acting for a woman charged with involvement in a major nationwide opium supply conspiracy and successfully appealing the sentence of the pilot of an aircraft used to import cocaine from mainland Europe. His most recent cases have involved representing a retired magistrate accused of drug-related money laundering, in a case founded upon the evidence of a supergrass and acting for a man accused of being the assistant to the leader of a major Luton/Greater London heroin conspiracy.

Homicide & Serious Non-fatal Violence

He has considerable experience in representing clients accused of homicide or serious non-fatal violence. He has dealt with many cases involving an alleged gang or organised crime background. Recent cases include representing a young man with learning difficulties accused of the manslaughter of a delivery driver and acting for a businessman accused of attempting to murder his wife.

In a particularly high profile case he successfully represented a pilot of a helicopter charged with manslaughter following a fatality at Long Marston Airfield.

Trafficking

Peter is experienced in representing clients accused of trafficking offences. His recent cases include representing a music company businessman facing charges concerning trafficking women from South America and Europe for employment in a prostitution business.

Rape & Other Sexual Offending

He has conducted many trials involving allegations of rape and serious sexual offending. His cases include defending a man charged with historical rapes as part of a major grooming investigation and representing a mental health carer alleged to have sexually abused a woman lacking the capacity to consent. His past rape cases include obtaining an acquittal for an actor who appeared in the film War Horse.

Terrorism

Peter has defended in Islamic terrorism cases. These include the House of Lords case of *R v G; R v J* [2009] UKHL 13 and a very high-profile case concerning al-Qaeda's internet media operation. His experience includes representing a teenager accused of grooming a vulnerable fellow college student to construct a pipe bomb for use in a planned terrorist incident. He also acted as junior counsel for a man accused of conducting an animal-rights-motivated bombing campaign against Oxford University.

Contempt of Court & Perverting the Course of Justice

He has a niche interest in cases involving allegations of contempt of court or perverting the course of justice. He acted for a man who published a recent image of one of the men responsible for the murder of Jamie Bulger. He has also represented a juror who conducted internet research.

Notable Cases:

2024

R v BN (Isleworth CC)

Represented a man accused of involvement in a fraud in which it was alleged that dishonest misrepresentations were made to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and various relief charities to obtain free accommodation and financial support that had been made available to those who had been resident at Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire. Following an eight-week trial at Isleworth Crown Court his client was acquitted.

2023

R v X

Represented a consultant anaesthetist alleged to have physically assaulted a child while trying to put a mask providing air and anaesthetic on to the child's face. After a two-day trial, during which the court heard from multiple eyewitnesses, the District Judge found the doctor not guilty.

2022

R v M (Winchester CC)

Representing a man alleged to have played a leading role in a major cocaine supply network. The case involved prosecution expert evidence of the alleged deployment of a novel telephone anti-surveillance technique involving the use of spoof SIM cards.

2021

Acting for a businessman accused of attempting to murder his wife.

2019

R v K (Kingston CC)

Acting for a man alleged to have played a leading role in a Greater London heroin conspiracy.

2018

R v B (Teesside CC)

Acting for a retired magistrate accused of drugs-related money laundering in a case involving evidence from a Supergrass.

R v R (Cambridge CC)

Acting for a mental health care worker alleged to have sexually abused a woman lacking the capacity to consent. The case involved the questioning of two witnesses with severe learning difficulties.

2017

R v W (Court of Appeal)

The successful appeal of the 19-year prison sentence of the 'cocaine pilot'. Andrew Wright had previously pleaded guilty in 2016 to conspiracy to import £33.5m of cocaine in his light vessel plane.

R v K (Blackfriars CC)

Represented a garage owner at trial charged with involvement in a conspiracy to import and supply two hundred kilos of cocaine via Tilbury docks.

2016

R v L (Kingston CC)

Large multi-handed £1M opium conspiracy. Represented second defendant and partner of leading conspirator.

R v L (Peterborough CC)

Represented a man with learning difficulties charged with manslaughter involving robbery on pizza delivery driver

2015

R v I (Central Criminal Court)

Representing a teenager accused of grooming a vulnerable fellow college student to buy ingredients for a pipe bomb to be used in a terrorist attack.

Inquests

Peter has considerable experience in dealing with inquests. This includes representing interested persons into deaths caused by deliberate criminal acts, deaths in prisons, deaths in healthcare settings, and other high profile cases involving workplace accidents or deaths in the community.

He has acted at inquests for families of the bereaved, local authorities, health authorities, housing providers, and individual professional workers.

The experience he gained from previously working as a clinical negligence solicitor, and as a legal adviser to a leading teaching trade union, has equipped him with sensitive client care skills and invaluable insight into workplace environments and the working lives of busy professionals.

He has also acted as counsel on two major independent inquiries into homicides committed by patients with mental health problems.

Notable Recent Cases:

2023

Inquest touching the death of CB

Representing emergency department nurse in high-profile inquest into the death of a young man suffering from cardiogenic shock. (4-week hearing. Case ongoing)

Inquest touching death of JC

Representing family in high-profile inquest into death of man who suffered a cardiac arrest after being physically restrained in a pub. The case had been adjourned part way through the proceedings after the coroner invited the police to re-open a criminal investigation following Peter's cross-examination of the forensic pathologist and one of the men involved in the restraint. (2-week hearing)

Inquest touching death of LW

Representing sheltered housing company in inquest into the death of a man with mental health and learning difficulties who died as a result of a ruptured oesophagus after a period of weight loss and vomiting. My client had housed the deceased in the immediate period prior to his death.

2022

Inquest touching the death of DN

Representing a hospital trust in an inquest in the death of man who died from a heroin overdose following his discharge into the community from a mental health unit run by my client.

Inquest touching the death of KF and others

Representing GP at in an inquest into the deaths of four people in circumstances in which a father shot and killed his partner and their

children before shooting himself. My client participated in the firearms application process for the gun involved.

Inquest touching the death of HW

Representing a GP at an inquest into the death of a 12-year-old boy who was killed after a man deliberately drove his car into a group of school children. My client had conducted a Mental Health Act assessment on the man responsible.

Inquest touching the death of LB

Representing a doctor in an inquest into the death in of a woman at HMP Peterborough who died following a period of alcohol and drug withdrawal. My client had conducted an examination of the deceased at Peterborough Crown Court.

Professional Discipline

Peter is currently ranked as a leading junior in Professional Discipline and Regulatory Law in Legal 500.

He is frequently instructed by regulatory bodies and on behalf of individual practitioners. His experience includes representing professionals in tribunals and in associated high court proceedings.

The experience he gained from working as a clinical negligence solicitor, and as a legal adviser to a leading teaching trade union, has equipped him with sensitive client care skills and invaluable insight into the disciplinary and performance problems experienced by professionals.

He has represented NHS England and acted for the regulator in cases against optical professionals, osteopaths, pharmacists, vets, and teachers. His defence practice embraces representing audiologists, doctors, dentists, nurses, police officers and teachers.

Peter has dealt with a wide range of cases including allegations of sexual offending, dishonesty, professional or clinical error, health issues, inadequate service provision, bullying and serious compliance failings, and alleged disgraceful conduct outside work. He is experienced in handling factually complex cases involving voluminous materials and multiple complaints. His criminal defence experience means that he has particular expertise in defending cases concerning allegations of dishonesty and sexual misconduct.

He has acted as the legal adviser at hearings for the Teaching Regulator and for a University School of Medicine.

In addition, he has also served on the Professional Conduct Committee of the Bar Standards Board.

Notable Recent Cases:

2023

GMC v Dr S

Representing consultant anaesthetist accused of assaulting a patient during a clinical procedure. (ongoing)

GMC v Dr M

Representing GP accused of multiple acts of dishonesty regarding applications for professional positions. (4-week hearing)

GMC v Dr M

Representing emergency medicine doctor accused of sexually harassing nurses. (2-week hearing)

2022

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons v Ms A

Representing RCVS against nurse accused of dishonest record keeping. (1-week hearing)

GMC v Dr X

Representing consultant in acute medicine accused of dishonest misrepresentation to facilitate access to a private hospital. (2-week hearing)

General Pharmaceutical Council v Mr A

Representing GPC against pharmacist convicted of supplying controlled drugs. (1-week hearing)

GMC v Dr A

Representing consultant in general medicine accused by his wife of assault and coercive control. (5-week hearing)

2021

GMC x Dr M

Representing surgeon accused of plagiarising the academic work of a colleague. (2-week hearing)

GMC v Dr B

Representing consultant anaesthetist accused of stealing and taking controlled drugs. (1-week hearing)

GMC v Dr M

Representing consultant endocrinologist accused of sexual assault. (3-week hearing)