

Will Martin

“Will has a remarkable analytical mind and as an advocate he is confident, charming & persuasive. He is a stellar practitioner.”
Legal 500 UK 2024



Year of Call: 2010

020 7353 5324

Will Martin is a highly regarded junior, ranked in the Legal 500 as a leader in the fields of crime and sport.

Considered to be a first-class advocate and astute tactician, Will advises and acts for individuals and companies in a diverse array of matters across the criminal spectrum, from pre-charge through to trial.

Will's criminal practice focuses primarily on defending and prosecuting serious crime, white-collar crime and regulatory crime. He has particular experience in complex cases, including murder, bribery and high-value fraud.

Will has a busy sports law practice, with an expertise in football. He regularly acts for sports' governing bodies, such as the Football Association and the English Football League in high profile regulatory and disciplinary disputes.

Will is considered by The Legal 500 to be “*one of the best juniors in sports regulatory disputes out there*”, and was shortlisted as Sports Junior of the Year in The Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2023.

Will is able to receive [Direct Access](#) instructions.

What Others Say:

“One of the best juniors in sports regulatory disputes out there.” – Legal 500 UK 2024 (Sport)

“Will has a remarkable analytical mind and as an advocate he is confident, charming & persuasive. He is a stellar practitioner.” – Legal 500 UK 2024 (Crime)

“He has all the qualities one looks for in a top criminal barrister, combining a fierce tactical intellect with effortless advocacy.” – Legal 500 UK 2023

“Will is one of the best criminal barristers of his generation and a definite star of the future. He has a very sharp intellect meaning he successfully practices across a number of areas, including crime. He

Location

2 Hare Court
Temple
London
EC4Y 7BH

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is an elegant advocate who can target a good point with laser-like precision. He is one of the few juniors one could confidently entrust to conduct any aspect of a serious case including complex legal arguments before the Court of Appeal.” – Legal 500 UK 2022

“One of the best juniors at the criminal bar. He thinks deeply about his cases and puts huge effort into their preparation. An outstanding all-rounder, he is comfortable arguing points of law and addressing juries. He has the ability to work across a number of practice areas. A definite star in the making.” – Legal 500 UK 2021

“A natural advocate with a real presence in court” – Legal 500 UK 2020

Business Crime & Financial Services

Will specialises in defending and prosecuting cases of business and white collar crime, including high value fraud, bribery and corruption, money laundering, and bankruptcy and insolvency offences.

Will has extensive experience both defending and prosecuting SFO and FCA cases. He spent a year seconded to the FCA working on Operation Tabernula, the largest ever insider trading prosecution brought by the regulator, and Operation Cotton, a multi-million pound land banking fraud.

Will has experience defending in high-value cases involving cryptocurrencies, and engaging with complex concepts such as Bitcoin clustering and tracing.

Will is experienced in defending complex confiscation proceedings at first instance and before the Court of Appeal.

Recent Cases:

R v AH & Ors

Led junior defending the company director of a demolition company alleged to have bribed employees of a large multinational construction company to favour his workers. Instructed by Shearman Bowen solicitors.

R v JL & Ors

Defence of individual charged with involvement in a conspiracy to defraud customers of Blockchain.com of massive amounts of Bitcoin (£15m plus) using a spoofed website.

Insolvency Service v A, B & C

Advising the directors of a MedTech company in relation to an Insolvency Service investigation into an alleged failure to notify creditors of an application to strike off a company.

Operation Grapevine

Leading junior defending a disqualified company director accused of the laundering the proceeds of a £13m Ponzi scheme. The trial at Southwark Crown Court lasted two months. Instructed by Shearman Bowen solicitors.

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Lam v R

Appeal against first instance judge's determination of a wife's interest in assets available to satisfy confiscation order (the marital home) following the husband's conviction for tax evasion. Reported at [Lam v R. \[2022\] EWCA Crim 448](#).

SFO v Thomas & Ors

Led junior defending the CEO of an international fibre-optic / infrastructure company alleged to have played a significant role in a factoring fraud perpetrated against Barclays and KBC banks to the value of £160m. The trial at Southwark Crown Court lasted five months. Instructed by Janes Solicitors.

Criminal Defence

A fearless and agile advocate, Will's defence practice has a particular focus on serious and complex cases, and encompasses matters such as white collar crime, homicide, drug importation and supply, and public disorder including protests.

Will has particular experience in representing professionals, including company directors and executives, doctors and police officers.

Recent Cases:

R v RO & Ors

Leading Eleanor Fox, represented one of three defendants at St Albans Crown Court charged with conspiracy to supply Class A drugs. This was an 'EncroChat' case arising from the NCA's Operation Venetic.

R v RL

Defence (led) of defendant accused of part-financing £30 million international cocaine importation. The trial lasted two months. Instructed by Shearman Bowen solicitors.

R v RW

Defence (led) of a 15 year old charged with murder. Instructed by Fosse Law.

R v MCT

Defence (led) of an individual charged with murder. Instructed by Fosse Law.

R v TP & Ors

Defence (alone) of an individual charged with violent disorder following involvement in clashes with police and antifascist protesters. The incident was widely reported following the channel 4 documentary Angry, White & Proud. Instructed by Duncan Lewis solicitors.

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Criminal Regulatory

A major part of Will's practice is advising and acting in matters related to business regulation, especially defending criminal cases brought by national and local government agencies against company directors and businesses.

Will has extensive experience in matters related to director's duties under the Companies Act and the Insolvency Act, and health and safety, trading standards, planning and environmental protection regulations.

Recent Cases:

Insolvency Service v A, B & C

Advising the directors of a MedTech company in relation to an Insolvency Service investigation into an alleged failure to notify creditors of an application to strike off a company.

R v Gettings

Prosecution (led) of the director of a waste disposal management company for gross negligence manslaughter and failing to discharge a duty under s.33 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 following the death of a scrap yard worker who had become entangled in an industrial conveyor belt.

Companies House v RM

Defence of company directors prosecuted under the Companies Act 2006 for failing to deliver up company accounts. Instructed by Brabners LLP.

DBEIS v GC

Defence of a businessman prosecuted by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy for allegedly falsifying invoices during the winding up of multi-million pound business in order to account for

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fraudulent cash withdrawals. Instructed by Oracle solicitors.

HSE v MR

Defence of a business owner prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive following an accident in which an employee's hand was amputated.

HSE v Company X

Defence of a company prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive for allegedly dangerous excavation and building works at a residential property in London.

Trading Standards v SA & Ors

Defence of the company secretary of a London estate agency against allegations of fraudulent trading.

Trading Standards v SK & Ors

Defence of the director of a car dealership charged with various offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

Private Prosecution

Will frequently advises and represents clients who wish to bring or defend private prosecution proceedings.

Will has successfully conducted numerous prosecutions in the Magistrates' and Crown Courts.

Will brings invaluable public prosecution experience to bear on the private sphere, having advised on investigation, restraint of assets, evidence, charging, disclosure, and confiscation for agencies as diverse as the CPS, SFO, FCA, UKBA and the Home Office.

Will has particular expertise managing issues of disclosure, a potential pitfall of private prosecution, and has drafted numerous disclosure management documents and protocols.

Will has also helped train private investigators to assist them in giving live evidence in court.

Recent Cases:

R v B & Ors

Will defended three businessmen against a private prosecution brought by a disgruntled associate. The associate alleged a conspiracy to commit blackmail in relation to the purchase of a property.

Following written representations, the DPP was persuaded to take over the case and the CPS then offered no evidence against the three men. Will obtained costs against the private prosecutor for having brought the case improperly, a decision ratified by the Divisional Court: *The Queen (on the application of Ayodeji Holloway) and Harrow Crown Court and Adamneet Singh Bhui, Jimneet Singh Bhui and Gurbinder Singh Bhui [2019] EWHC 1731 (Admin)*

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Professional Discipline

Will specialises in sports professional discipline, particularly within football. Please see the Sports Law tab for more detail.

Additionally, Will has appeared before other disciplinary tribunals, including at the Nursing and Midwifery Council and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Public Prosecution

Will is a Grade 4 Prosecutor. He is frequently instructed as junior counsel, as well as acting alone.

Will's prosecution practice encompasses cases across the criminal spectrum, including matters such as homicide and serious violence, drug supply, and serious sexual offences. Will has particular experience prosecuting cases of human trafficking by organised crime networks.

Recent Cases:

R v L & C

Prosecution of two men for the murder of Tashan Daniel at Hillington Underground Station. Led by Jonathan Rees KC; instructed by the CPS Homicide Unit.

R v ZN & Ors

Prosecution of ZN and six other individuals for conspiring to attack ZN's 3-year-old child using sulphuric acid. The attack took place in a busy shop in Worcester. Led by Jonathan Rees QC; instructed by CPS West Midlands Complex Casework Unit

R v EM

Prosecution of EM for the murder of a young man at a butcher's shop in Wood Green. Led by Brian O'Neill QC; instructed by the CPS Homicide Unit,

R v DF

Prosecution of DF for the killing of his 11-year-old niece. Led by Jonathan Rees QC; instructed by CPS West Midlands Complex Casework Unit

R v SP & Ors

Prosecution of a network of Slovakian traffickers for bringing women from Eastern Europe to the UK for the purposes of sham marriage and prostitution. Led by [Sarah Przybylska](#); instructed by the CPS Special Casework Unit,

R v KH & KH

Prosecution of two public officials at Broadmoor secure psychiatric unit in relation to payments made by the News

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Sports Law

Will's advises and represents clients in sports regulatory and disciplinary disputes.

Will is considered by The Legal 500 to be "*one of the best juniors in sports regulatory disputes out there*", and was shortlisted as Sports Junior of the Year in The Legal 500 UK Bar Awards 2023.

Will has a particular expertise in football, and regularly acts in high profile cases for sports' governing bodies, such as the Football Association and the English Football League.

Will is adept at dealing with both on and off-field disputes. On-field, he is often instructed in matters relating to violent or abusive conduct by players, coaches or supporters. Off-field, Will specialises proceedings relating to intermediaries (i.e. players' and clubs' agents), and disputes relating to the ownership of, and interests held in, clubs.

Will has extensive experience dealing with safeguarding disputes and Anti-Doping Regulation Violations.

Will has represented The FA at appellate level, and advised both The FA and The EFL in relation to High Court proceedings.

Will's current instructions include:

- Representing The FA in relation to alleged breaches of the Working with Intermediaries Regulations by a club, club director, intermediary and high-profile player as a result of the hidden ownership structure of a club;
- Representing The FA in relation to an alleged prohibited agreement between a club and an intermediary to pay a fee based on the future transfer value of a high-profile player.

Will's recent cases include:

- **The FA v Adrian Ward and Colossal Sports Management.** Represented The FA in a case brought against Adrian Ward and Colossal Sports Management Ltd for approaching and inducing an underage player into entering a Representation Contract. The suspensions of 20 months from Intermediary Activity are thought to be the longest imposed for such misconduct.
- **The FA v West Ham United Football Club:** Represented The FA in a case brought against the club as a result of significant crowd disorder at a match against Burnley at the London Stadium in March 2018. The case was complicated by WHUFC's contract with the operators of the London Stadium. The FA successfully proved its case, and the Club was fined £100,000;
- **The FA v David Manasseh:** Represented The FA in case brought against a leading football intermediary and managing director and co-founder of the Stellar Group, for approaching and entering into a representation contract with a player aged under 16. Mr. Manasseh denied the charge, but The FA successfully proved its case. He was suspended from intermediary activity for three months and fined £50,000.

Accreditations

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Appointments & Memberships

- 2020: Appointed to SFO Panel B
- CPS Advocate Panel Level 4
- CPS Serious Crime Group Specialist Panel Level 4

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- CPS Fraud Specialist Panel Level 3
- Young Fraud Lawyers Association
- Criminal Bar Association
- Private Prosecution Association

Education & Qualifications

- BA (Hons) (1st class) Politics, University of Nottingham
- David Karmel Entrance Award, Gray's Inn
- Steen Award, Gray's Inn
- Norman Tapp Memorial Prize, Gray's Inn
- Kalisher Archbold Award, Kalisher Trust

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