

Nick Johnson QC

Call 1994 | Silk 2016



Clerks' Details

 Ian Spencer
 0113 203 1971

 Kate Heald
 0113 203 1983

Appointments

- Category 4 Prosecutor
- Specialist lists for Complex Crime Unit and Fraud Unit

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Bar Council North American Group
- International Bar Association
- Fraud Lawyers Association

Education

- B.A. (Ebor) English (1st Class)
- Dip. Law B.V.C. (London) Pupil Supervisor

Beyond the Bar

- Japanese Speaker
- Interests include Contemporary Photography, Walking, and Skiing
- Advocacy Lecturer at University of York Law Department

Practice Overview

Nick Johnson is a Queen's Counsel barrister in independent practice with a focus on financial and corporate crime, associated regulatory work and other serious and organised crime. He is currently ranked Silk Band 1 for both Crime and Financial Crime in Chambers & Partners 2021 and Tier 1 for Crime in the Legal 500 2021.

Nick has specialised in criminal fraud and money laundering cases since 2001, appearing as leading counsel in some of the largest fraud jury trials in the UK, concerning tax to pharmaceutical and medical devices to financial markets and property frauds, prosecuted by specialist agencies. He has been described in the legal directories over the years as "tactically phenomenal", "a fantastic courtroom advocate" and "pleasingly personable". He has particular expertise in bribery and corruption investigations, including large scale multi-jurisdictional investigations. Companies and individuals retain him, both advising on preventative measures such as Bribery Act compliance and corporate governance, and for wider strategic advice in civil fraud, economic sanctions, mutual assistance, DPAs and civil recovery, often at an early stage. Nick has experience of corporate investigations brought by the Department of Justice and SEC in the United States and investigations and litigation in Europe, Russia and the CIS and the Middle East.

In addition, Nick has extensive experience of regulatory and professional misconduct proceedings, acting for individuals, directors, and companies. These proceedings often overlap with his criminal fraud practice. He has represented police officers, teachers, solicitors, and other professionals over the years, whether in the Crown Court, before their disciplinary body or at inquests. He also provides expert advice and representation in asylum and extradition proceedings.

Nick continues to prosecute and defend in other serious and organised criminal cases. For example, in 2017 he defended the teenage girl who

killed 7-year-old Katie Rough, a case concerning schizotypal and persecutory delusional disorders. In 2018/19, he defended in a double gangland assassination case, concerning the shooting of prominent figures Paul Massey and John Kinsella.

Nick has also been instructed as leading counsel in multiple private prosecution cases in recent years. For the prosecution, he has led investigations into HMRC officers for corruption, into senior company directors for fraud and perverting the course of justice, into a Swiss private bank for corporate criminal offences and leading a crowdfunded investigation into police officers for inflicting GBH and corruption. He has also defended private prosecutions, including acting for a Russian national alleged to have devised a sophisticated fraud scheme which targeted the Hong Kong-based accounts of a Kazakhstani businessman. As such, he has extensive experience of the investigative tools and duties of a private prosecutor, including obtaining foreign evidence, the use of Norwich Pharmacal orders, the enhanced duties of disclosure and candour which apply prior to making an application for a summons and issues of funding and costs. Nick also brings to this work his extensive experience of prosecuting serious crime on behalf of the CPS and specialist prosecuting agencies, in particular in relation to complex business crime.

Complementing his work as UK barrister, Nick is a member of the American and International Bar Associations, the Fraud Lawyers Association and the Bar Council International Committee. He has been a speaker and at the annual ABA White Collar Crime conference and regularly contributes to online publications. He also speaks conversational Japanese and undertakes advocacy training at the University of York.

Nick is qualified to accept instructions by direct access as well as working closely with other UK and foreign lawyers.

Recommendations

Chambers & Partners UK Bar guide has ranked Nick as Band 1 for Financial Crime since 2012.

“He is absolutely brilliant and really good on his feet - a very gifted advocate.” “He is an exceptional advocate and a highly experienced fraud lawyer.”

Chambers and Partners 2021

“A master tactician with a wonderful court presence, he manages the team expertly – simply the real deal.” “He is a phenomenal advocate, both in his written and oral presentation. I would wish him to represent me if I were in trouble-the best guarantee of a favourable outcome.”

The Legal 500 2021

“A first choice for complex criminal matters.” “He’s very hard-working, and is one of the finest advocates you’ve ever seen - his ability to cross-examine is excellent.” “A truly impressive silk with very strong attention to detail. He is assiduous in his preparation and he’s especially good in international fraud cases.”

Chambers and Partners 2020

“Exceptional on his feet and displays excellent client care skills.”

The Legal 500 2020

“He is exceptionally good and his pedigree in fraud is second to none.” “He’s extremely thorough, has tremendous attention to detail and is extremely talented.”

Chambers and Partners 2019

“Recent work includes high-profile murder trials.”

The Legal 500 2018/19

“He is an exceptional advocate who controls a courtroom.”

Chambers and Partners 2018

“He has an excellent courtroom manner and affinity with clients.”

The Legal 500 2017

“Lots of people say they can do white-collar crime, but he is a real expert in it.” “He took silk recently, which was deserved definitely. He is very busy but always on top of everything.”

Chambers and Partners 2017

“A fantastic courtroom advocate.”

The Legal 500 2016

“A class act.”

Chambers and Partners 2016

“His ability to digest and retain information is phenomenal.”

The Legal 500 2015

“He is tactically phenomenal; he’s fantastically focused on each and every case.” “His attention to detail is particularly impressive.”

Chambers and Partners 2014

“A pleasingly able and personable operator with plenty of gravitas, who is especially good at cross examination.”

Chambers and Partners 2012