

David Toal

Call 1990



Clerks

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Memberships

- Northern Circuit
- Criminal Bar Association
- Gray's Inn

Education

- St Bede's College, Manchester and Urmston Grammar School for Boys LLB (Hons) degree
- Bar Vocational Course, Inns of Court School of Law 1989

Criminal

David is a specialist criminal barrister who has developed and maintained a heavyweight criminal practice made up of predominantly defence work. He is regularly instructed in the most serious and high-profile criminal cases including many trials that have been well-publicised over the years.

David is in great demand and is often approached to become involved at the earliest possible stage in order to get the fullest benefit of his advice and also to secure his availability going forward. By way of example, he was asked to represent the Manchester United footballer Mason Greenwood before the case had even been brought before the court.

Once a case reaches trial, his meticulous preparation is clearly apparent and he provides courtroom advocacy of the highest order. The client will receive first-class representation that will ensure he/she has the best possible chance of success before a jury. His record of securing acquittals in trials – often against the weight of the evidence – quite simply reflects this.

Whilst he largely acts for defendants, his abilities have been recognised by the prosecuting authorities and he has been instructed to prosecute significant cases for both the CPS and the Serious Organised Crime Agency at times as lead counsel. Further, he is also a Category 4 CPS Prosecutor (the highest level) and is on the specialist list of approved counsel to be instructed to prosecute trials involving charges of rape and other serious sexual offences.

Whether dealing with professional or non-professional clients, David's personable manner and style inspires trust and confidence in the people he represents and his effectiveness in court is well recognised by both judges and juries.

Criminal Cases

Cases

Murder and Manslaughter

R v Harrison (& others) – ‘Operation Sun & Mera’. Conspiracy to Murder and Conspiracy to Pervert Court of Justice. Represented 1 of 9 Category ‘A’ Defendants. A series of shootings (one victim being a 7 year-old boy) & serious violence linked to the notorious Salford gangs ‘The A Team’ and ‘The Anti A Team’. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Pitt (& others) – represented leading member of the notorious Manchester gang ‘The Pitt Bull Crew’ in a long trial involving Murder, firearms & drug-dealing. Case eventually taken to the Court of Appeal & attracted national publicity.

R v Briercliffe (& others) – represented Defendant charged with Manslaughter following a violent incident with an alleged local paedophile who jumped from the balcony of a block of flats. Complex issues of causation. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Rajkuma – Defendant charged with Soliciting to Murder his wife. The case revolved around his dealings with an undercover Police Officer masquerading as a hit-man.

R v Anderson (& others) – the ‘Frank Buckley’ Murder case. Represented one of the Defendants who were doormen from Yates’ Wine Lodge in Swinton charged following a violent incident outside the pub that led to the death of a customer, Frank Buckley. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Makin – represented nurse charged with Murder of her 4 year-old daughter who then slashed her own wrists and drank anti-freeze in an unsuccessful attempt to take her own life leaving her permanently disabled. Convicted of Manslaughter not Murder.

R v Joy – represented Defendant charged with Murder. Very complex case involving detailed neuropathological evidence to determine whether the brain injury that led to death was caused by violent trauma or ecstasy use.

R v Dempsey (& others) – represented principal Defendant charged with Murder. Involved fatal stabbing by a Manchester street gang. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Pilkington (& others) – represented serving prisoner charged with Manslaughter involving an attack on a fellow prisoner which led to his death. Given circumstances and location of the incident significant issues relating to disclosure of security information re prisoner/staff witnesses.

R v Kalumda (& others) – ‘Operation Adelite’. Represented 1 of 10 Defendants charged with Conspiracy to Murder. Defendants part of notorious ‘RTD’ gang seeking revenge for the murder of a fellow gang member by rival ‘M40’ gang. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Ashurst – the ‘Louise Sellars Murder case’. Defendant charged with Murder of 15 year-old Wigan schoolgirl Louise Sellars. Defendant re-arrested 5 years after her death (and his original arrest) when advanced DNA techniques on a cigarette end found near to her body linked him to the murder. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Khan (& others) – represented principal member of gang charged with Murder. Involved a pre-planned execution over unpaid monies following an agreement not to give evidence in separate criminal proceedings.

R v Schofield – represented 17 year-old Defendant charged with Murder of another 17 year-old by stabbing. Numerous psychiatric issues given the mental health of the Defendant. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Carroll (& others) – represented 1 of 3 Defendants charged with Murder. Sustained assault, robbing and stripping of Deceased before throwing him in a brook where he drowned. Complex issues of joint enterprise and causation.

R v Smith – represented 15 year-old boy charged with Murder. Deceased attacked in the street but ultimately died due to asthma attack. Complex medical issues re: causation. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Davies – represented Defendant charged with Murder. Allegation involved brutal stabbing of his partner before he then fled the country. Arrested in Holland and extradited to face trial in the UK. Case attracted national publicity.

Drugs/Firearms

R v Witter (& others) – ‘Operation Trinket’. Conspiracy to supply Heroin. Represented one of the principal Defendants. Involved seizure of the largest amount of heroin adulterant and bulking agent ever in the UK. Case attracted national publicity.

R v Baillie (& others) – ‘Operation Mallard’. Represented 1 of 13 Defendants charged with Conspiracy to Supply Heroin. Major ‘county-lines’ drug operation. Case attracted national publicity.

R-v-Egerton (& others) – ‘Operation Billow’. Represented 1 of 7 Defendants charged with offences of False Imprisonment and Possessing a Firearm. The Defendant even had a previous conviction involving a firearm. Case attracted national publicity. After a lengthy trial this Defendant was 1 of only 2 that were acquitted.

R-v-RM & KR – represented RM who was 1 of 2 Defendants charged with Possessing a Firearm & Ammunition with Intent to Endanger Life. During trial both blamed each other. Jury acquitted RM of all charges whereas KR was convicted & sentenced.

R v Heathcote (& others) – ‘Operation Incrusto’. Represented one of a number of Defendants charged with a large Conspiracy to Import Class ‘A’ drugs on a massive scale from Holland. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Spensley (& others) – represented 1 of a group of Defendants charged with half billion pound Conspiracy to Import Class ‘A’ drugs from the continent. Described as one of the most sophisticated operations ever dealt with by customs authorities. Attracted national publicity. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Taylor (& others) – ‘Operation Greengage’. Represented one the principal Defendants in what was at the time the largest UK importation case to date. A complex conspiracy involving importation and supply/transfer of drugs, firearms and ammunition. Attracted national publicity.

R v Bashir (& others) – ‘Operation Kestrel’. Represented one of the Defendants charged with Conspiracy to Supply Class ‘A’ drugs in a national operation. Following trial Defendant acquitted of the most serious charge. Attracted national publicity.

R v Bowden (& others) – ‘Operation Sabine’. Represented 1 of 24 defendants charged with Conspiracy to Supply Class A drugs on a commercial scale. Following trial this Defendant 1 of only 2 to be acquitted.

R v Kimmer – represented Defendant charged with serious offences involving firearms, ammunition and drugs. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R-v-A – represented Defendant charged with Possession of a Firearm with Intent to Endanger Life. After a police pursuit whilst driving a stolen car Defendant found to have discarded a fully-loaded gun & had a bullet in his pocket of a type that could be used in the gun. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

Sexual Offences

R-v-Mason Greenwood – represented the Manchester United footballer charged with Attempted Rape, Assault & Controlling Behaviour. Instructed prior to the case reaching court and represented him at his 1st appearance in the Magistrates Court and then at a Crown Court bail application which led to bail being granted. A further Crown Court hearing was dealt with when the case was listed for trial. Subsequently, the CPS discontinued the case and all charges were dropped

David Toal represents footballer *Mason Greenwood* as all charges are dropped

R v M – represented Defendant charged with Rape & Assault. Allegations made by former partner that he repeatedly forced himself upon her sexually then physically attacked her. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R-v-H – represented Defendant charged with Rape & other serious sexual offences. He denied all allegations saying they were involved in consensual sexual activity. The jury found him not guilty of all charges. This was the first jury trial to be held in the North of England after the first covid lockdown and which involved new & unique. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Doyle – represented a former vicar charged with historic sexual allegations. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v H – represented teacher charged with downloading “most graphic” indecent images and voyeurism. Attracted national publicity.

R v Vagheir – represented Rochdale male charged with sexual offences against 4 schoolchildren. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Sutton – represented serving Police Officer charged with sexual offences on two female colleagues. Following trial Defendant acquitted. <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/smutley-policeman-is-cleared-of-sex-attacks-861768>

R v Furnival – represented 15 year-old Defendant charged with repeatedly raping his sister when she was between 5 & 7 years old. Following trial Defendant acquitted of most serious charge.

R v Owolabi (& others) – represented principal Defendant charged with Conspiracy to Rape. Allegations involved arranging to meet a female via social networking site for her to be detained and repeatedly raped by him and his friends. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

R v D – represented Defendant charged with multiple offences of Rape, Indecent Assault & Child Cruelty. Allegations made by 2 adult females relating to when they were children. Following trial Defendant acquitted & a costs order made in his favour.

R v Howe – represented Defendant charged with Rape. Involved allegation he had dragged victim into bushes outside a nightclub and subjected her to a horrific attack. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

Fraud

R v DP (& others) – represented company Director charged with offences of Fraudulent Trading, Fraud by False Representation and Converting Criminal Property. Following lengthy trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Holland/Hunt (& others) – represented 2 Defendants in the large ‘Eon employee’ fraud case & subsequent confiscation proceedings.

R v Ali (& others) – represented Defendant charged with election fraud. Allegation of an organised attempt to cast votes on behalf of other persons in order to secure the election of a particular councillor in a local election.

R v Booth (& others) – represented Defendant charged with offences relating to the avoidance of excise liability following large-scale importation of cigarettes. Following trial Defendant acquitted of most serious charge.

R v Casales (& others) – represented one of the directors of UK North and GM Buses Enterprise Ltd charged with Conspiracy to Defraud. Case involved the falsifying of documents used in proceedings before the Traffic Commissioner to cover up breaches of driving regulations. Attracted national publicity including an investigative TV programme. Defendant acquitted.

R v Moore – Defendant charged with serious bankruptcy offences.

R v Flye – represented Defendant charged with high value fraud relating to subsidies for staff training provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.

R v Kenny (& others) – represented Company Director charged with Conspiracy to Defraud which involved allegations of illegally diverting payments from one company to another.

Other

R v Platt (the ‘Rooney Blackmail’ case) – represented Defendant charged with blackmail of Coleen Rooney following the stealing of a camera which contained very personal photographs of her, Wayne Rooney & other family members.

R v Atkin (& others) – represented 1 of 3 prison officers charged with Misconduct in Public Office following the death of a prisoner in HMP Nottingham. Enormous implications for the processes & policies relating to the care & control of prisoners meant the case was monitored closely by various authorities & agencies. Case attracted extensive publicity. After 4 weeks the trial Judge withdrew the case from the jury & the prison officers were acquitted.

R v Garner (& others) – represented Defendant charged with Conspiracy to Steal. A large and complex case involving theft of rail track and fencing in one of the largest cases nationally of its kind.

R v Orobiyi (& others) – represented principal Defendant allegedly involved in a well-organised Conspiracy to Arrange Sham Marriages between EU nationals and Nigerian males. The case attracted national publicity. After trial Defendant acquitted.

R v Murdoch (& others) – represented Defendant charged following an operation to target large-scale and organised football violence. Following trial Defendant acquitted.

Recommendations

“David is very approachable and responds very quickly. He is an experienced and very well-prepared barrister, who is an excellent jury advocate.”

“David is a go-to for any manner of case.”

Chambers and Partners 2025

“David is a phenomenal barrister and an excellent and articulate advocate. He is well respected by all on the circuit, he is able to absorb a great deal of information in complex cases at short notice, and he is incredible with clients and able to put defendants at ease regardless of the case before them.”

The Legal 500 2025

“David is an excellent jury advocate.”

Chambers and Partners 2024

“David is a dedicated barrister and a great advocate. He always masters his case, is extremely well regarded by the judiciary, and he commands the respect of his clients and solicitors through his measured and thorough approach.”

The Legal 500 2024

“David is extremely approachable, good with clients and fantastic before a jury.”

“He is a top-class act.”

Chambers and Partners 2023

‘David is hard working and thorough, has excellent client care and is approachable and proactive in case preparation.’

The Legal 500 2023

“He is very conscientious, and an extremely forceful and good advocate. He takes very strong legal arguments and goes the extra mile for his lay clients.” “He is one of the best for closing speeches – he really hits the point and the jury takes notice of what he is saying.”

Chambers and Partners 2022

“An extremely effective jury advocate. He is very approachable and provides excellent client care to both the professional client and lay client.”

The Legal 500 2022

“He is a favourite of solicitors and is always very well prepared. He is unflappable in court.” “He is very experienced and realistic. He’s good on his feet and very hard-working.”

Chambers and Partners 2021

“One of the circuit’s best jury advocates.”
The Legal 500 2021

“A fantastic advocate – he’s really excellent, always very well prepared and brilliant in a courtroom.” “An excellent jury advocate.”
Chambers and Partners 2020

“A great jury advocate.”
The Legal 500 2020

“He does very serious crime and is an excellent performer with an excellent client manner. Solicitors love him.” “He is a master tactician at trial.”
Chambers and Partners 2019

“He can use his gentle approach to devastating effect in court.”
The Legal 500 2018/19

“He is a good advocate, who’s good with clients and on the law.”
Chambers and Partners 2018

“A persuasive and very eloquent advocate.”
The Legal 500 2017

“He is hard-working, intelligent, measured and an extremely safe pair of hands.”
Chambers and Partners 2017

“I can hardly convey in words my heart felt gratitude to you for your excellent professional representation of my case. Both you and Louise are a formidable and supportive team!”
Client testimonial

“Mr Toal is nothing short of brilliant.”

“Your help in ensuring PC R retained his livelihood is something I can never thank you enough for and I could never articulate just how grateful we all are that you were there for the Officer during this difficult time.”
Helen Collier (Branch Board Secretary) – Humberside Police Federation

Beyond the Bar

- Interested in all sports but particularly football