

RICHARD SMITH QC

CALL: 1986

SILK: 2001

"He is without equal in terms of people who command respect. He is an exceptional and formidable advocate with an original style of his own."

Chambers UK 2022

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Richard is a criminal and sports law barrister, with over 30 years' experience at the Bar and some 20 years described as a "Leading Silk". He has been described in the independent Chambers UK Guide as a barrister who "*achieves incredible results from seemingly impossible situations*" and as being "*refreshingly unstuffy, proactive and a high-quality lawyer.*" "*An outstanding criminal barrister who is held in the highest regards by peers and clients alike*". Those who have instructed Richard note that "*his client care and courtroom skills are exemplary; he prepares very thoroughly and is very responsive.*"

PRACTICE AREAS

- Crime
 - Sports Law
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CRIME

Having taken Silk at the age of 38 and with over 30 years' experience at the Bar, Richard is one of the most senior and experienced Queen's Counsel practicing in serious crime on the Western Circuit.

Chambers UK guide has consistently described Richard as a "Leading Silk" and "Star individual". Richard's criminal practice is marked by particular experience in the defence and prosecution of cases involving allegations of murder. As the directories note, he regularly appears in the leading cases on Circuit.

Richard combines quality advocacy with a "*wonderful manner with juries*". He is similarly regarded for his caring and approachable manner with clients. "*He is a supreme tactician who thinks about a case through all 360 degrees. You would be hard pressed to find a silk in practice with more murder experience*," "*a down to earth barrister who pulls out unwinnable results*".

His experience and proven reputation over many years, means that Richard is also regularly instructed in privately funded defence cases by those who want to have the very best representation in respect of the criminal allegations made against them. Similarly, Richard also often draws on his criminal court experience, and in particular expertise in the examination of expert and professional witnesses, when instructed to act in family proceedings where the Court is seeking to resolve issues of fact where serious criminal allegations are being made against parents.

SPORTS LAW

Richard has a National reputation in Sports Law. Over many years his practice has covered a wide spectrum of sports, but most notably rugby. Described in this in this field as being " *a hugely intelligent, articulate counsel who remains resolutely calm in a crisis*", Richard's advice and advocacy extends to involvement with clubs, professional bodies, and individual participants both at professional and amateur level

For some time Richard has been retained as Counsel to the England Rugby Team, in that role attending the 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 Rugby World Cups. He toured with and acted for the British and Irish Lions in 2005 and 2009.

Richard's experience in the field is now recognised and called upon by a number of governing bodies who have invited him to adjudicate on disciplinary matters. He also advises on the drafting of sporting regulations.

Richard has lectured to sporting bodies and solicitors alike, both home and abroad, on the subject of sports discipline.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAMBERS UK 2022

Crime

Star Individual

"He is without equal in terms of people who command respect. He is an exceptional and formidable advocate with an original style of his own."

Sport

"He enjoys a strong reputation, particularly for his representation of the England rugby team."

LEGAL 500 2022

Crime

Ranked: Tier 1

Sport

Leading Silk: Tier 1

'He stands out for his calmness and assuredness, as well as his superb clarity of message.'

CHAMBERS UK 2021

Crime

Highly experienced silk able to act as both prosecution and defence counsel in the most challenging and complex criminal cases, including those that feature vulnerable defendants accused of serious offences. He handles cases involving murder, manslaughter and serious sexual allegations.

Strengths: "He is a superb advocate and is very easy to work with."

Recent work: Prosecuted a 17-year-old boy who stabbed his 17-year-old ex-girlfriend to death in her family home.

Sport

Valued for his advice on sports disciplinary matters, particularly in connection with rugby. He is often called upon to advise on the drafting of sports regulations. He is regularly invited to adjudicate on disciplinary matters by governing bodies and is especially popular with the England international rugby team.

Strengths: "He is superb. He gives clear advice."

LEGAL 500 2021

Crime

'A superb advocate with really good courtroom presence - judges and juries like him and listen to what he says.'

Ranked: Tier 1

Sport

Ranked: Tier 1

CHAMBERS UK 2020

Crime

Star individual Highly experienced silk able to act as both prosecution and defence counsel in the most challenging and complex criminal cases, including those that feature vulnerable defendants accused of serious offences. He handles cases involving murder, manslaughter and serious sexual allegations.

Strengths: "He is always on top of his cases, approachable and able to quickly provide advice on any issue arising in the case." "He has an aura of excellence."

Recent work: Acted in R v Wallace, a case involving a woman charged with the murder of her boyfriend who killed himself after she threw acid over him, causing him to suffer devastating injuries.

Sport

Valued for his advice on sports disciplinary matters, particularly in connection with rugby. He is often called upon to advise on the drafting of sports regulations. He is regularly invited to adjudicate on disciplinary matters by governing bodies and is especially popular with the England international rugby team.

Strengths: "He has got bags of experience in on-field misconduct: one of the most highly rated in that area." Recent work: Advised the RFU in numerous matters relating to its disciplinary protocols and the media.

LEGAL 500 2020

Crime

"Couples highly persuasive advocacy with an impressive intellect."

CHAMBERS UK 2019

Crime

Highly experienced silk able to act as both prosecution and defence counsel in the most challenging and complex criminal cases, including those that feature vulnerable defendants accused of serious offences. He handles cases involving murder, manslaughter and serious sexual allegations.

"He is impeccably well prepared and very good with the client." "He is a go-to silk on the Western Circuit and is very hard-working and very approachable."

Recent work: Defended a woman charged with murder after she perpetrated an acid attack on her boyfriend, whose injuries subsequently led him to commit suicide.

Sport

Valued for his advice on sports disciplinary matters, particularly in connection with rugby. He is often called upon to advise on the drafting of sports regulations. He is regularly invited to adjudicate on disciplinary matters by governing bodies and is especially popular with the England international rugby team.

"He's a really, really smooth advocate."

Recent work: Took a central role in planning new protocols for the expected conduct of rugby players on and off the field.

LEGAL 500 2019

Crime

'His preparation is impeccable and he has a great client manner.'

CHAMBERS UK 2018

Crime

Leading Silk - Star Individual

Highly experienced silk able to act as both prosecution and defence counsel in the most challenging and complex criminal cases, including those that feature vulnerable defendants accused of serious offences. He handles cases involving murder, manslaughter and serious sexual allegations.

Strengths: "Richard's vast amount of experience speaks for itself. He is an excellent advocate and he really helps to create a team environment."

Recent work: Represented one of three brothers charged with murder and attempted murder as a result of a long-running violent dispute between two Gypsy families.

Sport

Leading Silk - Band 1

Valued for his advice on sports disciplinary matters, particularly in connection with rugby. He is often called upon to advise on the drafting of sports regulations.

Strengths: "He's outstanding. He's the best I've come across at being able to judge the mood of a tribunal and pitch his arguments accordingly. He knows the nuances of rugby extremely well, so he's able to assess the level at which we should be pleading."

LEGAL 500 2017

Crime

Leading silks

'He has fantastic clarity of thought.'

CHAMBERS UK 2017

Crime

Leading Silk - Star Individual

Highly experienced silk able to act as both prosecution and defence counsel in the most challenging and complex criminal cases, including those that feature vulnerable defendants accused of serious offences.

Strengths: "An extremely competent and able advocate in cases at the very upper end of the spectrum."

Recent work: Represented a former bishop charged with sexual offences and misconduct in public office.

Sport

Leading Silk - Band 1

Valued for his advice on sports disciplinary matters, particularly in connection with rugby. He is often called upon to advise on the drafting of sports regulations.

Strengths: "As far as rugby is concerned, he's the best in the world."

Recent work: Continues to advise the RFU on various issues including in-tournament disciplinary hearings and pre-emptive media planning.

LEGAL 500 2016

Crime

Leading silks

'Experienced in defending and prosecuting serious murders, and sexual offences.'

CHAMBERS UK 2016

Crime

Leading Silk - Star Individual

An outstanding criminal barrister who is held in the highest regards by peers and clients alike. He is renowned for his work on serious and complex murders, manslaughter and other serious criminal offences.

Strengths: "He has phenomenal skill in the law, and is excellent on case preparation. He is compelling; he holds the attention of the court at all times."

Recent work: Acted in R v Ball, a high-profile case concerning a former bishop who was charged with misconduct in public office and indecent assault.

Sport

Leading Silk - Band 1

Highly regarded for his sports disciplinary practice which covers both doping and player misconduct cases. He enjoys a particularly high profile for his work in Rugby Union.

Strengths: "His client care and courtroom skills are exemplary; he prepares very thoroughly and is very responsive."

Recent work: He has attended the last three Rugby World Cups as counsel to the England national team and will reprise this role at the 2015 tournament.

LEGAL 500 2015

Crime

Leading silks

'Extremely good in front of the jury'

CHAMBERS 2015

Crime

Leading Silk - Star Individual

Prosecutes and defends in high-profile and complex criminal cases involving allegations of murder, manslaughter and serious sexual offences.

Expertise: "He is a supreme tactician who thinks about a case through all 360 degrees. You would be hard pressed to find a silk in practice with greater murder experience."

Recent work: He acted in the cases of R v Lagwinowicz and R v Vince, two high-profile murder cases.

Sport

Leading Silk - Band 1

Has considerable expertise in handling regulatory, disciplinary and doping disputes in rugby, horse racing and football. He acts for a range of sports clients, including players, clubs and governing bodies. He is frequently instructed by the latter to adjudicate on disciplinary matters.

Expertise: "He is a leading advocate in rugby disciplinary matters. He puts his case across fantastically well, he can read a panel extremely well, and his ability to make it aware of his best point is unsurpassed."

Recent work: He acted for two professional footballers accused of conspiring with a prominent jockey to fix horse races.

LEGAL 500 2014

Crime

Leading silks

'A down to earth barrister, who pulls out unwinnable results'.

CHAMBERS UK 2014

Crime

Leading Silk - Star Individual

One of the most in-demand silks on the Western Circuit, he is widely praised for his intellectual ability and wonderful manner with juries. He is tremendously good in court, and handles some of the most complex criminal cases in the circuit.

"Richard Smith QC has a commanding and authoritative style combined with a very personable and approachable manner with clients. He has achieved some incredible results in seemingly impossible situations."

Sport

Has regularly been instructed on misconduct, doping and regulatory matters, particularly in horse racing, snooker and rugby union cases. Has been instructed by the RFU and various professional clubs to handle players' disciplinary proceedings.

CHAMBERS UK 2013

Crime

Leading Silk - Star Individual

An automatic choice for solicitors seeking a heavyweight silk in cases involving serious violence, sexual assault or fatal RTAs. His recent cases include the successful defence of Mark Bruton-Young, a complex case concerning the alleged murder of a newborn baby. Sources agree that he is "efficient, effective and an extremely good advocate."

Sport

Richard Smith QC is noted for his work in rugby union and he travelled to the 2011 Rugby World Cup where he represented players in connection with misconduct charges both on the field and away from it. He is held up by his peers as an example of an "efficient, effective and extremely good advocate."

CHAMBERS UK 2012

Crime

He is particularly admired for his work in high-profile murder and kidnapping cases. He acted in R v Rachel Baker, a case involving the alleged abuse and murder of care home residents.

Sport

Richard Smith QC of Guildhall Chambers has developed a tremendous sports practice, and remains much sought after for his expertise in regulatory and disciplinary cases across a wide range of sports, including rugby, football, boxing and horse racing. Due to his role as counsel to both the England Rugby Union team and the British and Irish Lions team, it is perhaps rugby for which he is best known. Sources are quick to praise him as "a hugely intelligent, articulate counsel who remains resolutely calm in a crisis."

CHAMBERS UK 2011

Crime

"Smooth operator" Richard Smith QC was recently involved in Bristol's first ever major terrorist trial. He has a defence and prosecution practice that covers all serious criminal offences, and is an "able jury advocate who communicates very well with clients."

Sport

Richard Smith QC of Guildhall Chambers has a well-established sports practice. He has considerable expertise in sports disciplinary and regulatory cases across a range of sports, including horseracing, football and rugby. Commentators admire the work he has done as counsel to the England rugby team, and favourably note the fact that he was also appointed counsel to the 2005 British and Irish Lions, and toured South Africa with the 2009 Lions.

CHAMBERS UK 2010

Crime

The "Tremendously talented Richard Smith QC has a great deal of natural flair, and is particularly good in cases where a hard-hitting approach is called for".

APPOINTMENTS:

- Crown Court Recorder
 - Chairmen's List of the Sport Resolutions Panel
 - Football Association Appeal Board Chairman
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MEMBERSHIPS:

- British Association for Sport & Law
 - Criminal Bar Association
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RECENT NEWS

- Guildhall Members Appointed to Sports Resolutions' Panel
- Practical Advocacy in the Crown Court has been published today!
- We are very excited to announce publication of our book 'Practical Advocacy in the Crown Court' written by members of our Crime Team
- Coronavirus Regulations Update - 6 July 2020
- Guildhall Chambers is delighted to announce that Peter Binder will join our Crime Team on 1 September 2020
- We are pleased to announce our Crime Team will have their book published by Bloomsbury Legal
- Coronavirus Regulations – Update 23 June 2020
- Coronavirus Regulations - Update 1 June 2020
- Crime Team Newsletter - April 2020
- Richard Smith QC secures the acquittal of Berlinah Wallace
- Guildhall Chambers are recognised for excellence, Oct 2015
- Rugby World Cup 2015 - Ready for kick off! Sept 2015
- Richard Smith QC, successfully prosecuted murderer of Pennie Davis - April 2015

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