



# Alexander Shanks

Call 2022

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Alex became a member of Chambers in October 2024 upon the successful completion of his pupillage.

Alex has a busy practice both prosecuting and defending across a wide range of offences including violence, drug related crime, sexual offences and driving matters. Alex accepts instructions in the magistrates' court, Crown Court and youth court.

In his first Jury trial, Alex's client was unanimously acquitted of ABH and affray following a four-day trial at Southwark Crown Court. He has since completed further trials within the Crown Court where he has been complimented by the judge for his advocacy and management of the case.

Alex prides himself on his ability to build genuine rapport with clients from the outset as well as fearless advocacy. Alex has considerable experience in dealing with young and vulnerable defendants in a calm and empathetic manner.

Prior to joining Chambers, Alex was a paralegal at a Legal 500 criminal defence firm, assisting with a wide range of criminal cases including murder, serious violence and sexual offences, large scale encrochat conspiracies, fraud and money laundering. Alex was often first port of call for clients, providing excellent client care and supporting the partners and solicitors with their caseloads.

As part of his LLM, Alex completed his dissertation on '*The controversial use of drill music as evidence in criminal trials*' and remains particularly interested in this area.

In his spare time, Alex is a keen sportsman and enjoys playing cricket and golf.

## Expertise

### Assault and Violence

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#### Notable Assault and Violence cases

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##### **R v N [2026] Worcester Crown Court**

Represented an 18-year-old defendant who was charged with S.18 GBH and Robbery, alongside three co-defendants at Worcester Crown Court. The Crown's case was that the defendant was part of a group who attacked the complainant, stabbing him and stealing items from his person. Alex challenged both the admissibility and the reliability of the evidence

against his lay client and the case was set down for an application to dismiss. Following a fully contested application to dismiss, the Judge agreed with the defence application and dismissed the case against Alex's lay client.

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#### **R v Jean-Baptiste [2026] Maidstone Crown Court**

Represented a defendant in an eight-handed, four week-trial where the defendants were charged with S.18 GBH and violent disorder. It was alleged that the defendants were part of a planned group attack against the complainant, during which the complainant was assaulted and stabbed a number of times.

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#### **R v ALS [2025] Isleworth Crown Court**

Represented ALS who was charged with aggravated burglary. The defendant was alleged to be one of five males who entered a designer goods store in Knightsbridge, stealing designer handbags worth in excess of £60,000.

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#### **R v AH [2025] Birmingham Crown Court**

Represented AH who fell to be sentenced for two offences of violent Robbery against the same victim on different occasions. The prosecution placed the starting point for one of the robberies as 5 years' custody. AH was sentenced to a community order.

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#### **R v H [2025] Snaresbrook Crown Court sitting at Aldersgate House**

Represented H who was charged with false imprisonment. H was alleged to have held the complainant in his address against his will whilst armed with multiple knives for a period of 22 hours. The prosecution offered no evidence on the day of trial.

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#### **R v Tchuda [2025] Inner London Crown Court**

Represented the defendant who was charged with affray following a group fight on an Elizabeth Line train. Following representations to the Crown as to the Public Interest in proceeding to trial in this matter, the Crown reviewed the case and the defendant accepted a conditional caution.

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#### **R v AL JAF [2024] Southwark Crown Court**

Represented defendant charged with 2 counts of ABH and Affray. The prosecution asserted the defendant and a co-accused visited the complainants' home and assaulted them. The defence required extensive and detailed cross-examination of the complainants which exposed key inconsistencies in their evidence and undermined the credibility of the Crown's case. Alex presented an alternative narrative to the jury, namely that it was the complainants who were the aggressors and that the defendants were acting in self-defence. The jury delivered unanimous verdicts of not guilty on all counts and the client was acquitted.

Alex was instructed by Jack Ward of Tank Jowett Solicitors.

## Gangs & Organised Crime Groups

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### Notable Gangs & Organised Crime Groups cases

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#### R v N [2026] Worcester Crown Court

Represented an 18-year-old defendant who was charged with S.18 GBH and Robbery, alongside three co-defendants at Worcester Crown Court. The Crown's case was that the defendant was part of a group who attacked the complainant, stabbing him and stealing items from his person. Alex challenged both the admissibility and the reliability of the evidence against his lay client and the case was set down for an application to dismiss. Following a fully contested application to dismiss, the Judge agreed with the defence application and dismissed the case against Alex's lay client.

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#### R v D [2025] Isleworth Crown Court

Instructed privately to represent the defendant for sentence, who pleaded guilty to importing Cannabis worth £404,000. The defendant received a sentence of 10 months' custody.

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#### R v Johnston (Operation Libellary) [2025] Truro Crown Court

Led junior counsel for D1 in a conspiracy to evade the prohibition on the importation of Class A drugs. The defendant was alleged to have been involved in a conspiracy to import Class A drugs where 230kg of Cocaine was recovered by UK Border Force. The case involved a high-speed boat chase across the Cornish coast between the defendants and Border Force officers.

This case involved extensive examination of telephone and Garmin GPS evidence.

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#### R v JR [2025] Croydon Crown Court

Represented the defendant for sentence who entered a guilty plea during her trial for conspiracy to supply Class A drugs. The prosecution placed the starting point as one of 8 years' custody. After mitigation, the JR received a sentence of 3 years and 9 months custody.

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#### R v Cela [2025] Isleworth Crown Court

Represented the defendant who was charged with production of Class B, approximately 200 Cannabis plants. A basis of plea was drafted on the day of trial which was accepted by the prosecution. The defendant was sentenced to 6 months custody, which was deemed served due to time spent in custody and subject to a qualifying curfew.

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#### R v Gordon [2025] Isleworth Crown Court

Represented the defendant who was charged with importing 12.5kg of Cannabis. The defendant was sentenced to 18 months' custody.

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#### R v AH [2024] Isleworth Crown Court

Represented defendant who was charged with importing 47kg of Cannabis through London Heathrow Airport, which was valued at over £1.4 million. My client was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment.

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### **R v HBW [2024] Woolwich Crown Court**

Represented defendant at sentencing who pleaded guilty to conspiracy to steal motor vehicles. The cars stolen were valued at over £250,000. The Prosecution placed the starting point in this case as one of at least 5 years 6 months custody. My client received a sentence of just 30 months' imprisonment.

## **Sexual Offences**

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### **Notable Sexual Offences cases**

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#### **R v Banham [2024] Ipswich Crown Court**

Represented a man who was charged with possession of over 1000 indecent images and videos of children. This was the defendant's second offence concerning indecent images. He received a 20-month custodial sentence.

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#### **R v C [2024] St Albans Crown Court**

Represented the defendant in a case involving multiple breaches of his SHPO and possession of indecent images.

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#### **R v AM [2024] Ipswich Crown Court**

Represented the defendant charged with Sexual Communications with a Child. I persuaded the Judge to impose a suspended sentence order.

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#### **Police v L [2024] Southampton Magistrates Court**

Represented defendant on Application to remove indefinite notification requirements.

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#### **R v TM [2024] Ipswich Crown Court**

My client was charged with Possession of Category A, B and C indecent images of children. I was able to persuade the Judge to impose a suspended sentence order.

## **General Criminal Offences**

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### **Notable General Criminal Offences cases**

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#### **R v S [2025] Isleworth Crown Court**

Represented the defendant who was charged with attempted dwelling burglary. The Jury returned a special verdict of not guilty by reason of insanity.

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### **R v Fernandes Pontes [2024] Southwark Crown Court**

Represented Sofia Fernandes Pontes who was charged with two counts of theft and two counts of criminal damage in relation to a diary industry protest at Selfridges and Fortnum and Mason. Sofia Fernandes Pontes was sentenced to a 12-month community order. This case was widely reported in the national media.

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### **R v K [2024] Bromley Youth Court**

Represented a youth defendant who was involved in three violent robberies. Secured a Youth Referral Order.

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### **R v Henry [2024] Harrow Crown Court**

Persuaded the Judge to impose a Community Order for Possession of a Bladed Article and Criminal Damage valued over £5,000 where the starting point was one of 18 months' custody.

## **Fraud**

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### **Notable Fraud cases**

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### **R v Diane Hughes [2024] Winchester Crown Court**

Prosecuted the sentence of defendant who pleaded guilty to fraud by abuse of position totalling over £700,000 from her former employer.

## **Driving Offences**

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### **Notable Driving Offences cases**

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### **R v Curtis [2024] Cambridge Crown Court**

Represented the defendant charged with dangerous driving. The defendant was alleged to have been the driver in a high-speed Police pursuit in Cambridgeshire.

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### **R v K [2024] Stratford Magistrates Court**

Represented defendant charged with Attempted drink driving. Acquitted following half-time submission.

## **Regulatory**

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## Notable Regulatory cases

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### **NMC v O [2025]**

Represented the NMC in allegations concerning the fraudulent entry onto the register of nursing.

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### **NMC v A [2025]**

Represented the NMC in allegations concerning the fraudulent entry onto the register of nursing.

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### **Central Bedfordshire Council v EW [2024] Luton Magistrates Court**

Represented EW who was alleged to have been involved in littering domestic waste. After representations at court, the Council offered no evidence.

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### **London Borough of Newham v Andrews [2024] Thames Magistrates Court**

Prosecuted for the local authority in case involving multiple offences under Housing Act 2004. The defendant was sentenced to a fine of £18,000.

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### **London Borough of Newham v JS Properties [2024] Thames Magistrates Court**

Prosecuted for the local authority in a case involving multiple breaches of failing to comply with an improvement notice. The defendant was sentenced to a fine of £20,000.

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### **London Borough of Brent v C [2024] Willesden Magistrates Court**

Represented defendant charged with Fraud and Blue Badge Misuse. I secured an out of court disposal for my client.

## Qualifications

- University of East Anglia – LLB Law (Hons)
- BPP University Holborn- Barrister Training Course, Distinction and LLM, Distinction

## Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
- Advocate

# Positions Held

- CPS Level 2 Advocate Panel