



# Annie Johnston

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A highly experienced leading junior and is a master tactician working relentlessly to ensure that her clients are dealt with expeditiously and successfully. Her back catalogue is impressive and is second to none.

Often appears in cases prosecuted by the SFO and is instructed to defend in high profile cases including "missing trader" "carousel" and "advance fee" frauds. Also has experience defending in complex money laundering trials, cases involving organised crime including murder, corruption and drug trafficking. She also appears in the VAT tribunal.

## Expertise

### Confiscation, Civil Recovery and Asset Forfeiture

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Frequently instructed in High Court Restraint work and has a wide experience in applications to Discharge or Vary Property Freezing Orders, Restraint or Receivership Orders.

She is often asked to provide advice to individuals and companies in pre-charge and ancillary matters such as financial services regulation, issues of disclosure and privilege, restraint proceedings, seizure and due diligence.

A wealth of experience in this area due to the nature of her practice in dealing with fraud/drug cases of exceptionally high value.

Has appeared in the Court of Appeal and lectured on this topic.

### Regulatory and Disciplinary Proceedings

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Has appeared before various regulatory bodies including the GDC and GMC. Regularly appears in the VAT Tribunal on behalf of those appealing against the refusal by HM Customs to repay VAT following assertions of VAT/MTIC fraud.

Appears in Cases involving health and Safety, recently wrote an article called "Who's bad" for the Health and Safety Practitioner.

The Legal 500 directory also recommends Annie, quoting: "She commands the trust and respect of both her client and the court".

## Drug Driving

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This is a very recent piece of legislation and only applied to blood samples. If the drug has been measured in urine or saliva then you should not be convicted because there is no prescribed limit in place.

Cocaine is metabolised by our bodies very quickly. The rate of metabolism depends upon the concentration of the drug. There are three main routes by which cocaine gets 'bio-transformed' (broken-down);

Esterases

De-methylation

Ecgonine

The method that's important to us is 'De-methylation'. This is the process whereby cocaine is metabolised into Benzoylecgonine (the primary active metabolite of cocaine). Around 40% of cocaine is metabolised into benzoylecgonine.

Cocaine is eliminated from your blood within 4 – 6 hours whereas Benzoylecgonine can be present for up to 6 days after administration.

Benzoylecgonine is detectable in your blood within 30 minutes of cocaine consumption. This amount will then rise gradually over the next 2 – 3 hours. So, if you were to 'sniff' a 35mg line of cocaine at 10:00pm, Benzoylecgonine would be detectable by 10:30pm. By 01:30am, this will have rose to 130 micrograms(the legal limit is 50 micrograms).

In my experience entering a not guilty pleas almost invariably results in the case being dismissed – either because the police fail to turn up, or the correct procedures have not been followed, or the SRF 2 has not been served or the data analytical pack is not served.

## Notable Drug Driving cases

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### R v Carey - Sevenoaks Magistrates Court

Charged with driving whilst under the influence of drugs and alcohol. The level of Benzoylecgonine was far higher that I would expect it to be given the reading of cocaine which I would have challenged however,needless to say the CPS did not have their house in order and the police in any event did not turn up for trial – NG verdict Costs awarded.

### R v X

Two speeding offences in the space of 10 mins – 81 at 11.31am and 86 mph at 11.34. I challenged the validity of the operating cameras and the Police offered no further action.

## Appeals and CCRC

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### Notable Appeals and CCRC cases

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## R v Blackwell

Represented appellant in the Court of Appeal whose conviction was over turned, As a result advised the Government in relation to the laws of anonymity.

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## R v Luxworth

Represented defendant whose conviction was over turned in the Court of Appeal.

## Crime

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### Notable Crime cases

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#### R v Otis Ferry

Represented son of singer Brian Ferry on perverting the course of justice, blackmail.

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#### R v Sean Brosnan

Represented son of Pierce Brosnan on charge of assault.

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#### R v Keogh & O'Conner

Official Secrets Act – Represented a defendant charged with offences under the official Secrets Act trial was held in camera.

## Organised Crime

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### Notable Organised Crime cases

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#### R v Sadushi

Extradition Albanian convicted in absence of quadruple murder.

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#### R v Morton

Represented architect who was alleged to have murdered his wife with no body ever recovered.

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#### R v Gill (Operation Guinness)

Represented defendant in a large multi handed conspiracy to supply class A drugs into the UK.

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**R v Gordon**

Represented defendant on a gangland shooting in retribution for the "Shakespeare murders"

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**R v Stromberg**

Represented defendant on importation of 380 kilos of pure cocaine.

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**R v Mason**

Represented one of 11 young defendants on charge of murder gang warfare stabbing.

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**R v Kujo**

Represented defendant on a charge of murder.

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**R v Lowe**

Represented female defendant on charge of murder the issue being could the victim have stabbed himself causing his own death.

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**R v Dominguez**

represented female defendant charge with money laundering arising from activities of a Columbian Cocaine Conspiracy. At the time said to be the largest trial ever to be prosecuted.

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**R v Martinex**

Represented defendant connected to the Columbian Cartel charged with importation of large amounts of 100% pure Cocaine.

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**Fraud and Financial Crime**

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**Notable Fraud and Financial Crime cases**

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**R v X**

Largest "Boiler Room fraud" over £100m Southwark Crown Court

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**R v X**

Largest MTIC VAT fraud prosecuted in the UK with alleged losses of over £350 million.

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**R v Mahmood & Others (Operation Exhort)**

Linked mortgage and insurance fraud – 42 handed fraud involving car insurance “cash for crash” and mortgage fraud.

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**R v X & Others**

One of the principle defendants in a conspiracy to steal the pension fund from a large London company.

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**R v Peter Foster**

Represented the infamous Peter Foster who was extradited back from Australia to face fraud charges relating to slimming tablets and slimming tea sold.

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**R v S (Operation Hayrick)**

A case described by the HMRC as “the biggest ever case of its kind” involving an alleged 160m MTIC mobile phone fraud.

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**R v Hart & others (Operation Onset)**

Representing one of 6 defendants in a multi million pound MTIC fraud involving the sale of mobile phones imported into the UK and sold creating a VAT liability of £140million.

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**R v X**

(Operation Steamroller) – One of 7 defendants in 3 connected alleged “boiler room” fraud the total amount invested £100 million. Described by the SFO as the biggest fraud to be prosecuted by them.

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**R v Turner (Operation Rust)**

Represented one of 6 defendants on a multi million pound diversion fraud involving alcohol and cigarettes.

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**R v Varian**

Represented Company Secretary on a VAT fraud.

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**R v Crowe**

Represented defendant on a multi million pound MTIC fraud involving computer chips and mobile phones.

## Memberships

- Member of the Inner Temple
- Criminal Bar Association

## Awards

