



# Gemma White

**Year of Call:** 2009

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## Crime and Regulatory Crime

Gemma has been practising in general crime across the Western Circuit since 2007 when she worked as an advocate for the CPS. She completed pupillage with the Crown Prosecution Service before leaving in 2013 to come to the independent bar where she now has a well-balanced mixed prosecution and defence practice.

Prior to qualification, Gemma worked for a Local Authority in child protection, and as such has a particularly good rapport with young and vulnerable people, which she uses to ensure witnesses give their best evidence, and to make them feel as comfortable as possible with the court process. Given the current emphasis on handling young and vulnerable witnesses these skills ensure Gemma is able to deal with the most sensitive of cases; she has successfully completed the vulnerable witness training programme, and a significant proportion of her practice is devoted to defending the most vulnerable in society or prosecuting cases with very young witnesses.

Gemma has a deep understanding of criminal procedure and her practice encompasses the full range of offences with particular emphasis on complex multi-defendant drug conspiracies, serious sexual offences, dishonesty including fraud and POCA/money laundering, murder, serious violence and public order. Her practice has particular emphasis on cases with young or vulnerable witnesses or defendants, and she is regularly instructed to represent those with neurodiversity or complex learning or mental health difficulties.

Gemma has experience of dealing with complex and sensitive disclosure issues including Public Interest Immunity and is regularly instructed in cases involving Confiscation under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

### Recent Cases of Note: Drugs

- R v Hibbert [2018] EWCA Crim 2047
- Approved Counsel for Operation Venetic (Encrochat):
  - Operation Yealm [2025] Winchester Crown Court
  - Operation Scowl [2024] Southampton Crown Court
  - Operation Paperweight [2023] Bournemouth Crown Court
- Operation Highwood (2021) Portsmouth Crown Court – led by Jodie Mittell – 9 handed conspiracy to supply Class A drugs, county lines from London to Sussex. Main defendant unfit to plead, complex disclosure matters. National Press Report [here](#).
- Operation Origin (2019) Prosecution Counsel 10 defendant Class A drug conspiracy – county lines
- R v G (2018) Southampton Crown Court. Taking Drugs into prison – community order imposed
- Operation Operative (2017) – Multi-handed drugs conspiracy involving the supply of an estimated £4.5 million of import grade cocaine. Press Reports [here](#).
- Operation Pretty (2016–2017):

- Magic Network – prosecuting Counsel multi-handed conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and associated Money Laundering Offences
- Kane Network – prosecuting Counsel supply Class A drugs
- Scouse Network – Junior Prosecuting Counsel (led by Jodie Mittell) 8 handed conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and associated Money Laundering. Local Press Report for Op Pretty [here](#).

### **Fatal and non-fatal Violence/Public Order**

- R v Martin [2017] EWCA Crim 648 – appeal against sentence to Court Martial Appeals Court
- R v Gover (unreported) successful appeal against extended sentence.

### **Non-Fatal Violence**

- R v Drew [2024] EWCA Crim 1537 – AG Ref
- R v Marks [2024] EWCA Crim 1326 – AG Ref firearms offences
- R v T [2023] EWCA Crim 41 – appeal against sentence
- R v Martin [2017] EWCA Crim 648 – appeal against sentence to Court Martial Appeals Court
- R v CL [2024] Southampton Crown Court. Defending mother charged with allowing 4 month old baby to be caused serious injury (multiple fractures). Significant disclosure failures argued which led to case being discontinued pre-trial
- R v NP [2022] Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel for s18 where victim sustained brain injury following sustained domestic assault. Significant volume of bad character evidence successfully opposed
- Operation Swallowtail Hove Crown Court [2022] leading Thomas Acworth – Prosecution of 3 youths for s18 which left victim with life altering brain injuries. Press reports [here](#)
- R v H [2021] Winchester Crown Court. False imprisonment, possession of a firearm with intent, threats to kill and robbery. Press report [here](#)
- R v S (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Wounding with intent x 2 (s.18 OAPA) Defence Trial Counsel for vulnerable Defendant suffering with severe bi-polar disorder. Local Press report [here](#)
- R v L (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel for Defendant fit to plead but subject to Hospital Order with Restrictions for assault on worker at psychiatric unit where he resided
- R v H (2020) Bournemouth Crown Court. Prosecution Counsel in arson where Defendant unfit and then fit to plead. Multiple previous offences for arson
- R v G (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Trial Counsel for allegation of wounding with intent. Acquitted after trial but guilty plea entered to s20 unlawful wounding. Sentence of 4 with extended licence years successfully appealed to Court of Appeal as manifestly excessive
- R v D (2019) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel for mother accused of false imprisonment, child cruelty and assault in relation to teenage son. Prosecution offered no evidence after submissions in relation to undermining unused material
- R v H (2019) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel for Defendant who was unfit to plead charged with intentionally/ recklessly endangering life through arson. As a result of psychiatric evidence obtained Crown accepted plea to simple arson
- R v H (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Multiple Assaults on 3 year old child by father
- R v R (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Child Cruelty. Defence Counsel in case involving allegations of child cruelty and assault by father and mother on two teenage daughters. Case required careful cross examination of girls, particularly given English was not their first language and one child had the assistance of an intermediary
- R v C and H (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel in multi-handed s.18 unlawful wounding case where victims sustained significant knife injuries including slash marks to the face. Local Press report [here](#)
- R v G (2018) Bournemouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel in allegation of unlawful wounding with intent where Defendant

had previously sustained Traumatic Brain Injury. CCTV showed Defendant snap pool cue in half and hit victim around the head. As a result of expert medical evidence obtained the Prosecution accepted a plea to a lesser offence and a suspended sentence was imposed

- R v T (2018) Winchester Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel in case involving allegations of domestic violence and coercive and controlling behaviour alleged against a serving police sergeant by a serving police constable. Sensitive and evidentially complex case. Local Press report [here](#)
- R v W (2017) Southampton Crown Court. Child Cruelty and Assault – Allegation over sustained period of time. Involved cross examination of vulnerable complainant – Defence Trial Counsel Secured Acquittal.

### **Dishonesty**

- R v H (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel in two handed Aggravated Burglary involving multiple weapons
- R v C (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel in Robbery. Issues of Abuse of Process because of delay in bringing case raised- Defendant was 15 at time of alleged offence and an adult at date of charge. Prosecution Offered no evidence
- R v W (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel in robbery of 83 year old pensioner. Local news report [here](#)
- R v M and others (2020) Portsmouth Crown Court. Trial defence counsel in three handed multiple allegations of robbery. One count dismissed following successful half time submission
- R v G and others (2019) Winchester Crown Court- 5 handed aggravated burglary involving firearm.

## **Recommendations**

'Gemma is highly intelligent, exceptionally diligent in preparation and has an effective laconic style of advocacy.'

**Legal 500 2026**/Crime (General and Fraud)/ Leading Juniors/ Western Circuit

Gemma White – 3PB 'Gemma is extremely hard-working. Her case presentation skills are second-to-none, and she is a stand-out cross-examiner who has a particular ability to gently undermine the evidence of any witness in a case without appearing overbearing.'

**Legal 500 2025**/Crime (General and Fraud)/ Leading Juniors/ Western Circuit

'particular strength lies in the cross-examination of young or vulnerable witnesses'

'Whether prosecuting or defending, she is particularly adept at dealing with cases of the utmost sensitivity. She is always on top of her brief and combines intellect with a common sense approach.'

**Legal 500 2024**/Crime (General and Fraud)/ Leading Juniors/ Western Circuit

'Gemma is determined, focused, committed, always fully prepared and highly professional. She is an assured and proficient advocate, confident in court with all judges.'

**Legal 500 2023**/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

## **Academic qualifications**

- LLB Law with French (Hons) 2.1 – University of the West of England, Bristol
- Certificate in European Political Studies – Université de Robert Schuman, Strasbourg
- Bar Vocational Course (Very Competent) BPP Holborn
- LLM Sports Law and Practice (Distinction) – De Montfort University Leicester

## **Professional qualifications & appointments**

- Grade 4 Prosecutor
- Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Specialist
- Deputy District Judge (Magistrates Court) 2021
- Fee-Paid Judge of the Mental Health Tribunal 2023
- Recorder (Crime) 2023
- Treasury Counsel Monitoree 2024

## **Professional bodies**

- Criminal Bar Association
- Western Circuit
- Inn: Inner Temple