



## Zahra Baqri

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Year of Call: 2010

Zahra Baqri is a criminal law practitioner whose experience and specialism encompasses all aspects of serious crime and fraud.

Born in Liverpool, Zahra read Law at Leeds University. Post-qualification, she worked as an associate solicitor with a senior equity partner in the Commercial Litigation department. Zahra attended as advocate for interlocutory hearings at the High Court and substantive hearings at the County Court.

She worked for the Crown Prosecution Service in Bristol before moving back to the North West and practising from the CPS Manchester office where her experience included:

- Contested hearings in the Magistrates' Court – trials, remand courts (adult and youth)
- Abuse of process arguments, bad character evidence, hearsay, special measures applications
- Preliminary hearings/plea and Case management hearings and bail applications in the Crown Court
- Pre-charge advice at designated police stations

## Memberships

- Northern Circuit
- Criminal Bar Association

## Recommendations

*"I have no hesitation in saying that she is amongst the best of prosecutors. Her levels of preparation, grasp of both fact and law, skill in presentation and even-handed approach have always been evident."*

*"She is always well prepared, helpful, articulate and respectful. She is a sound lawyer, intelligent, practical, robust and full of common sense; she is also very firm but fair when appropriate. She is highly*

regarded by the District Judges in Manchester.” – District Judge Finestein

## EXPERTISE

### Crime

Zahra has prosecuted (whether that be in the capacity of reviewing lawyer or advocate) in some of the region’s most serious cases, including many cases of murder, attempted murder, child destruction, child cruelty, serious sexual offending, unlawful manslaughter and fraud.

### Cases as Reviewing Lawyer

#### **The Crown v Erskine**

The Freshers’ Week murder of a young student. Case complicated by the initial charging of an individual other than the Defendants for the murder. Very complex issues of identification requiring the instruction of voice experts and laborious examination of CCTV.

The case was led by Michael Shorrock QC. The defendant was convicted after trial and received a life sentence.

#### **The Crown v Brown et al (Operation Willoughby)**

Five defendants accused of targeting vulnerable homosexual males along the canal in Manchester City Centre. They had robbed two males prior to pushing the victim into the canal where he drowned. The Crown brought its case on the basis of 1300 hours of CCTV footage, placing the defendants in each other’s company before and after the incident. The case was initially refused charge by a previous lawyer. Upon further consultation with the police team and Zahra, the charges of manslaughter and robberies were authorised. All five were convicted and are serving lengthy sentences.

#### **The Crown v Bradley et al (Operation Cairo)**

Zahra provided charging authority for all 54 defendants, brought to the court for supply of controlled drugs. Retained file ownership. All committed to the Crown Court where they received sentences ranging from three to seven years.

#### **The Crown v Musa et al (Operation Hamilton)**

13 defendants accused of targeting elderly, vulnerable complainants. 95 have been identified. By use of a sophisticated scam, their personal details are obtained and money is extracted from their accounts.

#### **The Crown v Naqvi et al (Operation Revoke)**

Three defendants accused of attempted murder by shooting. Gang affiliations feature in this case.

## Cases as Trial Prosecution Advocate

### **R v Philip Day**

Prosecuted for arson and stalking. The case has been covered by the [BBC](#), [BBC North West Tonight](#) (begins at 3.10), [ITV Granada](#), [Liverpool Echo](#) and [Northwich Guardian](#).

### **The Crown v Youth**

16-year-old male defendant accused of sexual assault by penetration upon his three-year-old niece. Convicted after trial.

### **The Crown v Youth**

Allegation of sexual assault by a 14-year-old male defendants upon his five-year-old twin cousins. Convicted after three-day trial.

### **The Crown v Youths**

Allegation of robbery committed by four males on a lone female student. Grave crime argument had previously been rejected and the case was tried in the Youth Court. All four were convicted after trial and successfully submitted that the case be allocated to Crown Court for sentence.