



# Melanie Cumberland

**“An absolutely first-rate public lawyer whose advocacy is very effective indeed.”**

(Chambers & Partners)

Melanie Cumberland is a leading junior with a broad range of practice areas, including crime, extradition, confiscation, mutual legal assistance, administrative law, public inquiries and inquests.

Melanie has extensive experience appearing in the higher courts, in cases before the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court. She also regularly acts on behalf of individuals and the Government in cases before the European Court of Human Rights.

She has been instructed in some of the most complex and sensitive criminal and quasi-criminal cases of recent years, including a challenge to the refusal to issue arrest warrants against Tony Blair, Jack Straw and Lord Goldsmith for their participation in the Iraq War (R (on the application of Al-Rabhat) v. Westminster Magistrates’ Court); Supreme Court appeals concerning a challenge to search warrants issued in reliance on sensitive material (R (on the application of Haralambous) v. St Albans Crown Court); and sentences of imprisonment for public protection based on their alleged breach of the principle of *lex mitior* (R v. Docherty).

Melanie was first appointed by the Attorney General as junior counsel to the Crown in 2009, and has been on the A Panel since 2016. She undertakes a range of high profile work for a variety of government departments and has particular expertise in national security work, inquests, public inquiries and judicial review proceedings raising issues of principle under the criminal law.

She has acted in many of the most important public inquiries and inquests of recent years including the Westminster Bridge Inquests, the Litvinenko Inquiry, the inquest into the death of Alexander Perepilichnyy and the Al Sweady Inquiry. She has also been instructed in a number of judicial review and civil damages claims arising from the Government’s military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan; for example, in claims brought by Rahmatullah, Al-Sweady and Al-Saadoon, and in appeals before the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court, arising from those claims.

**“Delightful to deal with, she’s a brain on a stick – really, really smart and wonderful.”**

(Chambers & Partners 2019)

**“She is instructed in all the major inquests and inquiries – she is outstanding.”**

(Legal 500 2019)