



Leila has a varied criminal practice, with particular experience defending corporate and individual clients in large, complex financial crime cases. Leila came to the Bar from a career as a solicitor.

She trained and qualified at Slaughter and May between 2013 and 2015, before spending a further five years in the London office of WilmerHale where she specialised in financial crime and investigations. She therefore has criminal litigation experience, skill, and judgement well beyond her years of call. Work highlights include:

- R v ME and ors: First junior counsel for the first trial defendant (led by Duncan Penny K.C.) in a \$500 million trade finance fraud prosecuted by the Serious Fraud Office.
- R v Entain: Second junior counsel (led by David Perry K.C. and Katherine Hardcastle) for Entain plc in its £615 million deferred prosecution agreement with the CPS.
- R v JDL and ors: Representing at trial (as a solicitor) the former Chief Compliance Officer of Alstom, prosecuted by the Serious Fraud Office for conspiracy to corrupt.
- R v RA: Junior defence counsel at trial (led by Simon Ray) for a former Presidential Chief of Staff, prosecuted for requesting a bribe under section 2 of the Bribery Act 2010.
- R v PB: Instructed as second junior counsel (led by Alison Pople K.C. and Rachna Gokani) for the defendant in a £20 million VAT fraud.
- R v ZH and ors: Instructed as second junior counsel (led by Jonathan Hall K.C. and Tom Rainsbury) for the National Crime Agency in multi-million pound POCA civil recovery proceedings connected with the issue of the first Unexplained Wealth Order in this jurisdiction.

Corporate Crime

Leila's commercial background – first as a City solicitor at Slaughter and May with a predominantly commercial practice, and subsequently as a white collar criminal practitioner at WilmerHale – means she is exceptionally well-placed to take on a wide range of corporate criminal work.

Leila has experience representing corporates in a number of Serious Fraud Office investigations, including the investigation into Glencore plc. She appeared as second junior counsel (led by David Perry K.C. and Katherine Hardcastle) for Entain plc in connection with its £615 million deferred prosecution agreement with the CPS (the first ever DPA agreed with the CPS). She has provided advice to corporate clients on a range of criminal and regulatory matters, and has represented several organisations, including banks and other financial institutions, in proceedings before the Financial Conduct Authority. Leila has also worked on a number of investigations by overseas authorities, in particular the United States Department of Justice and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

As a result of Leila's depth of experience representing corporates, and her understanding of corporate structures and procedures, and her experience in civil, criminal and regulatory matters, she is able to provide pragmatic and commercially-sensitive legal advice to these clients.

Leila has particular experience advising on complex issues of legal professional privilege. At the Bar, she has provided standalone advice to corporate clients on these issues, including in the context of Serious Fraud Office investigations.

Fraud, Bribery and corruption

Leila represents a number of individuals charged with fraud, bribery and corruption. This includes high-profile, complex cases prosecuted by the Serious Fraud Office.

Leila appeared as first junior counsel for a defendant in the Serious Fraud Office prosecution of fraud offences at Balli Group and Balli Steel, and in subsequent confiscation proceedings. She was junior counsel to Romy Andrianarisoa, the former Chief of Staff to the President of Madagascar, who was prosecuted for requesting a bribe under section 2 of the Bribery Act 2010. While working as a solicitor, Leila also represented Jean-Daniel Lainé, the former-Chief Compliance Officer of Alstom, who was charged with conspiracy to corrupt in relation to contracts secured by Alstom in Hungary. After a ten-week retrial, Mr Lainé was acquitted. Leila has represented suspects and witnesses in a number of other Serious Fraud Office investigations, including the investigations into British American Tobacco, Rolls Royce, GlaxoSmithKline, KBR, and Barclays.

Leila has experience in Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 matters, including contested confiscation proceedings, High Court civil recovery proceedings, and unexplained wealth orders. She is currently instructed as second junior counsel for the National Crime Agency in civil recovery proceedings against the wife of the former Chairman of the International Bank of Azerbaijan, Jahangir Hajiyev.

Internal Investigations

Leila has worked on a number of internal investigations for corporate clients, ranging in complexity, size and outcome. She has assisted corporate clients with investigations into financial criminal matters, general criminal matters, and regulatory issues. Many of these investigations involved suspected bribery, for example, a recent internal investigation involving an overseas subsidiary of a multinational, US-headquartered manufacturer. She also has experience advising corporates in deferred prosecution agreement negotiations, having appeared as second junior counsel (led by David Perry K.C. and Katherine Hardcastle) for Entain plc in connection with its landmark £615 million deferred prosecution agreement with the CPS.