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## Practice Profile

***Valeria Swift is a specialist criminal law barrister who is known for her persuasive advocacy, excellent client care and painstaking case preparation. She defends and prosecutes and has a strong track record for delivering results. She conducts most of her cases as sole counsel but is frequently instructed as junior counsel in appropriate cases. Valeria is multi-lingual, fluent in Spanish, French and Italian.***

In recent years Valeria Swift's practice has focused particularly on allegations of homicide, organised crime and serious sexual offences and she has built up a strong reputation for achieving successful outcomes in such cases.

She is regularly instructed in matters relating to:

- Organised crime (particular expertise in covert and intelligence led operations, disclosure issues, and informant handling)
- Cases of Homicide
- Serious sexual offences (eg. rape, sexual assault, offences against children and the vulnerable, indecent images)
- Drugs (eg. major conspiracies, importations, possession with intent, cannabis factories)
- Serious violence and firearms offences
- Financial crime (fraud and money laundering)
- Complex and High Value Confiscation
- Regulatory work including prosecutions brought by local authorities in respect of housing and benefit fraud, health and safety, trading standards and environmental act proceedings.

Valeria's Privacy Policy can be downloaded [here](#).

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## Areas of Practice

- Confiscation, Civil Recovery & Asset Forfeiture
- General Crime
- Prosecution
- Serious & Organised Crime
- Sexual Offences
- Homicide

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## What The Directories Say

"An impressive lawyer who gets excellent results." *Chambers UK 2024*

"Perfect for difficult and unattractive defences where the jury must be wooed." *Chambers UK 2023*

"She is phenomenally steely yet pleasant, and an operator who achieves great results." *Chambers UK 2022*

## Appointments

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- Recorder - appointed in 2019

## News

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### Rape Acquittal

23 April 2024

Valeria Swift represented a man of good character accused of rape. Following a section 8 application for disclosure, Valeria Swift obtained material to sustain a two day cross-examination of the complainant and, at the conclusion of the trial, the defendant was found not guilty. Instructed by Aaron Hickey of Brooklyn Law.

### Criminal Appeals Seminar

22 April 2024

5KBW Criminal Appeals Unit is delighted to present the first in a series of seminars on appellate matters:

#### **The Criminal Appeal Office and Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) [CACD]**

A practical approach to CACD procedure: **Master Alix Beldam KC**, Registrar of Criminal Appeals

Fresh evidence as a ground of appeal (now and in the future): **Paul Taylor KC**, General Editor of Taylor on Criminal Appeals

**Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at 6pm**

#### **Inner Temple Lecture Theatre**

Master Beldam KC will discuss the work of the Criminal Appeal Office and the CACD, the procedural framework for launching and pursuing an appeal and the practical issues that often arise.

Paul Taylor KC will analyse the CACD's current approach to grounds of appeal based on fresh evidence. He will also consider potential changes in this area that may follow the recommendations of the Law Commission's Criminal Appeal Project (expected in 2025.)

Please click [here](#) to register your interest in attending this seminar.

### Teacher Acquitted of Rape & Sexual Assault

12 March 2024

Valeria Swift represented a teacher accused of attempting to rape and sexually assault a 10 year old pupil in his class throughout an alleged one year campaign of abuse at school.

After a 2-week trial at Snaresbrook Crown Court, he was acquitted of all charges. Instructed by Mark Stewart of

Stewart Begum Solicitors.

## **Serial rapist attacked lone women in Shoreditch**

15 June 2023

Following a 5-week trial at Wood Green Crown Court, Clement Omoregbee was found guilty of raping four women after detectives used DNA evidence from one incident to match him to three similar incidents. It was believed that the defendant used GHB/GBL on his victims to facilitate the rapes. Valeria Swift led Corinne Bramwell of 9 Bedford Row for the prosecution.

He will be sentenced on 29th September.

'Vile' serial rapist attacked lone women in Shoreditch over two years | Evening Standard

## **Recent Cases**

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### **R v. P [Southwark] 2023**

Rape, Sexual Assault & False Imprisonment

Sarah Forshaw KC leading Valeria Swift and instructed by Nick Vamos of Peters & Peters, represented this young man from a wealthy and prominent overseas family, who was found not guilty of all charges against him following a two-week trial at Southwark Crown Court in February 2023.

Accusations made by his former girlfriend had resulted in a six-count indictment, including allegations of sexual assault, false imprisonment and rape. He was released under investigation shortly after his arrest, and was granted bail to return to and remain in his home country until the trial. Peters & Peters obtained permission for him to attend all pre-trial hearings remotely. The allegations date back to 2018. Trial was originally scheduled for early 2022, but was adjourned owing to prosecution disclosure failures. The failures continued up to and during trial, with a number of disclosure hearings taking place, and significant items of disclosure provided only on the day the case was opened to the jury.

Following the two-week trial, during which the client gave evidence, the jury returned unanimous not guilty verdicts on all charges after less than three hours' deliberation.

### **R v W [Isleworth] 2020**

Multiple rapes, false imprisonment and choking

Valeria Swift secured her client's acquittal of multiple counts of rape, false imprisonment and choking at the conclusion of a three week trial. Instructed by Hodge, Jones & Allen.

### **R v. KB [Woolwich] 2020**

Attempted Murder

Valeria Swift was instructed by EBR Attridge to represent the first defendant in an eight-handed attempted murder trial at Woolwich Crown Court. Her client was acquitted of attempted murder at the conclusion of the trial.

### **R v. D [Wood Green] 2020**

Murder of friend following drink & drugs orgy

Natasha Wong QC and Valeria Swift successfully defended man accused of murdering his friend in a fight following a night of drink and drug taking. The deceased suffered from significant heart disease and traumatic brain injury. Case involved exploration of issue of causation with evidence from numerous leading medical experts, including neuro-pathologists, cardiologists, histo-pathologists, toxicologists and forensic pathologists. Instructed by Ben Thomas of Sternberg Reed.

### **R v. KK & 5 ors [C.C.C.] 2019**

Murder of Sierra Leone teacher in South London Arson Attack

Natasha Wong QC and Valeria Swift secured the acquittal of their client, an autistic teenager with severe learning disabilities, at the end of a 12 week murder trial involving six defendants at the Old Bailey. A woman became the innocent victim of a drugs feud when she died in an arson attack just hours before she was due to return home to Sierra Leone. The 46 year old Teacher, was staying with relatives in Woolwich, South East London, when the blaze broke out. Client found not guilty of joint enterprise murder, manslaughter and causing grievous bodily harm with intent to multiple victims. Instructed by Jatinder Sokhal of TBW Solicitors.

### **R v AI [Central Criminal Court] 2019**

Murder

Murder of Essex schoolgirl, Jodie Chesney

### **R v JK [Southwark] 2019**

Bribery

Defence of Immigration Officer accused of bribery in the Home Office.

### **R v TH [Inner London] 2019**

Rape

### **R v. W & 7 ors [C.C.C] 2018**

Large scale human trafficking operation

Valeria Swift represented this defendant, one of only two defendants to be acquitted, following a 3 month Old Bailey trial concerning a Kent based gang accused of smuggling migrants into the UK. Instructed by Cantaris Locke Solicitors.

BBC report [here](#)

Daily Mail report [here](#)

### **R v. JLM & ors [C.C.C.] 2016**

Murder of a 17 year old aspiring "Rap" artist

Jonathan Higgs QC leading Valeria Swift defended a 15 year old youth, at his 2 month Old Bailey trial, charged with 5 others, accused of the murder of a 17 year old aspiring "Rap" artist in South London. Instructed by Thomas Boyd Whyte Solicitors.

### **R v. ED [Woolwich] 2016**

Rape

Valeria Swift instructed to defend a grandfather accused of raping his granddaughter. Defendant found not guilty.

### **R v. WM [Snaresbrook] 2016**

Rape

Valeria Swift prosecuted a cold case of several stranger rapes in 1990. Defendant convicted.

### **R v. VK [C.C.C.] 2016**

High profile sexual assault

Valeria Swift prosecuted this high profile case where the defendant was charged with sexual assault on a co-worker at a top International law firm during an office party. Defendant found guilty.

### **R v. MC [Woolwich] 2016**

Sexual assault

Valeria Swift instructed to represent a step-father accused of sexually assaulting his step-daughter. Defendant found not guilty.

### **R v. TB [Isleworth] 2016**

Child grooming

Valeria Swift instructed to prosecute a woman accused of grooming and sexually abusing teenage girl. Defendant convicted.

### **R v. RM [Woolwich] 2016**

Incest rape

Valeria Swift instructed to represent a brother accused of raping his sister. Defendant found not guilty.

### **R v. CH [Wood Green] 2015**

Child cruelty involving infant fatality

Valeria Swift defended this allegation of child cruelty involving infant fatality. Mother arrested in connection with death of her baby. Careful consideration had to be given to pathology evidence in order to negotiate best outcome for the defendant with the prosecution. Defendant pleaded guilty on an extremely limited basis which led to her being released from custody immediately.

### **R v. PM [Woolwich] 2015**

Child cruelty

Valeria Swift prosecuted this cruelty of father on his young son. The case required very sensitive examination of the vulnerable victim. Defendant found guilty.

### **R v. TS [Snaresbrook] 2015**

Historic rape

Valeria Swift defended this matter of multiple allegations of historic rape. The case required sensitive cross-examination of a highly vulnerable victim. Defendant found not guilty.

### **R v. TA [Aylesbury] 2015**

Rape

Valeria Swift defended this rape case where the victim sustained over 20 injuries during the course of the alleged assault. Defendant found not guilty of rape.

### **R v. JW [Wood Green] 2015**

Gang rape

Valeria Swift instructed by the defence in a multi-handed gang rape trial lasting several months. Defendant found not guilty.

### **R v. MA [Inner London] 2015**

Rape of infant child

Valeria Swift defended this rape of an infant child by father and indecent images – case investigated by the FBI and defendant arrested in UK as a result of multi-agency cooperation. Legal submissions successfully made to exclude the evidence obtained by the FBI – this led to further submissions relating to insufficiency of evidence. Defendant found not guilty.

### **R v. FR [Basildon] 2015**

#### Possession of indecent images of children

Valeria Swift instructed as sole defence counsel in a case relating to possession of indecent images of children. The defendant pleaded guilty to making numerous indecent images of children and mitigation advanced which resulted in the defendant avoiding an immediate custodial sentence despite the finding of category A images. Legal submissions successfully advanced to reduce the negative impact of the Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) on the defendant's employment and career prospects.

#### **R v. BT [Snaresbrook] 2015**

##### Rape

Valeria Swift instructed by the prosecution in a rape case where the examination required meticulous planning to minimise distress to victim who resided in another jurisdiction, taking into account logistical difficulties of conducting a trial over two time zones. Defendant found guilty.

#### **R v PO [Inner London] 2015**

##### Violence

Valeria Swift instructed to defend a pilot with mental health issues accused of violent behaviour whilst armed with a knife. Defendant found not guilty.

#### **R v. MD [Southwark] 2015**

##### Attempted Murder

Valeria Swift acted as sole defence counsel in an apparently motiveless serious stabbing of taxi driver by woman of previous impeccable character – initially investigated by the police as an attempted murder - exploration of defences of insanity and automatism – following consideration of expert evidence defendant pleaded guilty to a section 20 offence and was immediately released from custody.

#### **R v. MS [Snaresbrook] 2015**

##### Baby shaking

Valeria Swift appeared on behalf of the defence as a led junior. Baby shaking case involving an exceptionally large number of multi-disciplinary experts on issues ranging from neuroradiology, infectious diseases and haematology. Defendant found not guilty.

#### **R v. DP [Snaresbrook] 2015**

##### Sexual abuse of 5 year old

Valeria Swift instructed by the prosecution in relation to the sexual abuse of 5 year old by father – intermediary – believed to be first time counsel examined child witness from a remote room to assist the vulnerable witness – highly successful novel approach. Defendant found guilty.

#### **R v. LM [Inner London] 2015**

## Housing fraud

Valeria Swift prosecuted as sole counsel in a case relating to a house rental fraud involving identification of money transfers to multiple bank accounts. Defendant found guilty – conviction upheld in Court of Appeal following full submissions.

## **R v. MN & ors [Wood Green] 2015**

### Gangland stabbing

Catherine Farrelly led Valeria Swift instructed by the prosecution, in this 6 handed conspiracy to commit GBH, which included a premeditated attack on another youth, his stab wounds close to his heart which were very nearly life ending. This case required expert analysis of telephone evidence which equated to over 20,000 pages. Defendants convicted of conspiracy.

News report here.

## **R v. DW [Woolwich] 2014**

### Sexual assault

Valeria Swift instructed to defend a man charged with a sexually motivated section 18 attack committed on lone female at night. If convicted, the defendant would have been at risk of a sentence for public protection due to an previous conviction for sexual assault on a woman in the woods (which was admitted in evidence). Defendant found not guilty of section 18 but guilty of section 20 thereby avoiding a sentence of public protection.

## **R v. JE & 6 ors [Winchester] 2013**

### Murder

Christopher Sutton-Mattocks led Valeria Swift instructed by the defence in this conspiracy to murder involving an attempted contract killing. This defendant subsequently pleaded guilty to attempted GBH and was acquitted of conspiracy to murder. Instructed by the Grech Gooden Partnership.

## **R v. JK [Wood Green] 2009**

### Conspiracy to supply drugs

Valeria Swift instructed as defence junior in this conspiracy to supply drugs. Represented only defendant to be found not guilty in very long trial. Successful result contingent on careful analysis of telephone evidence and extensive intrusive surveillance authorised under RIPA.

## **R v. JK & ors [Reading] 2009**

### Conspiracy to supply drugs

Mark Dacey led Valeria Swift for the defence in this complex Conspiracy to supply drugs. They represented the only defendant to be found not guilty after a 3 month trial – successful result contingent on careful analysis of telephone evidence and extensive intrusive surveillance authorised under RIPA. Instructed by Dhanju Mclean.