



---

## Practice Profile

**Fiona Ryan is a specialist criminal barrister. She appears, both led and alone, in serious and complex cases in the Crown Court.**

Fiona has a busy and varied criminal practice, appearing for both prosecution and defence. Recent cases include allegations of large-scale class A drugs importation and supply, possession of firearms, people trafficking and fraud. Fiona has particular experience in cases of serious sexual offending.

Fiona is a conscientious and passionate advocate, who tends to gain the confidence of clients or witnesses with difficult needs who require extra attention. She will advise promptly in writing, particularly in cases with complex legal issues. She is often commended for her attention to detail and command of the case papers.

Fiona has been successful before the Court of Appeal on behalf of both the appellant and respondent.

Fiona obtained a Diploma in Forensic Medical Sciences in 2019, giving her an advantage in cases with technical scientific issues.

Fiona was previously seconded to the white-collar crime department of a leading international law firm, primarily advising on disclosure within a high-profile bribery and fraud investigation.

She is a Grade 3 panel advocate for the CPS, Serious Crime and on the 'RASSO' list.

Fiona also accepts instructions in public law Children Act proceedings.

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

---

## Areas of Practice

- General Crime
- Family
- Prosecution
- Regulatory & Professional Discipline
- Road Traffic
- Serious & Organised Crime
- Sexual Offences

---

## News

## Teacher Sentenced to 16 Years

11 November 2024

Former teacher David Pickthall was sentenced today at Chelmsford Crown Court. Pickthall had previously pleaded guilty to committing 29 sexual offences against 19 victims, most of whom were his own students.

Fiona Ryan was instructed by the Crown. HHJ Loram KC imposed a total sentence of 16 years: 12 years' custody followed by 4 years' extended license.

Read more here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c79zq74n5dxo>

<https://news.sky.com/story/former-teacher-david-pickthall-jailed-for-carrying-out-dozens-of-child-sex-offences-over-40-years-13252524>

## Slavery on the High Street

2 October 2024

A new BBC Documentary "Slavery on the High Street" features the Modern Slavery case in which Benjamin Temple, leading Fiona Ryan, appeared for the Crown and a total of 60 unanimous guilty verdicts were returned.

Baroness May, who piloted the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Dame Sarah Thornton, the UK's former anti-slavery commissioner discuss the importance of the case prosecuted by Ben & Fiona and it's importance in guiding the government's next steps in enhancing modern slavery legislation.

It can be watched here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0023h3b/slavery-on-the-high-street>

## 60 Guilty Verdicts for Four People Traffickers

30 May 2024

Four people traffickers, who brought vulnerable people from eastern Europe to London and forced them to work long hours while stealing their wages, have been convicted of modern slavery offences following a 16 week trial at Southwark Crown Court.

Zdenek Drevenak, 37, his former partner Monika Daducova, 43, Jiri Cernohous, 49, and Martin Slovjak, 46, all from the Czech Republic, acted together to lure 12 men and women to the UK on the promise of well-paid jobs and a better quality of life.

The victims were selected from poor or rural backgrounds, many of whom had experienced homelessness or addiction, with a view to being exploited.

The accommodation ranged from cramped room sharing, or even bed sharing, inside the house, to demeaning and miserable conditions in a shed in the garden.

Victims also saw their passports and identity documents taken and retained in a safe, which they had no access to. Several were subjected to violence by Mr Drevenak.

With no money to find other accommodation in the UK, and fear of what the gang might do if they tried to escape, their options to leave or return home were severely limited.

Benjamin Temple, leading Fiona Ryan, appeared for the Crown. There were a total of 60 unanimous guilty verdicts returned.

## **Young Man Convicted of 22 Counts of Rape**

18 August 2023

Catherine Farrelly, leading Fiona Ryan and Anna Dutka, prosecuted this young defendant who was convicted of 22 counts of rape in relation to 6 separate young girls, following a 5 week trial at Inner London Crown Court. Instructed by Laura Devitt of CPS RASSO.

## **Recent Cases**

---

### **R v. Varga [Harrow] 2022**

Fiona Ryan prosecuted this attempted rape, sexual assault and robbery. The defendant was charged with a violent attempted oral rape by a stranger. Defendant pleaded guilty on day 1 of trial. Found to be dangerous and sentenced to life imprisonment with minimum of 8 years, taking time spent in custody into account. Would have been a 12 year determinate sentence.

### **R v. Clarke [Snaresbrook] 2022**

Sexual assaults upon clients by a massage therapist

Fiona Ryan prosecuted a massage therapist for sexual assaults upon clients. Guilty pleas on day 1 of trial. Sentenced to imprisonment and prohibited from engaging in any type of 'bodywork' on females whether on a paid or voluntary basis.

### **R v. Waheed [Snaresbrook] 2022**

Sexual activity with a child

Fiona Ryan prosecuted a 40 year old man for sexual activity with a child, utilising s.28 procedure for evidence of schoolgirl victim. Defendant convicted after trial.

### **R v. Newport [Snaresbrook] 2022**

PE teacher convicted by a jury of inciting his ex- student to send nude photographs

Fiona Ryan prosecuted this former PE teacher who was convicted by a jury of inciting his ex- student to send nude photographs. Following legal argument, the judge was also satisfied that sexual touching of the 13 yr old student, to which he had pleaded guilty on a limited basis, went beyond what he had accepted.

### **R v. H [Wood Green] 2021**

Father convicted of Sexual Assaults on 11 year old daughter

Fiona Ryan prosecuted this assault of a child under 13 by penetration. The father of the 11 year old victim was convicted by a jury for sexually assault and digital penetration of his 11 year old daughter. Sentenced to 6 years 6 months' imprisonment.

### **R v. O'Brien [Wood Green] 2021**

Assault by penetration whilst asleep on a bus

Fiona Ryan prosecuted this assault by penetration. The Defendant attacked a woman on a bus while she slept. Change of plea on day 4 of trial, after victim had given evidence. Sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment.

### **R v. Bell [Reading] 2018**

First CID prosecution under s.53 RIPA 2000

Fiona Ryan acted for the Crown in the first (CID) prosecution under s.53 RIPA 2000. The defendant, suspected of possession of indecent images of children, failed to comply with a s.49 requirement to provide the password to an encrypted drive. The defendant was sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment and Sexual Risk Order imposed.

### **R v. Prospere [Turks & Caicos Islands] 2014**

Supreme Court Providenciales

Fiona Ryan appeared at the Supreme Court Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, in respect of an armed robbery trial which stopped at half time following submission of no case to answer.