



LIBERTAS  
CHAMBERS

# Nina Grahame KC

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**Year of Call: 1993**

**Year took silk: 2019**

**Nina Grahame KC defends in the most serious Crown Court cases and has a busy appellate practice with a particular focus on out-of-time 'miscarriage of justice' appeals.**

**She is regularly instructed to defend in cases of the most extreme complexity, particularly:**

- **Complex fraud and financial crime, including contested POCA proceedings,**
- **Cases involving complex contested expert medical evidence, particularly paediatric, medical, & psychiatric,**
- **Cases founded on alleged OCG or gang membership,**
- **Cases involving the use/misuse of cutting-edge technology.**

Nina represents defendants accused of complex fraud, taxation and money laundering offences, including those founded upon evidence from other jurisdictions.

Nina has represented numerous members of Organised Crime Groups and territorial gangs operating throughout the North-West and nationally. These cases typically involve gang-related murders as well as international drug supply networks and other serious violence and the supply/use of firearms.

Nina frequently represents parents and carers accused of serious offences against children or vulnerable adults. She is highly respected for her expertise in representing defendants with complex mental health needs and is frequently instructed in cases involving vulnerable witnesses and complainants. She has specialist expertise in linked Criminal and Family Court/Court of Protection cases. She has advised professional parties on specific issues of potential criminality arising in Court of Protection cases.

Nina lectures on a variety of topics, most notably cross-jurisdictional disclosure, joint enterprise and vulnerable defendants. She is a mentor with the Association of Women Barristers and a member of Women in Criminal Law and Women in the Law.

## **Testimonials (most recent first):**

*"Nina is a superb KC with an extraordinary eye for detail."* - Chambers and Partners 2023

*"She communicates very effectively and is very authoritative."* - Chambers and Partners 2023

*"She is a marvellous advocate, very effective and great with clients."* - Chambers and Partners 2023



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*"Nina thinks outside the box and makes excellent legal arguments."* - Chambers and Partners 2023

*"She has a strong court presence."* - Chambers and Partners 2023

*"Nina is able to hold the attention of the judiciary and a jury by her thoughtful and detailed analysis of every aspect of a case; and she is always the best prepared person in the Court. Despite her formidable ability, she remains approachable and open to clients and solicitors. She is able not only to manage clients, but also ensures even the most disadvantaged are fully involved in the preparation of their case. Her paperwork is thorough and always excellent."* Legal 500 2022 (Crime; Leading Silk)

*"Absolutely superb - she is very careful and considered, prepares extremely thoroughly, and is very personable in court. She is also very good in communications with clients, especially those in difficulty. She's a formidable barrister."* - Chambers and Partners 2021

*"A brilliant advocate who persuades by calm, reasonable but ferociously intelligent argument."* - Legal 500 2021 (Crime)

*"Defends some of the most significant matters in the Crown Court and also has a busy practice in the appellate courts. She is regularly instructed for the defence in cases concerning murder, national drug supply, serious sexual offences and child cruelty. She also represents professionals including lecturers and teachers accused of abusive behaviour. "She is amazing - very hard-working and a tenacious advocate." Recent work: Acted in R v Hughes, which concerned the alleged activities of a large organised crime group in Liverpool who traded in huge quantities of class A and class B drugs."* - Chambers and Partners 2019

*"She combines excellent legal knowledge with incisive legal analysis and fearless advocacy."* - The UK Legal 500 2019

*"Defends some of the most significant matters in the Crown Court and also has a busy practice in the appeals courts. Regularly instructed for the defence in cases concerning murder, national drug supply, serious sexual offences and child cruelty. Also represents professionals including lecturers and teachers accused of abusive behaviour. Strengths: "She takes an extremely robust and thorough approach." "She is an eloquent and experienced advocate." Recent work: Acted in R v Adams, a case concerning an alleged planned assassination."* - Chambers and Partners 2018

*"An excellent barrister."* - The UK Legal 500 2017

*"Considerable experience defending in Court of Appeal cases."* - The UK Legal 500 2016

*"Utilises pre-trial protocols on disclosure effectively to the benefit of clients."* - The UK Legal 500 2015



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*"An extremely able defence practitioner."* - The UK Legal 500 2014

*"Recommended as a criminal practitioner whose "preparation work is most comprehensive"".* - The UK Legal 500 2011

*"... a conscientious, capable and committed defender."* - The UK Legal 500 2010

*"...conscientious and ahead of the game."* - The UK Legal 500 2007

*"Nina Grahame is a charismatic and persuasive advocate whose success in court comes from a profound understanding of the law, rigorous preparation and a commitment to the welfare of every client."* - Nicky Hall, Clifford Johnson Solicitors

*"Hardworking, robust and conscientious; Nina's quality of preparation and delivery is of the highest quality. The 'go to' to counsel for all serious criminal matters."* - Helen White, Howells Solicitors

#### **Appointments & Memberships:**

- Member of Criminal Bar Association
- The Howard League
- Women in Criminal Law
- Women in the Law

#### **BUSINESS CRIME**

Nina is currently instructed as leading counsel on behalf of **BM** in a highly complex case concerning charges of conspiracy to defraud and money laundering arising from 2 major NTS investigations into alleged consumer frauds totaling nearly £14 million pounds. It is alleged that the frauds were operated from Spain and the proceeds laundered outside of the UK.

In **R v DJG**, Nina was instructed as leading counsel to defend a Director of the Medical Research Council prosecuted for conspiracy to steal and to defraud both the MRC and the National Assembly of Wales. The case concerned fraudulent business grant applications relating to the cost of numerous items of highly specialised computer hardware and software, each valued at several hundred thousand pounds.

In **R v PWL**, a high value tax fraud and money laundering case, Nina represented a defendant accused of using the fraudulent sales and re-sales of high value vehicles via the European export market to launder the proceeds of Class A drug supply on a large scale.



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### POCA

In her fraud cases, as well as her numerous cases relating to large-scale drug importation and supply, Nina has consistently demonstrated her expertise in defending in contested POCA confiscation proceedings. Pursuing skilled evidential challenges to hidden assets and other evidential complexities, Nina has also successfully advanced imaginative legal arguments in such cases. In **R v Parsons**, a highly complex credit card fraud resulted in 2 sets of proceedings spanning several years. In the subsequent POCA proceedings, Nina successfully argued that, whilst a judge cannot act inconsistently with the jury verdicts, neither those verdicts or a defendant's acceptance of guilt by his plea operate as an absolute bar to subsequent complete re-examination of and challenge to evidence adduced at the POCA proceedings.

In this case and others such as **R v Stanton**, Nina has successfully deployed independent expert forensic accountants to assist the defence case.

### CRIMINAL DEFENCE & APPEALS

Nina's very busy criminal defence practice reflects her reputation for impressively detailed preparation and persuasive presentation of defence cases at trial in the most serious cases. She has a formidable reputation for her ability to forensically demolish prejudicial preconceptions and circumstantial evidence relating to race, gender, musical/lyrical expression and other 'background' issues alleging motive.

Nina has a commitment to representing defendants considered 'vulnerable'. In addition, a large proportion of her cases relate to criminal prosecutions where defendants are also party to linked concurrent proceedings in the Family Court or Court of Protection and she regularly lectures and writes about the complexity of cross-disclosure between these vastly different jurisdictions.

She has defended numerous professionals, including nurses, medical professionals, teachers, members of the clergy and company directors accused of offences ranging from fraud and theft to manslaughter and sexual offences.

Nina has also published articles on the subject of vulnerable witnesses and defendants and has been extensively interviewed by national and local media.

**R v Stubbs & others (2022)** - Appointed by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals as leading counsel for all 4 appellants in an appeal against their convictions for murder in 2021. The appeal was founded upon a detailed critique of flaws in the preparation and presentation of aspects of the prosecution case, most notably their handling of an unwilling witness, the only eye-witness, to a fatal assault.



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## HOMICIDE

Specific expertise in cases involving gang-related activity and the admissibility of gang culture, images, iconography & drill rap music. In 2022 she secured the acquittal of a teenager, Simon Thorne, of conspiring to murder numerous members of an opposing gang who had killed his friend; the admissibility of gang images was challenged and prosecution assertions as to gang allegiances and inferences from drill rap lyrics were successfully undermined. Nina has successfully challenged such evidence in numerous recent trials, including *R v Reid* in 2021 which featured extensive gang images and music, and she lectures on the admissibility of gang-related and drill rap evidence.

Specific expertise in cases involving allegations of joint enterprise participation. Nina defended Armel Gnango in the most high-profile joint enterprise case before Jagee, where parasitic accessorial liability was considered by the Supreme Court in the context of a transferred malice murder. Since that time, joint enterprise liability has featured in the majority of her numerous multi-handed and gang-related trials.

Specific expertise also in cases involving the murder of babies and young children, an area requiring detailed understanding and analysis of highly complex expert evidence. In *R v Ashurst*, the majority of the 15 expert witnesses who reported were cross-examined by Nina at trial, including neuropathologists, osteo-articular pathologists, paediatric neuroradiologists, ophthalmologists, paediatric radiologists, and psychiatrists. In particular, Nina successfully challenged prosecution expert evidence of alleged bite mark injury, thus undermining the prosecution case on specific intent and culminating in the defendant's acquittal of the murder of his 14-month-old child.

**R v Knox (2023)** - As leading counsel, Nina secured the unanimous acquittal of a young defendant of effective good character on counts of both murder and manslaughter. A total of 9 defendants were indicted for the alleged joint enterprise murder of a teenager in the context of drug and gang related feuding in Liverpool. By detailed analysis of the extensive technical evidence in the case, Nina successfully proved that the prosecution had substantially over-estimated the length of time that the defendant was present at the scene; unanimous acquittals then followed her detailed analysis of the credibility of the defence overall by reference to every other aspect of the prosecution case. Nina led **Charlotte Noddings** of Exchange Chambers, Leeds

<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/faces-murderers-who-beat-teenager-25933337>

**R v Thorne (2022)** - Leading counsel successfully defended a young man on trial for alleged participation in a conspiracy to murder in the context of gang feuding which had previously led to the death of the defendants' friend. The jury found the defendant guilty only of the



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lesser count of conspiracy to cause GBH, having been persuaded to reject the prosecution inference that drill rap lyrics and images of gang affiliation demonstrated a greater intention to kill. Nina led **Dan Travers** of Exchange Chambers, Manchester.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/jailedviolent-gang-xated-revenge-24378018>

**R v Nuttall (2021-2)** - Leading counsel representing a schoolboy accused of the joint enterprise murder by stabbing of a 15-year-old boy. Both young defendants required various special measures to assist them throughout the trial. The co-defendant was convicted of murder but, accepting the defence submissions that Nuttall did not share a specific intention to kill or cause really serious harm, he was acquitted of murder and convicted of the lesser offence of manslaughter. Nina led **Clare Ashcroft** of GCN Chambers.

<https://www.gmp.police.uk>

**R v Ennis (2021)** - Leading counsel representing the driver of a vehicle in a 'drive-by' shooting which resulted in the death of a young law student, an innocent passer-by, caught in the line of fire. Nina led **Adrian Farrow** of Exchange Chambers, Manchester.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-58087826>

**R v Reid (2021)** - Leading counsel successfully defended a young man on trial for an alleged joint enterprise murder in the context of gang feuding in Moss Side. The jury found the defendant guilty of the lesser count of manslaughter, having been persuaded to reject the prosecution inference that drill rap lyrics and images of gang affiliation demonstrated a specific intention to kill or cause really serious harm. The custodial sentence imposed for manslaughter was reduced following a successful appeal. Nina led **Sarah Johnston** of Exchange Chambers, Manchester.

**R v Hulme (2020)** - Leading counsel defending a young mother acquitted of murder + manslaughter of her partner. Successful defence of self-defence was advanced on the basis that the deceased had, in fact, stabbed himself following a heated domestic dispute. The defence involved extensive challenges to non-conviction evidence of bad character & detailed pathological analysis of the method of injury. Nina led **Dan Gaskell** of Tuckers Solicitors.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10824201/Mother-two-falsely-accusedmurdering-ex-partner-stabbed-her.html>

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/wronglyaccused-murdering-.anc-23989800>



**R v KG (2020)** - Leading counsel in a case involving the fatal stabbing of young father. “Exceptionally”, a plea to manslaughter on basis of loss of control was accepted by the prosecution following assessment of the defendant by a total of 6 experts analysing features relating to the apprehension of violence in light of PTSD and a learning disability. Determinate sentence imposed. Intermediary granted for entire proceedings. Nina led **Rebecca Filletti** of GCN.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/kellygray-david-gavin-rochdale-19032846>

**R v DA (2020)** - Leading counsel defended a father acquitted of the murder of his 14 month old daughter. Complex case involved a total of 15 specialist expert witnesses, including neuropathologists, osteo-articular pathologists, odontologists, neuroradiologists, ophthalmologists, paediatric radiologists, and psychiatrists. Nina led **Clare Ashcroft** of GCN.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-51641833>

**R v GC (2020)** - Alleged murder of elderly man within 24 hours of defendant’s release from a lengthy custodial sentence where defendant stole vehicles, burgled properties, threatened young children and kidnapped a care worker prior to the killing. Accepted by the prosecution to be floridly psychotic at the time, the contested issue was whether this resulted from schizo-affective disorder or effect of potent synthetic cannabinoids (“Spice”). Allegations of negligent psychiatric care by the prison authorities were also central to the defence, pursued with what the trial judge referred to as “characteristic courage” and aided by extensive disclosure of medical and inmate records. Nina Led **Richard Brigden** of GCN.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-53256378>

**R v SC (2019)** - Joint enterprise murder; brothers accused of the knifepoint murder of a Birkenhead woman alleged to be motivated by homophobia. Case involved complex factual analysis of DNA and blood distribution evidence.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-48092027>

## Other notable cases 2018-2019

**R v LT (2019)** - In a final case as a senior junior represented a psychiatric staff nurse accused, with others, of the wilful neglect of an inpatient which led to her death and perverting the course of justice in the related Coroner’s Court proceedings. The ‘whistleblower’ in the case was extensively cross-examined by Nina using crucial, late-disclosed unused material, following which the case was discontinued by the prosecution and verdicts of not guilty recorded against all defendants.



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<https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/17686084.neglect-trial-collapses-disclosurefailure/>

**R v PP (2018)** - Led by **Sasha Wass KC**, represented 80 year old defendant facing historical allegations of rape and false imprisonment in 1972. Defendant had previous convictions for similar offending in the 1960s and for the manslaughter of a 14 year old in 1972; had been detained in secure psychiatric hospitals continuously for past 46 years. Particularly complex 3rd party disclosure issues in a challenging case where the defendant attended trial by video-link throughout.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/20/beast-of-wombwell-peterpickering-guilty-of-1972-rape>