



Frances McMenamin KC

Year of Call: 1985

Year of Silk: 1998

Frances called in 1985 after 8 years in the Fiscal Service and has become one of the most highly respected members of the Criminal Bar.

In 1991 she acted as Junior Counsel for the Crown in the Lockerbie Inquiry and in 1997 was appointed as an Advocate Depute prosecuting in the High Court in major and serious criminal cases as well as appearing for the Crown in the Appeal Court. She also held an appointment as a Temporary Sheriff from 1991 to 1997.

Having taken silk in 1998, Frances has become recognised as the top female criminal defence counsel, appearing constantly in the High Court, particularly in cases relating to murder, rape and serious organised crime.

Frances is the senior woman at the Scottish Bar and has been a member of various Faculty Committees over the years including the Faculty Council, the Faculty Disciplinary Committee and High Court Rules Council and is currently a member of the Criminal Courts Rules Council. Having been a Board member of the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission from 2010-2018, in 2020 she was appointed to be its Consultant Legal Adviser. In 2009 she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Strathclyde for services to the law and to the University.

Areas of Practice

Criminal Trials

Health and Safety

FAI and Public Inquiries

Road Traffic Violations

Appointments and memberships

- Temporary Sheriff 1991-1997
- Director of Faculty Services Ltd 1993-1996
- Visiting Lecturer at the Scottish Police College 1991-2013
- Member of Court of Strathclyde University 2005-2009
- Honorary Doctorate from Strathclyde University 2009
- Director of The Merchants House of Glasgow 2016 – present
- Member of the Audit Committee of the Police Investigations and Review Commission 2018 – 2021

- Board Member of the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission from 2010-2019 and, since 2020, their Consultant Legal Adviser
- Member of Lord Bonython's Post Corroboration Safeguards Review Group 2014-2015 (Reported 2015)
- Member of the Lord Justice Clerk Lady Dorrian's Review Group on the Management of Sexual Offences 2019-2021 (Reported April 2021)
- Member of the Scottish Government's Governance Group on the Management of Sexual Offences 2021-present
- Judge in Herald Law Awards since 2015
- Speaker at various Law Conferences