



John Brannigan
Year of Call: 2021

John graduated from the University of Glasgow in 2011 with a First Class Honours Degree (LL.B) in Scots Law and Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Legal Practice in 2012. He called to the Bar in 2021 and quickly developed a very busy practice, specialising in all aspects of Criminal Law including trials in the High Courts and Sheriff Courts across the country, as well as regularly being instructed to appear in the Criminal Appeal Courts. John has appeared as Junior Counsel both in his own right and alongside Senior Counsel in high profile and complex cases.

Areas of Practice

Criminal Trials

FAI and Public Inquiries

Post conviction proceedings

Health and Safety

Selected Cases

HMA v Kevin McCluskey [2024] - Successfully defended client accused of serious sexual crime and secured a 'Not Guilty' verdict in the face of strong evidence from the complainer, an eye-witness, evidence of injury and immediate distress coupled with immediate, detailed disclosure.

Robert Thomson v HMA [2024] – Junior Counsel for an appellant in the Post Office Proceedings which resulted in the appellant’s conviction being successfully overturned (https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/docs/default-source/cos-general-docs/pdf-docs-for-opinions/2024hcjac15.pdf?sfvrsn=3cf3192a_1)

HMA v Iain Packer [2024] - Lead Junior Counsel in the high-profile cold-case murder of Emma Caldwell. This was a complex and lengthy case which involved a voluminous amount of disclosure.

Nathan McKenzie v HMA [2023]- appeared as sole Counsel in a 3-Judge appeal chaired by the Lord Justice General, relating to the issue of the Crown libelling a rape allegation within a 'DASA' charge at Sheriff Court level (https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/docs/default-source/cos-general-docs/pdf-docs-for-opinions/2024hcjac6.pdf?sfvrsn=65dab8a3_1)

HMA v Anthony McDonald [2023] - defended in a case involving 3 complainers, all alleging serious sexual offences, and client acquitted of all 7 charges after trial.

His Majesty's Advocate v Christopher Harrisson [2023] – Lead Junior Counsel in a high profile 'cold-case' murder trial which was televised in the Summer of 2023. This was a complex and lengthy trial.

His Majesty's Advocate v Colin Hamilton [2023] – Defence Counsel in trial involving an allegation of being involved in Serious and Organised Crime under section 28 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010. Secured client's acquittal in respect of this charge as well as successful no case to answer submissions in respect of charges involving being concerned in the supply of cocaine.

Robert McDonald and Euan Milligan v HMA 2022 [2022] HCJAC 34 - Represented both appellants who appealed in relation to the issue of "discount":-

https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/docs/default-source/cos-general-docs/pdf-docs-for-opinions/2022hcjac34.pdf?sfvrsn=c09e5f67_1

DM v HMA 2022 [2022] HCJAC 27 – Junior Counsel to Senior Counsel in a complex appeal against conviction:-https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/docs/default-source/cos-general-docs/pdf-docs-for-opinions/2022hcjac27.pdf?sfvrsn=5b33fc5_1

Testimonials

"Meticulous preparation and comprehensive knowledge of the law and legal principles underpins his courageous advocacy."

“A supremely capable advocate who cuts to the root of the dispute with his easy-going manner and extensive knowledge of the law.”

“John Brannigan always ensures the best outcome possible for a client, his experience as a criminal defence solicitor assists in ensuring the client is placed at complete ease.”

“When instructing John, he ensures to speak to the client in an engaging and relatable manner and after consultations with him, they are left feeling reassured that everything possible will be done to help their defence.”

“He is always professional with all parties involved, ensuring that each case is prepared completely and effectively.”