Maya Chopra



YEAR OF CALL 2014

Maya is a dedicated, tactical and fearless advocate with a busy criminal defence practice focussing on serious organised crime and fraud. She is regularly instructed in cases concerning high value drugs, serious violence and large volumes of evidence.

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Career Overview

Maya is a dedicated and fearless criminal defence advocate. She is known for her forensic and tactical approach to case preparation, and her ability to connect with defendants from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities. Her legal arguments during the early stages of a case have led to prosecutions being stopped, or lesser charges being preferred. As a trial advocate, Maya is skilled in arguing matters of law as they arise, responding to late-served evidence and, most importantly, presenting a case powerfully and persuasively to a jury

Area of Practice

Maya has a busy and wide-ranging criminal defence practice and is regularly instructed in cases of drug trafficking, violence and dishonesty. She has a particular focus on serious organised crime and fraud and is also experienced in representing defendants with mental health conditions. Her cases often involve large volumes of complex evidence, and she is adept at the cross-examination of experts and police officers.

Notable Cases

R v W & others [Operation Wingdale] – Warwick Crown Court – Attempt murder

Maya represented one of the three lead defendants in this seven-defendant case. The trial involved forensic analysis of CCTV and medical evidence, as well as contentious cross examination of the complainant.

R v O & others [Operation Supermarine] – Winchester Crown Court – Modern slavery and human trafficking

Maya represented a vulnerable defendant- a former sex-worker, who was alleged to have been a victim-turned-trafficker as part of a wider sex slavery and trafficking conspiracy. Her client was acquitted after a successful submission of no case to answer.

R v B & others [Operation Holms] – St Albans Crown Court - Gang warfare

Maya appeared for the first defendant. This case related to "gang warfare" in the Bedford area. The page count was in excess of 25,000, largely due to the volume of telephone data served. Maya analysed raw phone data to observe patterns in communications and cell sites. She successfully challenged some of the Crown's schedules, cross examined the data analyst and cell site expert and made successful applications for disclosure throughout the trial.

R v D & others [Operation Seacourt] – Warwick Crown Court - Conspiracy: High value commercial robbery

Maya represented the only defendant acquitted in Operation Seacourt. The defendant was accused of taking part in a conspiracy concerning numerous high value commercial robberies, including a cash in transit delivery. The Crown's case relied heavily upon telephone evidence and CCTV, which Maya considered in minute detail. She identified a significant inaccuracy in how the CCTV evidence had been interpreted, and as a result the prosecution case against her client was substantially weakened.

R v N & others [Operation Forsten] – Warwick Crown Court - Violent disorder

This case centred around a violent disorder which resulted in a fatality. Whilst the investigation was led by the police homicide team, prosecutions were brought only for the violent disorder rather than murder. Maya represented one of ten defendants; her client was acquitted at trial.

R v C & another – Newcastle Crown Court – Cocaine supply

Maya appeared for the first defendant. He was accused of supplying cocaine across county lines. Due to separate investigations being taken by different police forces around the same time, the defendant had already pleaded guilty

to supplying heroin and received a significant custodial sentence. The Court heard arguments on abuse of process. Maya spent considerable time analysing telephone messages, the result of which the prosecution expert conceded where many messages pertained either to legitimate business dealings or drugs for which the defendant was already serving a sentence.

R v LM – Woolwich Crown Court - Knifepoint robbery

The defendant was accused of an attempted knifepoint robbery of a taxi driver. The complainant identified him through an ID procedure. At trial Maya adduced, through cross examination, the video of the procedure and evidence of an alternative suspect from the unused material. The court acceded to a submission of no case to answer, and the jury was directed to enter a not guilty verdict.

Education

Kaplan Law School, Bar Professional Training Course

University of Exeter, Law LLB

Exeter College, International Baccalaureate

Scholarships

Inner Temple Duke of Edinburgh Scholarship

Inner Temple Exhibition Award

Other Information

Professional Memberships

The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple

Criminal Bar Association

Women in Criminal Law