

# Maya Chopra

YEAR OF CALL 2014

Maya is a dedicated, tactical and fearless advocate with a busy criminal practice. She has recently appeared in cases of serious violent crime concerning complex telephone evidence.

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## Career Overview

Maya joined Farringdon Chambers in 2016.

Prior to coming to the Bar Maya worked in various paralegal roles, most notably on the Mau Mau Reparations litigation (see: *Mutua and others v. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office* (“Mau Mau” case), [2012] EWHC 2678 (QB)).

At University and Bar School Maya was actively involved in both competitive advocacy and drama. She has a flair for performance which has carried through to her career at the Bar.

## Area of Practice

Maya is a dedicated and fearless advocate with a busy criminal practice. She is regularly commended for her tactical approach to defending cases and her sensitivity with vulnerable defendants. She receives legal aid and private instructions, and often provides assistance and advice throughout the lifespan of a case. Her drafting in advance of trial has led to Prosecutions being stopped, or lesser charges being preferred.

Maya regularly represents defendants accused of serious violence. Her cases often involve large volumes of complex telephone evidence and she is experienced in the cross-examination of experts.

In addition to general crime, Maya accepts instructions in private driving and taxi licencing matters.

## Notable Cases

### **R v B & others – St Albans Crown Court – Led Junior for the first defendant in Operation Holms**

This case, which took place between November 2018 and January 2019, 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 examined the Crown's schedules, which led to a number of exhibits being amended. She conducted the cross examination of the telephone data analyst and cell site expert and made ongoing applications for disclosure. News coverage.

### **R v D and others – Warwick Crown Court – 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.

### **R v LM – Woolwich Crown Court – Successful submission of no case to answer**

The defendant was accused of an attempted knifepoint robbery of a taxi driver. The complainant identified him in a PACE compliant ID procedure. After Maya identified a potential alternative suspect in the unused material and put his picture to the complainant the Court acceded to a submission of no case to answer and the jury was directed to enter a not guilty verdict.

## **R v T – Blackfriars Crown Court – Unanimous acquittal by the jury of two Counts of sexual assault**

The defendant was accused of sexual assault by two separate, independent complainants. Maya cross-examined both complainants and forensically examined the CCTV in the case. The defendant was a family man of good character who was spared a conviction for a sexual offence.

## **R v E – Harrow Crown Court – Complex benefit fraud**

The defendant faced four Counts of benefit fraud covering a 15-month period. The allegations concerned receipt of benefits to which she was not entitled. The Prosecution case relied entirely upon documentary exhibits. Maya made a successful submission of no case to answer on one Count. The jury returned not guilty verdicts on two Counts and could not reach a verdict on the final Count. The Prosecution offered no evidence on the final Count.

## **R v M (a youth) & another – Stratford Youth Court - acquittal of s.18 GBH**

Appeared on a certificate for counsel in a case of grievous bodily harm (section 18) - The defendant was accused of being involved in the stabbing of another youth during a group attack. The trial involved the cross examination of youth witnesses, forensic evidence and submissions on joint enterprise. The defendant was acquitted.

## **R v J (Trollstation) – City of London Magistrates Court – Defence of a YouTube prankster**

Widely reported in the mainstream press, the defendant pleaded guilty on the day of trial to a charge under section 4A of the Public Order Act 1986. He was a member of an internet prankster group who staged fake 'heists' in the Tate Britain and National Portrait Gallery. Sentenced to 10 weeks' custody with notional credit. Maya's submissions in mitigation were quoted in the media. News coverage.

## **Memberships**

Professional Memberships

- The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple
- Criminal Bar Association
- Women in Criminal Law

- Society of Asian Lawyers

## Education

- Kaplan Law School, Bar Professional Training Course, V.C. – 2014
- University of Exeter, Law LLB, 2:1 – 2012
- Exeter College, International Baccalaureate – 2009

### Scholarships

- Inner Temple Duke of Edinburgh Scholarship – 2013
- Inner Temple Exhibition Award – 2013

## Other Information

In 2018 Maya was interviewed for the UNJUST podcast, broadcast by The Justice Gap, to discuss the criminal justice system, disclosure and miscarriages of justice, [click here to read article](#).

