

## KENNIESHA STEPHENS

Year of call  
2015



Kenniesha Stephens is a criminal and regulatory practitioner specialising in serious and complex crime, financial crime, serious sexual offences and serious violence.

She has a substantial prosecution and defence practice across the full range of regulatory crime, including fraud, restraint and confiscation, trading standards, food safety and environmental offences, and is regularly entrusted with serious and complex cases above her year of call.

Kenniesha is known for a meticulous approach to case preparation and for fierce, incisive advocacy in both her oral and written work. She assimilates complex facts quickly, brings clear and decisive case strategy to every instruction, and is a persuasive presence in court. Approachable and personable, she engages effectively with vulnerable defendants and witnesses and is trusted by professional and lay clients alike to deliver in high-stakes cases. Being described as "great to work with and very good".

Kenniesha holds CPS Grade 3 panel appointments in General Crime and on the Specialist Fraud Division and is a member of the CPS Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) Panel. She also sits as a Specialist Regulatory Advocate (List C) and has served as a legal advisor and case presenter to professional regulatory panels. She also defends in Regulatory cases including for RCN.

Before coming to the Bar, Kenniesha built a strong foundation in financial and serious crime. She worked at HMRC as a paralegal in the strategic litigation team on high-profile, complex tax avoidance cases, at the London Borough of Camden on housing and antisocial behaviour litigation, and as an intelligence analyst at Surrey Police and the Metropolitan Police – experience she draws on directly in her fraud and serious crime practice today.

## LEGAL EXPERTISE

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## Crime & Regulatory

Kenniesha prosecutes and defends across the full spectrum of serious crime, including serious sexual offences, serious violence, drugs and firearms, and multi-handed conspiracies. She has strength in cases turning on complex disclosure, technical expert evidence and abuse of process, and in the sensitive handling of historic sexual abuse and cases involving vulnerable complainants and witnesses.

## Selected Cases

### [R v DC \[2026\], Lewes Crown Court](#)

Defence junior counsel in a large-scale historic sexual abuse case involving a 50-count indictment and 14 complainants spanning 1977-1987, when the defendant was a teacher at a boarding school. Kenniesha had primary responsibility for disclosure, conducting a systematic review of a substantial and complex disclosure schedule (including extensive social media, counselling and medical records) and identifying material capable of undermining the prosecution case or assisting the defence, which fed directly into the cross-examination of complainants. She drafted agreed facts, assisted with skeleton arguments, and produced a sentencing table mapping each historic offence to its closest equivalent under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, applying *R v H* [2011] EWCA Crim 2753.

### [R v TJ \[2026\]](#)

Prosecution counsel in a factually complex child sex offence case requiring multiple evidential strands to be synthesised into a clear and coherent timeline for the jury. Kenniesha restructured the trial bundles to enable effective examination of the officer in the case, integrating Uber journey data, cell site evidence, CCTV and telephone material. She met and defeated a late defence ambush alleging disclosure failures, ensuring continued compliance with the prosecution's disclosure obligations. Through decisive case management and advocacy, she kept the trial on track and preserved the integrity of the prosecution case. The defendant was convicted.

### [R v KH \[2025\]](#)

Prosecution counsel in a firearms possession and possession with intent to supply cannabis case turning on highly technical DNA evidence, the central issue being whether the defendant's DNA could be explained by secondary transfer. When the defence served an expert report out of time on the first day of trial, Kenniesha immediately instructed the Crown's forensic DNA expert to analyse the defence methodology and produce an addendum on secondary transfer and persistence. Through detailed and robust examination, she exposed the flaws in the defence assumptions, reinforced the probative value of the DNA findings and neutralised the late-served defence evidence.

## R v Maughan, Nafa, Stokes Snr, Stokes Jnr, Saroay & Harris [2025]

Junior prosecution counsel in a multi-handed conspiracy to steal high-value horseboxes during the COVID-19 pandemic, involving extensive and technically complex evidence including ANPR, CCTV, telephone material, voice notes and cell site analysis. With her leader engaged in another trial, Kenniesha assumed effective conduct of the case: she made bundles trial-ready, negotiated guilty pleas from multiple defendants, opened the case to the jury, and led the analyst and officer in the case through their evidence for the opening days of trial. She deployed a bespoke evidential presentation with embedded CCTV and voice notes to lead the jury through the chronology of offending and successfully applied to proceed in the absence of a non-attending defendant.

## R v JK [2025]

Defended a young man charged with possession of a bladed article at Notting Hill Carnival, successfully applying to stay the prosecution as an abuse of process (second limb). Kenniesha cross-examined the two interviewing officers and established, on the civil standard, that the defendant had been given an unequivocal promise of a caution on which he had relied to his detriment. Following a two-day hearing, the court stayed the proceedings.

## R v PO [2024], Court Martial

Successfully defended a Chief Petty Officer on a sexual assault charge before the Court Martial. Kenniesha made a successful application under section 41 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 to adduce the complainant's prior conduct, persuading the court through carefully drafted written submissions that the evidence was central to the defence and that its exclusion would deny the defendant a fair trial.

## R v IB [2024], Aylesbury Crown Court; R v C [2023], Winchester Crown Court; R v P [2023]. Gloucester Crown Court

A series of serious sexual offence trials, prosecuted and defended, involving vulnerable complainants and the careful handling of sensitive evidence.

## Regulatory & Professional Discipline

Kenniesha has a growing regulatory practice, sitting as a legal advisor and case presenter before professional disciplinary panels and appearing across the full range of regulatory crime, including trading standards, food safety and environmental prosecutions. She is a member of the NMC panel of case presenters and a Specialist Regulatory Advocate (List C).

## Selected Cases

### Legal advisor to the Fitness to Practice Panel of the CNHC [2024]

Instructed as legal advisor to the fitness to practice panel of the Complementary and Natural Healthcare

Council for a two-day hearing, advising on legal issues at each stage – facts, misconducts and impairment – sitting through the panel’s deliberations and drafting the notice of decision.

## Financial Crime

Financial Crime is one of Kenniesha’s core areas of practice. She prosecutes and defends fraud, money laundering and restraint and confiscation proceedings, frequently involving voluminous financial material and complex expert evidence. Her pre-Bar experience at HMRC on strategic litigation into complex tax avoidance, and as an intelligence analyst, gives her a distinctive command of financial and data-heavy cases.

## Selected Cases

### [R v LR \[2025\]](#)

Prosecution counsel in a fraud by abuse of position case concerning the financial exploitation of a vulnerable complainant suffering from aggressive dementia, whose finances were controlled by the defendant, his wife, under a lasting power of attorney. Instructed a week before trial, Kenniesha organised the bundles and developed a clear strategy for presenting voluminous financial material within a constrained timeframe. She conducted a detailed examination in chief of the consultant psychiatrist – elevating opinion expressed on the balance of probabilities to the criminal standard – led the jury through a complex three-year financial schedule, and managed multiple Crown witnesses supported by over 1,000 exhibits.

### [R v Dougall & Dougall \[2023\] Aylesbury Crown Court](#)

Criminal fraud prosecution.

### [Sambi v Revenue & Customs \(Income Tax\) \[2020\] UKFTT 231 \(TC\)](#)

Tax appeal before the First-Tier Tribunal.

## Appointments

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- CPS General Crime Panel: Level 3
- CPS Specialist Fraud Panel: Level 3
- CPS RASSO Panel Member
- Specialist Regulatory Advocates (List C)

## Memberships

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- Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
- Criminal Bar Association
- The Fraud Lawyers Association
- Women in Criminal Law

## Education

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- Criminology & Law, BA: London Metropolitan University (2005)
- Graduate Diploma in Law with Distinction (2013). Awarded the Judges' Prize for Excellent Performance in the GDL 2013.
- Bar Professional Training Course, University of Law with a Very Competent. Awarded a prize for achieving the highest grade in the Conference exam 2014/15.