



Valerie Charbit

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Valerie's diverse practice spans serious criminal cases involving sexual offences and murder/manslaughter, fraud, health and safety and professional disciplinary proceedings. She also has experience in public inquiries. Since November 2020 she has worked on the Grenfell Tower public inquiry.

She is appointed by numerous professional and public bodies to do advisory and advocacy work and has a broad range of clients from across the public and private sectors.

With vast experience in complex and multi-handed cases, she both prosecutes and defends as a leading junior and is public access accredited (so can take on private work directly).

Her defence work includes representing a variety of professionals before their regulatory bodies. Her broad experience means she is very well placed to advise in cases where criminal and civil law intersect.

Valerie has a particular interest in mental health and is experienced in vulnerable witness advocacy and she delivers training to barristers on this. Her skill in cross-examining experts across a broad spectrum of areas is well recognised.

Valerie is appointed to the CPS Grade 4 (top tier) list for prosecution advocates and the specialist rape and serious crime group panels. She is also appointed to the Grade A (top tier) list for Specialist Regulatory Advocates in Health & Safety and to the Panel A list for the SFO.

Since 2004 Valerie has sat as a part-time judge for the First Tier Tribunal (Mental Health) and she sits as a panel member on child and adolescent cases. She represents health authorities before the First Tier Tribunal and the Upper Tribunal.

Valerie is Chair of the Regulatory Practice Group at Red Lion Chambers.

She is wellbeing director for the Criminal Bar Association and for Chambers. She represents the Criminal Bar Association and South Eastern Circuit on the Bar Council's working party group on wellbeing. She is an ethics and advocacy trainer for Middle Temple and lead facilitator for vulnerable

witness advocacy training for South Eastern Circuit.

Crime

Valerie has over 25 years' experience of defending and prosecuting in serious criminal cases and has appeared in many complex, multi-party proceedings. Her areas of expertise include murder, manslaughter, serious sexual offences (including rape, child sexual abuse and possession of indecent images), drugs and fraud.

Valerie is appointed to the CPS Grade 4 (top tier) list for prosecution advocates and is an expert in vulnerable witness advocacy, regularly delivering training on topic, including as the lead trainer for the South Eastern Circuit.

Valerie has a particular interest and specialism in mental health and a profound understanding of the mental health problems faced by witnesses and defendants. She has many years' experience of questioning mental health professionals on the most serious cases in the Crown Court and in proceedings before the First Tier Tribunal (Mental Health).

She assisted in drafting the response to the Government's consultation on unfitness to plead on behalf of the Criminal Bar Association and the Bar Council. She has responded on behalf of the South Eastern Circuit and Criminal Bar Association to the Crown Prosecution Service and Sentencing Council's consultations on proposed guidelines for defendants with mental health issues.

Serious Sexual Offences

Valerie has prosecuted and defended in many cases involving children and family members. She has extensive experience in handling vulnerable witnesses and defendants and can utilise her detailed knowledge of mental health issues, including the impact of trauma on vulnerable witnesses.

Valerie is adept at eliciting relevant evidence from social services records and regularly makes and responds to bad character and hearsay applications.

Valerie recently prosecuted the re-trial of a rape case involving two minors and defended in a case involving two witnesses that required an intermediary.

Murder & Manslaughter

She is frequently instructed to defend youths and those with mental health issues, including Asperger Syndrome, Alcohol Dependency Syndrome, Battered Woman Syndrome and psychosis.

Drugs

In drugs cases she has been involved in lengthy trials involving the competing interests of multiple

defendants. Her cases have involved Class A and Class B drugs. Many of the cases have involved a number of preliminary arguments relating to abuse of process or the admissibility of evidence, including covertly obtained evidence.

She has advised and negotiated in large-scale confiscation applications.

Fraud

Valerie is appointed to the Panel A list for the Serious Fraud Office and is regularly instructed by the Insolvency Service to prosecute company directors and those who have been disqualified as directors. She has prosecuted in benefit fraud and charity fraud cases and has defended and prosecuted in cases involving directors, bankers, solicitors and accountants.

She is skilled in dealing with vast amounts of evidence and adept at handling material in large-scale disclosure exercises. Her attention to detail, diligent and thorough preparation and, specialism in cross-examining expert witnesses (across a broad spectrum of disciplines) make her a compelling advocate for her clients in such cases.

Other

She has also represented police officers and civilian officers charged with misconduct in public office or perverting the course of justice.

Regulatory & Professional Discipline

Health & Safety

Valerie has extensive experience in health and safety cases, both prosecuting and defending. She is often instructed to prosecute by the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authorities in respect of fatalities and other breaches of health and safety legislation. Her clients have included companies, NHS trusts, local authorities, the Health and Safety Executive, the Office of Road and Rail and individuals, including directors and trustees. Valerie is appointed to the A list of Special Regulatory Advocates in Health and Safety and Environmental Law.

Examples of her work include cases involving gas and chemical explosions, falls from height, electrocution, exposure to asbestos and basement collapse. She has been instructed in cases involving fatalities or serious injury on construction sites, care homes, hospitals, factories, railways, shops and a bus station.

Recently, Valerie has been involved with several cases involving retailers. She has advised and defended a large high street retailer in relation to food safety and other offences. She has also acted in a case concerning the death of a child in a retail setting. She is currently instructed in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Professional Discipline

Valerie is highly experienced in professional disciplinary work. Her varied practice means she is particularly well-placed to advise where civil and criminal law intersect, such as in the professional discipline arena. One recent example saw her defending a pharmacist accused of supplying Class C drugs. She has an in-depth understanding of the decision-making process for different regulators and a wealth of experience with disciplinary committees.

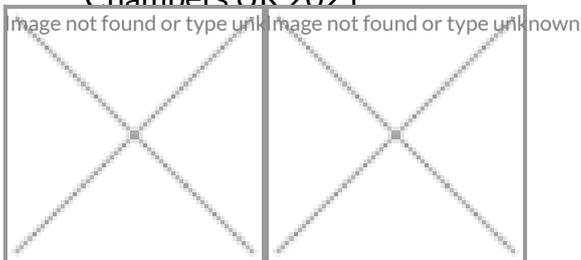
She is appointed to act as a legal adviser/assessor for: the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the Nursing and Midwifery Council and the General Osteopathic Council.

She is available for instruction before: the General Dental Council, the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal, the General Pharmaceutical Council, the Teaching Regulation Agency and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; having defended in a number of cases.

Recommendations

Legal Directories [Chambers UK](#) and [Legal 500](#):

- *"Valerie is an experienced health & safety advocate and has a long and successful track record in this field. She is meticulous in her case preparation and is excellent with clients. Clients watching her in court, never fail to express how impressed they are. It is a combination of her understanding of their case and the ability to tenaciously fight their corner when required that they pick up on."* - [Ranked in Health & Safety, Legal 500 2021](#)
- *"An extremely talented barrister. She is very hard-working, focused and good at getting to the heart of a case.", "A robust advocate who knows her cases inside and out."* Ranked in Health & Safety, [Chambers UK 2021](#)



Memberships

Criminal Bar Association

South Eastern Circuit

Health & Safety Lawyers Association

Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers

Mental Health Lawyers Association

Voluntary Work

Board member of Inclusion London

School Governor