

Pina Silvio

Higher Court Advocate	2005
Admitted to Roll	1990

Education

Chancery Lane College of Law – Solicitor Finals	1988
University of East London LLB (Hons) 2:1 Law	1982

Languages

Fluent in Italian and Spanish
French conversational

Employment

Whitlock & Storr Solicitors -Paralegal/Trainee Solicitor	1982-1988
Hudson Freeman Berg Solicitors- Articles and Solicitors	1988-1991
Kaim Todner Solicitors- Duty Solicitor/Supervisor	1991-1997
Stokoe Partnership- Duty Solicitor/ VHCC Supervisor	1997- 2001
Hartnells Solicitors-Duty Solicitor	2001-2005
Independent Higher Court Advocate	2005-2012
Hine Solicitors -Higher Court Advocate	2012-2019
Public Defender Service	2019- current



Profile

Pina qualified as a Solicitor in 1990 and has been practising in Criminal courts for 35 years. As a solicitor she has gained significant experience acting for clients from arrest, appearance in the Magistrates Courts and since obtaining Higher Rights in 2005, she has worked solely in the Crown Court as a defence trial advocate.

As a former litigator in busy criminal practices, Pina understands the needs of her instructing solicitors and is always able to deliver. Pina appreciates fully the difficulties faced by solicitors in preparing cases from the police station, leading up to crown court trials. Pina is committed to providing high quality service to both clients and her instructing solicitors and is always available for conferences and to provide advice and assistance at short notice.

Pina takes pride in maintaining good client care and communication, appreciating that client views are crucial to a good lawyer/client relationship and success of a case.

Pina specialises in defending RASSO prosecutions, historic sex cases, s28 pre-recorded cross-examination trials, including vulnerable child witnesses, possession of and making indecent images.

Pina is frequently appointed by the court to cross examine vulnerable victims and witnesses, in cases where the defendant is self-representing, in sex offence cases and domestic violence cases.

Pina has been commended on her tireless and meticulous preparation, her analysis and assessment of strengths and weakness of a case to determine case strategy and has been described as a "tenacious" advocate, "fearless" in presentation and "first class" cross examination.



0203-334-4253



pdsclerks@justice.gov.uk

Profile cont'd

Pina's practice over the years has allowed her to build extensive experience in representing and cross examining vulnerable and young defendants and witnesses and in cases involving the cross examination of professional experts and use of intermediaries.

Pina has represented defendants who have faced a wide spectrum of criminal offences including, murder (acting alone and led by KC), attempted murder (including gang related killings involving young defendants), large scale drug importations (including defending foreign clients), large scale conspiracies to supply drugs, terrorism, kidnap, firearm, fraud, money laundering and Proceeds of Crime Act. Pina has also defended in Very High Cost Cases (VHCC), involving analysis of large volumes of evidence and unused material.

Pina also appears before Court of Appeal, appealing conviction, sentence and unsafe verdicts.

Pina is fluent in Italian and Spanish, has good French Conversation skills and has represented many foreign clients, in serious offences, particularly drug importation, able to advise and take instructions in their own language, giving the client full confidence in representation.

Notable Cases

R v W (2025): Defendant was charged with Rape and sexual assault by penetration; the complainant was his long-term partner. The relationship broke up as a result of the complainant's drug abuse and the defence was that she had fabricated the account in retaliation, the defendant having reported her to social services out of concern for their children. Defence witnesses confirmed the erratic and aggressive behaviour and manipulation of the complainant which was confirmed by her reaction during cross examination. Defendant was acquitted on all counts.

R v F (2025): D charged with fifteen offences against his partner of 2 year nine ; counts of rape, 4 counts of sexual assault by penetration, controlling and coercive behaviour of a violent nature, administering a noxious substance. The complainant had been interviewed twice by the police in respect of the allegations. In her first interview she had not reported all the allegations, in fact very few and subsequent to the interview of the main prosecution witness in support, the complainant then reported further allegations. In cross examination when challenged at length on these points she suggested she had told the police officer and interpreter in her first interview of all the allegations, but they had failed to take note. The defendant was convicted of only 2 counts of rape and controlling and coercive behaviour and acquitted of the remaining 12 counts. The convictions are currently before the Court of Appeal on the grounds of inconsistent and unsafe verdicts.

R v KL (2025): D a youth aged 13 at the time, charged with rape of another young boy aged 12. The offence was alleged to have taken place at the defendant's cousin's home and in a room D shared on the night in question with the complainant and his two cousins. Both D and complainant were exceptionally vulnerable due to their ages and learning difficulties. The defence instructed a psychologist who recommended an intermediary should assess him. An intermediary was instructed and present throughout the trial to assist the complainant.

R v D (2025): D charged with repeated allegations of making indecent images of children in all categories using multiple devices to do so and breach of a Sexual Harm Prevention Order. D maintained he has severe psychiatric issues and was not aware he was making these images, downloading and sharing. A psychiatric report was obtained for sentence.

Notable Cases

R v D (2024): D charged with 3 counts of causing /inciting a child under thirteen to engage in sexual activity and exposure. The defend refused representation and Pina was appointed by the court to cross examine all 3 child complainants. The allegations took place in a park where all three complainant friends were together, one needing an intermediary. The defendant had absconded and the s28 cross examination took place in his absence. Cross examination of all 3 complainants was commended as “thorough but considerate” taking into account their vulnerability. The prosecution successfully tried the defendant in absence, and he was acquitted of all counts.

R v KK (2024): D charged amongst other offences with controlling and coercive behaviour in a domestic situation which included sexual assaults. He failed to return to the UK during all preliminary proceedings and failed to attend the s28 cross examination hearing. Although he had instructed his legal team to apply to vacate the trial date, the application failed as he had been given ample opportunity to return to the UK. The prosecution applied to try him in absence and despite strong arguments against this, defence instructions were found to be sufficient to go ahead in his absence.

R v V (2023) and (2024 re-trial): D was charged with attempted rape, sexual assault, robbery and possession of an offensive weapon, on a stranger, in the early hours. It was alleged he had followed her getting off a night bus, for a considerable length of time before he allegedly sexually assaulted and attempted to rape her. There was extensive CCTV evidence relied upon. The complainant was ABE interviewed and s28 cross examination in the first trial. The defendant admitted robbery as the only reason he followed her was for her mobile phone. He was acquitted of possessing an offensive weapon, but the jury could not reach verdicts in relation to the attempted rape.

A retrial was sought by the prosecution and took place. The complainant gave live evidence. Bad character application was made and an application to adduce his acquittal of the weapon was allowed. D was convicted and found to be to be dangerous.

R v G (2023): D charged with voyeurism, having several times filmed himself and his wife having intercourse covertly without her consent. Detailed downloads of his mobile phone revealed the frequency of his actions. The complainant was cross examined at length on the basis she was aware he did this had been discussed between them and she had consented and must have been aware. This was the highest breach of trust and deliberate planning.

R v X (2023): D charged with two counts of sexual assault on 2 separate complainants, propensity to commit sexual offences of this nature was a key issue. The defendant suffered from severe depression and anxiety said to have affected his memory as a result of excessive drug abuse, and he maintained that he had no recollection of meeting either female. The second complainant was identified by the police during investigations in connection with the first, the offences allegedly committed within 12 days of each other.

R v P (2023): D, a foreign national, was charged with attempted rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault sexual assault on his very young sister-in-law, who was under the care of her sister and defendant making this a serious breach of trust. The complainant was ABE interviewed and had said she had previously warned her sister that the defendant had made advances towards her, but the matter had not been reported to the police and this was cross examined at length and supported by the defendant’s wife who gave evidence.

Notable Cases

R v E (2023): D charged with 3 counts of rape, two counts of assault by penetration and stalking, against his childhood sweetheart wife. The complainants account detailed facts that were proved to be exaggerated and false during cross examination. The defence was one of fabrication in order to remove custody from the defendant, of their children and remain in the matrimonial home. Her account was not believed; defence cross examination was described as “subtle and skilful”. Defendant was acquitted on all counts.

R v T (2023): D charged with two rapes of a child under thirteen, two attempted rapes, two sexual assaults and two counts causing a child to watch sexual activity. The complainant was the defendant’s stepsister, she was ABE interviewed and s28 pre-recorded cross examination took place. The complainant giggled through much of the cross examination and legal discussion took place on respect of this and, the defence successfully argued it should remain and go before the jury as recorded. This case was very sensitive as the defendant and complainant had the same mother, who repeatedly informed the police that the complainant was prone to deliberately lie and make up allegations for attention seeking. On the first day of trial the defendant’s mother informed the defence that she had found a diary of the complainant that detailed admissions her deliberate lying to get attention, including accounts about the defendant. This was reported to the prosecution and trial Judge and the defence argued that HHJ should be shown extracts of the diary that were both relevant, and very articulate and crucial to the defence. HHJ having seen the extracts, agreed in the first instance the complaint should be asked if the diary was hers and if it was her handwriting. The complainant refused to allow her mother to act as appropriate adult for this purpose, and a further formal ABE interview was required, and the case was adjourned for this to take place, with another appropriate adult. The ABE was then seen by all parties; complainant made some admissions rendering her initial account unsafe and the prosecution offered no evidence as a result Not Guilty verdicts were entered on all counts.

R v T(2023/2024): D over a period of time and after being remanded in custody then released was repeatedly charged with sexual offences namely, engaging in sexual communication with a child, several offences of exposure to a child aged under 13 for self-gratification and breach of two serious breaches of a sexual Harm Prevention Order. D was never afforded an assessment but clearly had issues with regards to his sexual behaviour. Whilst pending sentence on the final matters D had commenced self re-habitation of a significant nature by self-referral to two separate organisations. Having been warned he was likely to receive a lengthy custodial sentence, the court was persuaded through strong mitigation and supported by his family, to sentence by way of a stringent and committed community order requiring regular verification of work carried out.

R v D (2023): D charged with offences of possession of a firearm to cause fear, breach of restraint order that led to threats to disclose private sexual photos and films of him and his partner engaging in sexual activity. Mobile downloads and messages between him and the complainant were obtained, some contradicting her account. She was cross examined at length on the basis that she had fabricated the account to get him evicted from the home and distance him from their young child.

R v W (2022): D charged with sexual assault of a child under 13. The complainant was four years old at the time of the offence. The D had been friends with the complainant’s mother some 18 months and a regular babysitter. The complainant was ABE interviewed and s28 recorded cross examination took place. During the trial further evidence came to light of previous similar allegations by a different complainant made but not pursued resulting in lengthy opposed bad character applications by the prosecution.

Notable Cases

R v E (2022): D was charged with multiple rapes, sexual assault, coercive and controlling behaviour and breach of a restraining order, on his long-term partner, who married him during the period in which she said she was being habitually raped and sexually assaulted. Whilst waiting for the trial to be listed the defendant was on bail and further charged with harassment. She was cross examined at length and contradicted her ABE evidence. The prosecution called her mother as a witness who under cross examination did not support her daughter and was shown to have blatantly lied to support her. Defendant was acquitted of all counts.

R v B (2022): D charged with sexual assault, assault by penetration, Kidnap and false imprisonment, on a complete stranger. The complainant was at a concert. Went outside to make a call and could not get back in. She decided to head home and as she was walking along a van stopped and D offered her a lift to the station. On route he diverted to an empty car park locked her in the van, went to the back and obtained alcohol. He then forced her to drink some and then sexually assaulted her by digital penetration the complainant had switched on her mobile phone whilst he went to get the alcohol and recorded the incident and could be heard telling him to stop. Her boyfriend became concerned and was able to find her by tracking her mobile phone which led him to the car park. He could hear shouting from the van and the prosecution say prevented a rape taking place. D was adamant it was consensual, but the recording was strong evidence of the contrary.

R v B (2023): Defendant had significant learning difficulties that affected her short term memory and severe epilepsy and was charged with 20 counts of historic sexual assaults, rapes, gross indecency and sexual activity with a male family member, a boy under 16, her younger brother who also had some learning difficulties. Defendant did not understand the charges or consequences were she to be convicted. She was unable to provide comprehensive instructions and both a psychologist and intermediary were engaged by the defence. Both expert reports recommended that the defendant had such severe difficulties which included very short concentration span, that she should be allowed an intermediary throughout the trial not just when she gave evidence. This was twice refused by the trial Judge in preliminary hearings but eventually after persistent applications and legal arguments, an intermediary was justifiably granted for the entire trial. This case defined the need to seek the assistance of an intermediary at a very early stage.

R v CM (2020): D was charged with a number of sexual assaults and rapes on his step sister. The complainant's older sister had made similar allegations when the defendant was 10 years old at the time and the case could not proceed on the grounds of doli incapax due to his age. The complainant in this case gave evidence of the exact same modus operandi of the defendant. The prosecution called the older sister in order to support propensity and introduced successfully bad character. She was cross examined at length, did not support the prosecution case and eventually admitted under cross examination she had only agreed to come to court because her sister had lied, had mirrored her allegation some 15 years previously when she had informed her parents and sister that she had been sexually assaulted and raped and was not believed and that her sister had made these false allegations to try and rebuild a wrecked sister relationship. The defendant was acquitted of all counts.

R v E (2020): Defendant was charged with having a sexual relationship with his adult daughter over a number of years. He maintained it was consensual. The daughter complainant was not charged with having sex with a family member and maintained she was forced to have sex with her father. Numerous representations were made seeking a review of the charges. Despite denying consent, admitted the complainant, both she and the defendant had committed offence of sexual intercourse with a family member

Notable Cases

R v P (2019): Sixteen-week trial with Multi defendant historical rape and sexual assaults carried out over many years, at a boy's boarding school, which closed down as a result of the investigation. This was a skittle prosecution, every complainant that came forward resulted in another coming forward. There were over 20 victims, aged between 9-14 at the time of the alleged offences that came forward, now aged between 25-35, many of whom had suffered severe psychological and emotional trauma as a result of the abuse and delay in the complaints being brought.

R v B (2019): A series of rapes and sexual assaults on a stepdaughter who made allegations whilst the defendant was serving a 15-year sentence for identical offences carried out against her twin sister. This victim had given evidence at her sister's trial but had made no allegations she had been a victim at the same time. She suffered from serious mental health issues and was cross examined at length and with great sensitivity about the delay in bringing the complaints. Defendant acquitted on all counts.

R v W (2019): A series of historical rapes and sexual assaults on a neighbour's daughter, the defendant was 81 years old, had severe heart condition and suffered from some memory loss.

R v B (2019): A brutal stranger rape and serious sexual assault. The defendant was a serving soldier, and the offences were carried out in public gardens close to his barracks. Both parties were heavily intoxicated. The case involved considerable CCTV evidence.

R v F (2019): A series of sexual assaults on the defendant's best friend's son, a young boy with autism and ADHD, but who was exceptionally bright. This case involved an intermediary, who interfered continuously in the defence cross examination, requiring several legal arguments during the trial. Defendant acquitted on all counts.

R v W (2019): Rape and sexual assault by a 16-year-old defendant on his 5-year-old sister. The complainant had given 3 different accounts at various stages and eventually in cross examination denied her brother had done anything to her. The case involved careful and sensitive cross examination of such a young vulnerable witness. Defendant acquitted of all counts.

R v L (2019): Rape and series of sexual assaults on two 15-year-old twin brothers, known to the defendant through a local church. The case required intricate s28 pre-recorded cross examination of the 2 boys as their accounts conflicted despite the similar allegations both made over the same period of time. D acquitted on all counts.

R v J (2019): The defendant a primary school supply teacher, was charged with possession of numerous indecent images of primary school aged children of all categories and making indecent video recordings of children in changing rooms and PE classes. Although convicted, meticulously prepared mitigation highlighting the defendant's own rehabilitation process pending the matter coming before the courts resulted in an unexpected lenient sentence.

R v W (2019): Defendant charged with possession of indecent images of children from ages 4-12 and making indecent recording of his own daughter aged six. The defendant was very computer literate and computer experts were called by the prosecution and defence and cross examined extensively to contradict suggestions of deliberate deletion of searches.

Notable Cases

R v W (2019): Series of Rapes on a 15-year-old schoolgirl, the child of a close family friend. Defendant maintained they were having a long-term consensual relationship. Through detailed cross examination of the complainant described by the trial Judge as “first class” the defendant’s account was believed. Defendant was acquitted on all counts.

R v R (2019): Rape. Complainant invited the defendant known to her, to stay overnight, having been out drinking excessively. Her account at trial differed to that given to the police, she maintained was due to poor recollection through drink in cross examination but was contradicted by another prosecution witness who was at the home and supported the defence case in cross examination and the defendant was acquitted