

RICHARD HOOKER

Senior Forensic Scientist with considerable experience in drugs related casework. Committed to providing outstanding support to the Criminal Justice System using scientific skills and knowledge.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Promoted throughout career with the Forensic Science Service London Laboratory (formerly Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory). Acted as expert on drugs and packaging comparisons and worked on many high profile cases which linked key players in the drug supply chain.
- Played a key role in providing quality forensic evidence, which facilitated opportunity for drugs cases to be closed prior to going to court as defendants pleaded guilty.
- Attended illicit laboratory premises and provided sound advice on the safety of chemicals and dismantling of equipment seized. Selected and analysed reaction mixtures and established whether or not controlled drugs had been produced at premises.
- Selected to conduct case file audits under Quality Management System in the Forensic Science Service to ensure consistent delivery of unbiased findings.
- Selected to deliver lectures for Scene Examiners' Qualifying Courses. Planned and produced lectures which enabled Scene Examiners to prepare accurate records of illicit drug production facilities and to select appropriate samples for analysis.
- Introduced method for recording emission spectra of laser induced fluorescence of fingerprints on drug packaging materials which proved to be a valuable tool in the photography of fluorescing fingerprints on exhibits in high profile cases
- As Consultant Forensic Scientist in drugs casework secured repeat business following timely completion of work for solicitors.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Consultant Forensic Scientist, RH Forensic Consultancy Jan 2012 - To Date

- Providing forensic consultancy services to Defence Solicitors or Crown Prosecution Service in cases involving drugs of abuse
- Reviewing reports provided by other forensic scientists to ensure consistency with analytical findings.
- Providing expert impartial testimony at court following assessment of scientific evidence.

Senior Scientific Officer/Forensic Specialist, Forensic Science Service Jul 1996 - Dec 2011

- Promoted to Senior Scientific Officer in 1996 and responsible for managing output and delivery of services in line with Service Level Agreements with customers. Led, developed and mentored scientific staff.
- Set strategies for complex drugs casework. Interpreted scientific findings in the context of case circumstances. Effectively communicated findings in unbiased statements of evidence and, where required, in oral evidence in courts.
- Compared chemical profiles of drug materials and manufacturing detail/edges on packaging materials in items seized in drugs supply cases in order to establish whether or not there was scientific evidence for links between cases.
- Assessed cannabis cultivation set ups indoors, based on scene photographs/records and the detailed examination of sample plants. Provided estimates of potential yields of cannabis from crops of plants produced, enabling valuations of the crops to be made.

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- Assessed illicit laboratories alleged to have been used in the production of controlled synthetic drugs.
- Liaised and worked closely with investigating officers, optimised use of a range of forensic services to ensure delivery of services to timelines, quality standards and at a minimum cost to the customer.
- Checked critical findings in casework reported by colleagues and peer reviewed case notes and statements.

Higher Scientific Officer

Jan 1987 - Jun 1996

Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory

- Used various analytical methods in the identification and/or quantification of controlled drugs in powders, herbal substances, tablets and liquids and in residues on exhibits such as packaging, scales and tablet press equipment.
- Prepared accurate case examination records and provided expert scientific reports as required.
- Supervised assistant forensic scientists.
- Used chemical methods and laser induced fluorescence to develop latent fingerprints on outer and inner packaging layers in drug exhibits.

EARLIER CAREER

Research Fellow, Police Scientific Development Branch (Home Office)

Oct 1984 - Dec 1986

QUALIFICATIONS

PhD Photochemistry, Southampton University

BSc (First Class Honours) Chemistry, Southampton University

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Professional Member of The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Gas Chromatography- Mass Spectrometry, Infra Red Spectroscopy, Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy, Shadowgraph lighting techniques, Microscopy.