



Aamer Anwar

University Rector

Aamer Anwar is a criminal defence solicitor and human rights campaigner with his own Glasgow based practice set up in 2007. Brought up in Liverpool, Aamer came to Scotland in 1986 to study mechanical engineering at Glasgow University. He graduated from Social Sciences with an MA (Hons) in 1994.

Whilst a student activist at Glasgow University he led a campaign against alleged racism at the University's Dental Hospital Dental. The campaign eventually saw the introduction of anonymous marking across all faculties at the University. From 1992-94 he was the Scottish organiser for the Anti-Nazi League and in the years since has been a prominent member of the Scottish Campaign against Criminalising of Communities, Stop the War Coalition and Glasgow Campaign to Welcomes Refugees.

In 1995 he made legal history in a successful civil action against the Police for a racist attack on himself in 1991 whilst a student at Glasgow University, when he was told *'this is what happens to black boys with big mouths'* as his teeth were smashed out.

He graduated from Strathclyde University School of Law with an LLB in 1999 and the Diploma in Legal Practice in 2000. A lawyer since 2000, he has been instructed in some of Scotland's high profile cases, including the Ice Cream Wars appeal and perjury trial of Tommy Sheridan. He was instructed by the relatives of deceased Megrahi and British relatives in the 'Lockerbie Appeal'. He acts for the family of the controversial death in police custody case of Sheku Bayoh as well as the family of murder victim Emma Caldwell.

In 2008 Aamer became the first UK lawyer to be put on trial for *'contempt of court'* for comments he made at the end of Scotland's first Islamist terror trial claiming there had been a miscarriage of justice, Aamer was acquitted and also vindicated following a successful miscarriage of justice appeal for his client Mohammed Siddique in 2010. The Scotsman Newspaper described him as the *'Man who made Legal History'* and Liberty intervened on his behalf and stated - *"The ability of a lawyer to protest on behalf his client is crucial to both free speech and justice in a democracy. This case provides a golden opportunity for Scotland to protect the independence of lawyers."*

His unrelenting 17 year campaign finally helped secure a conviction in October 2016 for the murder of Surjit Singh Chhokar - described as Scotland's Stephen Lawrence. The Chhokar family's campaign and Aamer's central role in helping to secure justice was widely recognised

by the authorities. The case was credited as having placed victim's rights at the heart of the criminal justice system and having exposed institutional racism.

In 2016 he won Solicitor of the Year in the Heralds Law Awards of Scotland 2016, followed by the Lawyer of the Year in 2017 at the Legal Awards of Scotland. He has also previously won Criminal Law Firm of the Year.

At the Lloyds TSB Jewel Awards, he received the Professional Excellence Award as a *'recognition of his outstanding achievements and the huge impact his work has had UK wide'*. In January 2013, he was nominated for the Services to Law award at the British Muslim Awards. In 2014 he was awarded the Scottish Muslim Award by Baroness Syeda Warsi —Al Adl Ihsan for Public Services (Adl and Ihsan are Arabic terms for evoking the importance of justice and charity in Islam).

Aamer Anwar is regular panellist on the news and TV as well as writing or appearing as a columnist on a wide range of issues including criminal law, civil liberties and terrorism. He is also a member of the campaigning advocacy body INQUEST which deals with deaths in custody.

For nearly three decades Aamer has a record of fighting for human rights and justice, including campaigning for the closure of Dungavel Detention Centre, playing a leading role in the Stop the War Coalition, the TIE campaign for inclusive LGBTI education at schools and fighting against Islamophobia and extremism. He won the Rector post at University of Glasgow following the largest turn out of students in recent times with over 54% of the vote in the first round.

His personal time is taken up with being a father to his three children Qais, Lylah and Kyras and when able watching 'Coronation Street' as well as Horror movies.