NORTHERN IRELAND EDITION • FREE SELF-ADVOCACY & APPEAL PREPARATION GUIDE

Criminal Cases Review Coaching Services (CCRCS)

Plain-English CCRC Application Support for Prisoners in Northern Ireland & Outside Supporters

IMPORTANT PRISON MAILROOM NOTICE (NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON RULES 1995)

Do NOT mark CCRCS guides or family correspondence as "Legal Mail" or "Privileged". Under the Prison and Young Offenders Centre Rules (Northern Ireland) 1995 (Rule 68), legal mail privilege applies strictly to correspondence with your solicitor, barrister, or the courts. CCRCS is **not a law firm**. Always send printed CCRCS templates via **standard social post** with the sender's name and return address clearly written on the envelope. Direct correspondence between you and the official **CCRC** is protected under confidential correspondence rules.

1. What is CCRCS and How Can We Help You?

Criminal Cases Review Coaching Services (ccrcs.co.uk) is a free, independent UK digital advocacy platform. We do not charge fees, we never take your physical case files, and we do not act as solicitors. Instead, we equip your trusted family or friends on the outside with plain-English frameworks and privacy-safe AI templates so you stay in full control of preparing a structured application to the **Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC)**.

How the CCRC Covers Northern Ireland

Under the Criminal Appeal Act 1995, the official **CCRC** investigates suspected miscarriages of justice across **Northern Ireland**, England, and Wales. If you were convicted in the Crown Court or Magistrates' Court in Northern Ireland and have already exhausted your normal appeal rights to the **Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland** (or County Court), you can apply to the CCRC to review your case.

2. How Inside & Outside Teamwork Works (Zero-PII Method)

Because prisoners do not have open internet access, our system splits the workload between you inside and your trusted supporter outside—while keeping your personal identity and confidential case files completely private (Zero-PII):

Your Role Inside (Maghaberry, Magilligan, Hydebank)	Your Supporter's Role on the Outside
1. Build a Factual Timeline: Write down key dates, trial events, witness issues, and what went wrong in plain chronological order.	**1. Access Free Guides:** Visit **ccrcs.co.uk** (Northern Ireland section) to download free chronology and CCRC coaching templates.
2. Identify Missing Material: List any police statements, disclosure schedules, forensic reports, or unused material you never received.	**2. Use Zero-PII Prompts:** Use CCRCS's anonymised AI templates (removing all real names, dates, and prison numbers) to structure arguments.
3. Request Your Trial Papers: Write to your former trial solicitor requesting a copy of your defence file and appeal papers.	**3. Submit SARs & Public Audits:** Help draft Subject Access Requests (SARs) to the PSNI, PPSNI, or courts where lawful and appropriate.
4. Review & Sign Your Application: Check every fact carefully in your cell, sign the official CCRC form, and post it directly.	**4. Print & Post Guides:** Print clean drafts and send them to you via normal social mail so you remain the decision-maker.

3. What the CCRC Looks For in Northern Ireland Cases

The CCRC is not a fourth tier of appeal and cannot overturn a conviction simply because a trial seemed unfair. Under the **"Real Possibility" Test**, the CCRC can only refer a conviction or sentence back to the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland (or County Court) if there is a real possibility that the court will overturn it because of:

- **Fresh Evidence:** New witness testimony, expert forensic analysis, medical evidence, or digital records that were not presented at your original trial or appeal.
- **New Legal Argument:** A significant point of law or procedural error that was not raised previously, or a relevant change in Northern Ireland case law.
- **Disclosure Failures:** Evidence held by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) or Public Prosecution Service (PPSNI) that undermined the prosecution case or assisted the defence but was never disclosed.
- **Exceptional Circumstances:** Where no new evidence or legal argument exists, the CCRC can only refer a case in truly exceptional circumstances—which is why structured preparation matters.

4. Step-by-Step Preparation Checklist

- ☐ **Step 1 — Check Normal Appeal Status:** Confirm whether you have already appealed to the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland (or County Court for Magistrates' convictions), as the CCRC normally requires you to appeal first.
- ☐ **Step 2 — Share This Guide Outside:** Send this leaflet out to a trusted family member or friend and ask them to visit **ccrcs.co.uk** and select the **Northern Ireland** pathway.
- ☐ **Step 3 — Recover Your Case File:** Write a polite, dated letter to your previous solicitor asking for your full trial and appeal bundle (or send it to your outside supporter).
- ☐ **Step 4 — Separate Emotion from Evidence:** Focus on verifiable facts, dates, and documents rather than general complaints about witnesses or trial fairness.
- ☐ **Step 5 — Protect Your Privacy:** Ensure your supporter removes all names, locations, and case references before using any AI structuring prompts from CCRCS.
- ☐ **Step 6 — Verify Every Citation:** Never submit any case law or statutory reference generated by AI unless it has been checked against official Northern Ireland legal sources.

Official CCRC Contact Details (Free & Confidential Application):
Criminal Cases Review Commission, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham, B2 4BH • Tel: 0121 233 1473 • Web: **ccrc.gov.uk**
Note: You do not need a lawyer to apply to the CCRC, and applying is completely free. Mark envelopes to the CCRC clearly as "CCRC Confidential Correspondence".

CCRCS Free Guidance for Outside Supporters:
Website: **https://ccrcs.co.uk** (Select *Northern Ireland*) • Email: **info@ccrcs.co.uk** (Mon–Fri, 9:00am–5:00pm GMT)

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