

Brother of Manchester bomber 'exposes guilt' by not giving evidence, court told

Trial judge tells jury to put emotions aside *From the Guardian [yesterday](#)*

The brother of the Manchester suicide bomber decided not to give evidence at his own trial because his cover story – placing all the blame on his dead sibling – had been revealed as an attempt to “pull the wool over the eyes” of investigators, a court heard

Hashem Abedi was accused of standing shoulder to shoulder with his brother, Salman, sharing a common goal to kill and maim as many people as possible in what proved to be one of the deadliest terror attacks the UK has seen, the Old Bailey heard.

On Thursday, during the final days of his trial, Abedi, 22 – who is accused of helping to plan the May 2017 attack and helping to build the suicide bomb that his brother detonated at the end of an Ariana Grande concert – sacked his legal team and declined to give evidence in his own defence or to be present in the dock.

Abedi had acted as quartermaster, chauffeur and technician in the planning of the attack and had tried to evade responsibility for the “cruel and cowardly carnage” unleashed on his innocent victims by blaming his brother, according to the prosecution. Prior to the jury being informed of his decision, Abedi’s lead counsel, Stephen Kamlish QC, and his team, who had represented him for almost four months, left the courtroom. Abedi had been represented by the renowned human rights and civil liberties law firm Birnberg Pierce. The firm are currently representing [expressed here before](#), and not just

by me.

On Friday, as Justice Jeremy Baker summed up the evidence against Abedi, he cautioned the jurors about the high level of emotions surrounding the case. Addressing the 12 jurors directly, Baker said it would not be surprising if the jurors felt sympathy towards the innocent people who were killed during the attack. However, he asked them to exercise objectivity and to consider the verdict dispassionately.

“Therefore, for the purposes of the exercise which you will be performing when you deliberate upon the evidence next week, it is important for you to put any such feelings to one side for the time being and to undertake your task with dispassion and objectivity.”