Westlaw UK - quick guide
Eleni Borompoka, May 2016
QG LAW014 [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/law/qglaw014.pdf]

Westlaw is an online legal service which provides full text access to UK, EU, US and international case law, legislation and journals. It includes a current awareness service of press releases and newspaper articles about legal developments; a legal journals index, and expert analytical commentary from resources.

Accessing the database
Click on the Primo link in the Search Our Collections tab on the Library homepage and enter the keyword Westlaw into the search box. Click on the title to link out to Westlaw UK and log in with your university username and password. To access the Westlaw UK service off campus, login with your university username and password when the Shibboleth login screen opens.

Welcome page
The first screen which appears is the welcome page. This page allows you to start your research straight away with a search facility covering all sections of the site. Enter your keywords into the search box and specify the collections you wish to search by ticking in the relevant boxes. Select Document Title if you want to find a specific document or Document Free Text to find your terms anywhere within a document.

- Click on List of Connectors for a full list of connectors used on Westlaw searches. Commonly used connectors are "AND" and "OR". By default if you enter multiple terms with no connectors, Westlaw UK will automatically insert the `&` (AND) connector between them.
- Click on Search Tips for a comprehensive list of search types.

Collections navigation bar
The collections navigation bar appears at the top of the Welcome page and offers the option to search by type of material: Insight, Cases, Legislation, Journals, Current Awareness, EU, Books. We do not subscribe to News. UK national and regional newspapers are available on Lexis®Library.

Selecting a heading on the bar calls up a customised form which allows you to look at a section in more detail. These customised forms are divided into two sections, Search and Browse.

Search
The Basic search screens allow you to input keywords into different search boxes, e.g. Text, Party Names and Citation (for Cases), Act or SI Title (for Legislation) and Article Title or Author (for Journals). For a more comprehensive search screen click on Advanced Search. Click on the blue link to open the document that interests you.

Browse
A browsing function is available across all the collections in Westlaw UK, except for News. Select the collection you require and click on the appropriate heading. To search all issues of a law report or a journal, click on the title to open a screen showing dates available, and input keywords etc. into the basic search screen.

Insight
Insight is a growing, online legal encyclopaedia. The Insight page displays 24 main areas of the law in the UK. Click on the sign `+` next to the topics to browse more specific areas of law.

Cases
Case Analysis Documents provide direct and indirect history, legislation cited and details of relevant journal articles. The Law Reports and Transcripts link allows you to browse all the UK law report series available in full text.

Status Icons:
- A green 'C' next to a case name in a result list or at the top of the actual case indicates that the decision has received positive or neutral judicial consideration and is good law.
- A case which has received mixed or mildly negative judicial consideration will be indicated by an exclamation mark.
- A red 'no entry' next to a case name in a result list or at the top of the actual case indicates that at least one point of law has been overruled or reversed. This is an immediate notification that the case is no longer good law.
The icon shows that the case has an appeal outstanding at the Court of Appeal, Civil decision or the Supreme Court.

Legislation
You can browse legislation from the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Status Icons indicate that a provision:

- is the law in force ✔
- is not yet in force ✗
- is partially in force ✶
- is partially repealed ✶
- has pending amendments 🎨
- has prospective amendments ✠
- has been repealed 🔳
- has been superseded 🔴

To see the prospective change select Legislation Analysis or Overview Document from the blue left-hand navigation bar.

Journals
- Abstracted Articles includes the Legal Journals Index and Financial Journals Index (no longer updated) and contains over half a million abstracts of articles from English language legal journals published in the United Kingdom and Europe. If the full text of an article is available on Westlaw UK a direct link is provided.
- Full Text Articles provides the text of articles from UK legal journals published by Sweet & Maxwell, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press and several others.

To access US and international legal journals click on Services at the top of the screen and then on International Materials.

1. Click on World Journals to see titles of all journals. This will include US.
2. Click on a jurisdiction to see all journals listed for the country.

For more information follow the guidance in Library guide QG LAW023 Westlaw UK – UK and International Journals.

Current Awareness
This service, which is updated throughout the day, allows you to browse through the categories Most Recently Added and Archive, by Document Type and Subject.

EU
EU information is provided by Ellis and EUR-Lex, the official legal database of the EU. The headings within this section follow those found in EUR-Lex i.e. Cases, Secondary legislation, Treaties, Preparatory documents, Parliamentary questions and Information and Notices published in the Official Journal C series.

Books
This section lists all the major legal publications included in Westlaw. Titles include Anton’s Private International Law, Renton and Brown’s Criminal Procedure and Palmer’s Company Law.

To find a specific section in a publication, click on the required title and select the section from the online table of contents in the Browse window.

For legislation and treaties:

1. Go to the International Materials Index and click on International Legal Materials.
2. Within the collection enter search terms in quotation marks.
3. Search within results to narrow your search further.

To access international legislation select Services from the blue banner at the top of the screen and then click on International Materials. This opens the international materials library in a new window.

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Print, Download and E-mail

When you open any document on Westlaw UK you will have the options to print, save to your computer, or email it to yourself or a colleague. Just choose the relevant icon from the top right corner of the page and follow the online instructions.

Help and tutorials

For comprehensive help pages or training tutorials click on the appropriate links from the static toolbar at the top of the screen. Contextual help, information on coverage and a list of connectors is available for each of the collections.

Logging out

Click on Log Out at the top right of the screen to end your Westlaw UK session.

Contacts

If you have any problems in using this database or require further assistance in finding relevant documents, please contact:

Taylor Library Staff
Tel: 01224 - 272601
Email: lawlib@abdn.ac.uk

Nicola Will, Site Services Manager
Tel: 01224 - 273166
Email: n.will@abdn.ac.uk

For access problems (including Out-of-Hours Service) contact the IT Service Desk:

Address: Room G84, Edward Wright Building, Dunbar Street, Old Aberdeen.
Log a problem via your MyIT portal at https://myit.abdn.ac.uk/
Email: servicedesk@abdn.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)1224 273636
(for *Out of Hours Service – call this number.)

*Out-of-Hours Service

The Out-of-Hours (OOH) helpline operates from 17:00 to 08:00 weekdays and provides 24 hour cover over weekends and public holidays. During these times, any telephone call you make to the IT Service Desk number is automatically transferred to the OOH Helpline.