Lexis®Library - searching for case law
Zita Szabo, May 2016
QG LAW017 [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/law/qglaw017.pdf]

Lexis®Library provides full text access to major (general and specialised) series of UK court reports, selected unreported cases from upper courts and tribunals, as well as European and International case reports. There is also access to Case Overview, an annotated archive of case records from 1502 onwards.

Accessing the database
Go to the Library home page and enter Lexis Library in the Search Our Collections box. Click on the title line in the results list to link out to Lexis®Library, and, when prompted, log in with your university username and password.

Note: Personalisation services e.g. Alerts, Saved searches etc. will only be available when using off campus access via the UK Federation (Shibboleth) link.

Searching for UK case law
Quick Find
Use this search option on Lexis®Library Home page if you know the parties in a case or the citation. Quick Find defaults to All subscribed cases. Enter the name(s) in the search box, e.g. Brown v Stott and click on Find.

You can also enter the citation in the Case name or citation search box. You may ignore brackets and other punctuation, e.g. 2004 2 AC 323.

Cases search screen
From the opening screen of Lexis®Library, select Cases (see top menu bar) to open the case specific search screen. This page provides more options, so you can perform a more sophisticated search if you do not know the parties in the case or the citation. (See image below)

It is not necessary to complete every field on this screen. The default search is All subscribed cases sources. See the options in the image below to change your sources.

When clicking on the ‘More sources’ link, a new window will open, and you can filter your search by Topics or select a category from Publication Type list. Tick the sources you require and click on OK-Continue. Your search will be limited to your selected series.

Use connectors to improve your search
AND when all terms must appear, e.g. natural justice AND fair hearing.

OR when either or both words or phrases must appear, e.g. medical negligence OR criminal negligence. Use OR to link words that are synonyms, antonyms, abbreviations, alternative spellings.

AND NOT when the first term must appear but not the second, e.g. capital allowance AND NOT property.
To search for a phrase, enter the words together, e.g. medical negligence. To find variant word endings, use the truncation symbol !, e.g. acqui! finds acquire, acquires, acquired, acquisition. Use the wildcard symbol * to replace a single character, e.g. ’wort*n’ finds woman and women.

Click on Search tips on Cases search screen for online help on using connectors.

Viewing search results
Search results appear in a list view. Click on the case name and citation to open the full text of the case. Click on the View last search tab in the top left corner to return to your original list of results.

You can restrict your search by adding other terms in the Search within results box. You can narrow your results by Source Name or by Topic using the links on the left of the result page.

Searching for EU or US case law
In the Cases screen, select International Cases from the left-hand side of the screen, then select EU or Federal Cases from the Sources drop down list. If you want to search a specific source, click on More sources. You can then Filter by country and/or topic. Select a Publication Type and then tick the sources you wish to search, and click on OK – Continue. This will add your selection to the Sources list. Complete the search form as for UK case law using the Search tips to improve your search.

To return to the UK case law screen, click on ‘Cases’ in the menu bar. To return to the opening screen of Lexis®Library, click on ‘Home’ tab on the toolbar.

Case Overview
This is a comprehensive archive of case records updated daily and dating from 1502 onwards. It provides procedural history, annotations, keywords and summaries. To access the archive, click on Cases on the menu bar and then select Case Overview from the list on the left-hand side of the screen. Complete the search screen and click on Search.

In the result screen, click on the case name and citation to display the short summery of the case and other useful links, like the Case Overview & Digest, Case History, Cases referring to this case and Cases considered by this case, etc. (See below)

Case Overview uses symbols to provide a quick visual indication of how a case has been treated in subsequent judgments. Users should always conduct further research before deciding whether to rely on a specific case in their legal argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✗</td>
<td>Negative treatment: The decision has been subsequently reversed, disapproved or overruled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✧</td>
<td>Positive treatment: The decision has been affirmed or applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✭</td>
<td>Neutral treatment: The decision has been received neutral or ambivalent treatment: considered or explained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>📘</td>
<td>Citation information only: No treatment has been given. Only citation information is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⚠️</td>
<td>Cautionary treatment: Decision has had some doubt cast upon it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appeal Tracker

Appeal Tracker is an enhancement to Case Overview which tracks the appeal status of judgements starred on the All England Reporter service and are subject to appeal to the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal (from May 2008) and to the House of Lords or Supreme Court (from October 2008). Starred cases (marked with the symbol '*' before the case name) indicate that the case will be considered for inclusion in the All England Reports or one of the Specialist Reports series.

The service is available from the Cases search screen. Click on the link on the right-hand side of the screen to open the Appeal Tracker page. (See image below). An appeal tracker shows the details, stages and dates of an appeal.

Browsing case law

Click on Cases in the menu bar and then on Browse at the left-hand side of the screen. This will open a list of all UK subscribed report series. Scroll through the list to find the title you want, then click on the + symbol to find the year/volume/issue you require. Click on the + symbol again to view the table of contents, and click on the citation you require to open the case report in full text.

My Documents

In the top right of the page is your My Documents folder. It is a useful temporary store for documents you have saved from your results list. From this folder you can arrange, print, email and download your documents. A maximum of 100 items will remain saved in this folder for 30 days.

Printing, emailing and downloading documents

You can opt for delivery of a single document, a range of documents, or all of the documents in your documents folder. Click on the Print , the Email or the Download button and follow the on-screen instructions. If you only have access to network printers we advise that you use the email option.

Online tutorials

For contextual help or online tutorials, click on the icon on the top right corner of the screen. A detailed user guide to using Lexis®Library and LexisPSL is available under Support & Training at http://help.lexisnexis.co.uk/.

Logging off

To log off, click on the Sign-out link at the top right of the screen, and then select OK to exit the database.

Help

If you have problems in using this database, please contact:

Nicola Will, Site Services Manager, Tel.: +44 (0)1224 273166, Email: n.will@abdn.ac.uk
Taylor Library Issue Desk, Tel. :+44 (0)1224 272601, Email: lawlib@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/, or Email: servicedesk@abdn.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)1224 273636 (for *Out of Hours Service – call this number)