



Law for non-law students using the Taylor Library & EDC

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QG LAW009 [<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qglaw009.pdf>]

What do we have?

The Taylor Library holds legal encyclopaedias, textbooks, legislation, law reports and law journals. Law encyclopaedias and textbooks are a good starting point if you want to find basic legal information on a topic.

All **encyclopaedias** are *reference use only* or are in electronic format. Many of the current **textbooks** are housed in the *Heavy Demand collection* and are available for overnight loan. Law continually changes, so check that the text used is current.

Staff at the **Help Desk** or the **Issue Desk** can help you to find an appropriate text.

How do I find legislation?

Legislation affecting Scotland comes from more than one source.

- **Acts of the UK Parliament**

The library gets copies of all UK Acts on publication. These are the Acts as they were passed and do not include any amendments.

- **Acts of the Scottish Parliament**

The library has copies of all Acts of the Scottish Parliament (asps) and explanatory notes. These are the Acts as they were passed and do not include any amendments.

Consolidated legislation, i.e., including the latest amendments, is available on the electronic legal database, Westlaw UK. To access Westlaw UK from the Libraries, Special Collections and Museums homepage enter 'Westlaw UK' in the **Search Our Collections box**. Log in with your university username and password.

- **UK and Scottish Statutory Instruments (SIs)**

These are also referred to as secondary, delegated or subordinate legislation. They allow the provisions of an Act to be brought into force or altered without Parliament passing a new Act. From 2004 some SIs have accompanying **Explanatory Memorandum**. The library stopped taking paper copies of UK SIs in 1998. They are available electronically on WestlawUK.

- **EC legislation**

All [EC legislation](#) is available online. This includes **Treaties, Directives and Regulations**. There is a [separate library guide](#) to using EUR-

Lex. Paper copies of legislation up to 2012 are held in the **European Documentation Centre (EDC)** on the upper floor of Taylor Library. Staff in the EDC Office can help you find the appropriate documents.

How do I find case law?

Finding a case by citation

Case law citations follow a standard format:

Party Names	Citation
Hunter v Sec. State for Scotland	1998 S.C. 446

Legal databases such as **Westlaw UK**, **Lexis@Library** or **HeinOnline** can be used to find cases. You can search by citation, party or subject. Please see the list at the end of this guide to see the coverage of these databases.

If you prefer to find whether the case report is available in paper, you first need to find out what the report abbreviation stands for.

You can look it up in:

- the library guide - [Common Legal Abbreviations](#) (for abbreviations of materials held by the Taylor Library)
- the online database - [Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations](#).

Use the **Advanced Search** facility on [Primo](#), restricting the material type to **Journals** to see if we subscribe to a particular law report series. Primo will identify those report series which are also available electronically.

Bound law reports are shelved in A-Z sequence on the right-hand side of the lower floor of the library. Unbound parts for the current year can be found on the periodical racks near the entrance to the library.

Reports of all cases before the [Court of Justice of the European Union \(ECJ\)](#) can be found online or in paper in the European Documentation Centre. From 2012, cases are only available electronically.

Reports of cases before the [European Court of Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#) can be found online.

How do I find commentary on case law or legislation?

Use **Westlaw UK**, **Lexis@Library** or **HeinOnline**. Some established law journals are cited like a law report; e.g. *2002 JR 35 (Juridical Review, 2002 p. 35)*.

To **find out the title of a journal**, check the abbreviation in:

- the library guide - [Common Legal Abbreviations](#)
- the e-database - [Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations](#).

Use the **Advanced Search** facility on Primo, restricting the material type to **Journals** to see if we subscribe to a particular law journal series. Primo will identify those journal series which are also available electronically.

Bound law journals (periodicals) are shelved in A-Z sequence on the left-hand side of the lower floor of the library. Unbound parts for the current year can be found on the periodical racks near the entrance to the library. Encyclopaedias and textbooks on your topic will cite informed opinion and comment published in legal journals.

Use the legal databases HeinOnline, Lexis@Library, Westlaw UK and OGEL to search for articles by keyword and subject.

Recommended databases for law

[Westlaw UK](#) - full text UK (original and consolidated) and Scottish statutes and SIs, legislation from the EU and other countries, UK and international law reports and law journals.

[Lexis@Library](#) - full text UK statutes (consolidated legislation), UK SIs, legislation from the EU and other countries law reports and law journals.

[HeinOnline](#) - full text US and international legal journals, treaties and other documents, also includes libraries of legal classics and history of English and Scottish law.

[Eur-Lex](#) - use to access full text of EU legislation.

[Curia](#) - use to access cases before the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ).

[OGEL](#) – specialist database for oil, gas and energy law.

[Public Information Online](#) - Parliamentary and Official Documents from the UK and Scottish Governments.

How do I access legal databases?

Access law databases from Primo or from the [Accessing Legal Databases](#) webpages.

Need help?

Taylor Library - Issue Desk

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