Westlaw UK - quick guide

Eleni Borompoka, May 2017

QG LAW014 [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qglaw014.pdf]

Westlaw UK is an online legal service which provides full text access to UK case law, legislation, legal journals, commentary and current awareness alerts, as well as EU and US legal materials.

Accessing the database

Enter the keyword Westlaw into the Prime search box on the Library homepage. 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, log in 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 offers 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 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.
- The Natural Language search facility does not use terms and connectors but allows you to describe your issue in plain English.

Collections navigation bar

The collections navigation bar appears at the top of the welcome page and allows you 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 that 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. Free Text, Party Names and Citation (in Cases), Act or SI Title (in Legislation) and Article Title or Author (in Journals). For a more comprehensive search including fields such as Legislation Title or Cases Cited (in Cases and Journals), Law in Force, Historic Law, Prospective Law or Point in Time (in Legislation), click on Advanced Search.

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.

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 case has received **positive** or **neutral** judicial consideration.
- A case has received **mixed** or **mildly negative** judicial consideration will be indicated by an exclamation mark.
- A case in which at least one point of law has been **overruled** or **reversed** on appeal.
- This is an immediate notification that the case is no longer good law.
- This icon shows that the case has an **appeal outstanding** at the Court of Appeal or Supreme Court.
Legislation

You can browse legislation from the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland or use the basic search platform and check the link to Key Legal Concepts which deals with issues arising routinely in legislation.

Status icons indicate that a provision:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Icon</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>is the law in force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>is not yet in force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>is partially in force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has been partially repealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>has pending amendments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has prospective amendments</td>
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<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>has been repealed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has been superseded</td>
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</tbody>
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To access international legislation select Services from the blue banner at the top of the screen and click on International Materials. This opens the international materials library in a new 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 see all connectors and expanders click on Advanced next to the search box. This will bring up the advanced search form. For more information see guide QG LAW022 Westlaw UK – legislation.

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.

- **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 select 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, updated throughout the day, enables access to the latest case, legislation and legal developments. Approximately 1000 sources of information are monitored. You can browse through recently added documents or by document type and subject.

EU

EU information is provided by Ellis and EUR-Lex, the official legal database of the European Union. The headings within this section follow those found in EUR-Lex i.e. Cases, Secondary legislation, Treaties, Preparatory documents 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 title and select the section from the table of contents in the Browse window. Many of the titles to which we do not subscribe are available in print editions in the Taylor Library and can be found on Primo.
My Westlaw UK

This service allows you to create your personal profile and get access to personalised features such as My Folders, Alerts, RSS Feeds and the Linkbuilder tool. To set up a profile click on My Westlaw UK on the blue banner and select 'Create Profile' in the pop-up window. If you already have a profile, log in. (Client ID is ukfederation.) To see more about this service see the relevant blog post on Legal Information Update.

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.

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. To see more about using Westlaw International Materials, click here.

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:

Janet MacKay, Information Consultant (Law)
Tel: 01224 - 272572, 01224 - 273892
Email: j.i.mackay@abdn.ac.uk

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

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

For access problems (including the out-of-hours service) contact the IT Service Desk:

Address: Room G84, Edward Wright Building, Dunbar Street, Old Aberdeen
Tel: 01224 - 273636  *(for the out-of-hours service – call this number)*

*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.

Email: servicedesk@abdn.ac.uk
Log a problem via your MyIT portal at https://myit.abdn.ac.uk/