

Guide to...

Acts of Parliament

How to find an Act of Parliament and information about different areas of legislation

Background

Primary legislation is the name given to Acts of Parliament or Statutes. They are generally referred to by their short title eg **Charities Act 1992**, or they may be referred to by the Official Citation eg. **1992 c.41**, (made up of the year in which the Act received the Royal Assent and the chapter number, a running number assigned to each new Act for that year). Prior to 1963 a more complicated system existed. Acts may be Public General Acts, using cardinal numerals (eg 1,2,3) while Local and Personal Acts, use roman numerals (eg i,ii, iii).

Be aware

Acts can be found in two versions.

- ◆ **Queen's Printer copy**.....*full text version of the original Act*
- ◆ **in force or consolidated version**.....*full text version of the parts of Act which are active as the law of the land*

Where to look

Queen's Printer copy

In **Current Law Statutes, (from 1948)** *print version in the library* full text copies of an entire Act can be found, together with annotations which detail the background to the Acts inception and includes Hansard debates that took place, with references to preceding reports, such as White and Green papers. For an electronic version go to <http://www.legislation.gov.uk> (National Archives) for copies of Public General Acts. Explanatory Notes are available from 1999 for recent legislation, which aim to provide guidance on the intention of the Act.

For older legislation:- *print versions in the Chelmsford library*

Statutes at Large for Acts **from 1225**

Law Report: Statutes for the texts of Acts as they were published **from 1866-1935**

Public and General Acts from 1937-1973 available in annual volumes, starts Nov 1936.

in force or consolidated version

If you need to look at current legislation which is in force, ensure your version is the consolidated (updated) version. Both **Lexis** and **Westlaw** databases provide full text legislation in this format, together with additional relevant commentary and links to related cases, commencement and in

force details. **Lawtel** provides links to cases and very clear statutory status tables with links to the original text of Acts. Westlaw provides historic full text versions of Acts, LexisLibrary has detailed tables of any amendments made to legislation.

Halsbury's Statutes

Formerly a print based multi-volumed series, containing the amended text of all Public and General Acts that are in force. Now in an e version available in **LexisLibrary**, the broad subject order is retained in browsable e-volumes, together with links to **Is it in force** and **Halsbury's Statute Citator**, providing status information.

Commentary on Legislation

Where to find commentary on the law

Halsbury's Laws of England is an encyclopaedia of law, available through **LexisLibrary**, under the **Commentary** tab.

Encyclopaedias specific to certain subject areas are available either in hard copy or on-line through the legal databases, often with a current awareness bulletin.

On **LexisLibrary** you can find:-

Harvey on Industrial Relations and Employment Law Bulletin

Hill and Redman's law of Landlord and Tenant Bulletin

Encyclopaedia of Banking Law Bulletin

Specialist Practice Areas on LexisLibrary include, Commercial, Employment, Family, Litigation, Personal Injury, Public Sector and Property

On **Westlaw** you can find key encyclopaedias :-

Archbold for criminal law

Bullen & Leake & Jacob for precedents of pleadings

Civil Procedure Rules: The White Book

Copinger & Skone James on copyright

Current Sentencing Practice

Kerly's Law of Trade Mark and Trade Names

Palmer's Company Law

Sentencing Referencer

Terrell on the Law of Patents

Totty and Moss: Insolvency

Landlord & Tenant: Woodfall

Specialist Practice Areas on Westlaw include, Intellectual Property, Landlord and Tenant, Crime and Civil Procedure.

On **Lawtel** you can find:-

Specialist Practice Areas on Human Rights, Local government, Employment, Civil Procedure and Personal Injury – these include links to key documents, key cases and journal article collections

Print Resources found in the Law Area under 340s or in the LPC collection, include commentaries on:-

Family Law: Clarke Hall and Morrison, Rayden and Jackson, Social Services and Child Care Law, and Butterworth's Family Law Service.

Company Law: Gore-Brown on companies, and Butterworth's Corporate Law

Personal Injury: Kemp and Kemp

Property and conveyancing: Ruoff and Roper
and many other legal reference books.

Further Help

Pilot - Our online information literacy tutorial provides students with the skills and tools to find and manage information effectively.

www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/pilot/index.html

Skills@Uni - Each semester the library runs a series of study skills drop-in sessions in conjunction with Student Support Services. These cover topics such as essay writing, finding journal articles and evaluating information. Details of our up-coming sessions can be found at www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/helpdesk/train.htm.

AskUS - If you need help or advice about using any of our Library services, you can use the online enquiry form, or our new online chat service It is available on the Library website at www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/helpdesk/enquiry.htm.

Enquiry Desk - If you are in the library you can visit the Enquiry Desk for information about our services or help using the library resources.

Book a Librarian - If your enquiry is lengthy or detailed you can make an appointment to see a member of the library's law team. Your subject team is:

Cambridge: Thelma May (thelma.may@anglia.ac.uk)

and Karen Ready (karen.ready@anglia.ac.uk)

Chelmsford: Deborah Stebbing (deborah.stebbing@anglia.ac.uk);

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