

Guide to...

Understanding legal citations and abbreviations

1. How to understand legal citations and abbreviations

A typical citation would like this:-

Harriman v Martin [1962] 1 WLR 739 (*pronounced* Harriman and Martin)

Cases are normally referred to by the names of the two parties concerned in the law case. Here the court action is brought by Harriman (the claimant) in dispute with Martin (the respondent). The rest of the citation gives details of the law report series in which the case can be found. (Weekly Law Reports for 1962, volume 1, starting on page 739.)

NB. Where the claimant is the Crown (or state) it is referred to as R. v

2. How to interpret legal abbreviations

All legal citations use abbreviations for the law report series. You will soon recognise the more common abbreviations for law reports and journals. To find out what an abbreviation stands for look in the reference book **Raistrick's Index to Legal Citations and Abbreviations** - copy at the Enquiry Desk (Chelmsford) or Reference Collection (Cambridge). Or search the **Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations** - a searchable database of abbreviations: <http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/>.

3. Other places to look for guidance

Current Law Monthly Digest has a list of contemporary journals and law report series, useful to trace very new publications. Most textbooks will include a list of the cases, statutes and abbreviations used in the book. For further help always ask at the Enquiry Desk.

Things to note

- *Square brackets v round brackets - the year appears in square brackets when it is an essential part of the citation because the particular law report does not have volume numbers; law reports with volume numbers show the year in round brackets.*
- *Both legal databases (containing cases and journal articles) **Westlaw** and **Lexis** can trace citations, with minimal information.*
- *The year of the citation is not always the same as the year in which the case was heard.*
- *Remember not all cases are reported in a law report series. There may be transcripts/judgements available for very recent cases (they will be reported later). Or they may not be significant in terms of case law, but of public interest, so will be reported in newspapers or non-legal journals or the relevant professional press.*
- *Neutral citations, for cases heard in the House of Lords, Court of Appeal and Administrative Court, have been introduced from 2001, and for the High Court from 2002. These refer to the court not a law report series and the numbers refer to a case, not pages. Eg. *White v Herefordshire Council* [2007] EWCA Civ 1204. (*England and Wales, Court of Appeal, Civil Division, Judgement Number 1204*)*
- **See below for a list of law reports and their abbreviations.**

All E.R.	All England Law Reports (available on Lexis from 1936)
All E.R.Rep.	All England Law Reports Reprints
All E.R. (EC)	All England Law Reports European Cases 1995- (Lexis from 1995)
B.L.R.	Building Law Reports- published from 1976 - 2009(Chelmsford only)
BCLC	Butterworths Company Law Cases 1983- (Lexis from 1983)
C.L.J.	Cambridge Law Journal 1921- (Westlaw from 1998)
Com.Cas.	Commercial Cases 1895-1941 (Chelmsford only)
C.M.L.R.	Common Market Law Reports 1962- (Westlaw from 1962)
C.L.R.	Commonwealth Law Reports 1903-2008 (Chelmsford only)
C.P.L.	The Conveyancer and Property Lawyer 1936-96 (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw from 1986)
Conv.	The Conveyancer 1997- 2006(Chelmsford only)
Cox. C.C.	Cox's Criminal Law Cases 1843-1934 (Chelmsford only)
Cr. App R.	Criminal Appeal Reports 1909-2009 (Westlaw from 1995)
Cr. App R. (S)	Criminal Appeal Reports Sentencing 1979-96 (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw from 1996)
C.L.R.	Criminal Law Review 1954-2010 (Westlaw from 1986)
E.R.	English Reports (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw)
E.C.C.	European Commercial Cases 1979-2008 (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw from 1978)
E.C.H.R.	European Commission of Human Rights Decisions and Reports 1976-98 (Chelmsford only)
E.C.R.	European Court Reports 1954- (Court of Justice of the European Community and Court of First Instance) Available from http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/j_6/
E.H.R.R.	European Human Rights Reports 1993- (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw from 1983)
Fam. Law.	Family Law 1971-2010 (available on Jordans Family Law Online)
F.L.R.	Family Law Reports 1980- (available on Jordans Family Law Online)
I.R.L.R.	Industrial Relations Law Reports 1972- (Lexis)
J.P.L.	Journal of Planning Law 1948-...became Journal of Planning and Property Law 1954- now Journal of Planning and Environment Law 1972- 2007 (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw from 1990)
J.P.	Justice of the Peace 1862-1926 (Chelmsford only)
J.P. Rep.	Justice of the Peace and Local Government Review 1927-86 (Chelmsford only)
L. & T.R.	Landlord and Tenant Reports 2000- (Westlaw from 1998)
L.Q.R..	Law Quarterly Review 1885-2009 (Westlaw from 1986 - selected coverage)
AC. QB, KB, ChD,Fam.	The Law Reports - Appeal Courts, Family Division, Kings Bench, Queens Bench, etc (Westlaw)
L.S.G.	Law Society Gazette 1988- (Lexis from 1987)
L.T.	The Law Times Reports 1860-1947 (Chelmsford only)
Lloyd's Rep	Lloyds List Law Report 1919-67 Now Lloyds Law Reports 1968-2007 (Chelmsford only)
L.M.C.L.Q.	Lloyds Maritime and Commercial Law Quarterly 1975-87 (Chelmsford only)
P.L.R.	Planning Law Reports 1991-2004 (Chelmsford only)
P. & C.R.	Property and Compensation Reports 1949-97 (Chelmsford only) (Westlaw from 1949)
P.L.	Public Law 1968-2010 (Westlaw 1986- selected coverage)
R.P.C.	Reports of Patent Design and Trademark Cases 1980- (Chelmsford only)
S.T.	Reports of State Trials 1820-50 (Chelmsford only)
S.T.C.	Simon's Tax Cases 1973- (Chelmsford only) (Lexis from 1973-)

S.J.	Solicitors Journal 1857-2009 E-journal (current issue)
T.L.R.	Times Law Reports 1884-52 (Lexis from 1987)
W.L.R.	Weekly Law Reports 1953- (Westlaw from 1953)

4. Help

Database Guides – guides to the legal databases, Lexis, Westlaw and Lawtel are available on the library website at:

http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/guides/database_guides.html

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, evaluating information, and referencing. 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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