A Guide to Finding Legislation Online
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A Guide to Finding Legislation Online

Where can I find Legislation?

The Library provides online access to legislation using a number of databases. The main subscription services are Lexis Library and Westlaw UK; these can be used on and off-campus. In addition iSinoLaw is a bilingual Chinese legal database which is available on-campus. BAILII, the British and Irish Legal Information Institute, is available free online, and provides access to most British and Irish primary legal materials, including legislation. The UK Statute Law Database is the official revised edition of the primary legislation of the United Kingdom made available online.

Accessing Databases

- From the University of Dundee Library homepage click Resources for your subject.
- Click F-L on the A-Z subject list, or scroll down to L.
- Click Law to access the resources page for Law.
- Links are available to all the Databases referred to in this guide.
- If you need to login to access a service, instructions are provided after the title of the service. You should use your University of Dundee username and password.
- For the majority of databases, once you’ve entered your account details you will be taken to the database homepage.

Searching Databases for Legislation

Databases vary in how they allow you to search, and in the ease with which you can find information. They also vary in terms of what additional information you can link to, and what publications they make available.

The following instructions will assist you searching for legislation using Lexis Library, Westlaw UK, iSinoLaw, BAILII and UK Statute Law Database.
Lexis Library

Legislation Coverage

There are around 120 sources of legislation within Lexis Library, with a broad international coverage. The searches you conduct will show the legislation as it stands to date. If you wish to view legislation as it was at any earlier date (e.g. at its enactment) Lexis Library provides a Historical Versions email enquiry service.

Searching from the main search page

You can search for legislation from the homepage of Lexis Library:

- Within the Quick Find area you can search for legislation by entering the Title and Year of the legislation in the first search box, and clicking the Find button.
- Use the Explore area to enter terms you want to include in your search. A list of subject terms is available; click on choose topics to view the list. You select a topic by clicking the title, which will place a tick in the box along side it. Once you have finished selecting topics, click Okay – Add to Search. It is possible to combine terms, or exclude terms in your search; click on Search tips to find out more.

Using the Legislation search page

From the Lexis Library homepage click the Legislation tab under Search to open the legislation search page, this will limit the searches you carry out to legislation only. (This tab is located beneath the Lexis Library logo on the top left of the page).

To Search by legislation title

- In the Title box enter as much of the title as you know. Where there are brackets within the title enter the title without them.
- Enter the year the legislation was passed, if you have it, in the Year search box, rather than within the title of the legislation.
- Tick either the Acts or SI boxes to limit the results to either Acts or Statutory Instruments.

To reduce the number of results, enter any other information you have in the appropriate search fields.

To search by subject

In the Search Terms box, enter the terms of your search. A list of subject terms is available; click on choose topics to view the list. You select a topic by clicking the title, which will place a tick in the box along side it. Once you have finished selecting topics, click Okay – Add to Search. It is possible to combine terms, or exclude terms in your search; click on Search tips to find
out more, these will help ensure the results of your search meet your
requirements and don’t produce too many results.

**To search by legislation citation**

If you know the chapter number of an Act or the series number of a statutory
instrument, enter this into the **Series Number** field.

e.g. to find the Human Tissue (Scotland) Act 2006 (2006 asp 4) in the search
form:

- Enter human tissue in the **title** field
- In the **Year** field enter 2006
- In the **Series Number** field enter 4
- If you want to view a particular part of the Act, you can enter the part
  number into the **Part or Schedule** field, or into the **Provision** field.
- Select **Scottish Parliament Acts** from the Sources dropdown menu.

**Finding legislation for a specific country**

To limit your search for legislation to a specific country:

- Click the **Sources** tab along the top of the screen beneath the Lexis
  Library logo.
- Click the **Browse Sources** tab.
- In **Filter by Area**, select the country you want to view legislation for.
  The screen will update to resources relating to the country you have
  selected.
- Click the **Legislation** folder tab in the **Publication Type** area, to view
  the Legislation resources.
- Tick the boxes next to the titles you want to search within, and click the
  Red **OK – Continue** button on the right of the page.
- A new search page will open similar to the standard legislation search
  screen, but the sources being searched will be the ones you have
  selected.
- Carry out your search using the methods shown under “Using the
  legislation search page”.

**Finding legislation for a region within a country**

If you want to find legislation for a region within a country, e.g. Scotland

- Click the **Sources** tab along the top of the screen beneath the Lexis
  Library logo.
- Click the **Browse Sources** tab.
- In **Filter by Area**, select the country you want to view cases from, and
  in next box to the left, select the region you wish to search in. The
  screen will update to resources relating to the region you have
  selected.
- Click the **Legislation** folder tab in the **Publication Type** area, to view
  the legislation resources.
NB: you may notice publications from other regions within the country in addition to the region you have selected; this is because you will find legislation for the region you have selected in other regional publications.

- Tick the boxes next to the titles you want to search within, and click the Red OK – Continue button on the right of the page.
- A new search page will open similar to the standard legislation search screen, but the sources being searched will be the ones you have selected.
- Carry out your search using the methods shown under “Using the legislation search page”.

**Historical versions of legislation**

Lexis Library legislation search pages will only allow you access to legislation as it stands to date. If you want to see unamended or previous versions of legislation an email enquiry service is provided, from 1998 onwards. To access this:

- Click on the Legislation tab to open the Legislation Search page
- In the right hand column select the Historical Versions link
- Complete the email enquiry form and click Submit
- Lexis Library will respond to your request and supply you with the materials you have requested.

**Results**

On the left of the screen is the Results Group pane, this shows your results according to the type of resource the results come from. On the right of the screen is a list giving the name and enactment of the legislation

- To view the full-text of legislation, click on the title. Within the full-text of the legislation there will be a statement advising when the legislation was passed.
- On the left of the screen will be the table of contents for the source the legislation is coming from. Highlighted in red will be the document you have chosen. The full document will be listed first, with all the part of the legislation following. To view a part click on the part number and title link.
- Within the text of the documents will be links to any other relevant documents, such as Statutory Instruments, Acts referred to, etc.

You can choose to print, email, or save documents using the icons on the top right of the results screen.
**Westlaw UK**

**Accessing Westlaw**

Click the link to Westlaw UK from the Library: Resources for your Subject - Law page.

Enter your University of Dundee username and password and click “login” to be taken to the Westlaw UK homepage. can be accessed from the Westlaw UK page by clicking the “Services” link at the top of the page, and selecting “Westlaw International”.

**Legislation Coverage**

Westlaw UK’s archive goes back to 1267 and includes:
- all UK Public and General Acts which were still in force in 1991, and all published subsequently;
- all Public and General Acts of the Scottish Parliament (ASPS);
- all Local Acts published since 1991
- all Church of England Measures published since 1991
- a selection of UK Statutory Instruments published between 1948 and 1991

Westlaw UK does not include the following types of legislation
- Draft Statutory Instruments
- Northern Ireland Statutes

**Searching for legislation from the Westlaw UK main search page**

You can search for legislation directly from the Westlaw UK homepage.
- Enter as much of the title of the legislation as you know into the search box; there is no need to include any punctuation used in the title. Deselect all the ticked boxes except the Legislation tick box. Select **Document title** and click **Search**

or
- Enter the subject you wish to search for into the search box, if you want to search for a phrase use “”. Deselect all the ticked boxes except the Legislation tick box, and ensure the **Document Free Text** option is selected, and click **Search**.
Westlaw UK Legislation Search Pages

To access the Legislation section of Westlaw UK click on the Legislation tab at the top of the page along from the Westlaw UK logo.

You can choose between a basic search or an advanced search, and you can also choose to Browse.

Basic Search

This is the default Legislation Search page, from here you can search:

- **Free text**: use the free-text area to look for phrases or terms relating to the legislation you want to find. It is possible to search for phrases, combine searches etc. using connectors, click the link to List of Connectors at the left of the search screen. When you have selected the terms you want to include, click Search. The search will be carried out throughout the entire text of the legislation; consequently you could find a long list of results to look through.

- **Act/SI Title**: Use the Title field to search for terms which appear in the title of a piece of legislation. Entering terms in the Title field without quotation marks will retrieve all pieces of legislation with all those terms in the title. If you know the exact title of the Act or SI you are looking for, enter it in quotation marks. In the case of Statutory Instruments, if you know the year and the SI number, enter those into Title field to find the full text of the SI. For example: 2005/1970. Click Search.

- **Provision Number**: this field can be used in conjunction with the Act/SI Title field to search for a specific section within a piece of legislation, rather than retrieving the whole of the legislation. Select the appropriate prefix format from the Provision Number dropdown menu, and enter the number of the part you want to limit the search to. Click Search.

Advanced Search

To access the Advanced Search screen click the Advanced Search link on the Basic Search page.

The Advanced Search screen allows you to choose whether to restrict your search to the full text of legislation as it stands today or broaden it to include historic versions. You can also choose to look for legislation as it stood at a particular point in time.

- **Law in Force**: by selecting the Law in Force option you will be limiting your search to the law as it currently stands, and excluding any previous versions.
• **Law in Force and Historic Law**: by selecting Law in Force and Historic Law you will be searching for all versions of the legislation you are searching by. The results will display with the current version of the legislation as it stands, with any previous versions listed chronologically.

• **Point in Time**: by entering a date in the format shown you will limit your search to find legislation which applied at that specific date.

• **Since**: this option will retrieve all versions of a provision from the date specified onwards.

Use the search limitations in conjunction with text and title searches. You can also enter more than one term into a field by using **terms and connectors**, click on the link to **terms and connectors** to see how these can be used. The more information you provide, the more relevant your results will be.

**Searching within a jurisdiction**

To conduct a search of legislation related to a specific country or region on Westlaw UK, enter the country or the region into the Keyword field in addition to any other Keywords you want to search by. This will find legislation relative to that country or region. You can use this in conjunction with any of the limiter options.

**Browsing for Legislation**

You can browse for legislation (either Acts or SIs) by year, by title or by jurisdiction (either UK or Scottish Parliament).

At the bottom half of the Legislation Search page there are a number of browse categories, for each of these you can choose to:

• **Browsing By Year** - from 1990 onwards, you can select a year – before this select a time period (such as 1900-1909), from which you can then select the year you are looking for. Within each year you will see an alphabetical list of legislation published in that year.

• **Browsing by title** - choose the first letter of the title you are looking for to see an alphabetical list of the Acts and SIs available. Select a title to see the Arrangement of Act/SI for that piece of legislation.

**Results**

Once you have submitted your search the results will display in the order of **primary legislation** first, followed by **secondary legislation**.

The results list will show:

• The title of the legislation

• Any paragraph/chapter/schedule etc. number
• Title of the relevant paragraph/chapter/schedule etc, if applicable
• Date the version has been in force from
• There may be a status icon indicating whether the legislation still stands or has been superceded or repealed, or if an item has pending amendments not yet in force as shown below

**Status Icons**

- Indicates the document or provision has been **repealed**
- Indicated the version is historic and have been superceded
- Indicates the provision has pending amendments which are not yet in force

**View the full-text of a document**

To view the full-text of a legislative document click the citation link, this will take you into the full-text of the case report.

- Using the icons at the top right of the screen you can print, save or email the report.
- To print, click the print icon; a Print Options screen displays, tick the boxes to show what you want the print-out to include; the document will be prepared and send to the printer.
- To save the document, click the save icon and choose the save it as a Word or PDF document, and select the location you wish to save the document to.
- To email the document, click the email icon and enter your email address and any message, and select the type of file, either Word or PDF.

**Navigating the case**

On the left of the full-text screen you will see a menu allowing you to view different aspects of the document; these are short cuts to areas within the report. Click the appropriate link to skip to the information you are interested in.
**iSinoLaw**

iSinoLaw is a bilingual Chinese Law Database; it is only available on-campus. For the purposes of this guide we will be using the English language version.

**Case Coverage**

iSinolaw covers law from China. Legislation is categorised as **Constitutional and National Law; State Council Administrative Regulations; Local Regulations and Rules**; and **Legislative and Judicial Interpretation**. You can Browse or Search for legislation.

**Accessing the Browse or Search Screen**

From the iSinoLaw homepage
- Click **English** to access the English language version of the database
- Click **Enter into the Database**
- From this page you can search or browse.

**Searching for Legislation**

From the Search or Browse page you can enter your search term into the search field – this is considered the Basic Search option, and you can only enter keywords. To conduct an **Advanced Search**;
- Click **Advance** to the left of the screen.
- In **Title** enter any terms you have from the title of the legislation.
- The **Full Text** boxes will allow you to search anywhere within the text of the entire document.
- There are a number of date search options, enter date as YYYY-MM-DD. Use the date searches in conjunction with other search terms.
- On the left of the screen is a list of resources, click the + box to see more options. If you want to restrict the search to a particular resource, or resources, tick the box next to the resource(s) you want to include, and click **Select** in the lower box on the right of the screen. To remove a resource from this area, click on the resource and click **Remove**.
- Click **Search** at the bottom right of the search page.
- Results will be listed chronologically; the terms you have included in your search will be highlighted in red.
- Click the legislation title to view it.
Browsing for Legislation

From the Browse/Search page you can browse for legislation:

- You can select to browse Constitutional and National Law; State Council Administrative Regulations; Local Regulations and Rules; or Legislative and Judicial Decisions.
- Click the category you want to Browse.
- All the cases within that category will be listed, the most recent first. The list will show:
  - Promulgation Date – the date the legislation was passed
  - Effective Date – when the legislation was brought into law
  - Title
  - Status of the legislation; e.g. Effective, Amended or Repealed.

Viewing Legislation

- To access a document click on the Title.
- A new window will open, click on Full Text to view the report.
- You have the option to download or print the report.

Establishing whether legislation is still in force

iSinolaw assigns a status to all legislation held within the database. All documents will be the most recent version of the legislation; previous versions are not available, although within the document dates of amendment, etc will be shown:

- Effective – the law is in effect
- Amended – the legislation has been amended – dates of amendment will be shown, along with a brief description of what part(s) of the legislation have been amended.
- Repealed – the law has been repealed and is no longer in force. In some cases, where new legislation has been brought in to replace the law, the date and title of the new legislation will be shown.
BAILII - British and Irish Legal Information Institute

The BAILII website provides access to freely available British and Irish Legal Information, including case law and legislation from Britain, Ireland and the European Union.

Basic Search

From the BAILII homepage:

- Enter your search term in the search box.
- You can limit your search to any jurisdiction by selecting the jurisdiction from the drop-down menu which has **All Databases** as the pre-selected option.
- Click search.

The basic search will find **any** documents which contains **all** your search terms.

Legislation Search

From the BAILII homepage:

- Click the **Legislation** link which is in the middle area of the screen.
- Enter the information you have into the relevant search field
- The **Advanced query** will allow you to search for words with common roots; plurals; use Boolean searching and proximity connectors. To find out how to use these click the **Help** link beneath **Advanced Query**.
- You have the option to limit you search within a date range.
- You can choose to sort your results by Date, Jurisdiction, Title or Relevance.
- You can choose to have any terms in your search highlighted in the results
- You can limit your search to a particular jurisdiction, or by legislation or statutes.
- Once you have entered your search information click on the **Search** button at the top left of the search page.
- A list of results for your search will display. To open a document click on the title.
- Note within the document there may be a link at the top of the document to search for updates via the Statute Law Database.
A-Z Legislation Index

You can use the A-Z Legislation Title index to find specific legislation where you know the title. The link to the A-Z Legislation Title Index is on the left hand side of the screen, two-thirds of the way down the home page.

- Click A-Z Legislation Title Index.
- Select the jurisdiction you want to choose.
- Click the letter from the A-Z listing you want to browse in.
- Each letter is then further divided; click the appropriate range to access a full list of legislation.
- From the list click the title of the legislation to view the full-text.
- Details of where this legislation was issued from will be shown at the top of the page, next to the BAILII icon.
The UK Statute Law Database

The Statute Law Database provides access to Legislation from all UK Legislative bodies. Primary Legislation is held in Amended form, allowing you to know the law as it stands to date. The database also provides access to Amended Legislation, allowing you to trace the development of legislation over time; Provisional Legislation, allowing you to see what impact proposed amendments to legislation would have; Concurrent versions of legislation, allowing you to see how legislation has been enforced and amended in different jurisdictions.

Quick Search

The Quick Search toolbar appears along the top of every page. Use this facility when you know:

- Title
- Year
- Chapter, Statutory Instrument number
- Type of legislation, e.g. Acts, Statutory Instruments, Statutory Rules, etc.

To use the quick search, enter the information into the appropriate field. You can use partial titles, and use any single field or a combination. Click Go.

The results will list by Title, Year and Number, and Legislation type. Click the title to view the contents of the legislation. To view a specific part, click on the title of the part; or to view the entire document click on the title of the legislation.

Advanced Search

The Advance Search has all the function of the Basic Search but will also allow:

- As at the date – to see what the legislation was at a specific point in time – not necessarily as it stands to date;
- Text Search – to search for legislation containing a specific word, or phrase;
- Geographic extend – to search for legislation applicable to specific jurisdictions rather than the whole of the UK;
- Confers Power – to search for legislation that confers powers to make subordinate legislation, such as Statutory Instruments;
- Blanket Amendment – to search for legislation that amends or affects legislation generally, rather than amending or affecting a specific piece of legislation.
To access the Advanced Search click on the Advanced Search link beneath Quick Search

Enter the information you have into the search screen, using the appropriate fields and tick boxes. The more information you use, the fewer your results will be.

Browsing

The A-Z Index and Chronological Index (both located to the right of the Advance Search link) can be used to browse within the database.

New Legislation

Legislation from the past 7 days is unlikely to be fully incorporated within the Statute Law Database; it is held in a separate area of the database. To find legislation from the past 7 days click the New Legislation link on the banner underneath the UK Statute Law Database banner at the top of the screen. Legislation is listed chronologically, most recently published first.

The impact that the legislation has had on existing legislation will not be reflected in the database for around two weeks, sometimes more if the new legislation impacts on a large amount of existing legislation.

Results

Various icons are displayed within documents on the database, these are designed to give you more information about the legislation, information about these can be found within the database Index in “FAQ” (located underneath the Ministry of Justice logo on the right hand side of the page.

Within some documents a warning will be given at the top of the page advising that the legislation may not be up to date. In such events a link will be given to the Tables for Legislative Effect, follow this link and enter the details which have been given in the warning statement. The results will show what parts of the legislation have been amended or repealed; you can then use this information to find how this legislation affects the legislation from your previous search.
Further help…

If you have any questions or would like some help in using any of the Library Services or Resources please contact your Liaison Librarian; contact details can be found on the Resources for Your Subject page on the Library webpage

http://www.dundee.ac.uk/library