

Using Halsbury's Laws of England

This guide will help you understand how and when to use Halsbury's Laws of England to explore a topic.

What is Halsbury's Laws of England?

Halsbury's Laws of England (often just called *Halsbury's*) is a well-regarded legal encyclopaedia. It's a good place to start if you're researching a topic but don't know what cases or legislation are relevant.

It doesn't contain the full text of any cases or legislation but gives you enough information to be able to find them yourself in a legal database such as Lexis+ or Westlaw. One of the advantages of using *Halsbury's* for legal research is that it is updated regularly so will always reflect current law.

Information in *Halsbury's* is split up into numbered paragraphs. Each paragraph explains the current legal status of a particular topic. Accompanying footnotes will direct you to relevant case law and legislation.

We have access to Halsbury's in print and online via Lexis+. Please be aware that we no longer subscribe to the print version, so the newest volumes will not be on the shelves. The version on Lexis+ is more up-to-date.

[Learn more about how you can access and use Lexis+](#)

If you're not sure where to look for a particular topic, the print index can be easier to use than the online index. However, the volume and paragraph numbers are identical so you can easily move between the two versions.

Using Halsbury's Laws online to search for a topic

You can access *Halsbury's* online through Lexis+. On the Lexis+ homepage you will see *Halsbury's Laws of England* in the 'my sources' tab under the big search box. Click on its name to be taken to this search page:

The screenshot shows the Lexis+ UK search interface. At the top left is the Lexis+ UK logo. At the top right are links for History, Help, and Sign out. Below the logo is the text 'Halsbury's Laws of England' followed by an information icon (i), a share icon, and a menu icon (three dots). On the right side, there is a link for 'Advanced search'. The main search area contains a search box with the text '"parental leave" discrimination' and a dropdown menu with 'Halsbury's Laws of England' selected. A red search button with a magnifying glass icon is to the right of the dropdown. At the bottom left, there is a radio button selected for 'Search all documents in this source'. At the bottom right, there is a checkbox for 'Search Selected'.

Note how this page is labelled *Halsbury's Laws of England*. Type your search words into the search box, using connectors like AND or NOT if you wish, then click the magnifying glass icon.

If there is only one result you will be directed straight to that paragraph. If there is more than one result you will get a results list, with a snippet of text showing you how/where your search words are used. The number next to the title is the paragraph number. Look at the name of the volume that paragraph came from (in this example it's *Rights and Freedoms*) as that can be a clue to how relevant each result is.

676. Parental rights and work-life balance.

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Rights and Freedoms (Volume 88A (2018)) > 5. Rights and Freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights > (4) Solidarity > 676. Parental rights and work-life balance.



... and the right to paid maternity leave and to **parental leave** following the birth or adoption of a child 3. Although work-life balance and **parental leave** are not specifically addressed by the European Convention on Human Rights 4 there is an obvious correspondence between the Charter protections and the right to respect ...

Click on the title of any result to read it. Typically, the paragraph itself will be fairly short, but it will be followed by comprehensive footnotes. The footnotes will direct you to relevant cases and legislation.

Using Halsbury's Laws online to find a specific paragraph in a volume

If you know the volume number and paragraph number of something you want to find, then you can go straight to it. On the Lexis+ homepage you will see *Halsbury's Laws of England* in the 'my sources' tab under the search box. Click on its name.

Below the Halsbury's search box, you will see an alphabetical list of volumes. You have two options:

1. Tick the volume you're interested in, and then use the search box as described above. Look for your desired paragraph in the results list, and click on its name to open it up.

or

2. Click on the downward arrow to the left of a volume's name. It will expand and you will see the subsections within that volume. You may have to click through several levels before you start seeing paragraph numbers.

Using the printed volumes of *Halsbury's Laws* to look up a topic

You can find these on level 2 of the Headington Library shelved at 340 HAL. You cannot borrow them but you can read, copy and scan photocopy them within the library. Remember, this is no longer the most up-to-date source of Halsbury's that you have access to.

This is the recommended procedure to follow when looking up a topic:

1. Consolidated index	Start by looking up your topic in the consolidated index . This is split in two volumes, A-E and F-Z. It will give you a reference to the volume and paragraph your topic is in. For instance, the entry for computer fraud is 57 (5th), 502 . This means it's in paragraph 502 of volume 57 , which is on its 5th edition.
2. Main volumes	Now you have a volume number you can take that volume off the shelf and turn to this paragraph. You will find descriptive content followed by useful footnotes. To see how recent this information is, look for the date at the front of the volume underneath the names of the contributors.
3. Cumulative supplement	The cumulative supplement is produced every year. You should look up your volume and paragraph number in this to see if anything has been added since the main volume was published.

Other useful printed volumes of *Halsbury's Laws*

The **consolidated tables** volumes allow you identify where in *Halsbury's* a specific case or piece of legislation is discussed. So, unlike in the procedure outlined above, this allows you to start with a case or Act and explore its significance rather than starting with a topic and finding relevant cases.

Citing *Halsbury's Laws* in your work

Typically, *Halsbury's Laws* is used as a stepping stone to other legal materials (e.g. cases and legislation) which you would then go on to reference in your assignments.

If, however, you did want to refer to *Halsbury's* in your work then there is guidance in section 3.2.6 in the OSCOLA handbook.

Getting help and finding out more

More online information can be found on the Law help pages, at www.brookes.ac.uk/library/resources-and-services/course-resource-help/law

If you need any help with finding or using library resources for law please contact **Charlie Brampton** (Academic Liaison Librarian) using the contact details below.

Email: c.brampton@brookes.ac.uk
 Tel: 01865 483077
 Headington Library, JHB 112