

# OSCOLA Style

## Referencing with Confidence

**As used in:**  
York Law School

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## Using this Guide

This guide is intended to help you understand how to use source material effectively in this referencing style. It outlines the general features of the style, but it is important that you follow your department's specific guidelines as there are some different interpretations and requirements that might be specifically required within your discipline. The guide has been compiled using the official 4th edition OSCOLA publication. **You will find other examples of this style on the University website at [www.york.ac.uk/integrity](http://www.york.ac.uk/integrity).**

## Why Reference?

Citing and referencing source material is a crucial aspect of academic writing. You will probably be aware that plagiarism (using someone else's work as though it were your own) is a serious form of academic misconduct and it must be avoided at all costs. Referencing accurately and consistently is an important part of ensuring the distinction is clear between your words and the words and ideas of others in your assignments.

**In-text citation** is included in the body of your text and is there to **directly** show the reader where an idea, piece of information, and/ or a quotation are from. The reader will then be able to match the source cited in the text to the full reference given in your works cited/ bibliography where full details of the publication are presented.

Citing of source materials within your assignment is useful and beneficial to supporting your argument. However, be selective. Do not just use as many references as you can in a bid to impress the marker that you've read a massive amount. Your references should be relevant and integral to your argument, that is, you discuss or critique them in your writing.

### For example, if you:

- Include data from your reading (eg tables, statistics, diagrams)
- Describe or discuss a theory, model or practice from a particular writer
- Want to add credibility to your argument by bringing in the ideas of another writer – for or against
- Provide quotations or definitions in your essay;
- Paraphrase or summarise information which is not common knowledge

} cite the source

## Frequently asked questions

### ➤ What is OSCOLA?

The Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) (currently in its fourth edition) is the main source of authority you need to follow. It is a standard for use in law developed at Oxford University and adopted widely by law schools and publishers. **OSCOLA uses footnotes at the bottom of each page for in-text citation, with full references organised in a bibliography at the end of the document and grouped according to different types of source.**

The full guidance is available in the OSCOLA 4th edition available at [www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php](http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php).

If you are citing international law, you should see:

[https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/oscola\\_2006\\_citing\\_international\\_law.pdf](https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/oscola_2006_citing_international_law.pdf)

Parts of this guide direct you to the OSCOLA guide where you see, for example, “see OSCOLA 1.5”.

### ➤ How do I cite sources using footnotes?

To insert a citation into your writing, whether you are directly quoting or indirectly referring to a source (paraphrasing or mentioning an idea), you will need to add a footnote. The superscript footnote within the text should appear at the end of a sentence and after the punctuation. For example:

Neville states that The Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal was involved in developing the OSCOLA referencing system.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Colin Neville, *The Complete Guide to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism* (2nd edn, OU Press 2010).

(Where you cite an author of a secondary source their name should appear as it does on the publication with first name/ initials before surname).

For **multiple references** within one footnote use semi-colons to distinguish between them and put them in chronological order with the oldest first. For example, this footnote refers to two cases:

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<sup>1</sup> *R v White* [2010] EWCA Crim 978 (CA (Crim Div)); *R v Adam* [2011] EWCA Crim 865 (CA (Crim Div)).

If one or more references are more relevant than the others put these first and then ‘see also’.  
For example:

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<sup>2</sup> Rudi Fortson, *Misuse of Drugs: Offences, Confiscation and Money Laundering* (5th edn, Sweet & Maxwell 2005); Barbara Vettori, *Tough on Criminal Wealth* (Springer 2006). See also Peter Alldridge, *Money Laundering Law* (Hart Publishing 2003).

Also, order the sources with legislation before cases, and primary sources before secondary.

For more detailed information, see OSCOLA 1.1 and 1.2

➤ **How do I Effectively Cite Quotations?**

You need to be very precise when using quotations. If the quotations are less than three lines use **single quotation marks** and include within the text. For example:

**In-text**

Narcotics contribute greatly to the black economy, for example ‘the value of illegal drugs transactions has been estimated at up to £1.5 billion annually’.<sup>24</sup>

**Footnote**

---

<sup>24</sup> Peter Alldridge, *Money Laundering Law* (Hart Publishing 2003) citing HC Deb 30 October 2001, vol 373, col 757.

If longer than three lines, use an indented paragraph, no quotation marks and a line space above and below. For example:

**In-text** When asked about the role of a newspaper’s proprietor Rupert Murdoch said:

Yes, I think sometimes it’s overestimated, but certainly they have power. Let’s face it, if an editor is sending a newspaper broke, it is the responsibility of the proprietor to step in for the sake of the journalists, for the sake of everybody.<sup>25</sup>

**Footnote**

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<sup>25</sup> Leveson Inquiry: Culture, Practice and Ethics of the Press, *Transcript of Morning Hearing 25 April 2012* page 17, 6-11 accessed 21 May 2012.

For more detailed information, see OSCOLA 1.5

➤ **How do I use abbreviations?**

OSCOLA abbreviates a wide range of legal sources and institutions. Do not use punctuation when using an abbreviation. For example, the Director of Public Prosecutions should appear as DPP not D.P.P. There is also a small guide on the back page of this guide. For a comprehensive list of legal abbreviations, use the Cardiff index: [www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk](http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk). You can search by abbreviation to find the title, or by title to find the abbreviation.

For more detailed information, see OSCOLA Appendix 4.2

➤ **What are pinpoints, how do I use them and page numbers?**

A pinpoint is a precise reference to the part of a judgment or report through numbered paragraphs or page numbers. There are a number of ways you can pinpoint specific details within publications, depending on what the publication is. When citing more than one paragraph, place the numbers in square brackets. In this first example the pinpoints are at the end to paragraphs 42 and 45 of the case:

<sup>1</sup> Callery v Gray [2001] EWCA Civ 1117, [2001] 1 WLR 2112 [42], [45]

In this example for a secondary source the page number 131 is given at the end:

<sup>2</sup> Colin Neville, *The Complete Guide to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism* (2nd edn, OU Press 2010) 131.

For more detailed information, see OSCOLA 2.1.6 and OSCOLA 4.2.5

➤ **What is cross citation?**

Cross citation is when you are referring to discussion in another part of your writing, for example on an earlier page or in a previous chapter. It is good practice to use cross citation as little as possible. Try to be specific and use a specific footnote number (For example **See n 52** for the footnote. OR: **See text to n 22.**)

For more detailed information see OSCOLA 1.2.2

➤ **How do I cite a source I have already used in my writing?**

For a case, cite in full the first time. For further references to the case, use a short form of the case name and a cross-citation in brackets to the original footnote. For example:

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<sup>1</sup> Niemietz v Germany (1992) 116 EHRR 97 (If the case name is included in the text, omit it in the footnote).

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<sup>2</sup> *ibid* [8] – [10] (If the subsequent citation is directly after the full citation, simply use the term ‘*ibid*’. If pinpointing specific paragraphs, place these in square brackets).

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<sup>8</sup> Niemietz (n 1) (When referring to a previous citation a number of footnotes back, use the short version of the case and add n as an abbreviation signposting the number of the footnote).

For subsequent citation of legislation, abbreviations are acceptable. For subsequent citation of secondary sources, you only need the author’s surname.

For more detailed information see OSCOLA 1.2

➤ **What is secondary referencing and how do I use it?**

This means referring to a source you have not read that you have found within another source that you are using. **Try to avoid secondary referencing as it is always preferable to use the original source and you should always try to locate this.**

If you find you have to use secondary referencing, in the footnote cite the source you have read, followed by ‘citing’... For example:

Peter Alltridge, *Money Laundering Law* (Hart Publishing 2003) citing Hentrich v France (1994) 18 EHRR 40).

## Referencing with confidence: The OSCOLA Style 5

In the bibliography insert only the source you have read. There is no specific guidance on this within OSCOLA.

### ➤ How do I name judges?

When referring to a judge within a case, use the judge's surname followed by the correct abbreviation. **(Mr or Mrs Justice Smith should be called Smith J in your text).**

The exception to this rule is when the judge holds a title. A Court of Appeal Judge who is Lord or Lady Smith should be referred to as **Smith LJ**.

A House of Lords judge should be referred to as **Lord or Lady Smith** and should not be abbreviated.

A Supreme Court judge should be referred to as **Lord Smith SCJ**.

The Lord Chief Justice can be abbreviated to **Lord Woolf CJ**.

For more detailed information see OSCOLA 2.1.7

### ➤ Should I reference Westlaw or Lexis Library in my citation, if this is where I found the case law, legislation or journal article?

No – you do not need to include any information about Westlaw or Lexis Library in your citations, as this is just the portal through which you accessed the report, legislation or article. Simply reference the relevant source as you would a paper copy.

### ➤ Should I use Latin terms within my footnotes?

The only Latin term that is acceptable to use within the OSCOLA style is 'ibid', for the instances when you are referring to the same source in consecutive footnotes. Do not use other terms such as supra, op cit, loc cit.

For more information see OSCOLA 1.2.3 u

### ➤ Do I provide a bibliography or reference list and how do I compile it?

A bibliography contains all materials you have consulted for your assignment and a reference list includes only those sources you have actually cited in the work. You should include a reference list at the end of your assignment.

**The reference list should be ordered into separate sections for Primary Sources (Table of Cases and then Table of Legislation) and lastly Secondary Sources.** Each list of sources should be alphabetical and should not be numbered. Cases and Legislation should be arranged alphabetically by title. Secondary sources should be alphabetical by surname of the author. **Author citation differs from citation in footnotes as the surname comes first in a reference list and an initial is used, not the full name.**

For example:

#### Footnote:

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<sup>1</sup> Adam White, *The Politics of Private Security* (Palgrave Macmillan 2010).

#### Reference list:

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White A, *The Politics of Private Security* (Palgrave Macmillan 2010).

Multiple works by one author should be listed with the works in chronological order. If the author has more than one publication in one year, put these in alphabetical order by the first major word of the title.

For more detailed information see OSCOLA 1.7

### Further resources

**See more examples for this style online:** University of York referencing guides and A to Z of examples [www.york.ac.uk/integrity](http://www.york.ac.uk/integrity)

'Referencing the Discussion' tutorial available in the Academic Skills Tutorials module on Yorkshare <http://vle.york.ac.uk>

The Fourth Edition of the Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA): [www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php](http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php)

The OSCOLA quick reference guide: [www.law.ox.ac.uk/published/OSCOLA\\_Quick\\_Reference\\_Guide\\_001.pdf](http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/published/OSCOLA_Quick_Reference_Guide_001.pdf)

OSCOLA 2006 Citing International Law Sources Section: [www.law.ox.ac.uk/published/OSCOLA\\_2006\\_citing\\_international\\_law.pdf](http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/published/OSCOLA_2006_citing_international_law.pdf)

The Cardiff Index of Legal Abbreviations: [www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk](http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk)

Useful OSCOLA tutorials: <http://www.referencing.port.ac.uk/docs/cite4.php>

UWE Bristol has comprehensive referencing guides for OSCOLA, including an OSCOLA quiz to test your understanding of the style.  
<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/studysupport/studyskills/referencing/oscola.aspx>

## Referencing examples

### Primary sources

#### CASE LAW

➤ Neutral citations (referring to a judgment independently of the report)

Case name	[Year]	Court	Number	(Division)
<i>R v Thakrar (Miran)</i>	[2010]	EWCA Crim	1505	(CA(Crim Div))

<i>R v Thakrar (Miran)</i> [2010] EWCA Crim 1505 (CA (Crim Div))
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**Notes:** Case names should be in *italics*.

The date should be in **round brackets** when the date is not crucial because the reports have an ongoing number sequence. The date should be in **square brackets** when the report has several volumes in one year, as the year differentiates between volumes.

For further information see the bailii website ([www.bailii.org](http://www.bailii.org)).

Within OSCOLA, see 2.1.1

➤ Without a neutral citation (law report)

Case name (full)	Year	Volume	Report	Page	Court
<i>Woolin</i>	[1998]	4	All ER	103	HL

<i>Woolin</i> [1998] 4 All ER 103 HL
--------------------------------------

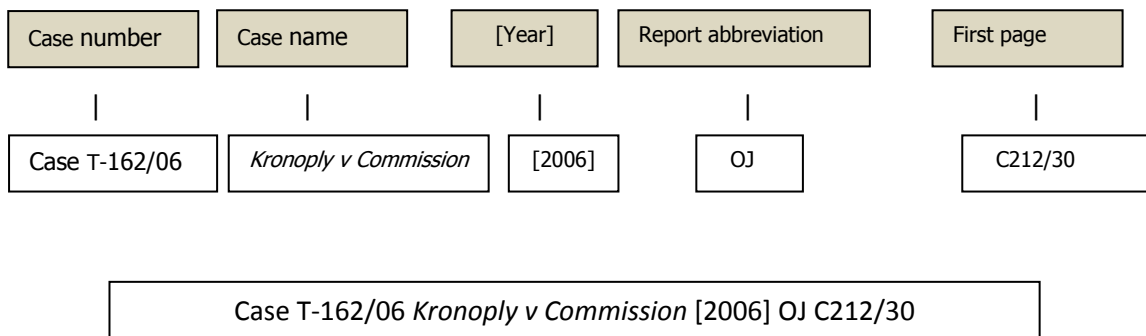
**Notes:** For **abbreviations** of all law reports, see Cardiff's Index to Legal Abbreviation: [www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk](http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk)

When making **detailed reference to a judgment and/or page**, put this at the end of the citation. So, if you want to include pinpointing about what a judge said and where this is in the law report: add the page number first then the judge's correct abbreviation in brackets: eg 273 (Smith LJ).



When deciding which law report to cite, the Law Reports is the most authoritative. If the case is not included, use the *Weekly Law Report* or *All England Law Reports*. The specialist law reports can be cited if the case is not included in the preceding reports.

➤ **European Court of Justice**



**Notes:** These can be found at [http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/j\\_6/](http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/j_6/)

For further information see OSCOLA 2.6.2.

➤ **European Court of Human Rights**

**Judgments**

*Shalk v Austria* App no 30141/04 (ECtHR, 24 June 2010)

**Notes:** Reports can be found at [www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/Case-Law/Decisions+and+judgments/HUDOC+database](http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/Case-Law/Decisions+and+judgments/HUDOC+database)

Before 1996, the reports were known as *Series A* and have a number. Simply include this in the citation after the case name and date.

For further information see OSCOLA 2.7.1

## Legislation

### PRIMARY LEGISLATION

#### ➤ Statutes

Short title	Year	Section	(Sub-section)	(Paragraph)
Bribery Act	2010	s 2	(1)	(b)

Bribery Act 2010 s 2 (1) (b)

**Notes: Bribery Act 2010** would be the way you would refer to the statute in general, if you did not need to include pinpointing to any specific part of the act.

The citation can be **abbreviated** if you are referring to the same act multiple times, as long as this is flagged up to the reader, for example: **Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984** (PACE 1984).

For further information see OSCOLA 2.4.1

#### ➤ Bills

Title of Bill	House	Session	[Running number]	Clause
Armed Forces HC Bill		(2011-2012)	[1]	Cl 2

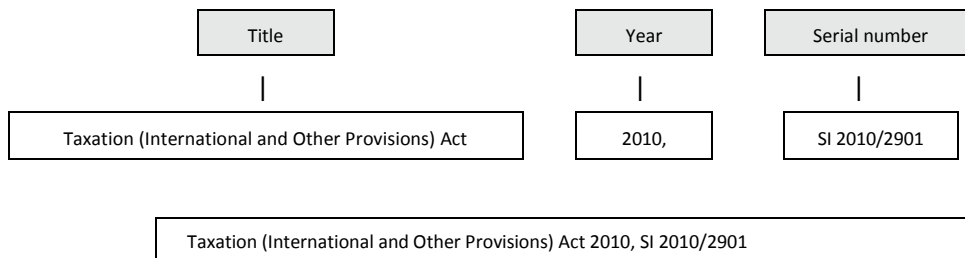
Armed Forces HC Bill (2010–2011) [1] cl2

**Notes:** House of Commons bills have their **running numbers** put in square brackets. For House of Lords bill running numbers have no brackets.

For further information see OSCOLA 2.4.5

## SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

### ➤ Statutory instruments (the detail within a statute)

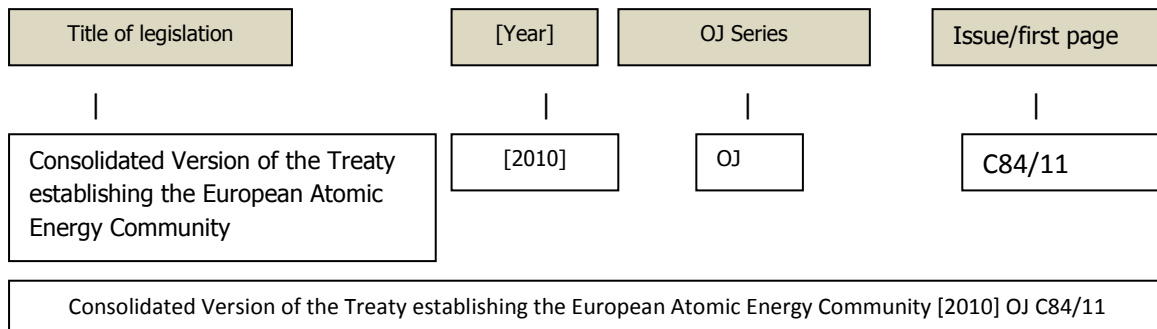


**Notes:** These can be orders, regulations or rules, so you need to pinpoint the detail in question by adding the appropriate abbreviation and number.

For further information see OSCOLA 2.5.1

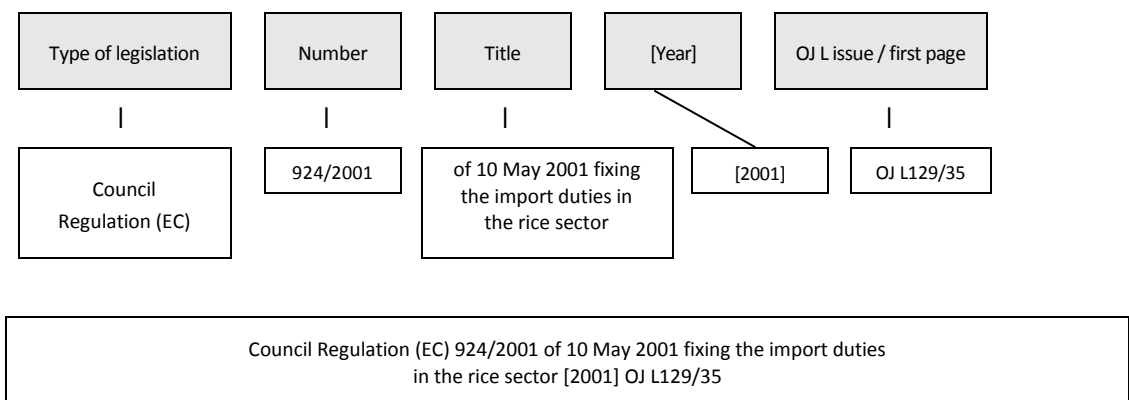
## EU LEGISLATION

### ➤ Treaties and protocols



**Notes:** Older treaties are known as the C series. The exception to the above rule includes the Lisbon Treaty, published in the L Series.

➤ Regulations, directives, decisions, recommendations and opinions

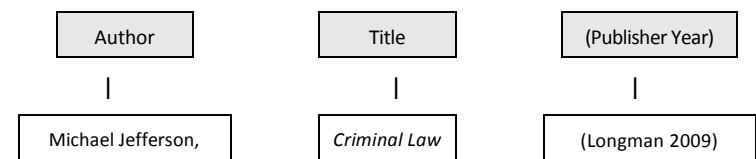


**Notes:** The date follows the running number in regulations but precedes it in directives.

For further information see OSCOLA 2.6.1

## Secondary sources

### BOOKS



**Notes:** The title should be in italics.

For a large reference book, such as Halsbury’s Laws of England, volume numbers need to be included.

When pinpointing a page number (if paraphrasing or quoting), add this to the end of your citation in the footnotes. For example <sup>1</sup>Michael Jefferson, *Criminal Law* (Longman 2009) 42.

➤ **Books with multiple authors**

**Books with up to three authors:** If the book has **up to three** authors, include ‘**and**’ in between each author.

CMV Clarkson and HM Keating and SR Cunningham, *Criminal Law: Text and Materials* (7th edn, Sweet & Maxwell 2010)

**Books with more than three authors:** If a book has **more than three authors**, include ‘**and others**’ after the name of the first author.

Dick Hobbs and others, *Bouncers: Violence and Governance in the Night-time Economy* (OUP 2005)

➤ **Chapters in books**

Philip Allott, ‘The Concept of International Law’ in Michael Byers (ed), *The Role of Law in International Politics* (OUP 2001)

➤ **Journal article**

When citing a journal article, the format for year of publication varies slightly. If the year of publication indicates the volume number, place this within [ ], for example:

Adrian Keane, ‘Towards a Principled Approach to the Cross-examination of Vulnerable Witnesses’ [2012] Crim LR 407

If there is a separate volume number for the publication use ( ), for example:

Adrian Burrows, ‘The Relationship Between Common Law and Statute in the Law of Obligations’ (2012) 128 LQR 232

**NB:** In this second example, ‘128’ denotes the volume of LQR (Law Quarterly Review). For further information see OSCOLA 3.3.1

➤ **Official publications**

If the reference is for a **select committee** from either house of parliament, give the name of the committee as the author.

Children, Schools and Families Committee, Sure Start Children’s Centre (HC 2009-10, 130)

For **command papers**, start the reference with the name of the committee or other body that produced the report.

Ministry of Defence, The Defence Strategy for Acquisition Reform (Cm 7796, 2010) para 1.3

➤ **Case notes**

David Thomas, ‘Sentencing: confiscation orders – Proceeds of Crime Act 2002’ [2011] Crim LR 164 (note)

If you refer to the case discussed in the text and then add a reference in the footnote, simply omit the case name.

## Online sources

### Online Journals

Diane Fahey, 'Can Tax Policy Stop Human Trafficking?' (2008-2009) 40 *Geo J Int'l L* accessed 26 April 2011

This is for referencing journals that are only published electronically. Many will not have page numbers, but you can pinpoint with details **before** the URL and access information.

### Websites with an author

Neil Addison 'Malicious Communications' (Harassment Law) accessed 26 April 2011

### Websites without an author

'Children Law' (The Law Society) accessed 26 April 2011 <[http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/areasoflaw/view=areasoflawdetails.law?AREAOFLAW=Children law&AREAOFLAWID=9](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/areasoflaw/view=areasoflawdetails.law?AREAOFLAW=Children%20law&AREAOFLAWID=9)> accessed 26 April 2011

## Newspaper articles

### Hard copy

Neil Addison, 'Privacy Law should be made by MPs, not Judges, says David Cameron' *The Guardian* (London, 21 April 2011) 6

### On-line

John Plunkett, 'Andrew Marr Reveals he took out Superinjunction' *The Guardian* (London, 26 April 2011) <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2011/apr/26/andrew-marrsuperinjunction>> accessed 26 April 2011

## ➤ Most Common Abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	MEANING	TYPE
AC	<i>Law Reports (Appeal Cases)</i>	Law reports
AJIL	<i>American Journal of International Law</i>	Journals
All ER	<i>All England Law Reports</i>	Law reports
BCC	<i>British Company Law Cases</i>	Law reports
BTR	<i>British Tax Review</i>	Journals
Ch	<i>Law Reports (Chancery)</i>	Law reports
CLJ	<i>Cambridge Law Review</i>	Journals
CLP	<i>Current Legal Problems</i>	Journals
CLY	<i>Current Law Yearbook</i>	Law reports
CML Rev	<i>Common Market Law Review</i>	Journals
CMLR	<i>Common Market Law Reports</i>	Law reports
Conv	<i>Conveyancer</i>	Journals
Cr App R	<i>Criminal Appeal Reports</i>	Law reports
Cr App R (S)	<i>Criminal Appeal Reports (Sentencing)</i>	Law reports
Crim LR	<i>Criminal Law Review</i>	Journals
EC Bull	<i>EC Bulletin</i>	Journals
ECLR	<i>European Competition Law Review</i>	Journals
ECR	<i>European Court Reports</i>	Law reports
EG	<i>Estates Gazette</i>	Law reports
EG	<i>Estates Gazette</i>	Journals
EHRR	<i>European Human Rights Reports</i>	Law reports
EIPR	<i>European Intellectual Property Review</i>	Journals
EIRR	<i>European Industrial Relations Review</i>	Journals
EL Rev	<i>European Law Review</i>	Journals
ER	<i>English Reports</i>	Law reports
EWCA Civ	<i>Court of Appeal (Civil Division)</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWCA Crim	<i>Court of Appeal (Criminal Division)</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (Admin)	<i>High Court, Administrative Court</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (Admlty)	<i>High Court, Admiralty Court</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (Ch)	<i>High Court, Chancery Division</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (Comm)	<i>High Court, Commercial Court</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (Fam)	<i>High Court, Family Division</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (Pat)	<i>High Court, Patents Court</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (QB)	<i>High Court, Queen's Bench Division</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
EWHC (TCC)	<i>High Court, Technology and Construction Court</i>	Neutral citation England and Wales
Fam	<i>Law Reports (Family)</i>	Law reports
FLR	<i>Family Law Reports</i>	Law reports
FSR	<i>Fleet Street Reports</i>	Law reports

ABBREVIATION	MEANING	TYPE
FTLR	<i>Financial Times Law Reports</i>	Law reports
ICLQ	<i>International &amp; Comparative Law Quarterly</i>	Journals
ICR	<i>Industrial Cases Reports</i>	Law reports
ILJ	<i>Industrial Law Journal</i>	Journals
IRLR	<i>Industrial Relations Law Reports</i>	Law reports
JBL	<i>Journal of Business Law</i>	Journals
JP	<i>Justice of the Peace Reports</i>	Law reports
JPEL	<i>Journal of Planning and Environmental Law</i>	Journals
JPL	<i>Journal of Planning Law</i>	Law reports
LGR	<i>Local Government Reports</i>	Law reports
Lloyd's Rep	<i>Lloyd's Law Reports</i>	Law reports
LMCLQ	<i>Lloyd's Maritime &amp; Commercial Law Quarterly</i>	Journals
LQR	<i>Law Quarterly Review</i>	Journals
LS Gaz	<i>Law Society Gazette</i>	Law reports
LS Gaz	<i>Legal Studies</i>	Journals
LS Gaz	<i>Law Society Gazette</i>	Journals
MLR	<i>Modern Law Review</i>	Journals
NLJ	<i>New Law Journal</i>	Journals
OJ	<i>Official Journal of the European Communities</i>	Journals
OJLS	<i>Oxford Journal of Legal Studies</i>	Journals
OUCLJ	<i>Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal</i>	Journals
P	<i>Law Reports (Probate)</i>	Law reports
P & CR	<i>Property and Compensation Reports</i>	Law reports
PL	<i>Public Law</i>	Journals
PTSLR	<i>Public &amp; Third Sector Law Reports</i>	Law reports
QB	<i>Law Reports (Queen's Bench)</i>	Law reports
RPC	<i>Reports of Patent Cases</i>	Law reports
RTR	<i>Road Traffic Reports</i>	Law reports
SC	<i>Session Cases</i>	Law reports
SCCR	<i>Scottish Criminal Case Reports</i>	Law reports
SCLR	<i>Scottish Civil Law Reports</i>	Law reports
SJ	<i>Solicitors' Journal</i>	Journals
SLT	<i>Scots Law Reports</i>	Law reports
STC	<i>Simon's Tax Cases</i>	Law reports
TC	<i>Tax Cases</i>	Law reports
UKHL	<i>House of Lords</i>	Neutral citation UK
UKPC	<i>Privy Council</i>	Neutral citation UK
UKSC	<i>Supreme Court</i>	Neutral citation UK
WLR	<i>Weekly Law Reports</i>	Law reports