How to find legislation using printed sources

How to find an Act from a citation
The simplest way to access the full text of an Act is by using one of the subscription sources such as Westlaw UK or Lexis Library. It is also possible to find historical, un-amended versions in these services.

Older Acts can be found in print in the Law Reports Statutes which is available on request from the Brunswick Library Store (see the catalogue record for the Law Reports Statutes to make a request). The alphabetical (by short title) list of Acts in the front of each volume indicates in which volume of the Statutes for that year the full text of the Act is printed. There is also a chronological list of Acts by chapter number. The Law Reports Statutes prints the text of the Act as it was passed; it does not include amendments.

To find older Acts, use the Official Statutes series which extends back to Magna Carta (KD130.R92, 1st floor, Abercromby Wing). Earlier volumes are known as Statutes at Large.

Regnal year
Before 1963, Acts were cited by regnal year and chapter number. A regnal year refers to the monarch on the throne at the time and the year of their reign in which the Act was passed. Parliamentary sessions commence in the autumn and therefore will usually span two regnal years (a regnal year is calculated from the date of the sovereign’s accession to the throne). For example:

- **15 & 16 Geo. 5 c. 18** is a reference to the Settled Land Act which was passed during the Parliamentary session held in the 15th and 16th years of the reign of George V and was the 18th act of that session.

A listing of regnal years can be found with a simple internet search.

Chapter numbers
Acts are allocated a chapter number in the order in which they received Royal Assent within the year. Chapter is abbreviated to c. For example:

- Climate Change Act 2008 c. 27
The Climate Change Act was the 27th Act to be passed in 2008.

Note that before 1963, chapter numbers referred to a Parliamentary session, rather than a calendar year.

**How to find Acts on a topic**

**Halsbury’s Statutes** (KD135 H3 H17.4, 1st Floor, Abercromby Wing) is arranged alphabetically by subject and contains the full-text of all amended legislation currently in force in England and Wales. See the guide *Using Halsbury’s Statutes* for more information.

**How to find the current status of legislation**

**Halsbury’s Is it in Force?** (KD135 H3 H17.4, 1st Floor, Abercromby Wing) is a guide to commencement dates for Acts passed since 1st January 1960. **Halsbury’s Statute Citator** (D7, 1st Floor, Abercromby Wing) is a guide to the current status of statutes, giving details of amendments, repeals and any cases which have interpreted the Act in court. See the guide *Using Halsbury’s Statutes* for more information.

The **Current Law Legislation Citator** (KD296.C85.B95, 1st Floor, Abercromby Wing) lists Acts chronologically and provides, section by section, details of commencement dates, amendments, repeals, any Statutory Instruments made under the Act and any cases which interpreted the statute, together with their Current Law Yearbook reference. For more information see the guide *Using Current Law*.

The **Law Reports Index** (KD285.L41, Abercromby Wing 1st Floor) also has a section listing details of where Statutes and Statutory Instruments have been judicially considered.

**How to find Statutory Instruments**

Statutory Instruments are not available in print in the Sydney Jones Library. Statutory Instruments are numerous and frequently repealed or replaced, so an online source is the best tool to use to find them. Try [Legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) or [BAILLI](http://www.bailii.org). Alternatively, use **Lexis Library** or **Westlaw UK** to find the text of Statutory Instruments, as amended.

September 2017