

# Professional English in Use

## Law

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# Introduction

## Who is this book for?

*Professional English in Use Law* is for a wide range of people who need to use legal English vocabulary in their work, for example as lawyers or litigators, paralegals or legal researchers, legal secretaries or trainee lawyers. English language learners may need to use legal English to work with foreign colleagues or clients; to describe or explain aspects of their own legal system; to find out about other systems. The book is also for students of law who wish to develop their knowledge of legal English vocabulary to assist their legal studies. It will also help extend the vocabulary of business professionals who need some knowledge of legal English vocabulary for commercial agreements and transactions. The book is suitable for learners who have reached an upper-intermediate or advanced level of English. The book can be used effectively for individual study or by a teacher in class, one to one or in groups. If you are preparing for the ILEC exam (*International Legal English Certificate*), this book will help you to develop your vocabulary.

## Language and law

The book aims to help learners develop their legal English vocabulary. It is not intended to be an introduction to law in English speaking countries nor to be relied upon for information or advice about law or the practice of law. It presents vocabulary in the context of the legal systems in the UK because the meaning of any legal terms and the conceptual relationship between terms is located within a specific legal system. The authors assume that you will need to talk and write about your own legal system. Consequently, some tasks encourage you to think about how far your own system shares the same legal concepts or procedures, and to decide whether to use a legal term in English as an equivalent to a concept in your own system or to employ an approximation in discussion or writing (see Unit 17).

## What kind of legal English is in this book?

This book concentrates on the vocabulary arising from the practice of commercial law (including company law, contract formation, employment law, sale of goods, real property, and intellectual property) but also presents more general legal English vocabulary. The legal topics covered are common to many legal systems and in that context the book has an international dimension. There are references in most units of the book to English language websites to help you to extend your language practice and to assist your understanding of legal concepts in English in authentic contexts.

## How is the book organised?

The book consists of 45 two-page units organised into four thematic sections: **The legal system**, **Legal professionals**, **Legal professionals in practice**, and **Law in practice** (including **Liability**, **Contract**, **Intellectual property**, **Information technology law**, and **Environmental law**). The units proceed from general legal topics to more specific.

The left-hand page of each unit presents **legal terms and expressions in context** and the right-hand page is designed to let you check and develop your understanding of them and how they are used through a series of exercises. Key terms or expressions may occur in more than one unit.

There is an **answer key** at the back of the book. Most of the exercises have questions with only one correct answer. If there is more than one possible answer the exercise tells you. Some of the exercises, including the **Over to you** activities at the end of each unit (see below), are designed for discussion and/or writing about the legal jurisdiction you work or study in.

Where appropriate, **website addresses** at the bottom of the right-hand pages give links to further information in English on related legal topics.

Also at the end of the book there is an **index** which lists the key words and phrases which have been highlighted and gives the unit numbers in which they appear. The index also tells you how the words and expressions are pronounced.

### The left-hand page

The texts on the left-hand page vary in length. Each text has a clear heading. Some texts are from spoken contexts; others from written. Some are from formal contexts, for example an extract from legislation, or contract terms, or a formal presentation; others are from more informal interactions, for example discussions between legal colleagues talking about aspects of their work. Some units draw your attention to characteristic features of legal language in English or to differences between legal English usage in the United States and England. All the units highlight typical word combinations.

### The right-hand page

A range of exercises on the right-hand page give practice in using the highlighted legal vocabulary and expressions from the left-hand page. Sometimes the exercises provide practice in contexts like emails between legal colleagues, letters to clients, contract terms, or legal forms. Other exercises focus on checking comprehension of meaning or distinctions in use between similar words, stress in pronunciation, or the formation of words.

### 'Over to you' activities

These activities give you the chance to practise using English legal language to write or talk about aspects of a legal jurisdiction known to you, and about your own work, study, or opinions. Self-study learners can do these as a written activity or set up a computer blog to share ideas with others wanting to develop their legal English vocabulary through practice.

In the classroom, the **Over to you** activities can be used as the basis for discussion in small groups, with a spokesperson for each group summarising the discussion and its outcome for the class. Alternatively, pairs can exchange views, ideas, or information and then combine with another pair to report on their discussion. The teacher can monitor the discussions for appropriate and accurate use of vocabulary. Learners can follow up by using the **Over to you** as a written activity, for example for homework. Learners might do more research on language use by exploring the suggested **web links**.

### How to use the book for self-study

Find a topic you are looking for by referring to the contents page or the index. Quickly write in note form in English what you already know about the topic and any questions you have. Then read through the texts on the left-hand page of the unit. If you are unsure of the meaning of terms, try to guess the meaning from the context as you read. Do the exercises on the right-hand page. Check your answers in the key. If you have made any mistakes look at the text again and check the exercise. Write down useful words in a notebook; notice how they are used in other texts. If you are still unsure of any words, look them up in a law dictionary. There are also legal glossaries online.

### How to use the book in the classroom

Teachers can choose the units that relate to learners' particular needs and interests, or themes which the course is focusing on. Learners can work on the units in pairs or individually, the teacher going round the class listening and advising. Teachers should encourage learners to discuss why one answer is possible and others are not.

We hope you find the book useful and easy to use. We would welcome your comments and suggestions on using it.