

UK Law – Knowledge Organiser

<p>Rule of law. The principles of how law is applied. Innocent until proved guilty, Equality before the law and Access to justice.</p>	<p>Our law comes from legislation (laws passed by parliament) Common law and EU law. England and Wales have the same legal system; Northern Ireland has a very similar system. Scotland has its own system of laws.</p>	<p>Common law—made by judges who make decisions which must be followed by all other courts (case law, precedent) Laws passed by UK parliament automatically apply to Wales. The Welsh assembly has passed some laws, but there are no major differences.</p>
<p>Criminal law: A specific crime has been committed Civil law: Disputes between individuals or groups</p>	<p>Criminal: Case between an offender and the government (acting for all citizens) These cases will go through the criminal justice system and could lead to a custodial sentence. Range in severity, not all 'serious' An Act of Parliament has been broken Civil: Often linked to rights e.g. company law, adoption, consumer rights. A claimant can bring a case to civil court, normally to claim damages (to sue for money) Can still be 'serious' and involve very emotive issues.</p>	
<p>Criminal courts: Magistrates: 95% of cases, less serious crimes e.g. theft Crown: Serious cases e.g. murder</p>	<p>Magistrates: Led by trained magistrates, no jury can only give minimal penalties. Crown: Led by judge, formal, jury decides on guilt. Courts must consider mitigating factors.</p>	<p>The Crown prosecution Service (CPS) advises the police on cases for possible prosecution. It reviews cases submitted by the police for prosecution and decides the charge in very serious or complex cases.</p>
<p>Civil disputes: A dispute between two individuals or groups that requires legal advice</p>	<p>Disputes can be solved in civil courts, but also via tribunals (less formal courts) Ombudsmen (expert decision makers) Mediation (talking it through) these are often cheaper and quicker</p>	<p>Tribunals produce rulings that are legally binding; an expert judge takes the lead. Ombudsmen are independent and free of charge but can be slow. Mediation can lead to a legally binding agreement.</p>
<p>Youth justice system: The part of the justice system that deals with young people (10-17)</p>	<p>The youth justice system aims to prevent youth crime. The UK recognise that YP who break the law should be treated differently. Sentences will often focus on rehabilitation.</p>	<p>YP must have an appropriate adult with them before they are questioned. Youth Offending Teams will work with YP to support and educate. Youth courts (less formal) are used but very serious crimes can be passed to a crown court.</p>
<p>Office for national statistics: The organisation that collects data about what is happening in the UK (including crime)</p>	<p>Most YP who commit crime have low literacy or difficult backgrounds. Rates of reoffending are high (especially with YP) Violent crime has fallen over the last 20 years</p>	<p>There is a growing view that prisons need to focus more on rehabilitating prisoners. Questions what government are doing to address the root causes of crime (literacy, poor home life) Crime statistics can be misleading as certain crimes (e.g. rape) may be underreported</p>
<p>Legal responsibilities: Many people in the UK take a role in the running of the legal system. You still have rights, even if you are an offender</p>	<p>Citizens can be on a jury (compulsory) train to be a magistrate (to hear cases in courts in their community), become a special constable (trained volunteers who support police) or advise in a tribunal (as an expert) These roles offer great support to justice within the community. If you are arrested you must be told the reason for the arrest, can tell someone, able to get legal aid, offered medical help if needed, provided with a written notice about your rights and offered an interpreter. Human Rights must also be followed in prison (within reason e.g. liberty, democracy)</p>	