

Moys Classification for Legal Materials: A Guide

Joanna Fear

Parliamentary Research Officer
Queensland Parliamentary Library

CLASSIFICATION SCHEMES – WHO NEEDS THEM?

Although I can envisage a day when library collections are entirely electronic and classification schemes are a thing of the past that day has not yet arrived. Dull as it may seem, the way a hard-copy collection is arranged on the shelf is still a very important part of library operations. Even with user-friendly, electronic catalogues a large number of library users still rely on browsing the shelves to find relevant material.

Moys Classification for Law Books is used by the majority of Australian law libraries to arrange their collections. It is a flexible scheme that can be adapted to suit the needs of very small to very large collections. It offers two notations, one that looks like Library of Congress classification (K) and the other that looks like Dewey (340 etc.) In this way the scheme can be used to classify the legal part of a larger collection that is classified in either LC or Dewey without the users being any the wiser!

Moys is a very manageable classification scheme. It only covers one subject area, namely the law; and it is relatively young (the first edition was published in 1968) which means it does not have the anomalies that come with the older, more frequently revised schemes. However, many new users of the scheme struggle at first because the current edition of the scheme (3rd ed.) provides very little guidance to its use, particularly in relation to number building using the tables.

The current edition of Moys is divided into a number of sections:

- Synopsis – provides a very useful overview of the scheme. It is particularly useful when you feel you don't know where to start or are lost in the detail
- Schedules – provides the classification numbers
- Tables – used to build numbers
- Index of jurisdictions – gives the classification numbers for particular countries and the cutter numbers for countries when dividing by jurisdiction A-Z (see below for further details)
- Index

This article is in two parts. The first is entitled 'Structure and Arrangement of the Scheme' and aims to provide an overview of the scheme, in particular the way Moys attempts to arrange a legal collection. The second, 'Number Building' provides details of how to use those mysterious tables at the back of the book

STRUCTURE AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE SCHEME

Classification schemes are like complex puzzles. They break an area of knowledge into small parts and then put it back together in as logical an arrangement as is possible, given

that no individual subject can be put in more than one place and the arrangement has to be linear.

It is very easy to get lost in the detail of a classification scheme. Finding an appropriate classification number for a publication on a new or unusual subject can often seem more like good luck than good management. However, when you understand the overall logic behind a scheme it is much easier to feel confident that the number you select is right for your collection.

Moys Classification Scheme aims to arrange material in a way that reflects the way lawyers think about and use legal material. Fortunately legal materials lend themselves to a logical arrangement as there are distinct types of material and subjects.

The main principles are:

- General always comes before specific;
- Material is primarily arranged by jurisdiction;
- Common law jurisdictions are special in that they are homogeneous and their materials should therefore be kept together;
- Primary and secondary materials are separated;
- Primary materials are arranged by type of material;
- Secondary materials are arranged by subject and are grouped into three broad categories: general subjects; public law subjects; and private law subjects

Each of these principles is discussed below.

The general precedes the specific

The overriding principle of all classification schemes is that the general precedes the specific. This means that general *types* of books come first and general *subjects* come before specific subjects.

General types of books

General types of books such as reference works are placed at the beginning of the collection, while more specialised books such as commentaries and textbooks appear later in the collection. Therefore Moys devotes the first part of the scheme (K) to journals and reference books. Many special libraries find the reference part of the scheme problematic because many of the materials commonly regarded as legal reference materials and shelved as reference materials such as digests, legal encyclopaedias and legal dictionaries are not included in the K area but instead are housed with the jurisdiction to which they relate. This may be appropriate for very large, multi-jurisdictional collections but is not appropriate for smaller libraries that want to keep all 'reference' type material together at the beginning of the collection. One way around this problem is to give the reference material a special prefix before the Moys number to indicate a special collection.

General subjects

General subjects come before specific subjects. Therefore reference materials are followed by books on jurisprudence, the theory of law (KA). Books on the theory of law are placed before books on the substance of law.

These books are followed by general, non-technical subjects such as legal fiction and poetry. Comparative law (KB) then follows. Works that cover the law of two or more legal systems from different regions are considered to be comparative law, with common law systems considered to be one system. Thus a work on taxation in Scandinavia and Canada would be classified in KB as comparative law, while a work on taxation in Australia and Canada would not be classified as comparative law as it discusses two common law jurisdictions.

The next areas are multi-national legal systems, which although covering substantive law are not as specific as the substantive law of particular jurisdictions. These are:

- International law (KC) – includes public international law and private international law (conflict of laws)
- Religious legal systems (KD) – the legal systems connected with religious groups such as Jewish law and Islamic law but not confined to a particular state such as Israel or Indonesia
- Ancient and medieval law.

These general areas are followed by the bulk of the collection which consists of legal works from modern national legal systems (KF-KW).

The final category (KZ) is reserved for non-legal subjects and is used as a prefix for numbers from a general classification scheme such as Dewey. This is where law libraries would classify non-legal materials on subjects such as management and information technology.

The movement from general to specific is also apparent within the details of the schedules themselves. The numbers are arranged hierarchically using indentations to show the level in the hierarchy. The general rule is to classify to the most specific number for the particular subject.

Material is primarily arranged by jurisdiction

Within the modern national legal systems areas (KF-KW), material is primarily arranged by jurisdiction.

In most general classification schemes material is initially divided by subject. This means that all works on a particular subject are kept together regardless of other factors such as geographical area, time frame or type of material. For example in most general classification schemes all works on aspects of clinical psychology would be kept together regardless of whether they were written in the United States or Scandinavia, published in the 1920s or 1990s or whether they were textbooks or practical manuals.

However Moys recognised that law differed from other disciplines in that the study of a legal subject is usually approached in terms of its jurisdiction. For example, if a person came into a law library in Brisbane and asked for material on types of leases chances are they would be wanting material on leases in Queensland. Books on leases from other Australian jurisdictions or even other common law jurisdictions such as England or New Zealand may also be relevant but they would probably not be interested in the types of leases in Russia, China or Chile.

Because Moys aims to arrange material in the way lawyers use the materials, books are separated by jurisdiction before subject. This means that rather than all books about leases being together on the shelf, all books from a particular jurisdiction are kept together and the subjects are scattered. However, Moys adopts an entirely different approach for common law jurisdictions as we shall see below.

Common law materials are treated differently

Although Moys arranges materials on jurisdictional rather than subject lines, the special nature of common law systems is recognised and materials from common law jurisdictions are kept together.

Moys divides modern national legal systems (KF-KW) into common law systems (KF-KN) and non-common law systems (KR-KW).

Common law systems are those systems that adopted English law, namely England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand and the West Indies. There are a few anomalies, for instance Scotland, Quebec and Louisiana are not strictly common law jurisdictions, however because they are part of a larger area that is common law they are classified as such. Other jurisdictions that have many common law elements, such as India, are classified with the non-common law geographical area in which they are physically located.

Because the law in common law countries is derived from a common source and developed in similar ways due to the doctrine of precedent, the law of one common law country is relevant to the law of others. For this reason common law jurisdictions are not divided initially by jurisdiction but rather by subject. Therefore all books on leases in Australia, the United States and England are kept together.

Non-common law jurisdictions (KR-KW) are arranged differently. Each jurisdiction is treated as a separate individual system and given a range of numbers in which all materials of that jurisdiction are arranged. Thus books are arranged strictly on geographical lines which means books on a particular subject will be located in a number of places depending upon the jurisdiction to which they relate.

Non-common law jurisdictions are arranged by continent and then by country. Numbers are assigned to reflect the regional arrangements. This means that if there are boundary changes the scheme can be adapted relatively easily.

Primary and secondary materials are separated

Primary materials consist of documents that *contain* the law, namely: legislation, law reports and parliamentary materials. Secondary materials on the other hand comment on and discuss primary materials. They include textbooks, monographs and treatises.

It is important to separate primary and secondary materials in a legal library for a number of reasons. Firstly, library users approach the material differently. In small libraries users often go straight to the shelf for law reports or legislation, it is unnecessary to use the catalogue as long as the collection is clearly sign-posted. Primary materials also subarrange themselves in chronological order. Primary materials are generally serials and therefore

expand at a very different rate from textbooks, so keeping the two separate makes collection management easier.

In Moys primary materials come before secondary materials following the general/specific principle. Therefore common law primary materials (KF-KH) precede common law secondary materials (KL-KN) and non-common law primary materials (Table I) precede non-common law secondary materials (Table II)

Primary and secondary materials are subarranged differently

Primary materials are arranged by form. Parliamentary materials first, followed by legislation and then case law. Also included here are citators, indexes and digests

Secondary materials (textbooks) are arranged by subject.

Secondary materials or treatises are divided into general subjects, public law and private law

General law (e.g. KL) covers non-specific legal topics such as the legal profession, legal education, research, administration of justice and legal history

Public law (e.g. KM) governs the relationship of individuals and the state and includes constitutional and administrative law, taxation and criminal law.

Private law (e.g. KN) regulates the relationship between individuals and includes contract, torts, property, family, health, industrial, equity and commercial law

While these distinctions work reasonably well there are some anomalies. The split between public and private law means taxation and company law materials are separated even though many practitioners would consider them to be related. Similarly legal topics often change their nature as they develop. For instance before the High Court's Mabo decision materials on 'native title' were often classified as land claims at KM208.433 whereas they would now be considered to be about a form of land tenure and be classified in the property law area at KN72.

NUMBER BUILDING

Moys is both an enumerated and faceted scheme. Parts of the scheme are set out or enumerated in great detail with numbers in the schedules for very specific subjects e.g. KL-KN. However other parts are provided in skeletal form as blocks of numbers, the details of which need to be filled in using tables and other number building devices e.g. KP-KZ

Tables

The eight tables located after the schedules are the main devices used to build numbers. They are used in two ways:

- to provide Cutter numbers which are attached to the end of existing numbers in order to keep like books together; or
- numbers from the table are substituted into a block of numbers given in the schedule to complete the individual classification number.

Many smaller collections that do not classify primary materials and do not have any non-common law materials will probably use the tables very little

Table I Primary materials

K notation:

Table I is used to subdivide primary material for all non-common law jurisdictions (KR-KV) and those common law jurisdictions which do not have numbers fully enumerated in the schedules (KF-KH). Classification numbers for the primary materials of England and the federal jurisdiction of the United States are enumerated in great detail. However, for all other jurisdictions, including Australia, a span of numbers is given and classification numbers for individual items must be built using Table I.

Table I has a similar sequence to those primary materials fully enumerated in the schedules, namely, KF1-99 and KG301-382, however it is less detailed.

Columns A-D are used with the K notation. The column to use depends on the size of the block of numbers assigned to a jurisdiction, which in turn depends on the size of the collection and perceived relevance of the jurisdiction. The relevant column letter is given beside each block of numbers in the schedules.

To construct a number using the K notation:

- (1) Find the block of numbers for the jurisdiction using the Index of Jurisdictions (pp.191-207).
- (2) Locate the block in the schedules and note the column number
- (3) Locate the number in the relevant column of Table I corresponding to the form of the material.
- (4) Substitute that number into the block OR add the number from Table I to the first number in the block and subtract 1.

Substituting the relevant number into the block of numbers means that the collection will be arranged in the same order as listed in the table i.e. gazettes, parliamentary materials, legislation and case law. See the following table for examples

Dewey notation:

No numbers are enumerated in the schedules for primary materials when the Dewey notation is used, therefore Table I is used in all cases.

Use column E for common law jurisdictions and F for non-common law jurisdictions.

To construct a number using the Dewey notation:

- (1) Find the block of numbers for the jurisdiction using the Index of Jurisdictions (pp 191-207)
- (2) Locate Dewey equivalent in the schedules
- (3) Attach the country number from the DDC geographical tables.
- (4) Locate the number in the relevant column of Table I corresponding to the form of the material.
- (5) Attach this number to the base number and the country number

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Indian Penal Code		
India	KT1501-1650 (A)	349.54
Table IA	28	0144 (Table IF)
Full no	KT1528	349.540144
Queensland Legislative Assembly Debates		
Queensland	KH81-100 (B)	344.943
Table IB	3 2	0173 (Table IE)
Full no	KH83 2	344.9430173
Collected Laws of France		
France	KV1101-1250 (A)	349.44
Table IA	15	0121 (Table IF)
Full no	KV1115	349.440121
Australian Digest		
Australia	KH1-60 (A)	344.94
Table IA	51	095 (Table IE)
Full no	KH51	344.94095
Mauritius Law Reports		
Mauritius	KR3301-20 (D)	349.6982
Table ID	6.2	0202 (Table IF)
Full no	KR3306.2	349.69820202

Table II Subjects of law

Table II is used to subdivide secondary material for all non-common law countries (KR-KV). It is never used for common law countries as the classification number for these jurisdictions are provided in detail in KL, KM and KN. Table II is similar to the enumerated schedules KL -KN covering common law jurisdictions but is far less detailed

The process of constructing a number is identical to that for Table I as the numbers just follow on from Table I

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Japanese Administrative Law		
Japan	KT4601-4680 (B)	349.52
Table IB	32	045 (Table IIF)
Full no.	KT4632	349.52045

Table II is also used throughout the schedules to divide a topic by specific subjects.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Hindu Family Law		
Hindu law (use IIB 31-80)	KD731-780	342.829
Table IIB	52	076 (Table IIF)
Full no	KD752	342.829076
Comparative Finance Law		
Comparative law (use IIA 61-150)	KB161-250	340.6
Table IIA	134	086 (Table IIF)
Full no.	KB234	340.6086

Table III Dates

Dates are generally not important in the law, but are used:

- as a Cutter number
- when instructed in the schedules or whenever you want to arrange material by date
- mainly to subarrange primary materials eg. KC14 Peace treaties, KG320 US official compilations of statutes

Table IV Common law jurisdictions

Table IV is used in conjunction with KL-KN to group material by jurisdiction within the run of the common law treatises. It is only used with common law jurisdictions. When subdividing non-common law jurisdictions, the cutter numbers in the Index to Jurisdictions are used. Table IV is not used with the Dewey notation. Numbers from the Dewey Area Tables are used to subdivide the common law subjects by jurisdiction.

Table IV works in two ways:

- blocks of 19 numbers are set aside throughout KL-KN for use with Table IV; or
- used as a Cutter number whenever you need to divide a specific KL-KN number by jurisdiction

Where blocks of numbers are set aside, the number from Table IV that corresponds to the relevant jurisdiction is inserted into the 19 number span.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Survey of Australian Law		
Surveys of common law	KL 11-29	345.09
Australia (Table IV)	16	94 (DDC Area Tables)
Full no.	KL 26	345.0994

Numbers in the second column of Table IV can be used as Cutter numbers to subdivide a legal subject in KL, KM or KN whenever required.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Family Law in Australia		
Family Law	KN170	347.42
Australia (Table IV)	.K1	94 (DDC Area Tables)
Full no	KN170 K1	347.4294

Table V Courts

This Table has a strong English bias so it is necessary to substitute local equivalents. Table V is used with a block of numbers when instructed in the schedules or as a Cutter number when required

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Rules of the Family Court of Australia		
Court rules etc	KN361-369	347.921 – .929
Family courts (Table V)	7	7
Australia (Table IV)	.K1	94 (DDC)
Full no.	KN367 K1	347.92794

Table VI Special legal forms and topics

This Table is used as a Cutter number whenever required. Z1 – Z18 cover primary materials which have been classified primarily by subject rather than form.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Australia. Laws, etc. Family Law Act 1975		
Family Law	KN170	347.42
Australia (Table IV)	.K1	94 (DDC Area Tables)
Statute (Table VI)	.Z14	Z14
Full no	KN170 K1 Z14	347.4294.Z14

Table VII Persons

This Table is used with a block of numbers when instructed in the schedules or as a Cutter number when required.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
People with Intellectual Disabilities and the Law		
Persons	KN151-157	347.411 – .417
Mentally disabled (Table VII)	5.2	5 2
Full no.	KN155.2	347.4152

Table VIII Non-legal forms and treatments

Use as a Cutter number whenever desired to group like forms together. For example, biographies can be classified in KB10 (341 31) or with a particular subject using .006 from Table VIII to bring out the biographical aspects. Similarly, comparative law can be

classified in KB161-250 (341.6) or with the subject in the local jurisdiction using .008 to bring out the comparative aspect.

Alphabetical Subdivisions

The instructions “By topic, A-Z” appear throughout the schedules. This means that the logical subdivision of the subject has reached its limits and an alphabetical subdivision is required. This is achieved in two ways depending on the subject matter:

- jurisdiction – use Cutter numbers set out in the “Index to Jurisdictions” with the K notation and the DDC country numbers with the Dewey notation

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Foreign Investment in Romania		
Foreign investment A-Z	KC227 2	341 4152
Romania (Index)	R66	498 (DDC)
Full no.	KC227 2.R66	341.4152498

- topic – insert a suitable letter and number to achieve an alphabetical arrangement of topics giving consideration to the likelihood of future growth. In the example below A4 is arbitrarily selected by the cataloguer to represent “acquisitions” to allow “accessioning” (eg A3) to be shelved before and “automation” (eg A9) to be shelved after “acquisitions” thus achieving an alphabetical arrangement by subject.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Acquisition Practices in Law Libraries		
Law Libraries A-Z	K85	340.055
Acquisitions	.A4	.A4
Full no.	K85.A4	340.055.A4

Other Forms of Number Building

Mini-tables appear within the schedules and are used in the same way as the main tables

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
International Organisations (KC351-650)		
Charter of the United Nations		
United Nations	KC401-5	341 622
Charter	1	1
Full no.	KC401	341.6221

Instructions are occasionally given in the schedules to subdivide a number in the same way as a similar number is subdivided.

Examples	K notation	Dewey notation
Human Resource Management in the High Court		
Appeal Court	KL 221	341.31
HRM from KL230	(0) 17	(0) 17
Australia (Table IV)	K1	94
Full no	KL221.017.K1	341.3101794

Alternative Placements

Moys provides a number of alternative placements for types of material and subjects. A Library should choose the most appropriate placement and note the decision in the Schedules so subsequent cataloguers are aware of the decision.

Type of Material

- journals – K1 by title OR classify with the subject eg KA1, KF99
- bibliographies – K29 OR classify with the subject eg. KA5

Subjects

- criminology – KA100-199 OR KB300-399 OR KM700-799
- prison law – KM650-690 OR with criminology
- EC law – KW OR KV1-50 OR KC1001 (with numbers from KW) OR KC1001-20 (with numbers from Tables ID and IID)
- conflicts of laws – KC2000 OR KN1-4
- public hygiene, pollution and environmental health – KN185.3 – 4 OR KN97
- preferred jurisdiction – KP (where you would like a particular jurisdiction to be separated out from the rest of the collection use KP with numbers from the most appropriate column from Tables I and II depending on the likely size of the collection). KP has been used by Enterprise Thesaurus for practice material. Numbers are constructed by using the numbers from the KN350 area, replacing the 'N' with a 'P' and subtracting 200 from the actual number. Thus KN350 becomes KP150!

Internet Moys User Group – LIS-MOYS-USERS@mailbase.ac.uk

An email discussion list for Moys users has been running for a number of years. The 4th edition of the scheme is currently in preparation and the discussion list is the primary means of communicating possible changes.

To subscribe send the following message to mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk
 join lis-moys-users firstname lastname

An archive of messages sent to this discussion group is available at
www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists/lis-moys-users