Legal Research Cheat Sheet

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1. Terminology

Doctrine = secondary sources (Books, Journal articles, case commentaries)

Jurisprudence = Case Law

Jurisdiction = Legal authority over a geographic region or area of law

Precedent = Rules established through previous case law

Common Law = Legal authority that is based on precedent

Civil Law = Legal authority that is based on legislation

Style of cause = The name of a case (eg.

Tort = A wrongful act that breaches another person's civil rights (eg. Negligence, liability, misconduct)

"R" (as in R. v. McGregor) = The Crown (this indicates a criminal case)

Hansard = The transcripts of parliamentary debates in Canada (and many other Commonwealth countries)

2. Legal Database Access

There are a few databases that are only available to law students.

Students need to fill out the following

> Irwin Law

1. -hand menu

2. Scroll to the bottom of this page to find the link for vLex





5. VLex vs VLex

everyone access to foreign case law (see Foreign and Comparative Law Guide:

8. Historic Legislative Research