

Legal Research: One Hundred Questions and Answers

By Michel Vols. (2021), 200 pages, ISBN: 9789462362246. \$49.99

Subject: General legal research / legal research handbook

Useful for: Useful for anyone seeking to learn about legal research generally and/or various aspects of legal research.

Format: Chapters; with Questions & Answers, recommendations for further reading, and a list of other relevant questions following each such Q&A throughout.

Reviewer's Comments:

Legal Research: One Hundred Questions and Answers is a revision of a Dutch book that provides answers to exactly one hundred questions about research in the field of law. Chapters cover general questions and definitions relating to legal research, research questions and planning, research theory, research methods and methodology, searching and deciding on sources, doctrinal legal research, analysis of case law, meta-legal research, empirical legal research, comparative law, putting research on paper, publication of research, and research ethics and plagiarism. Following each Q&A are recommendations for further reading and a list of other relevant questions also contained within the book.

Generally speaking, while some Q&As were of great interest (e.g., discussion of the philosophy of law, or of human rights approaches to research), they nonetheless appeared uncommon, at least in comparison to other traditional texts on legal research. Further, despite the author's attempt to appeal to an international audience, some definitions and Q&As appeared more relevant for European researchers, while other areas of discussion seemed incomplete. Despite a complete chapter on comparative law, for instance, the book fails to define or discuss any differentiation between foreign, comparative, and international research.

Regarding key observations, the book provides a general overview of various types and elements of legal research, rather than detailed guidance regarding how to conduct such research. The research process, for example, is divided into steps such as the gathering of information and drafting of a response, which seemed vague and less helpful for readers seeking more explicit direction. On the upside, the book exposes readers to new and less common research issues and provides insight into how legal

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research has evolved to collide with other disciplines and areas of social science. Additionally, it contains helpful discussion of the differences between academic and non-academic research and writing.

In sum, *Legal Research: One Hundred Questions and Answers* offers a broad overview of multiple aspects of legal research yet appears most useful when consulted with specific questions regarding such research. Given its Q&A/handbook format, it should not be recommended as a primary text on legal research but rather a supplementary resource. It may be useful for readers looking to gain a basic understanding of legal research issues as well as those seeking to learn about new and less common aspects of such research.

Reviewed by: Ashley Arrington, Texas Tech University School of Law, in 2022.