

Home>Taking legal action>Legal systems - EU and national>**National specialised courts**

National specialised courts

England and Wales

This page provides you with information on some of the specialised courts in England and Wales, including tribunals.

Administrative courts

The Tribunals Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 created a single unified structure for most tribunals, divided into the First-tier Tribunal and the Upper Tribunal. The First-tier Tribunal and the Upper Tribunal each have separate chambers covering different subject matters, which bring together similar jurisdictions. Details of the tribunals can be found on the website of [Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals service](#).

First-tier tribunal

The **first-tier tribunal** is a generic tribunal. Its main function is to hear appeals against decisions of the government in areas where the tribunal has been given jurisdiction. For some purposes, it has jurisdiction throughout the UK. The first-tier tribunal is currently divided into six chambers:

The Social Entitlement Chamber

The Health, Education and Social Care Chamber

The War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Chamber

The Tax Chamber.

General Regulatory Chamber

Immigration and Asylum Chamber

Property Chamber

Upper tribunal

The **upper tribunal** mainly but not exclusively, decides appeals resulting from decisions in the First-tier Tribunal. It is a superior Court of Record and also has power to deal with judicial review case in certain circumstances.

The Upper Tribunal consists of:

The Administrative Appeals Chamber

The Lands Chamber

The Tax and Chancery Chamber

Immigration and Asylum Chamber

A feature of tribunals is their expertise in the subject matter of the appeals. The structure is such that tribunals judges are experts in the law of their jurisdiction and non-legal members are either professionally qualified or qualified by experience in their field. Panels for individual types of appeals are varied depending on the subject of the appeal.

Employment and Employment Appeal tribunals

The Employment Tribunal and Employment Appeal Tribunal are outside the unified tribunals' structure but are supported by HMCTS. The tribunal's role is to carry out the administrative tasks necessary to enable claims to employment tribunals and subsequent appeals to the Employment Appeal Tribunal to be determined.

In England and Wales the work of the Administrative Court includes administrative law jurisdiction over England and Wales, as well as supervisory jurisdiction over inferior courts and tribunals.

Specialised courts

There are a number of specialist courts in England and Wales:

In **Coroners' Courts**, a coroner (sometimes with a jury) investigates the causes of violent, unnatural and suspicious deaths, or sudden deaths where the reason for death is unknown

The **Court of Protection** makes decisions on the property and affairs, healthcare and personal welfare of adults (and children in a few cases), who lack capacity. The court also has the power to make declarations about whether someone has the capacity to make a particular decision. It is a superior court of record and is able to set precedents

In **Courts Martial**, cases subject to military law are brought against members of the armed forces

The **Ecclesiastical Courts** decide matters relating to the Church of England and ecclesiastical law

The **Commercial/Mercantile Courts** deal with commercial matters

The **Technology and Construction Courts** deal with issues relating to building works or IT contracts

Related Links

[Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service](#)

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