

# CLASSIFICATION KEY

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## HEADING U1S

### UNIVERSAL INDEXING SCHEDULES

### FOR USE, APPLICATION, UTILITY

### AND PROPERTY

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## U1S UNIVERSAL INDEXING SCHEDULES FOR USE, APPLICATION, UTILITY AND PROPERTY

1.1 This heading, operative in general from Edition E, provides a schedule (Schedule 2) for recording the uses and applications of inventions classified in any of the headings of the Classification Key. Another schedule (Schedule 3) is provided for recording utilities and properties of materials in the case of inventions classified in certain headings only. A further schedule (Schedule 4) was introduced at edition V. The purpose of Schedule 4 is to allow the flagging of certain biotechnology applications so as to allow retrieval of all cases in which the invention relates to that particular category. The application of terms from Schedule 4 is mandatory. There are no search files and no abstract volumes corresponding to this heading. The words “invention” and “new” are used broadly to include any matter alleged to be inventive or new, and also any matter otherwise considered of sufficient interest to warrant individual classification.

1.2 Certain terms in other headings of the Key which served purely to index use or application have been deleted with effect from Edition F, as their function has been superseded by assignment of terms from the “Uses and applications” schedule of U1S. However, in some headings the “use” aspect is confounded with other types of information, and other headings require “use” terms of a different (*eg* more specialised) character to those from U1S. Consequently many pre-existing terms which denote use have been retained in the Key, although further such terms may be deleted at a later date. Heading C3Y was deleted at Edition E as its functions were substantially wholly taken over by these schedules. File lists are available for deleted terms from C3Y and other headings, up to the operative date of their deletion.

### GENERAL PURPOSES OF SCHEDULES

2.1 The most general and important purpose of the schedules is to make it easier to users whose interest lies in particular products or manufacturing operations to retrieve inventions having particular relevance to, but not consisting in, that product or operation.

2.2 Similarly, the schedules are designed to enable users who wish to retrieve significant references to the utility or property of a material, in those cases where inventions in or relating to the material have been classified on the basis of some other characteristic (such as chemical structure), to do so independently of the headings in which the inventions are classified.

2.3 A secondary objective is to extend to all headings the facility, in suitable cases, of limiting searches for particular technical subjects by appeal to the use or application of that subject.

2.4 Similarly, the schedules are intended to provide the facility of limiting searches for certain materials by reference to a significant property, such as solubility, rubbery or thermoplastic character, which is not explicit or implicit in the classification of the invention.

### INDEXING RULES

#### General

3.1 Because of the comprehensive nature of the use/application schedule it will often contain terms which might potentially be useful for describing *the subject of the invention itself* in greater detail, *eg* by identifying the materials or components used in the construction of an inventive product or the starting materials for a chemical reaction. It is *not* however the function of the schedule to provide this kind of information and terms should *not* be assigned for such purposes. Index should, rather, be limited to *use/application information which provides a context beyond the boundaries of the heading in which the invention is classified*. The terms of Schedule 4 are an exception to this rule and should be applied whenever the invention relates to the particular category of Schedule 4. Headings in which the nature of the subject-matter is such that there is likely to be some difficulty making the above distinction are identified in the Key and guidance given in an introductory heading note entitled “Relationship with the Universal Indexing Schedules”.

#### Excluded matter

3.2 Terms from these schedules are not, in general, assigned for information which is inherent or implicit in the classification of the invention or is wholly commonplace having regard to that classification. In the case of certain headings however information relating to associations is duplicated in U1S—*see* paragraph 5.2(b). In the context of these schedules, by the classification of the invention is meant the nature of the subject-matter taken by the heading in which the invention is classified and/or the nature of the specific term(s) applied to the invention in that heading, *disregarding any terms of a pure indexing character serving only to provide information as to use or application*. For example the term for “fishing” (S1022) will not be applied to any specification classified solely in heading A1A, Fishing &c, nor would the term for “vehicle windows” (S1855) be applied to an invention classified solely as a vehicle screen washer system in heading A4F, Cleaning &c. It should be noted that the indexing provisions of Heading C3W are not disregarded; consequently U1S is not used to record such polymer information in specifications classified in Headings C3J, C3K, C3L, C3P and C3V.

3.3 The exclusion, in paragraph 3.2, of matter “wholly commonplace” having regard to the classification is intended to obviate indexing of such trivia as the presence of a claim, in a specification disclosing only a new tyre construction, to a wheel including such a tyre. It will also be applied when the subject-matter of a heading is limited to a very small number of well-known uses or applications. Exclusions under this rule should be made with caution however and if there is any doubt whether the information on use, application or property is or is not commonplace that information should be indexed. In order to reduce the area of uncertainty as to what applications are to be regarded as commonplace those headings in which there is likely to be significant difficulty in this respect have been identified and guidance is given in the introductory heading notes referred to in paragraph 3.1.

3.4 Index should be limited to matter actually disclosed. In particular properties of a material should not be inferred from the stated use of the material.

3.5 Specifications classified in more than one heading. Paragraph 3.2 applies to headings individually, *ie* the fact that a specification is classified in other headings which are concerned with or identify the disclosed use, utility or property is ignored for the purpose of paragraph 3.2. This practice ensures, at the expense of some redundancy, that individual headings are complete as regards significant use &c information relating to their subject-matter and that such information is not lost if, during reclassification, specifications are deleted from the heading(s) in which the information is identifiable.

3.6 Circumstances in which index is required. Subject to paragraph 3.2 terms should always be assigned for an item of information relating to use, utility or property when one or more of the following circumstances applies:

- (a) a claim is directed or limited to the item
- (b) the abstract particularises the item
- (c) the disclosure contains a detailed description or exemplification of the item
- (d) the title and/or opening paragraphs of the specification state that the invention is particularly concerned with the item.

3.7 Foreign language specifications. Paragraph 3.6 may be departed from in the case of foreign language specifications depending on the degree of difficulty of recognising the item of information in the particular language concerned.

3.8 Indexing at Examiner's discretion. Disclosure of use &c, not covered by paragraph 3.6 may nevertheless be indexed if in the opinion of the Examiner the information is sufficiently unusual or otherwise of interest.

#### Indexing multiple disclosures of use, utility and property

3.9 Use in or with a plurality of products all falling within the same general class of products, for which a term is available in the use/application schedule, will normally be indexed only by the appropriate term for that class unless paragraphs 3.6 and/or 3.8 dictate that one or more of the specific products should also be indexed. If several products not falling within a single class are mentioned then they should be indexed individually to an extent sufficient to satisfy paragraphs 3.6 and 3.8.

3.10 Each use in a sequence of uses should be separately indexed subject to the above rules, *eg* an inventive textile mat is intended for use in the manufacture of a laminate (term S1591) particularly suitable for use in making ships' hulls (term S1854). In certain cases a second or subsequent stage of use might require index even though the direct or immediate use is inherent in the classification of the invention and therefore not indexed because of paragraph 3.2.

3.11 Disclosure of a bundle of properties characterised by all being present in appropriate measure rather than any being particularly remarkable should be indexed by the term(s) appropriate to the indicated use and not by the terms of the individual properties. For example, a material intended for making fences or railings (term S1710) would not attract terms from Schedule 3 in respect of mere statements that it was suitably light, weather and corrosion resistant and colour stable for this purpose. Term S3040 would however be applied if it were stated that its colour stability was particularly improved relative to known fencing materials.

#### Matching terms to disclosure: generic information

3.12 The use/application schedule is designed so that, in the majority of cases, intended uses can be matched by a term of corresponding generality. If the match is a good one no attempt should be made to apply further terms for the same item of disclosure.

3.13 It should be noted that certain terms in Schedule 2 are wholly or partially generic to other terms in different locations in the Schedule, *eg* term S1577 (sheet, plate) in the category for materials defined by structure embraces term S1700 (panels, sheets and slabs) in the building component category. Other terms are sometimes generic depending upon the particular item being indexed, *eg* term S1586 (mesh, net &c) is generic to S1022 (fishing) when the item indexed by the latter term is a fishing net. Following paragraph 3.12 however the more general term is not assigned, in either case, when a *specific* term wholly corresponds to the disclosed use. This practice contrasts with that in superseded Heading C3Y (where the use schedule was less comprehensive) and has been adopted to reduce indexing time and simplify the design of the schedules; it does however impose a greater burden on the searcher—*see* also paragraph 7.1.

3.14 Terms qualified by the words "in general" are *not* generic *ie* they are only assigned for matter at a corresponding level of generality. They appear in the schedule with the same indentation as terms for more specific information.

3.15 If the stated use cannot be matched exactly by a single term from the schedule then a more general term should be applied if it clearly encompasses the stated use. If no such term is available then terms should be combined to the necessary degree (*ie* used in a coordinate indexing mode). For example an inventive packaging apparatus specially for powdered medicines would attract terms S1452 and S1310 for this use.

3.16 The number of different terms provided for closely related information may sometimes seem unnecessary or confusing. However, each term will fit appropriate disclosures with precision and care should be taken not to blur the precise meanings of the terms by using them for unsuitable disclosures, *eg* by taking the same or similar words in documents at face value. For example, the "adhesive" and "binder" terms should not be used for improvements in bond strength between a coating and a substrate since a specific "bond strength" term is available.

## LIST OF HEADING CODES

4.1 This is merely a list of the headings in the Classification Key. In Editions E to J their identifying codes were prefixed by the letter S to provide an Indexing Schedule, from which one or more codes were applied whenever UIS was used, to identify heading(s) in which the invention was classified. This was to facilitate searches for matter having a use, utility, or property term from schedules 2 and 3 below and which had been classified by *any* term from a particular heading. As from 5th December 1988 these codes have ceased to be applied, since from that date it is possible to generate file lists corresponding to the heading codes directly (*see* also paragraph 7.6). The list of heading codes is retained for information only, in particular in relation to the use of schedule 3 (*see* paragraph 4.3).

4.2 It should be noted that although all headings are included for completeness and to allow for the unexpected, in practice application of paragraph 3.2 will result in certain headings rarely or never using the universal schedules.

4.3 Terms from Schedule 3 (*see* below) can only be applied when the invention has been classified in certain headings (*see* paragraph 6.1); such headings are identified by an asterisk in the list of heading codes.

4.4 Although they have the same type of designation as conventional headings in the Key, the three Indexing Schedules — C3W, Indexing Schedule for polymer information, C6Y, Indexing Schedule for micro-organism information, and H3T, Indexing Schedule for amplifiers, oscillators and pulse, logic and switching circuits — by their nature correspond to no one area of subject-matter. Consequently, although file lists for these Schedules can be obtained in the same way as for the conventional headings, such lists are thought unlikely to be required in normal use; the Schedules are therefore mentioned here, but have not been added to the list of headings.

## NATURE OF THE INFORMATION RECORDED: PURPOSES OF INDIVIDUAL SCHEDULES

### Schedule 2: Uses and applications of inventions

5.1 This is the largest schedule (some 1320 terms) and is inevitably complex given that it embraces the whole of technology. Its structure broadly follows that of the existing Classification Key but is more systematic in certain areas. A guide to the schedule appears immediately before the term list proper.

5.2 Terms from this schedule are applied, subject to the indexing rules above, for the following kinds of information:

- a) particular products, or natural or living entities, made or treated by inventive processes
- b) particular products, objects or materials with which or in the manufacture of which inventive products, or products indexed under (a) above, may be used. In certain headings, (*eg* B7A, F4R), terms are applied from UIS for products &c with which the subject matter of the heading is associated even if information regarding the associated product &c can be ascertained from the classification of the invention. A note to this effect is provided for each of the headings concerned, in the introductory heading notes referred to in paragraph 3.1
- c) the nature of operations in which inventive products, products indexed under (a) above, or inventive processes may be used
- d) in the case of inventions in materials or in treating materials, the use of the material *as* a material of a particular functional character, *eg* as an abrasive or a lubricant. (The use of materials *in* the fabrication of other products is, of course, covered by (b) above). The functional character of the material will often reflect a particular utility or property for which corresponding terms appear in Schedule 3; in such cases the terms in the two schedules have been given the same code
- e) broad fields and special environments in which inventive products and operations may be used. The schedule does not comprehensively provide for all fields of use but is reasonably complete for the main agricultural, medical, leisure, analytical, manufacturing, civil engineering and other industrial fields. The fields will normally be indexed by the appropriate "in general" term, *eg* term S1025 for medicine, surgery or veterinary treatment, but for smaller fields the term applied may not distinguish between the field as such and specific products and operations used therein, *eg* term S1204 for religious and devotional items. There are no terms for retail, commercial and professional fields such as banking, accounting or journalism, although they may sometimes be reflected in a specific term assigned for the stated use, *eg* "bank", "shop", "compositing".

5.3 It should be noted that the terms in this schedule for recording the functional character of materials are used both for purposes 5.2(a)/(b) and 5.2(d), *eg* term S1364 will be assigned both for new materials for use *as* lubricants and for inventions in other subjects, such as encapsulating, applicable to conventional lubricants.

### Schedule 3: Utilities and properties of materials

6.1 This schedule is for use when the invention consists in a material *per se*, or in a process or operation intended to modify the properties of a material (including a material in the form of an article), and has been classified in one or more of the headings identified by an asterisk (\*) in the list of heading codes.

6.2 Terms are assigned, subject to paragraph 6.1 and the Indexing Rules, to record the following kinds of information:

- a) the inherent properties and utilities of new materials or new forms of materials
- b) the enhancement or modification of existing properties of materials.
- c) the introduction of new, unusual or useful properties into existing materials or articles

6.3 In the circumstances outlined in paragraph 3.11 an individual property of a bundle is only indexed by this Schedule when paragraph 6.2(b) or (c) is satisfied for that property.

#### Schedule 4: Biotechnology

7.1 This schedule is for use when the invention relates to biotechnology.

7.2 Terms from this Schedule will usually be applied to cases classified in headings A5B, C3H, C6F and G1B but should be applied to any applications in which the invention relates to any of the terms listed in the schedule.

7.3 Application of terms from this schedule is mandatory for cases where the invention relates to any of them, and the terms from this schedule should be applied in addition to any other terms which would normally have been applied prior to the existence of this schedule (this schedule was introduced at Edition V).

7.4 The purpose of the schedule is to allow the retrieval of all applications relating to the specified aspects of biotechnology, from Edition V.

### **NOTES ON SEARCHING**

#### Limitations on the usefulness of these schedules

8.1 For many reasons, these schedules do not provide a secure basis for searching, particularly patentability searching. On the one hand, an applicant is not bound to disclose any use or utility and, on the other, any use or utility he does disclose may reflect only his own particular interest and not the whole potential of his invention. Furthermore indexing can only reliably be based upon what is actually disclosed in a document and there is often more than one way of expressing essentially the same information, *eg* one document may stress the heat stability of a particular thermosetting resin while another may instead state that the resin is particularly useful for making brake linings (for which use heat stability is essential). This last problem may be accentuated by the design of the schedules themselves in that particular products are subordinated to the term considered most appropriate to the category of product, yet may well additionally fall into other categories; references are provided in some cases but they cannot be comprehensive and no attempt is made to apply terms which conceptually embrace the product when a satisfactory particular term has been found (*see* paragraphs 3.12 and 3.13).

8.2 Provided a searcher is aware of the limitations and uncertainties discussed in the previous paragraph the recording of use and utility does provide direct access to inventive disclosure directed to particular ends. It is however essential for the searcher to be quite clear what his search need is and to peruse the available terms to identify those which might have been applied by the indexer to the information he is looking for, in the light of the various ways the information might have been expressed by the author of the indexed document.

8.3 The above uncertainties will be compounded by using terms from these schedules in intersection (logical AND relation) and this practice is not therefore recommended in general (but *see* paragraph 7.5).

8.4 The usefulness of the schedules is also presently limited by the fact that they are only applied to specifications classified from Edition E onwards and will therefore initially be more suited for current awareness purposes than to retrospective searching. With this qualification, the main kinds of search which the schedules will make possible are outlined in the following paragraphs.

8.5 Comprehensive retrieval. Comprehensive retrieval both of inventive disclosures concerning a given product, operation or utility, and of disclosures of that product &c in association with other inventive disclosures may be made, in principle, by using the appropriate term from the Classification Key proper in union (logical OR relationship) with the corresponding term from these schedules. In practice the searcher's interest may not wholly be reflected by a single term from either source and in that event additional terms should be used, as appropriate. Normally the terms from heading U1S will not themselves be used in union but in certain cases it will only be possible to identify highly specific products uniquely by terms used in intersection (*see* paragraph 3.15), before using terms in this manner searchers should consider whether the potential error (*see* paragraph 7.3) is acceptable. They should also note that certain terms are likely to be so frequently applied that comprehensive retrieval of the products &c represented by the term will eventually become impracticable.

8.6 Retrieval in selected subject-matter areas. For many purposes the procedure outlined in the previous paragraph will give results which are too wide ranging. In such cases it may be appropriate to define the area of interest by reference to one or more heading(s) of the Classification Key proper. This is readily achieved by searching the code for the selected heading in intersection with the term from Schedules 2 and 3 appropriate to the product or other item of information sought. Regard should of course be had to the classifying provisions of the heading and to any special relationship between the heading and U1S described in the heading introductory notes.

#### Limiting searches for inventive disclosure

8.7 In some circumstances, rather than wishing to extend a search for given subject-matter beyond disclosures

directly concerned with invention in that matter, a searcher may be content to see only those inventive disclosures having a particular end use. Searches of this nature can be performed by using terms from the Classification Key proper in intersection with appropriate terms from Schedule 2, subject to the proviso stated in the last sentence of paragraph 7.6.

8.8 Similarly, searches for a material or class of material can, with the same proviso, be limited to those materials having a particular property by intersecting the term appropriate to the material from the Classification Key proper with the term appropriate to the property from Schedule 3. The property may be relatively commonplace for the class of material in question, *eg soluble* polysaccharides; a new or unusual property in relation to the material, *eg normally thermoplastic polymers with cross-linking* properties; or an enhanced or modified property already characteristic of the material, *eg ABS polymers having enhanced impact strength*.

## **CATCHWORDS INDEX**

9.1 A Catchwords Index to heading U1S is available from the Patent Office.