Preface to the Fourth Edition vii
Preface to the Third Edition ix
Acknowledgments xi
Abbreviations xxiii
Table of statutes xxv
List of cases xxxi

PART I

The British Constitution

CHAPTER I

The constitutional order 3

1 CONSTITUTIONAL RULES 4
   The courts and habeas corpus 7
   An unwritten constitution 10

2 INSTITUTIONS 10

3 THE IDEA OF THE CONSTITUTION 18
   (a) Democracy and the constitution 19
   (b) Parliamentary sovereignty 22
      Transfers of sovereignty 26
      Continuing sovereignty and the 'new view' 32
      Sovereignty reappraised 39
   (c) The separation of powers 40
      The courts in the constitution 43
      The courts and the executive 46
      The courts and Parliament 51
(d) The rule of law 57
   Government under law 58
   Equality before the law 68
   Discretion and the rule of law 73
   Courts and the rule of law 75
   The rule of law: a wider conception 76
   The rule of the good law? 78
   The rule of law and parliamentary sovereignty 79
(e) Accountability 80
   Ministerial responsibility 81
   Access to information and reasons 83

CHAPTER 2

Law, convention and liberty 86

1 THE LAW OF THE CONSTITUTION 86
   (a) Statutes 87
   (b) Subordinate legislation 91
   (c) Common law 92
2 CONVENTIONS 100
   How do conventions arise? 103
   The Widdicombe Conventions 104
   Patriation of the Canadian Constitution 1980–82 107
3 THE CONSTITUTION AND LIBERTY 118
   (a) A flexible constitution 118
   (b) Constitutional rights and liberties 120
       Statutory interpretation 121
       Subordinate legislation 122
       Common law 124
   (c) The campaign for a ‘Bill of Rights’ 125
   (d) The Human Rights Act 1998 128
       The Convention rights 128
       The mechanism of protection 131
       The Human Rights Act and sovereignty 132
       The prospect for human rights 134
   (e) Freedom of expression 135
       Freedom of expression and democracy 135
       Freedom of expression: a constitutional right 138
       The Spycatcher cases 143
       Freedom of expression and statute 147
       Conflict of rights 151
   (f) Freedom of assembly 152
       Common law 153
PART II

The Government in Context

CHAPTER 3

The Crown and the government  165

1 THE CROWN  165

2 PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE CROWN  167

3 MONARCHY AND THE PREROGATIVE  172
  (a) Appointment of prime minister  173
  (b) Dismissal of ministers  177
  (c) Dissolution of Parliament  178

4 THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT  181
  (a) Ministers  181
     Ministerial solidarity  188
     The Westland Affair 1985–6  190
  (b) The prime minister  196
     The prime ministers’ office  201
  (c) The Cabinet  202
     Inner Cabinets  207
  (d) Ministerial committees of the Cabinet  208
  (e) Government departments  211
     The Next Steps: executive agencies  214
  (f) Non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs)  216
     Control and accountability  218
  (g) The civil service  219
     The status of civil servants  220
     The civil service: principles and conduct  223
     Civil servants and ministers  226
     Special advisers  228

CHAPTER 4

The structure of the United Kingdom  230

1 THE UNITED KINGDOM AS A UNITARY STATE  230
  (a) Federalism  230
  (b) Devolution  236
2 THE COUNTRIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM 238
   (a) England 239
   (b) Scotland 241
      Scotland in the Union 241
      The government of Scotland before devolution 247
      Devolved government 248
      Parliament and the devolution settlement 253
   (c) Wales 254
      Devolved government 255
   (d) Northern Ireland 259
      Devolved government 1921-1972 260
      Direct rule 262
      Renewed search for a settlement 264
      Devolution under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 266
      Human rights and equality 269
      North-South Ministerial Council and British-Irish Council 270
      A new beginning? 270

3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT 271
   Structure of local government 272
   Functions of local authorities 276
   Powers 278
   By-laws 279
   Ultra vires and judicial control 279
   Maladministration 281
   Central-local government relations 282

CHAPTER 5

The European dimension 290

1 NEW LEGAL ORDERS 290
2 THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND
   FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS 291
   Applications to the European Court of Human Rights 293
   Impact of decisions on UK law 297
3 STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION 298
4 INSTITUTIONS AND LAW OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY 303
   (a) Community institutions and ancillary bodies 303
      The European Commission 303
      The Council of the European Union 307
      The Economic and Social Committee 308
      The Committee of the Regions 309
      The European Council 309
      The European Parliament 309
      The Court of Justice of the European Communities and the Court of First
      Instance 313
The powers of government 357

1 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES OF GOVERNMENT 357
2 THE BASIS OF GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY 360
3 THE POWERS OF GOVERNMENT 362
   (a) General 362
   (b) Parliamentary legislation 364
       Implementation and effectiveness of legislation 369
   (c) Delegated legislation 371
       Statutory instruments 375
   (d) Prerogative legislation 382
   (e) Executive powers 383
       Prerogative powers 386
   (f) Quasi-legislation 393
       Naturalization 393
       Passports 394
       Interception of communications 395
       The Crichel Down rules 395
       Public interest immunity (PII) claims 396
       Arms exports 397
       Ex gratia compensation for wrongful conviction 397
   (g) Guidance and codes of practice 400
       Local authorities 402
       The police 402
   (h) Voluntary agreement 404
PART III

The Responsibility of Government

CHAPTER 7

Parliament and government 413

1 RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT 413
2 INDIVIDUAL MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY 417
   Crichel Down 418
   A convention of resignation? 419
   The Maze break-out 422
   Westland 424
   Responsibility of civil servants 427
3 THE POWER OF PARLIAMENT 431
   (a) Opposition 433
   (b) Backbenchers 439
   (c) The House 441
4 CONTROL AND SCRUTINY 442
   (a) Policy and administration 443
      Debates 443
      Questions 444
      Select committees 447
   (b) Legislation 454
      Primary legislation 454
      Delegated legislation 457
   (c) Finance 459
      The Public Accounts Committee 461
   (d) European Community legislation 462
5 THE HOUSE OF LORDS 466

CHAPTER 8

Parties, groups and the people 473

1 THE PEOPLE IN THE CONSTITUTION 473
2 ELECTIONS AND THE MANDATE 475
   (a) Review of constituency boundaries 475
   (b) Fairness of the contest 485
      The election deposit 486
      Election expenditure 487
      The media 489
   (c) Reform of electoral law 491
3 THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT 505
   Referendums 506
4 POLITICAL PARTIES 511
   Selection of candidates 512
   Party policy 513
   Financial resources 515
5 PRESSURE GROUPS 516
6 OPEN GOVERNMENT 522

CHAPTER 9

Remedies against public authorities 528

1 JUDICIAL REVIEW 528
   (a) Appeal and review 528
   (b) Review and the control of power 530
   (c) Grounds of review 534
      Illegality 534
      Irrationality 542
      Procedural impropriety 546
   (d) The scope and limits of review 552
      Ouster clauses 554
      Prerogative powers 555
      Miscellaneous common law powers 560
   (e) Standing, procedure and remedies 560
      Standing 560
      Procedure 563
      Remedies 565
      Collateral challenge 567
   (f) The advance of judicial review 567
2 PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE ADMINISTRATION 569
   (a) Liability of the Crown 569
      Contractual liability 570
      Tortious liability 573
      Restitution 576
   (b) Other public authorities 577
      Contractual liability 577
      Tortious liability 578
3 REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES 581
   (a) Tribunals 581
(b) The Parliamentary Ombudsman 587
(c) Other mechanisms of redress 593

PART IV
Constitutional Innovation and Reform

CHAPTER 10
Constitutional renewal 597

1 A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT 597
   Implementing reform 599
2 DIRECTIONS OF REFORM 600
   Effective governance 602
   Revival of Parliament 603
   Accountability 603
   Fundamental rights 604
   A written constitution? 604

Index 609