The doctrine of estates appears to be a logical consequence of tenure. The theory underpinning Land Law in England is that all land belongs to the Crown and that people held the land from the Crown, originally, in return for the performance of services. In this case, the tenants did not actually own the land itself, but only held an interest, or estate, in the land. Certain incidents of ownership can be divided between different people at different times, a process facilitated by the doctrine of estates. This chapter focuses on the doctrines of tenure and estates. It discusses freehold estates, which include the fee simple, the life estate, and the fee tail, as well as the co-existence of estates, ownership and possession of land, and leasehold estates.
2. Tenure and Estates