The English Legal System is based upon common law principles. Explain what this means

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The United Kingdom is widely known for having one of the most well-developed and established common law legal systems in the world. The English legal system is based on the common law tradition. Common law is a legal system that is built on judicial decisions and precedents, rather than on written statutes or codes (ICLR, 2018). According to William Blackstone, "the unwritten law, or common law, stands upon no written text, but is founded upon custom and usage" (Blackstone, 1765). This means that the common law system is based on the decisions made by judges in the courts, which become binding precedents for future cases. It originated in England in the Middle Ages, and it has since spread to many countries around the world, due to the commonwealth (Kiralfy et al., 2023). In common law systems, judges are responsible for interpreting and applying the law, and their decisions become part of the body of law that future judges may rely upon. Judges follow previous court decisions when deciding on similar cases (Partington, 2021). As judges have the ability to create new legal principles or modify existing ones in response to changing circumstances or social values, common law is flexible and adaptable. It is also considered to be more pragmatic and less rigid than civil law systems, which rely on written codes and statutes. Overall, the common law system in England is characterized by the importance of precedent, the role of judges in interpreting and applying the law, and the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances (LegalUK, 2017). When a new legal issue needs to be resolved, the ruling established a guideline which was to be followed in cases that were similar, in turn, making the law more predictable, (Elliot and Quinn, 2015). When King Henry II gained the throne, he introduced a series of reforms which produced a custom and body of law, which later helped shape the common law system (Nicholas, 2007).

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