This chapter examines the pattern of European Union (EU) institutions and the formal rules that govern them. It first considers the Treaties that form the founding ‘constitutional’ documents of the EU, from the Treaty of Paris to the Treaty on Stability, Co-ordination and Governance in the economic and monetary union (EMU), before turning to the main institutions involved in the processes of decision making, namely: the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, and the European Parliament, plus two consultative committees, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. The chapter proceeds by analysing the Union method of decision making, focusing on the budgetary and legislative procedures, as well as the process on the Common Foreign and Security Policy. It also discusses the implementation of EU decisions once they have been made, and
concludes with some reflections on the post-Lisbon institutional architecture of the EU, including differentiated integration.