



Interpretation Act 1978

1978 CHAPTER 30

Interpretation and construction

5 Definitions.

In any Act, unless the contrary intention appears, words and expressions listed in Schedule 1 to this Act are to be construed according to that Schedule.

6 Gender and number.

In any Act, unless the contrary intention appears,—

- (a) words importing the masculine gender include the feminine;
- (b) words importing the feminine gender include the masculine;
- (c) words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 6(a) excluded (E.W.) by [Sexual Offences Act 1985 \(c. 44, SIF 39:5\)](#), **ss. 4(3), 5(5)**
- C2** S. 6(b) excluded (E.W.) by [Sexual Offences Act 1985 \(c. 44, SIF 39:5\)](#), **ss. 4(3), 5(5)**
- C3** S. 6(b) excluded (E.W.S.) by [Employment Act 1989 \(c. 38, SIF 43:1\)](#), **ss. 5(4)(7), 29(6), Sch. 9 para. 4(1)**

7 References to service by post.

Where an Act authorises or requires any document to be served by post (whether the expression “serve” or the expression “give” or “send” or any other expression is used) then, unless the contrary intention appears, the service is deemed to be effected by properly addressing, pre-paying and posting a letter containing the document and, unless the contrary is proved, to have been effected at the time at which the letter would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Interpretation Act 1978, Cross Heading: Interpretation and construction. (See end of Document for details)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C4** S. 7 modified (E.W.) (1.7.1995) by 1994 c. 36, s. 17(2)(3) (with s. 20); S.I. 1995/1317, art. 2
- C5** S. 7 excluded by Insurance Companies Act 1982 (c. 50, SIF 67), s. 77(4)
- S. 7 excluded (E.W.) by Enduring Powers of Attorney Act 1985 (c. 29, SIF 1), s. 4(3), Sch. 1 Pt. IV para. 8(2)
- S. 7 excluded by Public Order Act 1986 (c. 64, SIF 39:2), s. 11(5)
- S. 7 excluded (20.6.2003) by The Enterprise Act 2002 (Merger Prenotification) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/1369), regs. 5, 11, 12, 13(5)
- S. 7 excluded (E.W.) (1.7.2005 for certain purposes and 1.8.2005 otherwise) by Serious Organised Crime Act 2005 (c. 15), ss. 133(6), 178; S.I. 2005/1521, arts. 3(1)(p), 4(1)
- S. 7 excluded (E.W.) (1.10.2007) by The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (c. 9), ss. 66(3), 68(1), Sch. 4 para. 12 (with ss. 27-29, 62); S.I. 2007/1897, art. 2(1)(d)

8 References to distance.

In the measurement of any distance for the purposes of an Act, that distance shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be measured in a straight line on a horizontal plane.

9 References to time of day.

Subject to section 3 of the ^{M1}Summer Time Act 1972 (construction of references to points of time during the period of summer time), whenever an expression of time occurs in an Act, the time referred to shall, unless it is otherwise specifically stated, be held to be Greenwich mean time.

Marginal Citations

- M1** 1972 c. 6.

10 References to the Sovereign.

In any Act a reference to the Sovereign reigning at the time of the passing of the Act is to be construed, unless the contrary intention appears, as a reference to the Sovereign for the time being.

11 Construction of subordinate legislation.

Where an Act confers power to make subordinate legislation, expressions used in that legislation have, unless the contrary intention appears, the meaning which they bear in the Act.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C6** S. 11 applied (1.1.1995) by S.I. 1994/3144, reg. 1(6)
- C7** S. 11 excluded (E.W.) (1.9.1997) by S.I. 1997/1972, reg. 2(3)
- C8** S. 11 applied (30.10.2005) by The Medicines (Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products for Human Use) Regulations 2005 (S.I. 2005/2750), regs. 1, 2(3) (with transitional provisions in reg. 12, Sch. 6)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Interpretation Act 1978, Cross Heading: Interpretation and construction. (See end of Document for details)

- C9** S. 11 excluded (S.) (1.8.2007) by [The Education \(Fees and Awards\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2007 \(S.S.I. 2007/152\)](#), **reg. 2(2)**
- C10** S. 11 excluded (W.) (31.8.2007) by [The Education \(Fees and Awards\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2007 \(S.I. 2007/2310\)](#), **reg. 2(2)**
- C11** S. 11 excluded (S.) (1.8.2012) by [The Education \(Fees\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2011 \(S.S.I. 2011/389\)](#), regs. 1(1), **2(2)**

Changes to legislation:

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