



Defamation Act 1996

1996 CHAPTER 31

Statutory privilege

15 Reports, &c. protected by qualified privilege.

- [^{F1}(1) The publication of any report or other statement mentioned in Schedule 1 to this Act is privileged unless the publication is shown to be made with malice, subject as follows.
- (2) In defamation proceedings in respect of the publication of a report or other statement mentioned in Part II of that Schedule, there is no defence under this section if the plaintiff shows that the defendant—
- (a) was requested by him to publish in a suitable manner a reasonable letter or statement by way of explanation or contradiction, and
 - (b) refused or neglected to do so.
- For this purpose “in a suitable manner” means in the same manner as the publication complained of or in a manner that is adequate and reasonable in the circumstances.
- (3) This section does not apply to the publication to the public, or a section of the public, of matter which is not of [^{F2}public concern][^{F2}public interest] and the publication of which is not for the public benefit.
- (4) Nothing in this section shall be construed—
- (a) as protecting the publication of matter the publication of which is prohibited by law, or
 - (b) as limiting or abridging any privilege subsisting apart from this section.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 15 repealed (S.) (8.8.2022) by [Defamation and Malicious Publication \(Scotland\) Act 2021 \(asp 10\)](#), [ss. 35\(3\)\(a\)](#), 39(2); S.S.I. 2022/154, [regs. 1\(2\)](#), 2
- F2** Words in s. 15(3) substituted (E.W.) (1.1.2014) by [Defamation Act 2013 \(c. 26\)](#), [ss. 7\(2\)](#), 17(4) (with s. 16(5)); S.I. 2013/3027, [art. 2](#); and substituted (N.I.) (7.6.2022) by [Defamation Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022 \(c. 30\)](#), [ss. 5\(2\)](#), 14

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Defamation Act 1996, Section 15.