
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1986 No. 1682

The Measuring Equipment (Measures of Length) Regulations 1986

PART II

MATERIALS AND PRINCIPLES OF CONSTRUCTION AND MARKING OF MEASURES OF LENGTH

4. Subject to Regulation 5 below, every measure of length shall be made of—
- (a) carbon steel, including matt chrome-plated carbon steel, steel protected by a clear film or rust-resisting steel;
 - (b) brass;
 - (c) aluminium alloy, including anodised and stained aluminium alloy;
 - (d) glass-reinforced or opaque plastics;
 - (e) wood; or
 - (f) any other material of adequate stability.

Commencement Information

I1 Reg. 4 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

5. Every measure of length shall be sufficiently strong and resistant to abrasion to withstand the wear and tear of ordinary use in trade.

Commencement Information

I2 Reg. 5 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

6. Where an end measure or composite measure is made of wood or other material of durability equal to or less than that of wood, the terminal surfaces shall have metal tips which shall be securely fixed to the wood or other material.

Commencement Information

I3 Reg. 6 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

7. The terminal surfaces of end measures and of composite measures shall be flat and perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the measure.

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Commencement Information

I4 Reg. 7 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

8. Every rigid measure of length, including folding measures, shall be practically straight and free from flaws.

Commencement Information

I5 Reg. 8 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

9. Every flexible measure of length shall be constructed so that when it is stretched out on a flat surface its edges are practically straight and parallel.

Commencement Information

I6 Reg. 9 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

10. Winding devices for flexible measures of length shall be constructed so that they do not cause any permanent deformation of the measure.

Commencement Information

I7 Reg. 10 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

11. Where a measure of length is marked with a reference temperature, it shall be constructed so that a change of not more than 8 degrees Celsius above or below that temperature does not cause in normal use a variation in length exceeding the prescribed limit of error.

Commencement Information

I8 Reg. 11 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

12. Where a measure of length is marked with a tractive force, it shall be constructed so that a change of 10 per cent. above or below that force does not cause a variation in length exceeding the prescribed limit of error.

Commencement Information

I9 Reg. 12 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

13.—(1) Every measure of length which is graduated shall be graduated clearly, indelibly and, subject to paragraph (2) below, regularly, so as to enable unambiguous readings to be made easily.

(2) Certain sections of a graduated measure of length may be subdivided more finely than other sections.

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I10 Reg. 13 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

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14. Where the scale marks on a measure of length are lines these shall be straight, perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the measure of length and all of the same thickness, constant throughout their length.

Commencement Information

I11 Reg. 14 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

15. The numbering of graduated measures of length shall be—

- (a) (i) continuous; or
- (ii) partly continuous and partly repetitive; and
- (b) (i) parallel to the longitudinal axis of the measure of length; or
- (ii) perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the measure of length, depending on how the measure is designed to be read.

Commencement Information

I12 Reg. 15 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

16. Where a graduated measure of length is a folding measure, some of its numbering in close proximity to the joints may be omitted.

Commencement Information

I13 Reg. 16 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

17. Every measure of length shall be conspicuously, legibly and durably marked (in the case of a flexible measure, near the beginning of the measure) with the following items—

- (a) on each graduated side, its nominal length expressed in one only of the following units of measurement in full or by means of one of the following abbreviations or symbols only:—

metre	m
centimetre	cm
millimetre	mm
yard	yd
foot	ft
inch	in;

- (b) the name or trade mark of the manufacturer of the measure; and
- (c) its tractive force, if it is a flexible measure with a nominal length exceeding five metres in metric units or ten feet in imperial units.

Commencement Information

I14 Reg. 17 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

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18. Every measure of length which is not graduated or subdivided shall be marked conspicuously, legibly and durably with the words “not graduated” or “not subdivided”.

Commencement Information

I15 Reg. 18 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

19.—(1) Every measure of length may be marked (in the case of a flexible measure, near the beginning of the measure) with one or more of the following items—

- (a) the reference temperature;
- (b) where not required to be marked under Regulation 17 above, the tractive force;
- (c) the number of the British Standard published by the British Standards Institution that specifies requirements for the measure or other specification reference;
- (d) a model designation;
- (e) the country of manufacture; and
- (f) the material from which the measure has been made.

(2) Nothing in paragraph (1) above shall prohibit other markings on a measure of length, which do not cause confusion in use.

Commencement Information

I16 Reg. 19 in force at 27.10.1986, see [reg. 1\(1\)](#)

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Instrument associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Instrument (including any effects on those provisions):

- Sch. 2 inserted by [S.I. 1996/2636 Sch.](#)
- Sch. 2 para. 2 words substituted by [S.I. 1996/3020 reg. 2](#)
- reg. 17A inserted by [S.I. 1994/1851 Sch. Pt. 1](#)
- reg. 17A words inserted by [S.I. 2001/85 reg. 3\(1\)Sch.](#)
- reg. 17A words omitted by [S.I. 2009/3045 reg. 3\(2\)\(d\)](#)
- reg. 23A23B inserted by [S.I. 1996/2636 reg. 2\(2\)](#)
- reg. 23B heading words substituted by [S.I. 2018/1387 Sch. para. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- reg. 23B(1) words substituted by [S.I. 2018/1387 Sch. para. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- reg. 23B(2)(b) words omitted by [S.I. 2018/1387 Sch. para. 4\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- reg. 23B(3) substituted by [S.I. 2003/214 Sch. para. 3](#)