



# Interpretation Act 1978

## CHAPTER 30

### INTERPRETATION ACT 1978

#### *General provisions as to enactment and operation*

- 1 Words of enactment.
- 2 Amendment or repeal in same Session.
- 3 Judicial notice.
- 4 Time of commencement.

#### *Interpretation and construction*

- 5 Definitions.
- 6 Gender and number.
- 7 References to service by post.
- 8 References to distance.
- 9 References to time of day.
- 10 References to the Sovereign.
- 11 Construction of subordinate legislation.

#### *Statutory powers and duties*

- 12 Continuity of powers and duties.
- 13 Anticipatory exercise of powers.
- 14 Implied power to amend.
- 14A Power to include sunset and review provisions in subordinate legislation

#### *Repealing enactments*

- 15 Repeal of repeal.
- 16 General savings.
- 17 Repeal and re-enactment.

*Changes to legislation:* Interpretation Act 1978 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

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### *Miscellaneous*

- 18 Duplicated offences.
- 19 Citation of other Acts.
- 20 References to other enactments etc..
- 20A References to certain EU instruments

### *Supplementary*

- 21 Interpretation etc.
- 22 Application to Acts and Measures.
- 23 Application to other instruments.
- 23ZA Assimilated direct legislation
- 23A Acts of the Scottish Parliament etc.
- 23B Application of this Act to Welsh legislation
- 23C Interpretation of this Act in relation to Welsh legislation
- 24 Application to Northern Ireland.
- 25 Repeals and savings.
- 26 Commencement.
- 27 Short title.

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## SCHEDULES

### SCHEDULE 1 — Words and Expressions Defined

#### *Definitions*

“ Act ” means an Act of Parliament. “Associated state”...

...

.....

#### *Construction of certain expressions relating to offences*

In relation to England and Wales— (a) “indictable offence” means...

In the above definitions references to the way or ways...

In relation to a term of imprisonment in respect of...

#### *Construction of certain references to relationships*

In relation to England and Wales— (a) references (however expressed)...

#### *Construction of certain expressions relating to the police: Scotland*

In relation to Scotland— (a) references to a police force...

#### *Definitions relating to the EU and the United Kingdom's withdrawal*

“ Assimilated law ”, “ assimilated direct legislation ”, “...

### SCHEDULE 2 — Application of Act to Existing Enactments

#### Part I — ACTS

- 1 The following provisions of this Act apply to Acts whenever...
- 2 The following apply to Acts passed after the year 1850:—...

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- 3 The following apply to Acts passed after the year 1889:—...
- 4 (1) Subject to the following provisions of this paragraph—
- 5 The following definitions shall be treated as included in Schedule...  
Part II — SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION
- 6 Sections 4(a), 9 and 19(1), and so much of Schedule...
- 7 The definition in Schedule 1 of “county court”, in relation...
- 8 The definition in Schedule 1 of “enactment”, in so far...

### SCHEDULE 3 — ENACTMENTS REPEALED

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**Changes and effects yet to be applied to :**

- s. 16(1) applied by [2023 c. 37 s. 26\(7\)](#)