

*These notes refer to the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
(c.31) which received Royal Assent on 30 October 2003*

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION ACT 2003

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND

3. Female genital mutilation (FGM) involves procedures which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out, and in later life.
4. FGM has been a specific criminal offence in the UK since the passage of the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985.
5. The Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act repeals and re-enacts the provisions of the 1985 Act and gives them extra-territorial effect as was recommended by an All Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health reporting in 2000. It also increases the maximum penalty, on conviction on indictment, for FGM from 5 to 14 years' imprisonment. The Act does not extend to Scotland.