

POSTAL SERVICES ACT 2011

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Part 3: Regulation of postal services

The universal postal service

Section 30: The universal postal service

150. Subsection (1) provides that OFCOM must set out in an order, which will be known as the “universal postal service order”, a description of services that they consider must be provided in the United Kingdom as a universal postal service. This subsection also provides that they must set out the standards with which those services must comply.
151. Subsection (2) introduces section 31 which contains the minimum requirements for a universal postal service.
152. Subsection (3) provides that before making or modifying the universal postal service order, OFCOM must assess the extent to which the postal market in the United Kingdom is meeting the reasonable needs of users. This “market testing” is to enable OFCOM to determine what services (if any), other than those specified in section 31, should be provided as part of the universal service in the United Kingdom, in order to meet the reasonable needs of users.
153. Subsection (4) waives the requirement for OFCOM to carry out an assessment described in subsection (3) for their first universal postal service order. It requires that OFCOM must have carried out such an assessment within 18 months of Part 3 coming generally into force.
154. Subsection (5) allows the Secretary of State to direct OFCOM to exclude certain types of postal services from their first universal postal service order.
155. In Part 3 of the Act, the universal postal service means the universal postal service as defined by OFCOM in their order.