



British Sign Language Act 2022

2022 CHAPTER 34

An Act to recognise British Sign Language as a language of England, Wales and Scotland; to require the Secretary of State to report on the promotion and facilitation of the use of British Sign Language by ministerial government departments; and to require guidance to be issued in relation to British Sign Language. [28th April 2022]

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

Declaration recognising British Sign Language

1 Recognition of British Sign Language

- (1) British Sign Language is recognised as a language of England, Wales and Scotland.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not affect the operation of any enactment or rule of law.
- (3) But see sections 2 and 3 (which, in connection with the recognition of British Sign Language by subsection (1), impose duties on the Secretary of State relating to the promotion and facilitation of the use of British Sign Language).
- (4) In this section, “enactment” includes an enactment comprised in, or in an instrument made under, an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

Duties relating to the promotion and facilitation of British Sign Language

2 Duty of Secretary of State to report on British Sign Language

- (1) The Secretary of State must prepare and publish a British Sign Language report for each reporting period.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

- (2) A British Sign Language report is a report describing what each relevant government department has done to promote or facilitate the use of British Sign Language in its communications with the public.
- (3) For this purpose a relevant government department's communications with the public include in particular—
- (a) any public announcement which it makes about policy or about changes to the law,
 - (b) the publication by it of any plan, strategy, consultation document or consultation response, or any explanatory or supporting materials, and
 - (c) its use of press conferences, social media or a government website to publicise any of its activities or policies,
- but do not include communications with individual members of the public, or any other communications which the relevant government department does not intend to be shared with the public at large.
- (4) In preparing a British Sign Language report, the Secretary of State must—
- (a) collect information from each relevant government department about the matters to be covered by the report, and
 - (b) set out in full or summarise that information in the report.
- (5) The Secretary of State must not collect, or include in a British Sign Language report, information about any communication made by a relevant government department so far as that communication—
- (a) relates only to Scotland and does not relate to reserved matters (within the meaning of the Scotland Act 1998);
 - (b) relates only to Wales and does not relate to reserved matters (within the meaning of the Government of Wales Act 2006).
- (6) The Secretary of State must publish each British Sign Language report no more than three months after the end of the reporting period to which it relates.
- (7) In this section “reporting period” means—
- (a) in respect of the first British Sign Language report, the period beginning with the day on which this section comes into force and ending with 30 April 2023;
 - (b) in respect of each subsequent British Sign Language report, the period (being not longer than three years) beginning on the day after the previous reporting period ended and ending on such date as the Secretary of State decides.
- (8) In this section and section 3, “relevant government department” means a United Kingdom ministerial government department listed in the Schedule.
- (9) The Secretary of State may by regulations made by statutory instrument amend the list in the Schedule so as to add, remove or vary an entry in consequence of—
- (a) a change to the name of a United Kingdom ministerial government department, or
 - (b) any change to the way in which the United Kingdom ministerial government departments are organised.
- (10) A statutory instrument containing regulations under subsection (9) is subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.