



Road Traffic Act 1988

1988 CHAPTER 52

PART VII

MISCELLANEOUS AND GENERAL

Forgery, false statements, etc.

173 Forgery of documents, etc.

- (1) A person who, with intent to deceive—
- (a) forges, alters or uses a document or other thing to which this section applies, or
 - (b) lends to, or allows to be used by, any other person a document or other thing to which this section applies, or
 - (c) makes or has in his possession any document or other thing so closely resembling a document or other thing to which this section applies as to be calculated to deceive,
- is guilty of an offence.
- (2) This section applies to the following documents and other things—
- (a) any licence under any Part of this Act ^{F1}...,
 - ^{F2}(aa)
 - (b) any test certificate, goods vehicle test certificate, plating certificate, certificate of conformity or Minister's approval certificate (within the meaning of Part II of this Act),
 - (c) any certificate required as a condition of any exception prescribed under section 14 of this Act,
 - ^{F3}[(cc) any seal required by regulations made under section 41 of this Act with respect to speed limiters,]
 - (d) [^{F4}any plate containing particulars required to be marked on a vehicle by regulations under section 41 of this Act] or containing other particulars required to be marked on a goods vehicle by sections 54 to 58 of this Act or regulations under those sections,

Changes to legislation: Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 173 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 24 April 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

- ^{F5}[(dd) any document evidencing the appointment of an examiner under section 66A of this Act,]
 (e) any records required to be kept by virtue of section 74 of this Act,
 (f) any document which, in pursuance of section 89(3) ^{F6} . . . of this Act, is issued as evidence of the result of a test of competence to drive,
^{F7}[(ff) any document evidencing the successful completion of a driver training course provided in accordance with regulations under section 99ZA of this Act,]
 (g) any [^{F8}certificate under section 133A or any] badge or certificate prescribed by regulations made by virtue of section 135 of this Act,
 (h) any certificate of insurance ^{F9}... under Part VI of this Act,
 (j) any document produced as evidence of insurance in pursuance of Regulation 6 of the ^{M1}Motor Vehicles (Compulsory Insurance) (No. 2) Regulations 1973,
 (k) any document issued under regulations made by the Secretary of State in pursuance of his power under section 165(2)(a) of this Act to prescribe evidence which may be produced in lieu of a certificate of insurance ^{F10} ... , ^{F11} ...
 (l) any international road haulage permit. [^{F12}and
 (m) a certificate of the kind referred to in section 34B(1) of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.]

(3) In the application of this section to England and Wales “forges” means makes a false document or other thing in order that it may be used as genuine.

^{F13}(4)

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 173(2)(a) repealed (8.6.2015) by Road Safety Act 2006 (c. 49), s. 61(1)(10), Sch. 3 para. 28(2)(a), **Sch. 7(4)**; S.I. 2015/560, art. 3 (with arts. 4-9)
- F2** S. 173(2)(aa) repealed (8.6.2015) by Road Safety Act 2006 (c. 49), s. 61(1)(10), Sch. 3 para. 28(2)(b), **Sch. 7(4)**; S.I. 2015/560, art. 3 (with arts. 4-9)
- F3** S. 173(2)(cc) inserted (1.4.1992) by Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 40, SIF 107:1), s. 48, **Sch. 4 para. 73(2)**; S.I. 1992/421, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F4** Words in s. 173(2)(d) substituted (1.4.1992) by Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 40, SIF 107:1), s. 48, 84, **Sch. 4 para. 73(3)**; S.I. 1992/421, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F5** S. 173(2)(dd) inserted (1.7.1992) by Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 40, SIF 107:1), s. 48, **Sch. 4 para. 73(4)**; S.I. 1992/1286, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F6** Words in s. 173(2)(f) repealed (1.4.1991) by Road Traffic (Driver Licensing and Information Systems) Act 1989 (c. 22, SIF 107:1), ss. 7, 16, Sch. 3 para. 22, **Sch. 6**
- F7** S. 173(2)(ff) substituted (24.9.2007) by Road Safety Act 2006 (c. 49), **ss. 41(4)**, 61; S.I. 2007/2472, **art. 2(l)**
- F8** Words in s. 173(2)(g) inserted (9.9.1996) by 1993 c. 31, s. 6, **Sch. para. 9**; S.I. 1996/1980, **art. 2**
- F9** Words in s. 173(2)(h) omitted (1.11.2019) by virtue of The Motor Vehicles (Compulsory Insurance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1047), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 26(2)** (with reg. 5)
- F10** Words in s. 173(2)(k) omitted (1.11.2019) by virtue of The Motor Vehicles (Compulsory Insurance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1047), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 26(3)** (with reg. 5)
- F11** Word in s. 173(2)(k) repealed (1.7.1992) by Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 40, SIF 107:1), s. 83, **Sch 8**; S.I. 1992/1286, art. 2, **Sch.**
- F12** S. 173(2)(m) and preceding word added (1.7.1992) by Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 40, SIF 107:1), s. 48, **Sch. 4 para. 73(6)**; S.I. 1992/1286, art. 2, **Sch.**

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F13 S. 173(4) omitted (8.6.2015) by virtue of [The Road Safety Act 2006 \(Consequential Amendments\) Order 2015 \(S.I. 2015/583\)](#), art. 1(1), [Sch. 2 para. 2\(f\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 S. 173 applied with modifications by [S.I. 1987/1378](#), [reg. 25\(3\)](#) (as amended by [S.I. 1990/842](#), [reg. 9](#))

C2 S. 173 applied (with modifications) (12.11.1999) by [S.I. 1999/2864](#), [reg. 80\(5\)\(f\)](#)

Marginal Citations

M1 [S.I. 1973/2143](#).

Changes to legislation:

Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 173 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 24 April 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.

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- s. 173(2) word repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 7\(10\)](#)
- s. 173(4) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 28\(3\)Sch. 7\(4\)](#)

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

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

- s. 34A inserted by [2000 c. 37 Sch. 7 para. 6](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The amending provision has been repealed)
- s. 41(2)(m) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 18\(1\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 41(2)(ba) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 56\(3\)](#)
- s. 49(3A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 48\(1\)](#)
- s. 66(7A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 56\(5\)](#)
- s. 85(1) words omitted (temp.) by [S.I. 2019/648 reg. 2\(5\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Reg. 2(5)(a) substituted (1.9.2020) by S.I. 2020/818, regs. 1(b), Sch. 6 para. 39(2)(c)(i))
- s. 85(1) words omitted (temp.) by [S.I. 2019/648 reg. 2\(5\)\(d\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Reg. 2(5)(a) substituted (1.9.2020) by S.I. 2020/818, regs. 1(b), Sch. 6 para. 39(2)(c)(ii))
- s. 85(2) added by [1988 c. 54 Sch. 2 para. 17\(c\)](#)
- s. 97(1)(c)(ia) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 6\(2\)\(b\)Sch. 7\(4\)](#)
- s. 97(1)(d)(ii) words omitted by [S.I. 2018/1251 reg. 2\(4\)](#)
- s. 97(1ZA) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 38\(2\)](#)
- s. 108(1BA) inserted by [S.I. 2018/1251 reg. 2\(5\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 123(123A) substituted for s. 123 by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 2](#)
- s. 123A(3) words inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 1\(3\)](#)
- s. 124(3)-(5) inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 3](#)
- s. 124(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 2\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125(3A)-(3D) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 3\(2\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125(5A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 3\(3\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125A(5)-(7E) substituted for s. 125A(5)-(7) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 6\(3\)](#)
- s. 125ZA inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 5](#)
- s. 125ZA(2)(b) word omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(2)(d) and word inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(c) word omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(c\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)

- s. 125ZA(4)(c) words substituted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(ba)(bb) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(ca) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(d\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 126(5) omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 6](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 126A inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 1\(3\)](#)
- s. 126A omitted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 8A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 3\(3\)](#)
- s. 126A heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(2\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 126A(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 126A(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(3\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128A inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 11](#)
- s. 128A(4) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 11](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(4\)](#)
- s. 128B inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 9](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 128ZA inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 1\(1\)](#)
- s. 128ZB inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 2](#)
- s. 128AZA128AZB inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 2\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA128AZB inserted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 10A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA128AZB substituted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 10A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZA(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZA(4) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(c\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZB heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZB(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(b\)\(i\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZB(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 131(A1)-(C1) inserted by [2006 c. 49, Sch. 6 para. 13\(1A\)](#) (as inserted) by [S.I. 2023/1286 Sch. 3 para. 92\(2\)\(a\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 131(3)(b)(c) substituted for s. 131(3)(b) and word by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(4\)](#)
- s. 131(6) inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 2\(4\)](#)

- s. 131(6) inserted by 2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13(9) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(5\)](#)
- s. 131(6) substituted by 2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13(9) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(5\)](#)
- s. 132-133ZA and cross-heading substituted for ss. 132, 133 and cross-heading by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 14](#)
- s. 133(2)(a) words omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 10\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133(2)(b) words omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 10\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133D(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 14\(2\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 140(1)(2) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 23\(2\)](#)
- s. 140(1A) inserted in earlier affecting provision 2006 c. 49, Sch. 6 para. 23(2) by [S.I. 2023/1286 Sch. 3 para. 92\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 140(3) s. 140 renumbered as s. 140(3) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 23\(1\)](#)
- s. 141A(5) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 24 Sch. 7\(4\)](#)
- s. 143(1A) repealed (cond.) by [S.I. 2019/1047 Sch. 2 para. 2](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The insertion of s. 143(1A) by 2018 c. 18, Sch. para. 17 was repealed (1.11.2019) by The Motor Vehicles (Compulsory Insurance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1047), reg. 1, Sch. 2 para. 1 (with reg. 5) without ever being brought into force.)
- s. 173(2)(g)-(gb) substituted for s. 173(2)(g) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 27](#)
- s. 173(2)(n) and word inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 37\(8\)](#)
- s. 174(1)(da) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 28](#)
- s. 183(6A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 29](#)