Chapter 3: Your Terms and Conditions of Service

1. About this Chapter

1.1 This chapter provides an overview of your terms and conditions of employment. These issues are also dealt with in more depth in further chapters of the Staff Handbook.

1.2 The second part of this chapter deals with security clearance and security passes, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (previously known as CRB checks). Security clearance is essential for continued employment in the House of Commons.

2. Appointments to the House of Commons Service

Appointment policy

2.1 The House’s recruitment and promotion procedures are outlined in chapter 8 of this Handbook.

Nationality

2.2 Candidates must provide evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK prior to appointment. The House is not able to sponsor work permits or visas.

Immigration

2.3 If you are a national of Croatia you must show proof of permission to work e.g. a worker authorisation document (also known as a purple registration certificate) or proof that you are exempt from this restriction. More details are available on the UK Visas and Immigration website.

2.4 Non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals will need to apply for the right to work in the UK via UK Visas and Immigration.

3. Your Terms and Conditions of Service

3.1 The terms and conditions of service are contained in your letter of appointment. This Staff Handbook serves as a guide to these terms and conditions, which can be varied from time to time. You will be informed of any variation either by Staff Notices (SNs) or in a variation to contract letter.

3.2 The House of Commons Service reserves the right to transfer you to any other suitable post within the organisation.
3.3 You may contact the HR Advisory Service (hradvisory@parliament.uk) for additional information or search the employment pages which may be found at the following Intranet link:

Employment Intranet pages

Types of appointment

3.4 Your appointment may be permanent, for a fixed period or temporary for a short period, and can be full or part-time.

3.5 The main types of appointment are:

- **Permanent**: This appointment is of indefinite duration and can be terminated only by giving notice or through dismissal. If you have a permanent contract you will normally have been selected through fair and open competition and have satisfied the requirements for fair and open competition.

- **Fixed-term appointments**: These appointments are made for a limited period and do not normally exceed four years. They are made either where the work is for a limited duration (usually more than three months) or where there is an exceptional reason for appointing someone to a continuing post for a limited period, for example, to cover maternity leave, or for specific projects of limited duration. Fixed-term appointments may usually only be converted to permanent status if this possibility was specified in the recruitment advertisement.

- **Temporary appointments**: These appointments are usually for a short period to cover a specific piece of work or short project. These appointments can be made without the need for fair and open competition. However, these appointments do not usually lead to permanent employment with the House unless through fair and open competition.

- **Inward secondments**: Individuals who are seconded in from other organisations are not House employees. They are subject to House of Commons rules, although they also continue to be subject to the terms and conditions of their employer and are usually paid directly by them.

- **Outward secondments**: House of Commons employees who are seconded out to other organisations continue to be subject to the House of Commons terms and conditions of service and continue to be paid by the House. The House of Commons Secondment policy is on the intranet at Secondment policy

- **Guaranteed Minimum Hours Contracts**: These appointments provide full employee status for the individual with contractual entitlements. They are contracted to work a certain number of hours per calendar month – their guaranteed minimum hours – and the House pays them a regular salary for those hours. The House is obliged to offer the work and the employee is obliged to work for those guaranteed minimum hours. The employee may also be offered additional hours on an ad hoc basis.
However, the House is not obliged to offer additional hours and the employee may decline them.

- **Term Time Contracts:** Under these appointments the employee works only during certain periods, usually coinciding with House sitting periods, and is not required to work at other times. These appointments result from a business requirement (primarily to provide staff at critical times of the year) rather than an individual making an individual flexible working request to work on a (school) term-time only basis. Pay is averaged into twelve monthly instalments.

4. **Probationary Period**

4.1 Your employment at the House of Commons is subject to a probationary period, the length of which will be stated in your letter of appointment.

4.2 The purpose of a probation period is the positive development and encouragement of new recruits while, at the same time, providing the House of Commons with an opportunity to test their suitability for continued appointment.

4.3 During your probation period your performance, conduct and attendance record are assessed formally at intervals of six and nine months to ensure that you meet the requirements for continued employment. You will be given advice and guidance to help enable you to meet the job requirements.

4.4 You do not have to serve another probationary period if you transfer to another team within the House, or are promoted. If you transfer to another team, or are promoted before you complete your probation period, your probationary period will continue in your new role.

4.5 A probationary period will usually still apply even if you are on a fixed-term or temporary appointment whose duration is equivalent to or shorter than the probationary period. If you are on a fixed-term or temporary appointment and are subsequently employed on a permanent basis by the House without a break in service, you do not necessarily need to complete the full probation period, depending on the length of your previous appointment and if you have already successfully completed part or all of the probation period.

**Completing the probation period**

4.6 In order to complete the probation period satisfactorily you must demonstrate that you are capable of meeting the requirements of the post and pay band to which you have been recruited. It is also important that your attendance record and conduct are satisfactory and that you have completed any relevant courses listed on the appropriate Mandatory Corporate Induction Training List.

4.7 If at any time during your probation period it becomes apparent that you are not making satisfactory progress your Line Manager will explain how your performance, attendance, or conduct is unsatisfactory, and set out what you need to do to improve to a satisfactory level. If you do not improve to a satisfactory level in the timescale you have been given, then your appointment will not be confirmed and can be terminated before the end of your probation.
period (see paragraph 4.10 below). You may wish to seek advice from your Trade Union Representative.

4.8 After six months’ service your Line Manager will hold a meeting with you to discuss your progress and where you may need additional help. After nine months you will have a further meeting to discuss the outcome of your probation. If your performance, conduct and attendance have been satisfactory and you have completed your personalised suite of courses and online learning, your appointment will be confirmed by your Line Manager.

4.9 In exceptional circumstances, for example if you have not been able to complete your probation due to maternity leave, unexpected severe illness or accident, your Line Manager may recommend that an extension to your probation is appropriate to assess whether your performance, conduct and attendance meet a satisfactory level. If you are not meeting the requirements of the role at the end of the probationary period, the Line Manager may consider extending your probationary period if they consider that improvement is likely.

Termination of appointment during the probation period

4.10 The House of Commons reserves the right to terminate your appointment at any time during your probation period if it is clear that you are not suitable for permanent appointment.

5. Hours of Work, Pay and Pensions

5.1 Your hours of work and pay are set out in your letter of appointment. See chapter 9 for more information on pay and overtime or on the Intranet at:

Information on pay and overtime

5.2 Information on the pension schemes available is in chapter 27.

6. Staff with a Disability

6.1 If you need an adjustment to help you perform your role, perhaps due to a disability or other particular requirement, you should discuss this with your Line Manager. If your Line Manager is not informed, they will expect you to carry out the normal duties of the role without any adjustments.

6.2 More information may be found in chapter 6 or on the Work Place Adjustments intranet page

7. Change of Personal Details

7.1 If at any time during your employment your personal details change, for example, your name, address, marital status or bank details, you must notify:
HR of a change in your personal details using the HAIS system which can be accessed using the HAIS Web Services icon on your desktop. If you do not have the HAIS Web Services icon on your desktop, please contact the Parliamentary Digital Service’s service desk. A short e-learning course and Quick Guides are available to guide you on how to update your personnel details.

Payroll Services of a change in your bank details in writing (an email is not sufficient in this case).

The Pensions Unit (pensionshocstaff@parliament.uk) for any changes to your pension details such as a change to your death benefit nominee.

7.2 Failure to notify the House of a change may affect our ability to contact you or successfully process your pay and benefits.

8. Bank References

8.1 If you need a reference, for example, for mortgage applications, personal loans or tenancy agreements, you should contact Payroll Services in the HR & Diversity team.

9. Security Clearance

9.1 All staff must be security cleared prior to appointment in order to work on the Parliamentary Estate. It is a condition of your employment with the House of Commons that you have security clearance. If for any reason you are not granted security clearance your offer of employment will be withdrawn.

9.2 Periodically the House of Commons will require you to be re-vetted in order for your security clearance to be maintained. Re-vetting is conducted by the Parliamentary Pass Office who will require you to complete a security form. Any information that you provide for the purpose of conducting the vetting process will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If it proves necessary for your security clearance to be withdrawn, this will render you liable to dismissal.

9.3 You must let your Line Manager, Countersigning Manager or Head of team know as soon as practicable if you receive a Police caution, reprimand, or final warning; are arrested and refused bail; are convicted by a court of any criminal offence(s). This does not apply to a traffic offence unless the penalty includes imprisonment or the requirement to drive is an integral part of your job. Failure to report an unspent criminal conviction may result in disciplinary action being taken against you (see chapter 18 and chapter 20). You must also let your Line Manager, Countersigning Manager or Head of team know of any other information you believe could potentially affect your security clearance. If you are in any doubt you should discuss with your Line Manager who will seek clarification.

Security passes

9.4 Anyone working on the estate, whether House staff, Member, Members’ staff or contractor, must have a valid parliamentary pass, issued by the Pass Office – this may only be used by the person to whom it was issued and must be issued before a person can start work.
on the estate. Under no circumstances should paper visitor passes be used in place of a photo 
security identity pass to enable somebody to come to work on the estate.

9.5 You will be required to have a photograph taken for your pass. These photographs must 
be taken with no part of the face obscured or covered by anything which might impede 
immediate recognition, for example, dark glasses, veils or head-dresses.

Wearing of security passes

9.6 Your photo security identity pass must be visibly displayed while you are on the 
Parliamentary Estate. It may be checked at any time and security staff must be able to match 
the photo security identity pass to the bearer with ease and without delay. You must not wear 
your pass outside the Parliamentary Estate.

9.7 Anyone seen without a pass, or with a visitor’s pass in a non-public area, should be 
challenged or reported to a member of security staff or a police officer.

9.8 Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements 
in paragraphs 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 by staff and contractors. Failure to ensure that these standards 
are followed may lead to disciplinary action.

9.9 If you become aware of somebody not complying with these requirements, report this at 
one to your Line Manager or to the Parliamentary Security team.

Facial coverings

9.10 You must not wear anything that conceals your facial features or makes comparison with 
the photograph on your pass difficult. Therefore, if you are wearing anything which obscures 
your features such as a crash helmet, veil or balaclava, you will be asked to remove it. Where 
possible, a female officer will be available to check female members of staff, but your face 
will be required to be exposed even if a female officer is unavailable.

9.11 While the House encourages everyone to be comfortable in their working environment, 
there are certain other circumstances in which you may be required to remove any covering 
which obscures your face. Circumstances might include for reasons of health and safety or 
food hygiene, and when working in customer-facing roles. You will be required to comply with 
such a request.

Restrictions for temporary staff

9.12 Any staff who do not have a full grey photographic security pass are not entitled to:

- show visitors the Visitors Route (formerly the Line of Route)
- take guests to the Terrace cafeteria or to the 1 Parliament Street cafeteria
- use the Terrace cafeteria on sitting days between 12 noon and 3 pm
- Park their cars in the precincts.

Losing your security pass or car parking permit
9.13 If you lose your photo security identity pass or car parking permit you should report the loss without delay to Security Control on ext. 5311.

**Returning your security pass**

9.14 When you leave the House, you must hand your pass to your Line Manager on your last day of service.

10. **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 The House of Commons takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, both during visits to the Parliamentary Estate, and when staff engage with them in the community. The House is committed to providing a safe environment and ensuring that it can confidently and competently fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. A link to the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy is given below:

[Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy](#)

10.2 If your role requires you to work with children or vulnerable adults you may be required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The requirement for you to undergo this check will be dependent on the nature and frequency of your contact with these groups. Your post is likely to be covered if you conduct any of the following activities at least once per month or for greater than two days in a 30-day period:

- caring for or supervising any children or vulnerable adults
- teaching, training or instructing children or vulnerable adults
- providing advice or guidance wholly or mainly for children, if the advice or guidance relates to their physical, emotional or educational wellbeing

10.3 The above list is not exhaustive but covers most cases where House of Commons staff may be required to undergo a check. If you believe your post or that of any staff for whom you are responsible as Line Manager falls under the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, you should contact your HR Adviser for clarification. HR will maintain a list of all posts requiring an enhanced DBS check and will ensure that checks are carried out as and when required. If you require clarification at any time you should contact your HR Adviser in the first instance.

10.4 If you are working in a role that requires you to undergo an enhanced DBS check, and you are subsequently convicted of a crime following your employment in that post, you must notify your Line Manager, Countersigning Manager or Head of team. Failure to report an unspent criminal conviction may result in disciplinary action against you (see chapter 18 and chapter 20).

[Return to the Staff Handbook](#)