



## Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

Note: sensitive information has been removed from this document prior to publication

5 July 2024

Dear Member,

### **Induction Pack for Members: Parliamentary Standards**

Congratulations on your election, and welcome to Parliament.

I am the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, an independent officer of the House of Commons. Under House of Commons Standing Orders, I am responsible for maintaining the Registers and monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct ('the Code'), including the assessment of complaints and investigation of alleged breaches of the Code.<sup>1</sup> I am also the decision-maker in Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS) cases against MPs, and I oversee ICGS investigations in those cases.

### **Registration of interests: urgent action required by each Member**

The House requires Members, within one month of their election, to register all their current financial interests, and any registrable benefits (other than earnings) received in the 12 months before their election.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, any new, changed or expired interests must be registered within 28 days.

#### **The deadline for registration of interests is 4 August 2024.**

**New Members** should book an induction meeting now (to be held in [information removed] from 10 July) on how to register their interests,<sup>3</sup> either by using this link [Registration Induction Booking](#) or this QR code.

#### **You will need to bring your laptop to your induction meeting.**

If you have any questions, the Registration team will be available on [information removed] from 5 July to 9 July, and in [information removed] from 10 July to 5 August inclusive.

<sup>1</sup> The House-approved process for consideration of complaints, opening of and conduct of investigations against MPs under the Code of Conduct is set out in the [Procedural Protocol in respect of the Code of Conduct](#).

<sup>2</sup> Registration is in the [Register of Members' Financial Interests](#). The main purpose of the Register is to provide information about any financial interest which a Member has, or any benefit which he or she receives, which others might reasonably consider to influence his or her actions or words as a Member of Parliament.

<sup>3</sup> Individual briefings will provide general and practical information and guidance only on how to register your interests. Under the Code of Conduct, only the Registrar of Members' Financial Interests can provide formal advice on matters in the Guide to the Rules: requests for advice must be made in writing to [CommonsRegistrar@parliament.uk](mailto:CommonsRegistrar@parliament.uk).

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020 7219 3738

**Returning Members** must review their entry in the [last edition of the Register](#) and submit any updates or changes to their registrable interests by **4 August 2024** via the Registration Portal.

**Registrations submitted by email will not be accepted.**

Full guidance and FAQs on how to use the online Registration Portal are published on ParliNet.

Members can view their last Register entry either by using the “Preview” function (on the dashboard) in the online Portal, or in the [last edition of the Register](#).

## **House of Commons Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules**

The [Code of Conduct together with the Guide to the Rules](#) sets out the rules that the House requires Members to follow.<sup>4</sup> The Code is underpinned by the Seven Principles of Public Life (the “Nolan Principles”),<sup>5</sup> which I am required to take into account when considering alleged breaches of the Code. Members are personally responsible for their adherence to the Code, including when breaches may have been caused by the actions of a member of staff.<sup>6</sup>

To support you to familiarise yourself with and uphold the House’s rules, I have prepared a short [video](#) to explain your key responsibilities in respect of the Code of Conduct.<sup>7</sup> I have also published a series of Advice Notes to support you to apply the Code.<sup>8</sup> These resources are not a substitute for reading the Code and Guide in full.

### **Declaration of interests**

I remind all Members that registration and declaration of interests are not the same: declaration covers a broader range of interests than registration.

Members must declare any relevant interest (including non-financial and non-registrable interests) in any proceedings of the House or its Committees, and in any communications with Ministers, Members, public officials or public office holders, from the time of their election. Relevant interests are those which might reasonably be thought by others to influence his or her actions or words as a Member.<sup>9</sup>

### **Guidance and advice on the Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Rules**

Members seeking information and guidance on registration, declaration and other matters in the Guide to the Rules should contact the Registrations team:

- 5-9 July 2024 inclusive, on [information removed],

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<sup>4</sup> Detailed rules on the use of Parliament’s facilities and services are found in the Rules Register on ParliNet, together with a list of rule owners who should be contacted for questions on the same. See also Appendix 4.

<sup>5</sup> Appendix 1, Seven Principles of Public Life

<sup>6</sup> [Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members](#), Introduction, paragraph 1

<sup>7</sup> Appendix 2, Commissioner’s welcome to New Members: introducing the Code of Conduct

<sup>8</sup> Appendix 3, Commissioner’s Advice Notes

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 2 of the [Guide to the Rules](#)

- 10 July to 5 August inclusive, [information removed] and
- from 6 August, at [commonsregistrar@parliament.uk](mailto:commonsregistrar@parliament.uk) or on [information removed]

For questions about specific rules governing use of Parliament’s facilities and services, see the list of rule-owners in the Rules Register, who will be able to advise you.

Please contact the Electoral Commission if you require advice on the permissibility of donations and the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).<sup>10</sup>

I am available to offer guidance and where appropriate formal advice on the Code and the Guide to the Rules,<sup>11</sup> and on wider standards matters, and all Members are welcome to contact me at [standardscommissioner@parliament.uk](mailto:standardscommissioner@parliament.uk).

Advice in advance of a course of conduct can avoid confusion and prevent breaches and public investigations: I, along with other rule-owners in the House service, am always happy to advise.

## **Parliament’s Behaviour Code and Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS)**

Parliament’s [Behaviour Code](#) and the ICGS’s [Bullying and Harassment policy](#) and [Sexual Misconduct policy](#) apply to every member of the Parliamentary Community on the Parliamentary estate or elsewhere in connection with their parliamentary activities.<sup>12</sup> They are designed to ensure that Parliament is a safe and respectful working environment for everyone, and if you keep that basic principle in mind you should find the Behaviour Code and ICGS policies entirely intuitive.

### **Supporting Members to uphold parliamentary standards**

The information and resources included in this induction pack are designed to provide an ongoing support to you and your staff in the effective performance of your role.

I will be addressing all new Members as part of the House’s induction support, and my office will provide a range of ongoing support and guidance to Members and their staff on the Code of Conduct and wider standards matters. My door is always open and I look forward to seeing you whenever you have any questions or simply want to discuss any aspect of standards.

Upholding parliamentary standards is a positive and inspiring duty, crucial to maintaining the trust and confidence that members of the public need to be able to place in Members and in Parliament.

I look forward to meeting you, and I wish you the very best for your time here.


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<sup>10</sup> Contact the Electoral Commission on 0333 103 1928

<sup>11</sup> See Introduction to the [Guide to the Rules](#), paragraph 16: “A Member who has sought and followed the advice of the Registrar of Members’ Financial Interests on a course of action (or, in respect of the stationery rules, the Clerk of the Journals), so long as they have provided adequate information for that advice to be relevant, will not have acted in breach of the rules in respect of that action.”

<sup>12</sup> For more information, see [The Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme \(ICGS\) - UK Parliament](#)

Yours faithfully,



**Daniel Greenberg CB**  
Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

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## **Appendix 1: Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)**

[Committee on Standards in Public Life, 31 May 1995](#)

### **1. The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also apply to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

#### **1.1 Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **1.2 Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **1.3 Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **1.4 Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **1.5 Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **1.6 Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **1.7 Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## **Appendix 2: Commissioner's welcome to New Members: introducing the Code of Conduct**

[Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards' introduction for new MPs & their staff \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Hello and welcome to Parliament. My name is Daniel Greenberg. I am the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and I am delighted to congratulate you upon your election as a Member of Parliament.

My main task, under the Standing Orders of the House, is to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Members. I am also the decision-maker under Parliament's Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme for bullying and harassment and sexual misconduct cases involving MPs. The Code of Conduct, the Guide to the Rules and the Behaviour Code on which the misconduct policies are based are short documents published on Parliament.uk. The Code of Conduct is just three pages, and the Behaviour Code is just one page.

As an MP, you are personally and individually responsible for compliance with all these rules from the time you are elected, and you will wish to take an early opportunity to familiarise yourself with them.

The purpose of the House's Code of Conduct is:

- to build a common understanding of what behaviour and attitudes the House wishes to promote or considers unacceptable;
- to ensure the openness and accountability essential to the proper functioning of a representative democracy;
- to protect and enhance the reputation of the House of Commons in order that the public can have justifiable confidence in it;
- to ensure all Members can and do speak and act without fear or favour; and
- to give clarity for Members and the public about the rules of conduct which underpin these standards, which are expected of all Members in undertaking their duties.

Members who breach the Code undermine these standards that the House has set down and risk sanction by the House, which in the most serious cases can result ultimately in the end of their parliamentary career. The Code rests on the Nolan principles of standards in public life, openness, accountability, honesty, integrity, objectivity, selflessness and leadership.

Those are all principles of which we can be rightly proud and which guide the vast majority of MP's and their staff in their everyday activities, as a result of which they give superb and much appreciated service to the members of the public whom they represent.

The House requires new Members to register their interests within one month of their election, and changes to a Member's list of interests are required to be registered within 28 days of occurrence.

Those interests are published in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. Chapter one of the Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members covers each of the 10 categories of registrable interest in detail, and the Registrar of Members Financial Interests and his team stand ready to support you should you have any questions.

Chapter two of the guide covers declaration of interests. Declaration is not the same as registration. In summary, when participating in most parliamentary activities, Members must declare any interest, even if that interest is not registerable, that might reasonably be thought by others to influence their actions or words.

The rules about lobbying set out in chapter three of the Guide are designed to ensure that Members do not take payment for advocating a particular matter in parliamentary proceedings, and the rules about outside interests in chapter four of the Guide prohibit the provision of paid parliamentary advice by Members.

These rules are all relatively straightforward. The Registrar or I will always be happy to advise on any issue you may have, and I have published a number of short advice notes on my parliamentary web page to support Members in applying the Code of Conduct by addressing questions that have occurred relatively frequently.

There are also rules about the use of House facilities by Members, including the use of stationery provided by the House, access tours, photography and filming, and digital services, which are available on the Parliamentary intranet in the Rules Register, along with contact details for specific advice which you should seek if you are in any way unsure of the rules.

Finally, I draw your attention to paragraph 11 of the Code of Conduct, which requires Members not to undertake any action which would cause significant damage to the reputation and integrity of the House of Commons as a whole, or of its Members generally.

As an officer appointed by the House, I am immensely proud to have been given this opportunity to support Members in their dedication to public service and to facilitate maintenance of the highest standards of public service in all that they do.

My team and I will always seek to support you to uphold the rules set by the House. I look forward to seeing you any time you wish to ask a question or simply to discuss any matter relating to the Code or standards. Generally, consultation in advance may avoid problems arising after the event and I am always at your service for that purpose.

Thank you for your attention and please accept my best wishes for success in your endeavours during your time in Parliament.

### **Appendix 3: Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards' Advice Notes: assisting Members in applying the Code of Conduct**

I have published a series of Advice Notes under Standing Order No. 150, to assist Members in applying the Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members. Advice Notes are designed to supplement and clarify (and not to supersede or contradict) provisions of the Code and the Guide.

Where specific or formal advice for a particular situation is required, the Registrar (commonsregistrar@parliament.uk) or I (standardscommissioner@parliament.uk) will be happy to provide it, in accordance with the Guide to the Rules.

To date, I have published the following Advice Notes:

<b>No.</b>	<b><a href="#">PCS Advice Notes</a> (published on <a href="#">OPCS</a> <a href="#">webpages</a>)</b>	<b>Summary of PCS Advice Notes</b>
1	<a href="#">Template provision on lobbying for reward</a>	“Advice Note provided in accordance with paragraph 95 of the Committee’s First Report of Session 2022-23, in which the Committee proposes to ask the Commissioner to advise “on wording for a template clause and letter of undertaking which satisfies the requirements of the new rule.”
2	<a href="#">Transparency of registration of income, donations and other financial interests</a>	“When considering registrable interests Members should aim to maximise transparency and accountability. Register entries should aim to describe the real-world source of income or donations. Giving full details of income reduces the risk of confusion or misrepresentation.”
3	<a href="#">Late registration of interests</a>	“Too many Members are registering interests late. This undermines the registration system. Members are personally responsible for timely registration. Future breaches will be investigated and reported for sanction.”
4	<a href="#">Registration of charitable donations</a>	“Money paid to charity (or to any other third party) at the direction of a Member remains registrable by the Member.”
5	<a href="#">MPs writing to judges</a>	“MPs should not generally write to judges. Letters from MPs will generally appear as attempts to interfere with legal proceedings, which is a breach of the separation of powers. MPs can provide character references in cases in the same way as anyone else.”



No.	<a href="#">PCS Advice Notes (published on OPCS webpages)</a>	Summary of PCS Advice Notes
6	<a href="#">Paid Parliamentary advice</a>	“When applying the new prohibition against the provision of paid Parliamentary advice and consultancy, Members should ask themselves whether the potential payer is seeking to “buy” the services of an MP in their capacity as such (which is prohibited) or to take advantage of non-Parliamentary professional or other skills or expertise which the Member happens to have (which is permitted).”
7	<a href="#">Lobbying after visits</a>	“When a Member goes on a funded visit, the rules on paid lobbying prevent the Member from seeking a benefit for the body that funded the visit; they do not prevent any other lobbying about the place visited or related matters.”
8	<a href="#">Crowdfunding</a>	“There is no objection to Members using crowdfunding campaigns to raise money; but it is their responsibility to ensure that registration requirements are met, and permissible donation laws are observed, in respect of all donations. Fully anonymous donations should not be accepted.”
9	<a href="#">Unpaid, Dormant and Miscellaneous Registrable Interests</a>	“The 2023 version of the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members introduced some new categories of registrable interest, including formal unpaid roles (including directorships) and roles with party organisations. Members will wish to consider the breadth of the new form of the Miscellaneous registration category.”
10	<a href="#">Registering estimated values</a>	“Where the value of a gift, hospitality or other benefit cannot be established before the deadline for registration, the Registrar will accept an estimate. The updated entry when the actual value is ascertained will not count as a late registration.”
11	<a href="#">Casework for family and friends</a>	“There is no reason why a Member should not pursue an issue on behalf of a constituent who is also a member of their family or a friend. Actual or perceived conflicts of interest should be guarded against in the usual ways, primarily through transparency.”

<b>No.</b>	<b><u><a href="#">PCS Advice Notes</a></u> <b>(published on <u><a href="#">OPCS</a></u> <u><a href="#">webpages</a></u>)</b></b>	<b>Summary of PCS Advice Notes</b>
12	<u><a href="#">Tours and Hospitality on the Parliamentary Estate</a></u>	“The Code of Conduct’s rule about using parliamentary facilities only for parliamentary activities or for reasonable personal use includes tours and catering facilities. Tours and hospitality on the Parliamentary Estate must never be offered as a prize or reward for donations or other benefits. Rules applying to specific facilities will be found in the Rules Register”.

## **Appendix 4: the House’s detailed rules on use of Parliament’s facilities and services**

Rule 8 of the Code of Conduct states:

‘Excepting modest and reasonable personal use, Members must ensure that the use of facilities and services provided to them by Parliament, including an office, is in support of their parliamentary activities, and is in accordance with all relevant rules.’

The relevant rules for the use of Parliamentary facilities and services are found in the Rules Register on ParliNet, together with a list of rule owners who should be contacted for questions on the same. Contact details for some of the most frequently asked about rules are below, for ease of reference:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Contact for questions</b>
Stationery rules	If you have questions, contact the Accommodation Team [information removed]  For formal advice under the Code of Conduct on House of Commons stationery, contact [information removed] Clerk of the Journals <sup>13</sup>
Commercial/banqueting venue rules	If you have questions, contact the Events Team [information removed]  For advice, contact [information removed], Interim Director of Catering
Tours and tours as prizes	If you have questions, contact the Bookings and Ticketing Team [information removed]  For advice, contact [information removed], Director of Visitor Experience

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<sup>13</sup> See Introduction to the Guide to the Rules, paragraph 16 (and footnote 11, above)

## **Appendix 5: All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)**

The [Guide to the Rules on APPGs](#) (published September 2023) sets out the rules that APPGs must comply with. These include the membership, meetings, publications and finances of APPGs. The summary information below is not a substitute for reading the Guide to the Rules on APPGs in full.

### **Closing income and expenditure statement**

- All APPGs cease to exist while Parliament is dissolved and must complete a closing [income and expenditure statement](#) (even if it is a ‘nil return’) before two months have elapsed after the General Election on 4 July 2024. The statement should cover the period between the start of the group’s latest reporting year and the date of dissolution. It should be signed by the Member who was Chair of the group at the point of dissolution.

### **Requirement for APPGs to hold Inaugural Meeting**

- If your APPG wants to operate in the new parliament, it will first need to hold an [Inaugural Meeting](#) to elect its officers then register the result. There is no deadline by which the group must hold its Inaugural Meeting but you cannot hold it before the State Opening of Parliament.
- Please note that APPGs cannot conduct any business between the Dissolution of Parliament and the group’s Inaugural Meeting.

### **Registration form for APPGs**

- The [Registration Form for APPGs](#) explains how to hold the Inaugural Meeting and register the outcome. Please do not enclose any documents with the registration form you send us (eg minutes, membership lists, income and expenditure statements). The Commons Registry Office does not hold copies of these or publish them on behalf of APPGs.

### **Membership and Officers**

- The Group must be open to all non-government Members of either House.
- A Group must have four registered officers (and no more), including at least one from the government party (or parties) and at least one from the main opposition party. At least two officers must be from the Commons.
- The Group must have a Commons chair; Peers can be co-chairs. The chair counts as one of the four officers.
- A Member of the House of Commons may be an officer of a maximum of six Groups.
- An APPG must have at least 20 parliamentary members and must maintain an accurate and up-to-date list of those members (which must be made available as set out in the Guide to the Rules).

## Secretariats

- An APPG may employ a secretariat to undertake its administration. However, it must not accept the provision of a secretariat by or on behalf of a foreign government, nor may it accept the services of a secretariat funded directly or indirectly by a foreign government.
- A Group's officers must undertake due diligence as to whether a foreign government is the eventual funder of a secretariat or other benefit.

<p><b><u>Advice Note on due diligence</u></b></p> <p>(Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and the Parliamentary Security Department, 20 September 2023)</p>	<p>Summary: "This document explains the new rule on the relationship between APPGs and foreign governments and provides advice to APPG Officers who are responsible for undertaking due diligence to ascertain whether the ultimate funder of any benefit to the APPG is a foreign government."</p>
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## Transparency

- APPGs must either publish on their website if they have one (or make available on request if they do not) the required information as set out in the Guide to the Rules.
- Where the rules provide that information relating to a Group must be provided on request, this must be provided within 28 days.
- Website addresses must be included in a Group's Register entry.

## Registering financial benefits.

- APPGs' financial and material benefits must be registered, subject to the thresholds set out in the Guide to the Rules on APPGs (see link above).

**The following additional rules apply to Groups who receive outside financial benefits (or benefits in kind) over £1,500 in a calendar year, applying from the point at which that threshold is reached:**

- The Group's subsequent AGM (and any Extraordinary General Meeting called to elect an officer) must be chaired by a Member of Parliament nominated by the Speaker who is not an officer or member of that Group.
- The quorum for the Group's AGM shall be eight members of either House (not including the externally appointed chair of the meeting).
- The Group shall publish an annual report explaining its work and a due diligence statement in relation to foreign government funding.
- The Group's four officers are jointly and severally liable for compliance with these additional rules.

## Contact for questions

For further advice please contact the Registry Office at [groupsregister@parliament.uk](mailto:groupsregister@parliament.uk)

## **Appendix 6: Register of Members' staff interests (known as the 'Staff Register')**

Only passholders are included on the Staff Register.

After the General Election, new staff will be given a registration form by the Pass Office when they apply for a pass.

Returning staff who held a pass before the General Election will only be required to complete a registration form if they have a new sponsoring Member and therefore require a new pass.

For returning staff whose sponsoring Member is unchanged from before the General Election, we will carry over their latest Register entry from the previous Parliament into the next edition of the Register.

Once a new pass has been physically collected from the Pass Office by the staff member concerned, the Pass Office send us the passholder's completed registration form. We will send staff confirmation once we have received their completed registration form and created an entry for them on the Register.

Prior to publication we will use Pass Office data on current passholders to identify and remove from the Register staff who no longer hold a pass.

For more information see [Staff Register](#).