



House of Commons

The Code of Conduct

*Approved by the House of Commons on 12
March 2012 and 17 March 2015*

together with

The Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members

*Approved by the House of Commons on 17
March 2015*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed on 18 March 2015*

HC 1076

Published on 14 April 2015
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£12.00

Contents

Contents	<i>Page</i>
The Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament	3
I. Purpose of the Code	3
II. Scope of the Code	3
III. Duties of Members	3
IV. General Principles of Conduct	3
V. Rules of Conduct	4
VI. Upholding the Code	5
Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members	10
Introduction	10
Chapter 1: Registration of Members' Financial Interests	15
Chapter 2: Declaration of Members' Interests	33
Chapter 3: Lobbying for reward or consideration	37
Chapter 4: Procedure for inquiries	43
Appendix to the Guide to the Rules: Resolutions of the House relating to the Conduct of Members	48
Registration and Declaration of Members' Financial Interests	48
Lobbying for Reward or Consideration	51
Conduct of Members	53
Index to the Guide to the Rules	56

The Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament

Prepared pursuant to the Resolution of the House of 19 July 1995

I. Purpose of the Code

1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist all Members in the discharge of their obligations to the House, their constituents and the public at large by:
 - (a) establishing the standards and principles of conduct expected of all Members in undertaking their duties;
 - (b) setting the rules of conduct which underpin these standards and principles and to which all Members must adhere; and in so doing
 - (c) ensuring public confidence in the standards expected of all Members and in the commitment of the House to upholding these rules.

II. Scope of the Code

2. The Code applies to Members in all aspects of their public life. It does not seek to regulate what Members do in their purely private and personal lives.
3. The obligations set out in this Code are complementary to those which apply to all Members by virtue of the procedural and other rules of the House and the rulings of the Chair, and to those which apply to Members falling within the scope of the Ministerial Code.

III. Duties of Members

4. By virtue of the oath, or affirmation, of allegiance taken by all Members when they are elected to the House, Members have a duty to be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, her heirs and successors, according to law.
5. Members have a duty to uphold the law, including the general law against discrimination.
6. Members have a general duty to act in the interests of the nation as a whole; and a special duty to their constituents.
7. Members should act on all occasions in accordance with the public trust placed in them. They should always behave with probity and integrity, including in their use of public resources.

IV. General Principles of Conduct

8. In carrying out their parliamentary and public duties, Members will be expected to observe the following general principles of conduct identified by the Committee on

Standards in Public Life in its First Report as applying to holders of public office.¹ These principles will be taken into account when considering the investigation and determination of any allegations of breaches of the rules of conduct in Part V of the Code.

“Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.”

V. Rules of Conduct

9. Members are expected to observe the following rules and associated Resolutions of the House.

1 Cm 2850-I, p 14

10. Members shall base their conduct on a consideration of the public interest, avoid conflict between personal interest and the public interest and resolve any conflict between the two, at once, and in favour of the public interest.

11. No Member shall act as a paid advocate in any proceeding of the House.²

12. The acceptance by a Member of a bribe to influence his or her conduct as a Member, including any fee, compensation or reward in connection with the promotion of, or opposition to, any Bill, Motion, or other matter submitted, or intended to be submitted to the House, or to any Committee of the House, is contrary to the law of Parliament.³

13. Members shall fulfil conscientiously the requirements of the House in respect of the registration of interests in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. They shall always be open and frank in drawing attention to any relevant interest in any proceeding of the House or its Committees, and in any communications with Ministers, Members, public officials or public office holders.⁴

14. Information which Members receive in confidence in the course of their parliamentary duties should be used only in connection with those duties. Such information must never be used for the purpose of financial gain.

15. Members are personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that their use of any expenses, allowances, facilities and services provided from the public purse is in accordance with the rules laid down on these matters. Members shall ensure that their use of public resources is always in support of their parliamentary duties. It should not confer any undue personal or financial benefit on themselves or anyone else, or confer undue advantage on a political organisation.

16. Members shall never 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.

VI. Upholding the Code

17. The application of this Code shall be a matter for the House of Commons, and particularly for the Committee on Standards and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards acting in accordance with Standing Orders Nos 149 and 150 respectively.

18. The Commissioner may investigate a specific matter relating to a Member's adherence to the rules of conduct under the Code. Members shall cooperate, at all stages, with any such investigation by or under the authority of the House. No Member shall lobby a member of the Committee in a manner calculated or intended to influence its consideration of an alleged breach of this Code.

2 Resolutions of 6 November 1995 and 15 July 1947 as amended on 6 November 1995 and 14 May 2002

3 Resolutions of 2 May 1695, 22 June 1858, and 15 July 1947 as amended on 6 November 1995 and 14 May 2002

4 Resolutions of the House of 22 May 1974 as amended on 9 February 2009; 12 June 1975 as amended on 19 July 1995 and 9 February 2009; 12 June 1975 as amended on 9 February 2009; 17 December 1985 as amended on 9 February 2009; 6 November 1995 as amended on 14 May 2002 and 9 February 2009; 13 July 1992; 30 April 2009 as amended on 7 February 2011 and 27 March 2008, as amended on 9 February 2009

19. The Committee will consider any report from the Commissioner to it and report its conclusions and recommendations to the House. The House may impose a sanction on the Member where it considers it necessary.

The Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members

Contents

Page

Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members	10
Introduction	10
Registration and declaration of financial interests (Chapters 1 and 2)	10
Lobbying for reward or consideration (Chapter 3)	13
Procedure for inquiries (Chapter 4)	13
Ministers of the Crown	14
Sources of advice	14
Commencement	14
Chapter 1: Registration of Members' Financial Interests	15
Requirements of the House	15
Category 1: Employment and earnings	15
Threshold for registration	15
Requirements for registration	16
Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament	18
Threshold for registration	18
Requirements for registration under Category 2(a) and 2(b)	18
Permissible donors	20
Category 3: Gifts, benefits and hospitality from UK sources	21
Threshold for registration	21
Requirements for registration	21
Category 4: Visits outside the UK	24
Threshold for registration	24
Requirements for registration	24
Category 5: Gifts and benefits from sources outside the UK	26
Threshold for registration	26
Requirements for registration	26
Category 6: Land and property	28
Threshold for registration	28
Requirements for registration	28
Category 7: Shareholdings	29
Threshold for registration	29
Requirements for registration	29
Category 8: Miscellaneous	30
Requirements for registration	30
Category 9: Family members employed	31
Threshold for registration	31
Requirements for registration	31
Category 10: Family members engaged in lobbying	31
Requirements for registration	31
Chapter 2: Declaration of Members' Interests	33
Requirements of the House	33

Requirements for declaration	33
Occasions when declaration is required	34
Chapter 3: Lobbying for reward or consideration	37
The principle	37
The rules relating to lobbying	38
Time limits	38
Definitions	38
Application of the lobbying rules	40
Chapter 4: Procedure for inquiries	43
Requirements of the House	43
Submitting a complaint	44
Parliamentary privilege	44
Initiating an inquiry	44
Resolution of inquiries: Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards	45
Resolution of inquiries: Committee on Standards	46
Remit of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards	47
Appendix to the Guide to the Rules: Resolutions of the House relating to the Conduct of Members	48
Registration and Declaration of Members' Financial Interests	48
Resolutions of 22 May 1974, amended on 9 February 2009: Members' Financial Interests (Declaration)	48
Resolution of 12 June 1975, amended on 19 July 1995 and 9 February 2009: Members' Financial Interests (Declaration)	48
Resolution of 12 June 1975, amended on 9 February 2009: Members' Financial Interests (Declaration)	49
Resolution of 17 December 1985, amended on 9 February 2009: Register of Members' Financial Interests	49
Resolution of 6 November 1995, amended on 14 May 2002 and 9 February 2009: Agreements for the Provision of Services	50
Resolution of 13 July 1992: Members' Interests (Interests of Chairmen and members of Select Committees)	50
Resolution of 30 April 2009, as amended on 7 February 2011: Registration of Members' Financial Interests	51
Lobbying for Reward or Consideration	51
Resolution of 2 May 1695: Against offering Bribes to Members	51
Resolution of 22 June 1858: Rewards to Members	52
Resolution of 15 July 1947, amended on 6 November 1995 and 14 May 2002: Conduct of Members	52
Resolution of 6 November 1995: Standards in Public Life	52
Conduct of Members	53
Resolution of 19 July 1995: Code of Conduct	53
Resolution of 24 July 1996: Code of Conduct	53
Resolution of 14 May 2002, amended on 9 February 2009: Code of Conduct	53
Resolution of 13 July 2005: Standards and Privileges	54
Resolution of 27 March 2008, amended on 9 February 2009: Standards and Privileges	54

Resolution of 9 February 2009: Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members	54
Resolution of 12 March 2012: Code of Conduct	55
Resolution of 17 March 2015: Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members	55
Index to the Guide to the Rules	56

Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members

Introduction

1. The Code of Conduct provides a set of rules to which Members must adhere.⁵ Some of these rules are supported by more detailed guidance. Those set out in this Guide relate to the registration and declaration of interests, and to paid lobbying. The Guide also sets out the procedure for inquiries by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

2. The Guide to the Rules and amendments to it are approved by means of Resolutions of the House of Commons. This Guide therefore carries the authority of the House. The House has agreed that its previous resolutions in relation to the conduct of Members shall be read and given effect in a way which is compatible with the Code of Conduct and this Guide to the Rules relating to the conduct of Members.

3. The Guide is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 of the Guide explains the requirements in relation to the registration of Members' financial interests;
- Chapter 2 explains the requirements in relation to the declaration of interests in proceedings of the House and on other occasions;
- Chapter 3 sets out the restrictions on Members engaging in lobbying for reward or consideration;
- Chapter 4 provides an outline of the Commissioner's remit, and sets out the procedures in relation to the Commissioner's inquiries.

Registration and declaration of financial interests (Chapters 1 and 2)

4. Paragraph 13 of the Code of Conduct provides:

13. Members shall fulfil conscientiously the requirements of the House in respect of the registration of interests in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. They shall always be open and frank in drawing attention to any relevant interest in any proceeding of the House or its Committees, and in any communications with Ministers, Members, public officials or public office holders.

5. The overall aim of both registration and declaration is to provide information about any financial interest which might reasonably be thought by others to influence a Member's actions, speeches or votes in Parliament, or actions taken in his or her capacity as a

⁵ 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.

Member of Parliament.⁶ Financial interests include material benefits and payments in kind.⁷ Each Member is responsible for making a full disclosure of such interests, which is achieved by registering and declaring them in accordance with the requirements of the House. The aim of this is openness. Neither registration nor declaration imply any wrongdoing.

6. Registration requires Members to place information about relevant financial interests in the Register of Members' Financial Interests, thus making it available to the public on a continuing basis. In addition, some of the information required for the Register reflects the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), as amended. The Electoral Commission extracts the information which it needs from the published Register, or, where the publication timescale of the Register does not permit this, by accessing from the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards the relevant information provided by Members.

7. The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards is responsible for preparing the Register, which is published electronically under the authority of the Committee on Standards. A printed version is also produced under the Committee's authority soon after the beginning of each new Parliament and approximately annually thereafter. Entries remain in the Register for twelve months, or until they have appeared in one printed Register if that is later.

8. The Guide sets out the categories in which Members are required to register their financial interests and the information to be provided. These categories are summarised below, together with the financial thresholds which apply. When considering registration, Members are also required to keep in mind the overall purpose of the Register.⁸ If a Member has any financial interests which meet that purpose but which do not fall clearly into one of the defined categories, he or she is nonetheless required to register them, normally under the Miscellaneous category.

6 This reflects the recommendations in the First Report of the Select Committee on Members' Interests, Session 1991–92, *Registration and Declaration of Financial Interests*, HC 236, paragraph 72.

7 The terms “financial interests” should be read in this way throughout this Guide.

8 The purpose of the Register is set out as paragraph 5 above.

Category	Financial threshold for registration
1. Employment and earnings	Over £100 for individual payments. Over £300 for the total of multiple payments of whatever size from the same source in a calendar year
2. Donations and other support	Over £1,500, either as individual payment, or for the total of multiple donations of more than £500 from the same source in the course of a calendar year
3. Gifts, benefits and hospitality from UK sources	Over £300 for the total of benefits of whatever size from the same source in a calendar year
4. Visits outside the UK	Over £300 if not wholly borne by Member or public funds Threshold also applies to the total of benefits of whatever size from the same source in a calendar year
5. Gifts and benefits from sources outside the UK	Over £300 for the total of benefits of whatever size from the same source in a calendar year
6. Land and property in the UK and elsewhere	Total value of property held: over £100,000 Income derived from property: over £10,000 in a calendar year
7. Shareholdings	Greater than 15% of issued share capital (on preceding 5 April), or if 15% or less of issued share capital (on preceding 5 April), greater in value than £70,000
8. Miscellaneous	No threshold
9. Family members employed and remunerated through parliamentary expenses	Remuneration of over £700 in a calendar year
10. Family members engaged in lobbying	No threshold

9. The requirement for the declaration of interests, set out in Chapter 2, applies in almost every aspect of a Member's activities, in the Chamber, in Committee and in their contacts with others, including Ministers, other Members, public officials and public office holders. It covers, as well as registrable interests, other financial interests which meet the test of relevance but which do not require registration, including past interests and expected future interests and the indirect financial interests of a spouse, partner or family member. Members may also declare non-financial interests if they consider these meet the same test of relevance. The test is whether those interests might reasonably be thought by others to influence his or her actions or words as a Member.

10. Members are not required to register or declare benefits available to all Members, such as their parliamentary salaries, or expenses met from parliamentary sources, or from a scheme for parliamentary expenses. Nor are they required to register or declare benefits

provided by their own political party, except as required under registration Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament.

Lobbying for reward or consideration (Chapter 3)

11. Paragraph 11 of the Code of Conduct provides:

11. No Member shall act as a paid advocate in any proceeding of the House.

12. A Member may, however, still hold a remunerated outside interest as a director, consultant or adviser or in any other capacity. Members who receive such financial benefits may take part in parliamentary proceedings or in meetings and discussions with Ministers, other Members and public officials, which could affect that interest, provided they do so in accordance with the provisions set out in Chapter 3 of this Guide. But such Members must not initiate proceedings or meetings which would provide a financial or material benefit to any organisation or individual from whom they have received, are receiving or expect to receive reward or consideration.

Procedure for inquiries (Chapter 4)

13. Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Code of Conduct provide:

17. The application of this Code shall be a matter for the House of Commons, and particularly for the Committee on Standards and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards acting in accordance with Standing Orders Nos 149 and 150 respectively.

18. The Commissioner may investigate a specific matter relating to a Member's adherence to the rules of conduct under the Code. Members shall cooperate, at all stages, with any such investigation by or under the authority of the House. No Member shall lobby a member of the Committee in a manner calculated or intended to influence its consideration of an alleged breach of this Code.

14. Allegations about failure to register or declare a relevant interest in accordance with the rules of the House, failure to abide by the rules on lobbying for reward or consideration, or any other alleged failure to meet the rules set out in the Code of Conduct are considered by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards who reports to the Committee on Standards.

15. Complaints about the misuse of the scheme for parliamentary expenses since May 2010 are a matter for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. However, if the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority or its Compliance Officer consider that a Member's conduct justifies it, they shall refer that Member, with the relevant evidence, to the Commissioner for him or her to decide whether to inquire into a potential breach of the Code of Conduct and its associated rules.

Ministers of the Crown

16. Ministers of the Crown who are Members of the House of Commons are subject to the rules on registration and declaration of interests in the same way as all other Members (although Ministerial office is not registrable and salaried Ministers may still speak in support of Government policies without breaching the restrictions on lobbying for reward or consideration). Members are not required to register either Ministerial office or benefits received in their capacity as a Minister. But Ministers are subject to the further guidelines and requirements laid down by successive Prime Ministers in the Ministerial Code, available from the Cabinet Office. These are not enforced by the House of Commons and so are beyond the scope of this Guide.

Sources of advice

17. No written guidance can provide for all circumstances, and the references in this Guide should not be regarded as exhaustive. The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards (“the Commissioner”) and the Registrar of Members’ Financial Interests (“the Registrar”) are available to give advice, as is the Electoral Commission as regards the permissibility of donations and the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).⁹

Commencement

18. The provisions of this Guide apply to all actions by or required of the Member from the commencement date or dates of the Guide agreed by the House. Actions undertaken by or requirements of Members before that commencement date or dates are governed by the previous version of the Guide in force at the material time.

⁹ Please contact the Electoral Commission on 020 7271 0616.

Chapter 1: Registration of Members' Financial Interests

Requirements of the House

1. Paragraph 13 of the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament provides:

13. Members shall fulfil conscientiously the requirements of the House in respect of the registration of interests in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. They shall always be open and frank in drawing attention to any relevant interest in any proceeding of the House or its Committees, and in any communications with Ministers, Members, public officials or public office holders.

2. The House requires new 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. After that, Members are required to register within 28 days any change in those registrable interests. Such a change includes both the acquisition of a new interest and the ceasing of any registered interest, for example because an employment has ceased or because a holding has reduced in value or been sold.

3. A Member who has a registrable interest must notify the Commissioner of that interest before he or she undertakes any action, speech or proceeding of the House (except voting) to which the interest would be relevant.

4. The paragraphs below set out the requirements of the House under ten categories. When considering registration, Members are also required to keep in mind the overall purpose of the Register, which is to provide information about any financial interest or other material benefit which a Member receives which might reasonably be thought by others to influence his or her actions, speeches or votes in Parliament, or actions taken in his or her capacity as a Member of Parliament. If a Member has any financial interests which meet that purpose but which do not fall clearly into one of the defined categories, he or she is nonetheless required to register them, normally under the Miscellaneous category.

5. The Miscellaneous category may also be used to register non-financial interests when the Member considers they meet the purpose of the Register.

Category 1: Employment and earnings

Threshold for registration

6. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, individual payments of more than £100 which they receive for any employment outside the House. They must also register individual payments of £100 or less once they have received a total of over £300 in payments of whatever size from the same source in a calendar year.

Requirements for registration

7. Under this category Members must register:

Any of the following received as a director or employee or earned in any other capacity:

- a) Salaries, fees and payments in kind; gifts received in recognition of services performed;
- b) Taxable expenses, allowances and benefits such as company cars;
- c) Redundancy and ex gratia payments;
- d) Income as a member of Lloyd's; and¹⁰
- e) Payments for opinion surveys (unless they fall below the registration threshold).

8. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Earnings received as a Member, Minister or select committee Chair in the UK Parliament;
- b) Unremunerated directorships (unless associated with, or a subsidiary of, a company or group of which the Member is a remunerated director);¹¹
- c) Directorships of companies not currently trading;¹²
- d) Earnings of the Member's spouse, partner or family members;
- e) Income received by way of dividends; and
- f) Pension payments.

9. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) Whether the Member is a director of the organisation;
- b) The name and address of the payer¹³ and a brief description of their business (if not self evident);

10 Members who have resigned from Lloyd's should continue to register their interest as long as syndicates in which they have participated continue to have years of account which are open or in run-off. In such circumstances Members should register the date of resignation. Members of Lloyd's are also required to disclose the categories of insurance business which they are underwriting. Any member of Lloyd's receiving financial assistance (including relief from indebtedness or other loan concessions but excluding any general settlement available to all Lloyd's members) from a company, organisation or person within or outside the United Kingdom should register that interest under gifts and other benefits.

11 Members may register these if they consider them relevant, under Category 8: Miscellaneous.

12 Members may register these if they consider them relevant, under Category 8: Miscellaneous.

13 Unless this would be contrary to any legal or established professional duty of privacy or confidentiality.

- c) The name and address of any client to whom the Member has personally provided services,¹⁴ if different from the payer, and a brief description of their business (if not self evident);
- d) The size of the payment received, and the nature and value of any taxable benefits and any payments in kind. (Earnings should be given gross, i.e. before tax or other deductions, wherever possible. Fees should be given before the addition of VAT.);
- e) The nature of the work involved, and the number of hours' work to which each payment relates;
- f) The date when the payment was received (or, if not yet received, the date when the work was completed); and
- g) Confirmation that the Member has not engaged in paid advocacy.¹⁵

Members who ceased to hold Ministerial office within the previous two years

10. Such Members should state, additionally, whether they sought the advice of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments in respect of this employment.

Payments made to other people or organisations

11. A Member who receives payment for his or her work and then donates it to another person, or to a charitable or community organisation, must make their registration in the usual way but may note the donation in their Register entry.

12. A Member who does not receive payment for his or her work in a recognisable form or at all, because it is made to another person or organisation, should nevertheless register the payment within 28 days of its receipt by that other person or organisation. This applies only to payments which, if made direct to the Member, would have required registration under this category.

Contractual agreements for twelve months or more

13. A Member who has a contractual agreement for twelve months or more and receives regular payments may choose, instead of registering each payment as it is received, to register such payments in advance, provided that he or she afterwards registers within 28 days any variation to the information already provided. The initial information to be provided is as set out in paragraph 9 above, except that instead of the information required under subparagraphs (d) and (f), the Member should provide:

- h) The agreed start, and (if any) end dates for the contract;
- i) The agreed payments, including any taxable benefits and payments in kind;

¹⁴ Unless this would be contrary to any legal or established professional duty of privacy or confidentiality.

¹⁵ As described in paragraph 1 of chapter 3 of this Guide.

- j) The dates agreed for those payments.

Registering ad hoc payments in advance

14. A Member who has undertaken work and agreed the terms of payment need not wait to receive that payment before making a Register entry, but may register the work at any time between completing the work and 28 days after receiving any payment. In such cases, the Member should provide the date when the work was completed.

Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament

Threshold for registration

15. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, support for their activities as a Member, or for candidacy at an election for parliamentary or non-parliamentary office, which has a value of more than £1,500, either as a single donation or in multiple donations of more than £500 from the same source in a calendar year.¹⁶

Requirements for registration under Category 2(a) and 2(b)

16. This category has two parts

Category 2(a): support received by a local party organisation or indirectly via a central party organisation.¹⁷ A Member must register under this sub-category support received by his or her constituency party organisation or which he or she receives via a central party organisation if there was a clear link between the donation and him or her; for example, if it was given to a such an organisation with a wish that it be allocated to him or her, to his or her fighting fund or to a front bench office which he or she held; if it was assigned to him or her in circumstances where he or she was aware, or could reasonably be expected to be aware, of the identity of the donor; or if he or she had invited or encouraged the donation;

Category 2(b): any other support received by a Member. This includes support received indirectly, for example via a political club.¹⁸ Before accepting any donations registrable under this category, Members must check that they are from a permissible donor. Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act, Members must not accept impermissible donations and must notify the Electoral Commission within 30 days of receipt.¹⁹

16 The terms “donations” and “support”, as used in this chapter, include both financial support and support in kind.

17 Defined as a registered political party or an accounting unit of such a party.

18 A political club is not a registered political party or an accounting unit of such a party. It is likely to be a Members’ association under PPERA, defined as an organisation separate from, but which may be affiliated to, registered parties, but whose members come mainly from one party.

19 For an explanation of a permissible donor see the end of this section. Please contact the Electoral Commission for further advice on checking permissibility and how to report and return an impermissible donation: tel 0207 271 0616. Members must check the permissibility of all donations with a value of £500 or more. Members have 30 days from receipt of the donation to check that the donor is permissible and decide whether or not to accept it. If the donor is not a permissible source then the Member must return the donation and notify the Electoral Commission

17. Under this category Members must register:

- a) Financial support and sponsorship;
- b) Loans and credit arrangements;
- c) Support in kind, including any of the following, if provided either free or at concessionary rates: advice or information services; receptions and events; training or development for the Member or his or her staff; the services of staff or interns; the provision of office space or equipment; hospitality or travel benefits such as season tickets or parking;²⁰
- d) Bequests;
- e) Gifts of property.

18. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Direct support from the Member's own party organisation;
- b) Trade union support for a constituency party organisation, where this is linked to the constituency and would be provided irrespective of the identity of the Member;
- c) Facilities, equipment or services provided by Parliament, or for which the Member claimed under a scheme for parliamentary expenses; and loans or credit arrangements taken out in order to fund activities for which the Member may claim expenses under a scheme for parliamentary expenses;
- d) Hospitality from UK public bodies, including for example devolved administrations, government departments, the armed services or the police, or local or health authorities. If there is any doubt as to the permissibility of such donors, Members should consult the Electoral Commission;²¹
- e) The hours contributed by volunteers (unless funded by another body);
- f) Any money or support provided out of public funds for the Member's security;
- g) Participation in developmental and secondment programmes, such as those operated by the Industry and Parliament Trust, the Armed Services Parliamentary Scheme and the Police Service Parliamentary Scheme, which are approved by the parliamentary authorities;²²

within the 30 days. Responsibility for checking the permissibility of donations registered under category 2(a) rests with the relevant party organisation.

20 A concessionary rate should be valued by reference to the nearest equivalent commercial rate.

21 Tel 020 7271 0616. See also the list of permissible donors.

22 Incidental benefits such as gifts or visits do however require registration under categories 3, 4 or 5 if they are received in the course of such a fellowship or secondment.

- h) Donations or gifts which are intended to provide personal benefit, which should be registered if necessary under Category 3: gift, benefits and hospitality from UK sources or Category 5: gifts and benefits from sources outside the UK;
- i) Foreign visits, which should be registered if necessary under Category 4: Visits outside the UK;
- j) Donations or other support received in a Member's capacity as a Minister, which should be recorded, if necessary, within the relevant Government Department in accordance with the Ministerial Code.

19. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The name and address of the donor and (if the donation was received indirectly) of the organisation acting as intermediary;²³
- b) The amount of the donation, or its nature and value if it is a donation in kind;²⁴
- c) Category 2(b) only: the dates of receipt²⁵ and acceptance;
- d) The status of the donor (whether an individual, building society, friendly society, LLP, registered party (other than the Member's own party), trade union, unincorporated association or company, in which case the company registration number is required);
- e) If the donor is a trust, the name and address of the person who created the trust; if created after 27 July 1999, the names and addresses of all others who have transferred property to the trust, or, if created before 27 July 1999, the date it was created;
- f) If the donation is by means of a bequest, the name and last address of the person who made the bequest, or, if that address is not listed in an electoral register, the last address where that person was registered in the previous five years.

Permissible donors

20. Members must not accept any donations, loans, security or other support valued at over £500 from impermissible donors. They must also report them to the Electoral Commission within 30 days of receipt. The following are permissible donors:

- an individual registered in a UK electoral register (or a bequest from such an individual);

23 Private addresses will not be published.

24 When registering any income from fundraising, for example by local party organisations or political clubs, Members should give the net figure (i.e. the surplus generated by the fundraising after costs are deducted) along with details of any individual donation which exceeded the financial threshold, and the relevant donor. If the funds were raised for more than one Member, each should register as if he or she was the sole beneficiary.

25 Subscriptions, memberships and staff secondments are generally regarded as received on their start dates.

- a UK registered company which is incorporated within the EU and carries on business in the UK;
- a Great Britain registered political party;²⁶
- a UK registered trade union;
- a UK registered building society;
- a UK registered limited liability partnership that carries on business in the UK;
- a UK registered friendly society;
- a UK based unincorporated association that carries on business or other activities in the UK.

21. In addition, certain trusts may be permissible as donors, but not as lenders or providers of security or credit. Local councils are not permissible donors or lenders.

Category 3: Gifts, benefits and hospitality from UK sources

Threshold for registration

22. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, any gifts, benefits or hospitality with a value of over £300 which they receive from a UK source. They must also register multiple benefits from the same source if these have a value of more than £300 in a calendar year.²⁷

Requirements for registration

23. Under this category Members must register:

Any benefits which relate in any way to their membership of the House or political activities, if provided by a UK source either free or at concessionary rates, including:²⁸

- a) event or travel tickets;²⁹
- b) hospitality in the UK, including receptions, meals and accommodation;
- c) gifts such as clothing or jewellery;
- d) club subscriptions and memberships;

26 Northern Ireland parties are not included as permissible donors because of the different rules on donations to which they are subject.

27 Subsequent references to benefits in this category include gifts and hospitality.

28 A concessionary rate should be valued by reference to the nearest equivalent commercial rate.

29 International travel and hospitality received abroad should normally be registered under Category 4: Visits outside the UK.

- e) loans or credit arrangements;
- f) discount cards.

See paragraph 27 below for guidance on the registration of benefits given to others.

24. Before accepting any benefit over £500 which would require registration in this category, (including a credit facility or a loan which exceeds £500 in value) Members are required to satisfy themselves that it is from a permissible donor, and to notify the Electoral Commission within 30 days of any impermissible donations.³⁰

25. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Benefits which could not reasonably be thought by others to be related to membership of the House or to the Member's parliamentary or political activities; for example, purely personal gifts or benefits from partners or family members. However, both the possible motive of the giver and the use to which the gift is to be put should be considered. If there is any doubt, the benefit should be registered;
- b) Hospitality from UK public bodies, including for example devolved administrations, government departments, the armed services or the police, or local or health authorities. If there is any doubt as to the permissibility of such donors, the Member should consult the Electoral Commission;³¹
- c) Benefits received in recognition of a service performed by a Member, e.g. after giving a speech. If these benefits would not have been received had this service not been performed, they should be registered under Category 1: Employment and earnings;
- d) Donations or other assistance given to a Member to support his or her parliamentary or political activities, or for candidacy at an election for parliamentary or non-parliamentary office, which should be registered under Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament;
- e) Foreign visits, including international travel and hospitality received outside the UK (even if funded by UK sources), which should be registered under Category 4: Visits outside the UK;
- f) Other benefits from sources outside the UK, which should be registered under Category 5: Gifts and benefits from sources outside the UK.

26. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The name and address of the donor;³²

30 For an explanation of a permissible donor see paragraph 20 above. Advice is available from the Electoral Commission, tel 020 7 271 0616.

31 Tel 020 7 271 0616. See also the list of permissible donors in paragraph 20 above.

32 Private addresses will not be published.

- b) The amount of the donation, or its nature and value if it is a donation in kind;
- c) The dates of receipt³³ and acceptance;
- d) The status of the donor (whether an individual, building society, friendly society, LLP, registered party (other than the Member's own party), trade union, unincorporated association or company, in which case the company registration number is required);
- e) If the donor is a trust, the name and address of the person who created the trust; if created after 27 July 1999, the names and addresses of all others who have transferred property to the trust, or, if created before 27 July 1999, the date it was created;
- f) If the donation is by means of a bequest, the name and last address of the person who made the bequest, or, if that address is not listed in an electoral register, the last address where that person was registered in the previous five years.

Benefits given to other people or organisations

27. A Member must register under this category any benefit given to any third party, whether or not this accompanied a benefit for him or her, if the Member is aware, or could reasonably be expected to be aware, of the benefit and that it was given because of his or her membership of the House or parliamentary or political activities.

Benefits received during a parliamentary attachment

28. Members must register under this category any incidental benefit, such as gifts, hospitality, or travel, received from a UK source in the course of a fellowship or secondment such those arranged through the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, the Police Service Parliamentary Scheme or the Industry and Parliament Trust.

Benefits received as a member of an All-Party Parliamentary Group

29. Groups themselves must register any benefit which exceeds the relevant threshold set out in the Guide to the Rules for All-Party Parliamentary Groups (over £1,500 in 2015-16), either as a single donation or as multiple donations of over £500). Each Member benefiting should also include in their Register entry details of any benefit to them from a UK source which exceeds the threshold for the Members' Register. If the ultimate donor is identifiable, Members should give their details, as well as naming the Group.

Legal funds

30. Members should normally register under this category contributions to legal funds. This would apply if, for example, the legal action arose out of activity as a Member of

³³ Subscriptions, memberships and staff secondments are generally regarded as received on their start dates.

Parliament but the donation was not specifically in support of the Member's activities as a Member of Parliament.

Category 4: Visits outside the UK

Threshold for registration

31. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, any visits to destinations outside the UK where the cost is over £300 if that cost is not wholly borne by the Member or by UK public funds. They must also register multiple visits funded by the same source if taken together these have a value of more than £300 in a calendar year.

32. Costs which are met from parliamentary resources or by UK public bodies do not require registration. But such costs should be taken into account for the purpose of establishing whether the cost of an individual visit exceeds the registrable threshold. Paragraph 35 below provides further details on the sources of funding which do not require registration.

Requirements for registration

33. Under this category Members must register:

Any travel or hospitality received in the course of a visit outside the UK, if it relates in any way to their membership of the House or to their parliamentary or political activities, including:

- a) international and other travel;
- b) hospitality, including hotel or other accommodation, and meals;
- c) car hire;
- d) reimbursement of the costs of any of the above.

The person or organisation funding the visit may be within the UK or elsewhere. Visits funded or arranged by the British Council, the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, the Police Service Parliamentary Scheme, or the Industry and Parliament Trust may require registration, subject to the financial threshold.

34. See paragraph 37 below for guidance on the circumstances in which visits by others may require registration; and paragraph 38 for visits undertaken as part of an All-Party Parliamentary Group.

35. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Visits wholly funded by their own political party;
- b) Visits undertaken with or on behalf of a select committee of the House;

- c) Visits wholly unconnected with membership of the House or with the Member's parliamentary or political activities (e.g. family holidays);
- d) Visits undertaken on behalf of, or funded by, HM Government, or an international organisation to which the United Kingdom Government belongs, such as the EU or a political group of the European Parliament;
- e) Visits undertaken on behalf of or under the auspices of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the British American Parliamentary Group, the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly, the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the NATO parliamentary assembly, or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly;
- f) Visits funded to an extent which goes significantly beyond reimbursement of the costs incurred. Such visits should be registered (subject to the relevant threshold) under Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament;
- g) Visits undertaken for the purpose of outside employment, including for example giving a speech. If the reason for meeting the Member's expenses lies in that outside employment and the Member received any remuneration or taxable expenses, the visit should be registered under Category 1: Employment and earnings.

36. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The name and address of the person or organisation funding the visit;³⁴
- b) The amount of any payment, and/or the nature and value of any donation in kind such as flights or accommodation;
- c) The destination of the visit;
- d) The date(s) of the visit;
- e) The purpose of the visit.

Visits by others

37. Members should register in this category any visit outside the UK which is undertaken by someone else, whether accompanying the Member or not. Registration is required if the Member is aware, or could reasonably be expected to be aware, that part or all of the visit was paid for by another person or organisation because of that Member's membership of the House or parliamentary or political activities.³⁵

Visits undertaken through an All-Party Parliamentary Group

³⁴ Private addresses will not be published.

³⁵ Subject to the relevant thresholds, Members' staff who hold parliamentary passes as secretaries or research assistants should also register their visits in the Register of Interests of Members' Secretaries and Research Assistants.

38. Groups themselves must register any visit which exceeds the relevant threshold set out in the Guide to the Rules for All-Party Parliamentary Groups. Each Member benefiting should also make a Register entry if the value of the benefit to them exceeds the threshold for visits in the Members' Register. If the ultimate funder is identifiable, Members should give their details, as well as naming the Group.

Category 5: Gifts and benefits from sources outside the UK

Threshold for registration

39. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, any gifts or benefits with a value of over £300 which they receive from a source outside the UK. They must also register multiple benefits from the same source if taken together these have a value of more than £300 in a calendar year.³⁶

Requirements for registration

40. Under this category Members must register:

Any benefits which relate in any way to their membership of the House or parliamentary or political activities, if provided by a source outside the UK either free or at concessionary rates, including:³⁷

- a) event or travel tickets;³⁸
- b) hospitality in the UK, including receptions, meals and accommodation;³⁹
- c) gifts such as clothing or jewellery;
- d) club subscriptions and memberships;
- e) loans or credit arrangements;
- f) discount cards etc.

41. See paragraph 44 below for guidance on the circumstances in which benefits given to others must be registered.

42. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Benefits which could not reasonably be thought by others to be related to membership of the House or to the Member's parliamentary or political activities, for example purely personal gifts or benefits from partners or family members, or loans or

36 Subsequent references to benefits in this category include gifts and hospitality.

37 A concessionary rate should be valued by reference to the nearest equivalent commercial rate.

38 International travel and hospitality received abroad should normally be registered under Category 4: Visits outside the UK.

39 See footnote above.

mortgage arrangements on commercial terms. However, both the possible motive of the giver and the use to which the gift is to be put should be considered. If there is any doubt, the benefit should be registered;

b) Benefits received in recognition of services performed by a Member, e.g. after giving a speech. If these benefits would not have been received had the Member not performed that service, they should be registered under Category 1: Employment and earnings;

c) Donations or other assistance given to a Member to support his or her parliamentary or political activities, or for candidacy at an election for parliamentary or non-parliamentary office, which (if permissible) should be registered under Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament. NB: There are legal restrictions on acceptance of benefits from sources outside the UK which amount to such support for a Member of Parliament, and before accepting any such support of more than £500 (including a credit facility or a loan which exceeds £500 in value) Members are required to satisfy themselves that it is from a permissible donor, and to notify the Electoral Commission within 30 days of any impermissible donations.⁴⁰

43. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The name and address of the donor;⁴¹
- b) The amount of the donation, or its nature and value if it is a donation in kind;
- c) The dates of receipt and acceptance;⁴²
- d) The status of the donor (whether an individual, building society, friendly society, LLP, registered party (other than the Member's own party), trade union unincorporated association or company, in which case the company registration number (if any) is required);
- e) If the donor is a trust, the name and address of the person who created the trust; if created after 27 July 1999, the names and addresses of all others who have transferred property to the trust, or, if created before 27 July 1999, the date it was created;
- f) If the donation is by means of a bequest, the name and last address of the person who made the bequest, or, if that address is not listed in an electoral register, the last address where that person was registered in the previous five years.

Benefits given to other people or organisations

44. Member must register under this category any benefit given to any third party, whether or not this accompanied a benefit for him or her, if the Member is aware, or could

40 For an explanation of a permissible donor see paragraph 20 above. The Electoral Commission can advise on the permissibility of donors, tel 020 7 271 0616

41 Private addresses will not be published.

42 Subscriptions, memberships and staff secondments are generally regarded as received on their start dates.

reasonably be expected to be aware, of the benefit and that it is given because of his or her membership of the House or parliamentary or political activities.

Benefits received during a parliamentary attachment

45. Members must register under this category any incidental benefit, such as gifts, hospitality, or travel, received from a source outside the UK in the course of a fellowship or secondment such those arranged through the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, the Police Service Parliamentary Scheme or the Industry and Parliament Trust.

Benefits received as a member of an All-Party Parliamentary Group

46. Groups themselves must register any benefit which exceeds the relevant threshold set out in the Guide to the Rules for All-Party Parliamentary Groups (over £1,500 in 2015-16-, either as a single donation or as multiple donations of over £500). Each Member benefiting should register any benefit to them from a source outside the UK which exceeds the threshold for the Members' Register. If the ultimate donor is identifiable, Members should give their details, as well as naming the Group.

Category 6: Land and property

Threshold for registration

47. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, any land or property in the UK or elsewhere which:

- i) has a value of more than £100,000; or forms part of a total property portfolio⁴³ whose value exceeds £100,000; and/or
- ii) alone or together with other properties owned by the Member, provides rental income of more than £10,000 in a calendar year.

Requirements for registration

48. Under this category Members must register:

- a) Land or property which they own or hold, either by themselves or with or on behalf of their spouse, partner or dependent children.

49. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Any land or property which is used wholly for their own personal residential purposes, or those of their spouse, partner or dependent children.⁴⁴

⁴³ Excluding property used wholly for the Member's own personal residential purposes, or those of their spouse, partner or dependent children.

⁴⁴ This includes land and property of registrable value which is held in trust for the Member, for example as part of a self-invested personal pension.

50. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The type of property; e.g. whether business or residential, and if land, the type of use to which it is put; and
- b) Its location, for example the relevant local authority area; and
- c) Whether the holding falls to be registered under (i) and/or (ii) of paragraph 47 above. If the rental income is paid to another person or organisation, this should be stated;
- d) The date on which the land or property was acquired, or when the value of the property (or the rental received) achieved registrable value.⁴⁵

Category 7: Shareholdings***Threshold for registration*****51. Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, any holdings which:**

- i) amount to more than 15% of the issued share capital of that company, or more than 15% of a partnership;
- ii) are valued at more than £70,000.⁴⁶

Requirements for registration**52. Under this category Members must register:**

- a) Shareholdings or share options which they hold, either by themselves or with or on behalf of their spouse, partner or dependent children. This includes any shares which are managed by a trust (other than a blind trust⁴⁷ or similar delegated management arrangement) and any holdings in sector-specific vehicles;
- b) Interests in LLPs or other partnerships.

53. Members should not register under this category:

- a) Holdings in collective investment vehicles such as unit trusts, investment companies with variable capital (ICVCs) and investment trusts;

45 If the value of the land or property is close to the threshold for registration, the Member should periodically check its value and, if it exceeds the threshold, should register it within 28 days of the date of that valuation.

46 Holdings should be valued as at the previous 5 April. If this is not possible, the Member should make their best estimate of the value on that date and register the holding within 28 days of the 5 April valuation. Holdings which fall below the registrable thresholds but meet the test of relevance should be registered under Category 8: Miscellaneous.

47 For a trust to be regarded as a blind trust the Member must not know details of how their assets are invested or give trustees instructions about specific investments. They may however give general directions about the nature of investments when the trust is established, may receive reports on its overall performance and may realise some or all of its assets. In certain circumstances there may be a requirement to declare a blind trust. See paragraph 4 of chapter 2 for more details.

- b) Assets held in blind trusts;⁴⁸
- c) Pensions (except for property held for self-invested personal pensions).

54. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The name of the company or organisation;
- b) A brief description of the nature of its business, and of any relevant trust or delegated management arrangement;
- c) Whether the holding falls to be registered under (i) or (ii) of paragraph 51 above;
- d) The date on which the holding was acquired or achieved registrable value.⁴⁹

Category 8: Miscellaneous

Requirements for registration

55. Under this category Members must register:

- a) Any relevant financial interest or material benefit which does not clearly fall into one of the other categories, including any shareholding which falls below the relevant threshold, or any other financial asset, including an asset held in trust, if the Member nevertheless considers that it meets the test of relevance; in other words, that it might reasonably be thought by others to influence his or her actions or words as a Member; and
- b) Any other interest, if the Member considers that it might reasonably be thought by others to influence his or her actions or words as a Member in the same way as a financial interest. This might include an unpaid employment or directorship, or directorship of a company not currently trading, non-practising membership of a profession, or a fund established to defray legal costs arising out of the Member's work, but from which no benefit has yet been received.

56. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) A description of the interest and, where relevant, the name of the donor;
- b) Any other relevant information. It is not necessary to provide a value for financial interests in this category;
- c) The date when the interest arose or became registrable.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Existing holdings should be valued as at the previous 5 April. If this is not possible, the Member should make their best estimate of the value on that date and register the holding within 28 days of their valuation, the date of which should be given.

Category 9: Family members employed

Threshold for registration

57. Under this category Members must register, subject to the paragraphs below, details of any family members whom they employ if those employees receive, from parliamentary expenses, remuneration of more than £700 in a calendar year.

Requirements for registration

58. Under this category Members must register:

- a) Any family members employed and remunerated through expenses or allowances available to support his or her work as a Member of Parliament. Family members should be regarded as including a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner of the Member and the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of the Member or of a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner of the Member.

59. Members are required to provide the following information:

- a) The name of any family members employed and paid from parliamentary expenses;
- b) Their relationship to the Member;
- c) Their job title;
- d) Whether they work part time.

Category 10: Family members engaged in lobbying

Requirements for registration

60. Under this category Members must register:

- a) Details of any of their family members involved in lobbying the public sector;⁵⁰ if they are aware, or could reasonably be expected to be aware, of the involvement of the family member in such a lobbying activity.

61. For the purposes of this category, lobbying is defined as undertaking activities in a professional capacity and on behalf of a third party or client in an attempt to influence, or advise those who wish to influence, the UK Government, Parliament, devolved legislatures or administrations, regional or local government or other public bodies on any matter within their competence.

62. Members are required to provide the following information:

⁵⁰ Family members are defined as under Category 9. See paragraph 58 above.

- a) The name of any family members involved in lobbying;
- b) Their relationship to the Member;
- c) Their job title;
- d) The name of their company or employer, if any.

Chapter 2: Declaration of Members' Interests

Requirements of the House

1. Paragraph 13 of the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament provides:

13. Members shall fulfil conscientiously the requirements of the House in respect of the registration of interests in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. They shall always be open and frank in drawing attention to any relevant interest in any proceeding of the House or its Committees, and in any communications with Ministers, Members, public officials or public office holders.

2. The declaration of interests ensures that Members, the public and others are made aware at the appropriate time, in proceedings of the House and on other occasions, of any interest relevant to those proceedings or to the actions or words of a Member. The requirement to declare an interest complements the registration requirements and applies from the time the House first sits after the Member is elected and to almost every aspect of a Member's parliamentary duties. It covers a broader range of interests than registration.

3. Declarations must be informative but succinct. A Member who has already registered an interest may refer to his or her Register entry. But such a reference is unlikely to suffice on its own, as the declaration must provide sufficient information to convey the nature of the interest without the listener or the reader having to have recourse to the Register or other publication.

Requirements for declaration

4. Members are required, subject to the paragraphs below, to declare any financial interests which satisfy the *test of relevance*, including:

- a) past financial interests (normally limited to those active within the last twelve months);
- b) indirect financial interests, such as the financial interests of a spouse or partner, or another family member, if the Member is aware or could reasonably be expected to be aware of that interest. It is not necessary to identify the person concerned: a formula such as "A member of my family has a financial interest in []" will usually suffice. The definition of a family member is as under Category 9 of the Register;⁵¹
- c) expected future interests, if the Member's plans have moved beyond vague hopes and aspirations and reached the stage where the Member has a reasonable expectation that a financial benefit will accrue;

51 See paragraph 58 of Chapter 1 of this Guide.

- d) financial interests of a sort which do not require registration, including for example blind trusts,⁵² and interests which fall below the financial thresholds;
- e) financial interests which require registration but have not yet appeared in the published Register;
- f) any registered non-financial interests.

Members may also declare, if they think it appropriate, non-financial interests which are not registered but which they consider meet the test of relevance.

5. *The test of relevance* is whether those interests might reasonably be thought by others to influence his or her actions or words as a Member.

6. Members are not required to declare an interest:

- a) *if to do so would unduly impede the business of the House*; for example, during oral Questions, when asking supplementary Questions, or when responding to a Ministerial statement; or
- b) *when voting*, either in the House or in committee. But a Member who has a relevant registrable interest which has not yet been registered should seek to register it before the vote; or if this is not possible, as soon as possible afterwards; or
- c) *if that interest is a benefit available to all Members*, such as the parliamentary salary, or expenses met from parliamentary sources or from a scheme for parliamentary expenses; or
- d) *if it is a benefit provided by the Member's own party* (unless it is registrable under Category 2: Donations and other support for activities as a Member of Parliament).

Occasions when declaration is required

7. Subject to paragraphs 1 to 6 of this chapter, Members must declare a relevant interest:

- a) *in the Chamber and in general committees*:
 - i) when speaking in a debate;
 - ii) *in the Committee or consideration stage of a Bill*. In a Public Bill Committee a Member should declare an interest at the first meeting or when he or she first addresses the Committee. The declaration should be repeated later if speaking on any amendment to which the interest is particularly relevant;
- b) *in Committee on Opposed Private Bill*:

52 Members should be aware that existence of a blind trust may be declarable for example during proceedings concerning legislation which would affect such trusts. In addition, if a Member is aware that the trust invests in a particular sector he or she may need to declare that where relevant.

A Member nominated by the Committee of Selection to serve on a Committee on an Opposed Private Bill must sign a declaration that “my constituents have no local interest, and I have no personal interest, in the said Bill.”⁵³ Advice is available from the Clerk of Bills.

c) *In Select Committees:*

- i) *at the Committee’s first meeting.* Members must provide details of any registered financial interests, and of any non-registrable interests which meet the test of relevance.⁵⁴ These are circulated under the authority of the Chair (if elected by the House) or in other cases the senior Member before the Committee’s first meeting. Members who do not attend the Committee’s first meeting must make their declaration at the beginning of the first meeting they do attend;
- ii) *when the Committee is deciding on the subject of an inquiry;*
- iii) *at the beginning of any inquiry to which their interest particularly relates;*
- iv) *at sessions of evidence, and in any hearings involving witnesses to whom the interest is particularly relevant and before any questions which might reasonably be thought by others relevant to that interest.*

These declarations will be recorded in the Committee’s proceedings.

If the subject matter of the inquiry is of direct concern to an outside body in which a Member has a financial interest, he or she must consider whether it is proper to take part in the inquiry without conflict of interest, and whether it is possible to participate effectively in the inquiry without crossing the borderline into paid advocacy. And a Member who has a personal interest which may reflect upon the work of the Committee or its report should stand aside from the Committee proceedings relating to it.⁵⁵

d) *When tabling any written notice:*

- i) *when tabling a notice for the presentation of a Bill, or tabling an amendment to a Bill.* A Member who gives his or her name in support of a Bill, or who tables an amendment to a Bill, must notify the Legislation Office of any relevant interest;
- ii) *when tabling oral or written Questions.* Members must indicate any relevant interest on the question form. If the question is for oral answer there is no need for further declaration when called in the Chamber;⁵⁶

53 Standing Order 120 refers.

54 The test of relevance is set out in paragraph 5 of this chapter.

55 Further guidance on select committees, including restrictions on the activities of Chairs, is available in the Guide for Select Committee Members.

56 There is also no need to declare an interest when asking a Supplementary Question.

- iii) *when applying for urgent Questions or emergency debates.* Members must inform the Speaker of any relevant interest. If the request is granted the Member must also declare the interest orally when asking the question or moving the motion;
- iv) *when tabling motions, including Early Day Motions [EDMs], or amendments to motions, or adding their name to a motion or amendment.* Members must indicate any interest in the appropriate place on the form;
- v) *when applying for an adjournment debate.* Members must inform the Table Office of any relevant interests;
- vi) *when giving notice before presenting a petition and when presenting a petition in the House.* Members must notify the Journal Office of any relevant interest when giving notice of presentation of a petition, providing an explanatory note if the nature of that interest is not immediately obvious from their Register entry. They must then declare any relevant interests in the House when presenting that petition;
- vii) *when standing for election as chair of a Select Committee.* The Member's full Register entry is published with his or her nomination.

When an interest is declared, the symbol [R] (for 'Relevant Interest Declared') will normally be printed on the relevant Notice Paper or Order Paper. If it is not readily apparent which of the Member's interests is relevant, he or she should provide an explanatory note which will then be made available for inspection.

e) *When approaching others:*

Members must declare a relevant interest in any communication, formal or informal, with those who are responsible for matters of public policy, public expenditure or the delivery of public services.⁵⁷ That includes communications with Ministers, either alone or as part of a delegation: with other Members; with public officials (including the staff of government departments or agencies and public office holders). If those communications are in writing, then the declaration should be in writing too; otherwise it should be oral.

f) *When booking facilities on the parliamentary estate.*

Members who book private dining rooms or any other rooms through the Facilities Department for the purpose of holding a function must indicate on the booking form if they have a relevant interest. This requirement applies if the function is on behalf of an outside organisation other than the Member's political party. Members who have such an interest must also indicate this on the invitations to their event. For this purpose a function is where significant hospitality including food and drink is provided: a declaration is not necessary when booking a room simply for a meeting or presentation where simple refreshments such as tea and biscuits may be available.

57 The test of relevance is set out in paragraph 5 of this chapter.

Chapter 3: Lobbying for reward or consideration

The principle

1. Paragraph 11 of the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament provides:

11. No Member shall act as a paid advocate in any proceeding of the House.

2. Taking payment in return for advocating a particular matter in the House is strictly forbidden. Members may not speak in the House, vote, or initiate parliamentary proceedings for payment in cash or kind. Nor may they make approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials in return for such payment.

3. A Member may not enter into any contractual arrangement which fetters the Member's complete independence in Parliament, nor may an outside body (or person) use any contractual arrangement with a Member of Parliament as an instrument by which it controls, or seeks to control, his or her conduct in Parliament, or to punish that Member for any parliamentary action.

4. The rules on lobbying are intended to avoid the perception that outside individuals or organisations may reward Members, through payment or in other ways, in the expectation that their actions in the House will benefit that outside individual or organisation, even if they do not fall within the strict definition of paid advocacy. They prevent a Member initiating proceedings or approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials which would confer a financial or material benefit on such a person or organisation. These rules are intended to provide the right balance between enabling Members to bring to bear their experience outside the House on matters of public policy while avoiding any suggestion that the parliamentary or policy agenda can be set by an outside individual or organisation making payments to a Member.

5. The lobbying rules do not prevent a Member holding a paid outside interest as a director, consultant, or adviser, or in any other capacity, whether or not such interests are related to membership of the House.

6. The lobbying rules apply only to Members who receive an outside reward or consideration and whose activities would provide a financial or material benefit to the person or organisation providing that reward or consideration. They do not otherwise prevent Members from initiating or participating in proceedings or approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials, even where they themselves may have a financial interest. In such cases the rules on registration and declaration apply. Members must also consider whether they have a conflict of interest. If so, they must resolve it, at once, in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the Code of Conduct.

7. Interests which are wholly personal and particular to the Member, which may arise from a profession or occupation outside the House, ought not to be pursued by the Member in proceedings in Parliament.

The rules relating to lobbying

8. The rules place the following restrictions on Members:

a) When **initiating** proceedings or approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials. Subject to paragraph 10 below, Members must not engage in lobbying by initiating a proceeding or approach which seeks to confer, or would have the effect of conferring, any financial or material benefit on an identifiable person from whom or an identifiable organisation from which they, or a family member, have received, are receiving, or expect to receive outside reward or consideration, or on a registrable client of such a person or organisation;

b) When **participating in** proceedings or approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials. Members may lobby by participating in such proceedings or approaches which would confer a financial or material benefit on the identifiable person from whom or identifiable organisation from which they, or a family member, have received, are receiving or expect to receive outside reward or consideration (or on a registrable client of such a person or organisation) provided that they have not initiated those proceedings or approaches and that their approach or participation does not seek to confer benefit exclusively on that person or organisation (or on their client) and provided that that person or organisation (or their client) has not initiated the event.

9. Exceptionally, a Member may approach the responsible Minister or public official with evidence of a serious wrong or substantial injustice even if the resolution of any such wrong or injustice would have the incidental effect of conferring a financial or material benefit on an identifiable person from whom or an identifiable organisation from which the Member, or a member of his or her family, has received, is receiving or expects to receive, outside reward or consideration (or on a registrable client of that person or organisation).

Time limits

10. The restrictions under the lobbying rules apply for six months after the reward or consideration was received. A Member can free him or herself immediately of any restrictions due to a past benefit by repaying the full value of any benefit received from the outside person or organisation in the preceding six month period.

Definitions

11. **Initiating a proceeding of the House includes:**

- a) presenting a Bill;
- b) presenting a Petition;

- c) tabling and asking a Parliamentary Question, including a Topical Question or a Question to the Prime Minister;
- d) asking a supplementary question to the Member's own Question;
- e) initiating, or seeking to initiate an adjournment (or other) debate;
- f) tabling or moving any motion (e.g. an "Early Day Motion", a motion for leave to introduce a Bill under the "Ten Minute Rule" or a motion "blocking" a Private Bill);
- g) tabling or moving an Amendment to a Bill;
- h) proposing a draft Report, or moving an Amendment to a draft Report, in a Select Committee;
- i) giving any written notice, or adding a name to such a notice, or making an application for and introducing a daily adjournment debate, or emergency debate.

12. Participating in a proceeding of the House includes:

- a) making a speech in the House, in Committee of the whole House, in Westminster Hall or in a general committee;
- b) making an intervention in a debate statement or other proceeding or asking a supplementary question to another's Question;
- c) asking a question in a Select Committee when taking formal evidence.

13. Outside reward or consideration includes:

- a) past financial interests or material benefits, including "one-off" registrable interests, such as visits and gifts, and continuing benefits such as directorships, employment and sponsorships.
- b) all present financial interests or material benefits which must be either registered or declared;
- c) future financial interests or material benefits, where a Member has a firm and specific expectation that such a financial benefit from an identifiable outside person or organisation will accrue in the next six months.

14. Outside reward or consideration does not include:

- a) any non-financial interest or benefit, even though this may be registered or declarable;

b) any payment to someone from the Member's family which arises out of that person's own occupation. This is not regarded as a benefit for the purposes of the lobbying rule, although it may be declarable.⁵⁸

15. **An identifiable person or organisation** is a named person or organisation from whom a Member has received or is receiving outside reward or consideration, or from whom a Member has a firm and specific expectation of receiving such reward or consideration, at the time of the relevant parliamentary proceeding or approach to Ministers, Members or public officials.

16. **Family members comprise:**

a) all those defined under registration Category 9 (see paragraph 58 of Chapter 1 of this Guide). The lobbying restriction arising from the receipt of outside reward or consideration by a family member applies only when the Member is aware or could reasonably be expected to be aware of such reward or consideration.

17. **Public officials** include:

a) all those who are responsible for matters of public policy, public expenditure or the delivery of public services. The term therefore includes all staff of government departments and agencies and public office holders.

18. **Making any approach to a Minister, other Member or public official** includes:

a) participating in or accompanying a delegation or group to discussions or meetings, whether these are formal or informal in nature.

Application of the lobbying rules

Matters outside the lobbying rules

19. The following fall outside the lobbying rules:

a) *Ministers*: Members who are acting in the House as government Ministers are not subject to these rules when acting in that capacity.

b) *Other elected bodies*: Membership of other specified elected bodies shall not be taken into account when applying this rule. These bodies comprise: the Scottish Parliament; the National Assembly for Wales; the Northern Ireland Assembly; the European Parliament; and local authorities in the United Kingdom.

c) *Constituency issues*: Members may pursue any constituency interest in any approach to a Minister or public official, subject to the registration and declaration rules. NB: The lobbying rules do apply, however, in respect of Members initiating any

⁵⁸ The definition of a family member is as under registration Category 9; see paragraph 58 of Chapter 1 of this Guide.

proceeding of the House on behalf of a person or organisation in their constituency from whom or from which they, or a family member receive, have received or expect to receive outside reward or consideration.

d) *Trade union sponsorship*: The rules do not prohibit Members being sponsored by a trade union or any other organisation, subject to the rules on registration and declaration.

e) *Representative organisations*, associations, charities, etc:

i) Membership alone (i.e. without remuneration) of a trade association, staff association, professional body, charity or other similar representative organisation is not taken into account when applying the lobbying rules.

ii) A Member who is a member of a representative organisation may lobby by initiating or participating in parliamentary proceedings or approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials in support of a policy position held by, or a campaign run by, that organisation, irrespective of any other relevant financial interest, provided any such interests are properly declared.

iii) Members who are remunerated advisers to representative organisations are subject to the lobbying rules in respect of such organisations as they would be in respect of other identifiable persons or organisations under paragraph 7 above.

f) *Private Members' Bills*: Private Members (including those successful in the Ballot for Bills) are not prevented from introducing and proceeding with a Bill by reason of the fact that they receive free or subsidised assistance from an organisation connected with the purposes of the Bill, provided the Member had no pre-existing financial relationship with the organisation which is registered, or is required to be registered.

Former Members

20. Former Members must abide by the restrictions of the lobbying rules for six months after their departure from the House in respect of any approach they make to Ministers, other Members or public officials. Former Members may not use their privileged parliamentary pass for the purposes of lobbying on the parliamentary estate.

21. These provisions do not apply to former Members who are Members of the House of Lords.

22. The Committee on Standards and Privileges has indicated it would expect the Committee on Standards to regard it as a serious matter if a sitting Member were influenced in his or her actions by the prospect of becoming a paid lobbyist, or entered into improper agreements relating to future lobbying activities.

23. *Hospitality from foreign governments and visits outside the UK*

24. **Members may not** initiate any parliamentary proceeding or approach to a Minister, other Member or public official which seeks to confer, or would have the effect of

conferring, any financial or material benefit on a foreign government, non-governmental organisation (NGO) or other agency which has, within the previous six months, funded a visit they have undertaken or provided them with hospitality.⁵⁹

25. **Members may**, having declared their interest, participate in parliamentary proceedings or approaches to Ministers, other Members or public officials which they have not initiated and which relate to a country from which they have received hospitality or where a foreign government has funded their visit, provided that their participation does not seek to confer benefit exclusively on that government or organisation.

Points of Order

26. The Speaker has declined to receive points of order relating to registration or lobbying.⁶⁰

59 Subject to the provisions in paragraph 10 above which enable a Member to free him- or herself of a past benefit.

60 Select Committee on Standards in Public Life, Second Report, Session 1994–95, HC 816, paragraph 26 and e.g. HC Deb, vol 276, col 605 and vol 277, cols 767–68

Chapter 4: Procedure for inquiries

Requirements of the House

1. Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Code of Conduct provide:

17. The application of this Code shall be a matter for the House of Commons, and particularly for the Committee on Standards and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards acting in accordance with Standing Orders Nos 149 and 150 respectively.

18. The Commissioner may investigate a specific matter relating to a Member's adherence to the rules of conduct under the Code. Members shall cooperate, at all stages, with any such investigation by or under the authority of the House. No Member shall lobby a member of the Committee in a manner calculated or intended to influence its consideration of an alleged breach of this Code.

2. The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards:

- considers complaints alleging that a Member of Parliament has breached the Code of Conduct and its associated rules; and
- if he or she thinks fit, investigates specific matters which have come to his or her attention relating to the conduct of a Member; and
- exceptionally inquires into a matter referred to the Commissioner by a Member in relation to his or her own conduct.

3. In all cases, the Commissioner will only initiate an inquiry if he or she is satisfied that the evidence put before the Commissioner is sufficient to justify such an inquiry. It is not sufficient to make an unsubstantiated allegation and expect the Commissioner to look for any supporting evidence.⁶¹ The receipt of a complaint or the initiation of an inquiry by the Commissioner does not imply that there has been a breach of the rules of the House.

4. Details of the Commissioner's current inquiries are provided monthly on the Commissioner's webpages.

5. Complaints about the misuse of the scheme for parliamentary expenses since May 2010 are a matter for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. However, where the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority or its Compliance Officer consider that a Member's conduct justifies it, they shall refer that Member, with the relevant evidence, to the Commissioner for the Commissioner to decide whether to inquire into a potential breach of the Code of Conduct and its associated rules.

61 Select Committee on Members' Interests, First Report of Session 1992–93, HC 383, paragraph 4

Submitting a complaint

6. Complaints must:

- a) be submitted by an individual, whether a member of the public or a Member of Parliament. Complaints from organisations, or made on behalf of someone else, cannot be accepted; and
- b) be made in writing and signed, and provide the complainant's name and full postal address; and
- c) make clear in what respect the complainant believes that the Member may have breached the Code of Conduct and its associated rules. Allegations should be supported by sufficient evidence to justify the initiation of an inquiry.

7. It is a basic courtesy that a Member making a complaint to the Commissioner should at the same time send a copy of the letter of complaint to the Member concerned.

8. Further guidance on the complaints procedure is available in the Commissioner's procedural note, which can be found on the parliamentary webpages.⁶²

Parliamentary privilege

9. Communications between a member of the public and the Commissioner are not covered by parliamentary privilege unless and until the Commissioner has accepted the matter for inquiry.

Initiating an inquiry

10. When considering any reference to the Commissioner, he or she will first consider if the matter is within his or her remit. If so, the Commissioner will consider whether in his or her view, sufficient evidence has been provided to justify the initiation of an inquiry into whether the Code of Conduct and its associated rules may have been breached.

11. The Committee has made it clear that it would expect the Commissioner to consult it before exceptionally initiating an inquiry into a former Member or in respect of a matter which goes back more than seven years. The Committee would expect to authorise such inquiries only in exceptional circumstances.

12. If, in the Commissioner's view, he or she has received, from the complainant or otherwise, sufficient evidence to justify the initiation of an inquiry into whether a named Member has breached the Code of Conduct or its associated rules the Commissioner will institute such an inquiry. That decision is made by the Commissioner. If the Commissioner considers that an inquiry would be disproportionate given the nature and seriousness of the allegation made, the Commissioner may decide not to inquire into that

⁶² The procedural note (now known as an Information Note) has been approved by the Committee on Standards and issued by the Commissioner.

matter. If the Commissioner considers the evidence received is insufficient to justify an inquiry, or the matter falls outside the Commissioner's remit, he or she will so decide and inform any complainant. The Commissioner will report briefly to the Committee on the consideration of all formal complaints and allegations submitted.

Resolution of inquiries: Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

13. If the Commissioner accepts a matter for inquiry the Commissioner will notify any complainant and invite the Member to respond to the allegation. The Commissioner will then make any subsequent enquiries he or she considers necessary.

14. Under the Code of Conduct Members are required to cooperate with any inquiry into their conduct. Members must also not lobby the Committee or the Commissioner in a manner calculated to influence their consideration of the matter. The Committee on Standards and Privileges⁶³ has regarded any breach of this rule as particularly serious and it alone has led to suspension from the House

15. If, after or during the course of an inquiry, the Commissioner concludes that the allegation has not been substantiated, the Commissioner will not uphold it and will report that conclusion briefly to the Committee. The determination letter and the evidence relevant to that inquiry will be published on the Commissioner's webpages. It is, however, open to the Commissioner to decide to submit a memorandum to the Committee into an allegation which the Commissioner proposes should not be upheld. This may be because of the particular seriousness of the allegation or because the inquiry raises matters of wider interest or relevance. The Committee will then consider the Commissioner's conclusions and submit its own report to the House.

16. Under Standing Order No. 150 the Commissioner may decide that the matter can be resolved through the rectification procedure.⁶⁴ If so, and the Member agrees and apologises, the Commissioner will determine the matter on that basis and report the fact briefly to the Committee. The determination letter and the evidence associated with that inquiry will be published on the Commissioner's webpages. In the case of non-registration, rectification requires a belated entry in the current Register in bold italic type with an appropriate explanatory note.⁶⁵ In the case of non-declaration, it requires an apology to the House by means of a point of order in accordance with the procedure established for such apologies by the Speaker. In cases involving parliamentary facilities or resources, the rectification procedure normally requires the Member to make any repayment or other relevant rectification.

17. If, after inquiry, the Commissioner finds that there has been a breach, which is not suitable for the rectification procedure, or that the inquiry raises issues of wider importance, the Commissioner will normally report the facts and his or her conclusions to

63 Now the Committee on Standards.

64 Standing Order No. 150(3)

65 A rectified entry remains in the Register in that form for 12 months or until the next printed edition, whichever is the later.

the Committee in the form of a memorandum. The Committee will then publish the Commissioner's memorandum on the case, alongside a report setting out its conclusions in the matter, including any recommendation to the House on whether further action is required.

Resolution of inquiries: Committee on Standards

18. The Committee considers any matter relating to the conduct of Members, including specific allegations against a Member in relation to alleged breaches of the rules of the House which have been drawn to the Committee's attention by the Commissioner.

19. The Committee may, under Standing Order No. 149, send for persons, papers and records; order the attendance of any Member before it; and require that specific documents in the possession of a Member relating to its inquiries or to the inquiries of the Commissioner be laid before it. The Committee will decide whether evidence is to be taken in public or in private. Its normal practice is to take evidence in private. The Committee is empowered to refuse leave for the broadcasting of any public sessions. The Committee's internal discussions are always held in private.

20. Where the Commissioner has concluded that there has been a breach of the rules, and the Committee agrees in whole or in part, those concerned face a range of penalties. In a very few cases, the reputational damage of an adverse report will be deemed sufficient, together with any action required to remedy the breach. In more serious cases the Committee will make recommendations for further action. The Committee may recommend:

- a) a written apology;
- b) for relatively minor failures to declare interests, an apology on the floor of the House by means of a point of order;
- c) an apology on the floor of the House by means of a personal statement;
- d) for non-Members, withdrawal of Parliamentary passes, either indefinitely or for a fixed period;
- e) suspension from the service of the House for a specified number of sitting days (during which time the Member receives no salary and must withdraw from the precincts of the House.)⁶⁶

In the most serious cases the Committee has the power to recommend expulsion. While the House itself decides whether a Member should be suspended, its practice has been to accept the Committee's recommendations on such matters.

⁶⁶ The House of Commons agreed on 26 June 2003 that a Member's salary could be withheld even if he or she was not suspended. The Committee on Standards and its predecessor have not so far recommended such a penalty.

21. The Committee may also report to the House on other matters referred to it by the Commissioner.

Remit of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

22. Subject to paragraph 16 of the Code, the House of Commons has agreed a number of exceptions to the Commissioner's remit. As a result the Commissioner is unable to investigate complaints about:

- a) policy matters;
- b) a Member's views or opinions;
- c) a Member's handling of or decision about a case (whether or not anyone involved is a constituent of the Member);

23. The following matters, which fall outside of the Commissioner's remit, may be referred by the complainant to the relevant body or individual:

- a) conduct in the Chamber, which is a matter for the Speaker;
- b) complaints about the misuse of the scheme for parliamentary expenses since May 2010, which are matters for the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority and its Compliance Officer;
- c) allegations of criminal misconduct, which are normally a matter for the police;
- d) the funding of political parties and the permissibility of donations, which are matters for the Electoral Commission; and
- e) alleged breaches of the Ministerial Code, which governs the conduct of government Ministers in their capacity as Ministers and which are matters for the Cabinet Office.

24. Complaints of non-registration by Members' staff and journalists will be considered by the Registrar of Members' Financial Interests. The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards will consider complaints about All-Party Parliamentary Groups.

Appendix to the Guide to the Rules: Resolutions of the House relating to the Conduct of Members

Registration and Declaration of Members' Financial Interests

Resolutions of 22 May 1974, amended on 9 February 2009: Members' Financial Interests (Declaration)

“In any debate or proceeding of the House or its Committees or transactions or communications which a Member may have with other Members or with Ministers or servants of the Crown, he shall disclose any relevant pecuniary interest or benefit of whatever nature, whether direct or indirect, that he may have had, may have or may be expecting to have.”

“Every Member of the House of Commons shall furnish to a Registrar of Members' Financial Interests such particulars of his registrable interests as shall be required, and shall notify to the Registrar any alterations which may occur therein, and the Registrar shall cause these particulars to be entered in a Register of Members' Financial Interests which shall be available for inspection by the public.”

✱

Resolution of 12 June 1975, amended on 19 July 1995 and 9 February 2009: Members' Financial Interests (Declaration)

“For the purposes of the Resolution of the House of 22 May 1974 in relation to disclosure of interests in any proceeding of the House or its Committees,

- (i) any interest disclosed in a copy of the Register of Members' Financial Interests shall be regarded as sufficient disclosure for the purpose of taking part in any division in the House or in any of its Committees.
- (ii) the term ‘proceeding’ shall be deemed not to include the asking of a supplementary question.”

✱

Resolution of 12 June 1975, amended on 9 February 2009: Members' Financial Interests (Declaration)

“Pursuant to the Resolutions of the House of 22 May 1974, this House agrees with the recommendations made in the Report of the Select Committee on Members' Interests (Declaration) relative to the arrangements for the registration of Members' Interests, and with the recommendations contained in paragraphs 43 and 47 of that Report in relation to the declaring of such interests; and that a Register of such interests be established as soon as possible in accordance with the proposals made in that Report.”

Paragraph 43 of the First Report from the Select Committee on Members' Interests (Declaration) (Session 1974–75) HC 102, reads:—

“No difficulty should arise in any proceeding of the House or its Committees in which the Member has an opportunity to speak. Such proceedings, in addition to debates in the House, include debates in Standing Committees, the presentation of a Public Petition, and meetings of Select Committees at which evidence is heard. On all such occasions the Member will declare his interest at the beginning of his remarks in exactly the same way as he has hitherto done by convention. It will be a matter for his judgement, if his interest is already recorded in the Register, whether he simply draws attention to this or makes a rather fuller disclosure.”

Paragraph 47 of the same Report provides that declarations of interest made in Select Committees shall be recorded in their Minutes of Proceedings.

✱

Resolution of 17 December 1985, amended on 9 February 2009: Register of Members' Financial Interests

“This House ... emphasises that it is the personal responsibility of each Member to have regard to his public position and the good name of Parliament in any work he undertakes or any interests he acquires; confirms that the scope of the requirement to register remunerated trades, professions or vocations includes any remunerated activity in the fields of public relations and political and parliamentary advice and consultancy; in particular ... in regard to the registration and declaring of clients that the services which require such registration and, where appropriate, declaration, include, as well as any action connected with any proceedings in the House or its Committees, the sponsoring of functions in the Palace, making representations to Ministers, Civil Servants and other Members, accompanying delegations to Ministers and the like ...”

[Note: This Resolution should be read in conjunction with the Resolutions of 6 November 1995 on lobbying (Conduct of Members) and delegations (Standards in Public Life).]

✱

Resolution of 6 November 1995, amended on 14 May 2002 and 9 February 2009: Agreements for the Provision of Services

“(1) With effect from Wednesday 15 November 1995, any Member proposing to enter into an agreement which involves the provision of services in his capacity as a Member of Parliament shall conclude such an agreement only if it conforms to the Resolution of the House of 6 November 1995 relating to Conduct of Members; and a full copy of any such agreement including the fees or benefits payable in bands of: up to £5,000, £5,001–£10,000, and thereafter in bands of £5,000, shall be deposited with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards at the same time as it is registered in the Register of Members’ Financial Interests and made available for inspection and reproduction by the public;

(2) any Member who has an existing agreement involving the provision of services in his capacity as a Member of Parliament which conforms to the Resolution of the House of 6 November 1995 relating to Conduct of Members, but which is not in written form, shall take steps to put the agreement in written form; and no later than 31 March 1996 a full copy of any such agreement including the fees or benefits payable in bands of: up to £5,000, £5,001–£10,000, and thereafter in bands of £5,000 shall be deposited with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and registered in the Register of Members’ Financial Interests and made available for inspection and reproduction by the public; ...

Provided that the requirement to deposit a copy of an agreement with the Commissioner shall not apply—

- (a) if the fees or benefits payable do not exceed one per cent of the current parliamentary salary; nor
- (b) in the case of media work (but in that case the Member shall deposit a statement of the fees or benefits payable in the bands specified above).”

*

Resolution of 13 July 1992: Members’ Interests (Interests of Chairmen and members of Select Committees)

“This House takes note of the First Report from the Select Committee on Members’ Interests, Session 1990–91 (House of Commons Paper No. 108), relating to the interests of Chairmen and members of Select Committees, and approves the recommendations of the Committee relating to declaration of interest in Select Committees (paragraphs 8 to 16), withdrawal from Committee proceedings (paragraph 24) and procedures prior to the election of a Chairman (paragraph 25).”

*

Resolution of 30 April 2009, as amended on 7 February 2011: Registration of Members' Financial Interests

“(1) That, for the purpose of complying with the Resolution of the House of 22 May 1974 relating to Registration of Members' Financial Interests, in respect of interests falling within Category 1 (Directorships), Category 2 (Remunerated employment, office, profession, etc) or Category 3 (Clients), hon Members shall furnish the Registrar with the following particulars—

- (a) the precise amount of each individual payment made in relation to any interest,
- (b) the nature of the work carried out in return for that payment,
- (c) the number of hours worked during the period to which the payment relates, and
- (d) except where disclosure of the information would be contrary to any legal or established professional duty of privacy or confidentiality, the name and address of the person, organisation or company making the payment;

(2) That such a payment shall be registered

- (a) where its value exceeds one tenth of 1 per cent. of the current Parliamentary salary;
or
- (b) where the total value of payments from the same person, organisation or company in a calendar year exceeds 1 per cent. of the current Parliamentary salary;

(3) That the provisions of this Resolution shall apply whether or not the interest in question depends essentially upon, or arises out of, the hon. Member's position as a Member of Parliament; and

(4) That the provisions of this Resolution shall come into effect on 1 July 2009.”

Lobbying for Reward or Consideration

Resolution of 2 May 1695: Against offering Bribes to Members

“The Offer of any Money, or other Advantage, to any Member of Parliament, for the promoting of any Matter whatsoever, depending, or to be transacted, in Parliament, is a high Crime and Misdemeanour, and tends to the Subversion of the Constitution.”

Resolution of 22 June 1858: Rewards to Members

“It is contrary to the usage and derogatory to the dignity of this House, that any of its Members should bring forward, promote or advocate, in this House, any proceeding or measure in which he may have acted or been concerned for or in consideration of any pecuniary fee or reward.”

*

Resolution of 15 July 1947, amended on 6 November 1995 and 14 May 2002: Conduct of Members

“It is inconsistent with the dignity of the House, with the duty of a Member to his constituents, and with the maintenance of the privilege of freedom of speech, for any Member of this House to enter into any contractual agreement with an outside body, controlling or limiting the Member’s complete independence and freedom of action in Parliament or stipulating that he shall act in any way as the representative of such outside body in regard to any matters to be transacted in Parliament; the duty of a Member being to his constituents and to the country as a whole, rather than to any particular section thereof and that in particular no Member of the House shall, in consideration of any remuneration, fee, payment, reward or benefit in kind, direct or indirect, which the Member or any member of his or her family has received, is receiving, or expects to receive—

- (i) advocate or initiate any cause or matter on behalf of any outside body or individual, or
 - (ii) urge any other Member of either House of Parliament, including Ministers, to do so,
- by means of any speech, Question, Motion, introduction of a Bill or amendment to a Motion or Bill, or any approach, whether oral or in writing, to Ministers or servants of the Crown.”

*

Resolution of 6 November 1995: Standards in Public Life

“This House agrees with the recommendations in the Second Report from the Select Committee on Standards in Public Life (House of Commons Paper No. 816) relating to the cessation of paid advocacy (paragraph 54);⁶⁷ and further that a Member with a paid interest should not initiate or participate in, including attendance, a delegation where the problem affects only the body from which he has a paid interest.”

67 “Activity constituting paid advocacy would be outside our proposed rules and should therefore cease from the start of the new Parliamentary session (1995–96).”

Conduct of Members

Resolution of 19 July 1995: Code of Conduct

“This House endorses the principle of a Code of Conduct, and instructs the appropriate Select Committee to prepare such a draft Code for approval as soon as possible, taking into account the suggestions of the Nolan Committee and any relevant overseas analogues; and whilst restating its commitment to the objectives of the Resolution of the House of 15 July 1947 relating to privileges, accepts the need to review its wording in the context of the work to be undertaken on the draft Code.”

*

Resolution of 24 July 1996: Code of Conduct

“This House approves the Third Report from the Committee on Standards and Privileges, House of Commons Paper No. 604, and in particular—

- (a) approves the Code of Conduct prepared pursuant to the Resolution of the House of 19 July 1995,
- (b) approves the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members, the modifications to the rules of the House contained therein, and the guidelines to the application of the Resolution of the House of 6 November 1995, (Conduct of Members) contained in paragraph 58 of the Guide, and
- (c) authorises the Committee on Standards and Privileges to make such minor amendments to the Guide to the Rules as appear to it to be justified by experience or necessarily reflect decisions of the House; and to report such amended versions of the Guide to the House.”

*

Resolution of 14 May 2002, amended on 9 February 2009: Code of Conduct

“(1) This House approves the Ninth Report from the Committee on Standards and Privileges (House of Commons Paper No. 763), A new Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules;

...

(4) the Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members (House of Commons Paper No. 688 (1995–96)) shall be amended as proposed in Annex 2 to the Report; and

(5) the registration forms submitted for the next published Register of Members' Financial Interests shall comply with the new rules on the registration of Members' interests; and any requirement under the new rules to register an interest which is not registrable now shall come into force on the publication of the next Register."

*

Resolution of 13 July 2005: Standards and Privileges

"That this House takes note of the Fourth Report of the Committee on Standards and Privileges, Session 2004–05 (House of Commons Paper No. 472), and approves the revised Code of Conduct set out in the Annex to the Report."

*

Resolution of 27 March 2008, amended on 9 February 2009: Standards and Privileges

"That this House approves the Seventh Report of the Committee on Standards and Privileges (House of Commons Paper No. 436) on Employment of family members through the Staffing Allowance; and endorses the changes proposed by the Committee in the purpose and form of the Register of Members' Financial Interests."

*

Resolution of 9 February 2009: Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members

"(1) That, subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) below, this House approves the Fourth Report of the Committee on Standards and Privileges (House of Commons Paper No. 208) and the revised Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members annexed thereunto;

...

(3) That the threshold for registering interests under category 4 (Sponsorships) shall be the statutory threshold for the time being applying to the reporting of donations by hon. Members to the Electoral Commission;

(4) That the revised Guide shall take effect on such date as section 59 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 shall come into force;

(5) That the Register of Members' Interests shall be renamed the Register of Members' Financial Interests and the Registrar of Members' Interests shall be known as the Registrar of Members' Financial Interests;

(6) Accordingly, in each place where they occur in any Standing Order, Order or Resolution of the House:

- (a) for “Register of Members’ Interests” there shall be substituted “Register of Members’ Financial Interests”; and
- (b) for “Registrar of Members’ Interests” there shall be substituted “Registrar of Members’ Financial Interests”.

*

Resolution of 12 March 2012: Code of Conduct

“That this House takes note of the Nineteenth Report of the Committee on Standards and Privileges (HC 1579), and approves the revised Code of Conduct set out in the Annex to the Report ...”

*

Resolution of 17 March 2015: Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members

(1) This House approves the Third Report from the Committee on Standards, on The Code of Conduct (HC 772);

(2) with effect from the beginning of the next Parliament, this House approves the revised Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members annexed to that Report;

(3) the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament be amended as follows:

(a) leave out Paragraph 2 and insert

‘The Code applies to Members in all aspects of their public life. It does not seek to regulate what Members do in their purely private and personal lives’.

(b) leave out paragraph 17; and

(4) previous Resolutions of this House in relation to the conduct of Members shall be read and given effect in a way which is compatible with the Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members.

Index to the Guide to the Rules

Except where otherwise stated, references are to the relevant paragraphs of the Guide

Advice, Intro: 17

Allowances, taxable, 1:7

All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- benefits received as member of, 1:29, 1:46
- visits through, 1:38

Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, 1:18, 1:28, 1:33, 1:45

Benefits

- available to all Members, Intro: 10, 2:6
- in kind, 1:7
- in recognition of services, 1:7, 1:25, 1:42
- provided by own party, Intro: 10, 1:18, 1:35, 2:6
- provided to others, 1:27, 1:44
- received in 12 months before election, 1:2

Bequests, 1:17, 1:19, 1:26, 1:43

British Council, 1:33

British Irish inter-parliamentary assembly, 1:35

Candidacy for elected office, registration of support for, 1:15-21, 1:25

Children, dependent, 1:48-9, 1:52

Clients, 1:9

Clubs, political, 1:16, 1:19(fn)

Collective investment vehicles, 1:53

Committee on Standards, 4:18-21

- Members must not lobby, 4:14

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 1:35

Company cars, 1:7

Concessionary rates, benefits provided at, 1:23

Constituency interests, lobbying rule and, 3:19

Contractual agreements for 12 months or more, 1:13

Contractual arrangements fettering discretion in house, banned, 3:3

Council of Europe, 1:35

Credit arrangements, 1:23

Declaration,

- aim of, Intro: 5, 2:2
- expected future interests, 2:4(c)
- facilities on parliamentary estate and, 2:8
- indirect interests, 2:4
- mode of, 2:3
- scope of, Intro: 9, chapter 2
- when required, 2:7

Delegations

- declaration and, 2:8
- lobbying rule and, 3:18

Development and secondment programmes approved by Parliamentary authorities, 1:18

Directorships, 1:7-9

- companies not trading, 1:8
- unremunerated, 1:8

Discount cards, 1:23, 1:40

Dividends, 1:8

Donations

- for personal benefit, 1:18
- impermissible, 1:20, 1:24
- linked to Member, 1:16
- received by local party, 1:16
- sources outside UK, from, 1:42

Donors, permissible, 1:20, 1:42

Election, benefits received before, 1:2

Elected bodies, membership of and lobbying rule, 3:19

Electoral Commission, Intro:6, 17, 1:16, 1:18, 1:20, 1:24, 1:25, 1:42, 4:23

Ex gratia payments, 1:7

Expenses, taxable 1:7

Family members, definition of, 1:58

- employed, 1:57

- lobbying, 1:60-62
 - income arising from own employment, 1:8, 3:14
 - see also interests, indirect
- Front bench, donations in support of, 1:16
- Fundraising events, 1:19(fn)
- Government, HM
- Visits funded by, 1:35
- Gifts
- in recognition of services, 1:7
 - of property in support of activities as MP, 1:17
- Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, Intro:15, 4:5
- Industry and Parliament Trust, 1:18, 1:28, 1:33, 1:45
- Interests,
- expected future, 2:4
 - indirect, 2:4
 - non-financial, 2:4
 - notification of Commissioner before action taken, 1:3
 - purely personal and particular, 3:7
- International organisations, 1:35
- Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1:35
- Journalists, complaints of non-registration by, 4:24
- Legal funds, 1:30
- Lloyds, 1:7
- LLP, interest in, 1:52
- Loans, 1:17, 1:18, 1:24, 1:40, 1:42
- Lobbying rules, see Chapter 3
- time limits 3:10
- Local authorities, membership of and lobbying rule, 3:19
- Members, former and lobbying, 3:20-22
- Ministers,
- donations and support received, in capacity as, 1:18
 - Ministerial Code, Intro:16
 - Ministerial office not registrable, Intro:16
 - rules relating to registration and declaration apply, Intro:16
 - ex, ACOBA and, 1:10
- NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 1:35
- Opinion surveys, 1:7
- Other people or organisations,
- gifts or benefits to, related to MP, 1:27, 1:37, 1:44
 - payment for MP's work donated to, 1:11
 - payments made to, 1:12
- OSCE, 1:35
- Outside reward or consideration. Definitions, 3:13-14
- Parliament, facilities etc provided by, 1:18, 1:32
- Parliamentary attachments, 1:28, 1:45
- Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
- communications with and parliamentary privilege, 4:9
 - inquiries, see Chapter 4
 - details published on webpages, 4:4, 4:15, 4:16
 - IPSA and, 4:5
 - remit, 4:22 -23
 - submits memorandum to Committee on Standards, 4:17
- Partner, interests of or gifts to, 1:8, 1:48-9, 1:52, 2:4
- Partnerships, 1:52
- Payments
- ad hoc, registered in advance, 1:14
 - to other people or organisations, 1:11-12
 - for advocating a particular matter in House or approaches to public officials, banned, 3:2
- Pensions, 1:8, 1:53
- Points of order, 3:26
- Police service parliamentary scheme, 1:18, 1:28, 1:33, 1:45
- Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act, registration and, Intro: 6, 1:16,

- Professional body membership and lobbying rules, 3:19
- Public officials, definition of, 3:17
- Rectification. 4:16
- Redundancy payments, 1:7
- Register,
- time entries remain on, Intro:7
- Registration,
- aim of, Intro:5, 1:4
 - thresholds for, Intro:8, and see Guide for relevant category
 - time by which benefits should be registered, 1:2
- Representative organisations and lobbying rules, 3:19
- Sponsorship, 1:17
- Spouse, interests of, or gifts to, 1:8, 1:48-9, 1:52, 2:4
- Share options, 1:52
- Staff of members, complaints of non-registration by, 4:24
- Subscriptions, as gifts or benefits, 1:23, 1:40
- Support in kind, 1:17
- Trade associations and lobbying rules, 3:19
- Trade Union support, 1:18
- Trusts,
- blind, 1:53
 - and declaration, 2:4
 - donations and gifts from, 1:19, 1:26, 1:43
- UK public bodies, hospitality from, 1:18, 1:25
- Visits,
- with APPG, 1:38
 - funded by own political party, 1:35
 - as select committee member, 1:35
 - funded by HM Government, 1:35
 - funded by international organisation or international parliamentary body, 1:35
 - by others, 1:35
 - undertaken for outside employment, 1:35
- Volunteers, registration of hours, 1:18
- Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 1:35
- “Whistleblowing”, lobbying rules and, 3:8-9