

REGISTER OF MEMBERS' FINANCIAL INTERESTS

Introduction to the Registers for the 2019 Parliament

The main purpose of the Register of Members' Financial Interests is to provide information about any financial interest which an MP has, or any benefit which they receive, which others might reasonably consider to influence his or her actions or words as an MP.¹

The Register began following a Resolution of the House of 22 May 1974. As Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards I am responsible, under House of Commons Standing Order No. 150, for maintaining it. In practice the Register is prepared by the Registrar and her team.

The House has agreed nine types of interest which MPs have to register. Any other benefit or interest which meets the main purpose of the Register, as explained above, but does not fit in these categories, is to be recorded in the Miscellaneous section of the Register.

The information in the Register includes details about donations to MPs, which we collect in accordance with legal requirements. It is republished by the Electoral Commission.

We publish an updated version of the Register fortnightly online when the House is sitting, and less often at other times. Interests remain in the Register for twelve months after the interest has ended.

MPs must register their interests within one month of their election. After that they must register any change to their interests within 28 days. The interests which have to be registered are summarised below.

¹ Select Committee on Members' Interests, First Report, Session 1991–92, "Registration and Declaration of Financial Interests", HC 236, paragraph 27.

Category number and name	What MPs must register
1. Employment and earnings	Individual earnings payments over £100 Any earnings payments of whatever size, if the total value of what the MP receives from that source is over £300 in a calendar year (eg 2020)
2. Donations and other support	Any donation in money or in kind valued at over £1,500, and any donation in money or in kind valued at over £500 if the MP has received donations totalling over £1,500 in value from that source in the calendar year. This includes loans and “linked” donations received via a party organisation.
3. Gifts, benefits and hospitality from UK sources (if related to membership of the House or to political activities)	Any benefit with a value over £300, and any benefit of whatever value if the same source has given the MP similar benefits which - together with this one - have a total value of over £300 in value in the calendar year.
4. Visits outside the UK (if related to membership of the House or to political activities)	Any visit with a value over £300, if not wholly paid for by public funds; or any other visit if the same source has given the MP similar visits which - together with this one - have a total value of over £300 in value in the calendar year.
5. Gifts and benefits from sources outside the UK (if related to membership of the House or to political activities)	Any benefit with a value over £300, or any benefit of whatever value if the same source has given the MP similar benefits which - together with this one - have a total value of over £300 in value in the calendar year.
6. Land and property (excluding any used only for the personal residential purposes of the MP or their close family)	(i) Any land or property if the MP’s portfolio has a value over £100,000 (ii) Any land or property if the MP’s portfolio generates annual income over £10,000
7. Shareholdings	(i) Any shares where the MP holds more than 15% of issued share capital in that company (on the preceding 5 April), or (ii) Any other shares if the MP’s holding in that company (on the preceding 5 April), is worth more than £70,000
8. Miscellaneous	Any other interest or benefit, if the MP believes that someone else might reasonably consider the interest to influence their actions or words as an MP
9. Family members employed and remunerated through parliamentary expenses]	Any family members paid over £700 in a calendar year. (Job titles and descriptions are set out on the webpages of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority.)

10. Family members engaged in lobbying the public sector	No threshold
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The rules and exceptions are explained in detail in the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members, as approved by the House on 7 January 2019.²

As well as registering their interests, MPs have a wide-ranging duty to draw attention to (“declare”) an interest on almost any occasion when someone else might reasonably consider it to influence what they say or do as an MP. To give a few examples, they must disclose interests in this way when

- writing letters or emails,
- speaking in the Chamber or elsewhere,
- joining a Select Committee or taking part in its proceedings, and
- tabling questions or motions.

This duty to be open about interests is wide ranging. As well as their own interests MPs may need to declare the interests of partners and family members, which do not appear in the Register. They may also need to declare interests which have not yet materialised but are expected to arise in future. Again, the rules are set out in in the Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members.

If there is evidence that an MP has not registered or declared their interests when the rules of the House required them to do so, I may investigate. If I find that they have broken the rules on registration, but this was minor or inadvertent, I may resolve the inquiry myself by means of the rectification procedure. In more serious cases I submit a formal memorandum to the Committee on Standards for the Committee to consider. Entries are printed in bold italics, with an explanatory note, when they have been made or amended following an investigation.

If you have questions about the Register please contact the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA or standardscommissioner@parliament.uk.

Kathryn Stone OBE
Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

31 January 2020

² *The Code of Conduct together with The Guide to the Rules relating to the conduct of Members 2019*, HC 1882;
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmcode/1882/188201.htm>