

The Nomination and Assessment Process

House of Lords
Appointments
Commission

Background

1. The role of the House of Lords Appointments Commission is:
 - to make recommendations on the appointment of non-party-political members of the House of Lords;
 - to vet nominees to the House of Lords, including those put forward by the political parties, to ensure their propriety.
2. The Commission's aim is to recommend people who will contribute effectively to the work of the House, based on a record of significant achievement and merit. It has published its selection criteria in full as part of its open and transparent process of attracting and assessing nominees.
3. The Commission has been asked by the Prime Minister to consider nominees who would broaden the expertise and experience of the House and reflect the diversity of the people of the United Kingdom.
4. The Commission makes recommendations to Her Majesty The Queen, via the Prime Minister, on non-party-political life peerages. The Prime Minister has undertaken to pass the Commission's recommendations directly to The Queen and will only intervene in the most exceptional cases.
5. The Commission has seven members, including the Chairman. The four non-party-political members of the Appointments Commission were appointed through open competition in autumn 2013, following guidelines set down by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. They were appointed for a fixed term of five years. The party-political members were chosen by their parties and took up post in November 2010. They were reappointed for a further three year term in November 2013. Biographies of all Commission members can be found at the end of these notes.
6. The Commission has adopted a Code of Practice to ensure that its work is conducted with integrity. A copy of the Code and the Commission's Register of

Interests is available on its website or from its office.

Eligibility

7. Any British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen over the age of 21 may be nominated for membership of the House of Lords. Nominees must also be resident in the UK for tax purposes and accept the requirement to remain so. Nominees who do not meet these criteria will not be considered.

Nomination Form

8. The Commission will consider self-nominations and nominations by another person or organisation.
9. All nominations will be considered against the same criteria regardless of whether they are self-nominations or nominations made by another person or organisation.
10. All nominees should complete the same nomination form, addressing the Commission's criteria. This should then be sent electronically to: enquiry@lordsappointments.gsi.gov.uk

Alternatively it can be sent in hard copy to the Commission's offices at:

Room G/08, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

A copy of the form is available on our website: <http://lordsappointments.independent.gov.uk>

11. If you would like to nominate someone else, please pass this information pack to him or her to complete. Alternatively, you can contact the Commission's office and we will send a pack direct to your nominee.

CV

12. Nominees should provide a CV to support their nomination form.

Selection Criteria

13. The Commission is committed to an independent and fair assessment of nominations against its criteria and alongside other nominees. All recommendations are made on merit. The Commission will apply these criteria consistently to all nominees. Any changes to the criteria will be published.
14. Building on the remit placed on it by the Government, the Commission seeks to recommend people:
 - with the ability to make an effective and significant contribution to the work of the House of Lords, not only in their areas of particular interest and special expertise, but the wide range of other issues coming before the House;
 - with a record of significant achievement within their chosen way of life that demonstrates a range of experience, skills and competencies;
 - who are willing to commit the time necessary to make an effective contribution to the work of the House of Lords. The Commission recognises that many active members continue with their professional and other working interests and this can help maintain expertise and experience;
 - with some understanding of the constitutional framework, including the place of the House of Lords, and the skills and qualities needed to be an effective member of the House – for example, nominees should be able to speak with independence and authority;
 - who are able to demonstrate outstanding personal qualities, in particular, integrity and independence;
 - with a strong and personal commitment to the principles and highest standards of public life;
 - who are and intend to remain independent of any political party.
 - who are resident in the UK for tax purposes and accept the requirement to remain so.

Party-Political Activity

15. You should be able to bring a perspective and contribution to the work of the House of Lords that is independent of party-political considerations. Party-political activity or membership of a political party is not a bar to nomination. However nominees will need to satisfy the Commission that they are comfortable operating outside a party-political framework, and intend to remain outside the party-political framework in future. The nomination form includes questions on current and past political activities that are similar to those used for most public appointments.

Political Donations

16. You must declare any donation either of money or in kind, loan or credit arrangement made to or with a political party whether or not the donation, loan or credit arrangement was declarable to the Electoral Commission. This requirement covers all donations, loans or credit arrangements regardless of when they were made whether given directly by yourself or indirectly, for example, by a business or trust over which you exercise significant direction, or by a trade union of which you are, or were, an office holder or major supporter. You must also declare any personal financial relationship between you and a senior member of a political party.
17. Donations, loans or credit agreements made to or with a political party by close family members, such as your spouse or partner, should also be declared, as should any close personal financial relationship between them and a senior member of a political party.

Referees

18. The Commission believes that references play an essential part in assessing the quality and propriety of nominees. All references will be treated in confidence.
18. As a minimum, you are asked to provide details of at least three referees, but no more than six. These should include at least one work-related referee (where relevant) and a personal referee.
19. Referees should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of you and show how you could contribute to the work of the House of Lords.
20. **Please note that, at this stage, the Commission only requires contact details for each referee.** It is not necessary for written references to be included with nominations.
21. The Commission may contact referees directly to request written references as part of the assessment process and may also discuss a written reference with them.

Closing Date for Nominations

23. There is no closing date for nominations. The nomination and assessment process is continuous. The Prime Minister has said that for the time being he would like the Commission to recommend no more than two individuals for appointment over the course of a year.

Acknowledgement of Nominations

24. All nominations are acknowledged. Please note, however, that it may be some time before you hear about the outcome of your nomination. You are welcome to update your nomination at any time during this period.

Confidentiality

25. The Commission treats all nominations and supporting information in confidence.

Withdrawal of Nominations

26. Please inform the Commission if you wish to withdraw your nomination.

The Assessment Process

27. The assessment process includes a number of stages to ensure that all nominations are considered fairly and consistently. The process is summarised below.
 - Stage 1: before the assessment begins, a number of objective checks on eligibility are made. It is a statutory requirement that appointees to the Lords are UK, Commonwealth or Irish nationals, aged over 21. The Commission also requires nominees to confirm they are resident in the UK for tax purposes. Nominees who do not meet these criteria will not be considered further.
 - Stage 2: the Commission's Secretariat carries out the first sift. At least two team members make an initial assessment of the nomination against the published criteria. The team then discuss their separate assessments and agree a final recommendation for discussion by a sub-committee.
 - Stage 3: a sub-committee of the Commission meets to discuss the Secretariat's recommendations. The sub-committee considers all the nominations and agrees its recommendations for consideration by the Commission as a whole.
 - Stage 4: references are taken up for those nominees whom the sub-committee wishes to consider for interview.
 - Stage 5: the Commission considers the sub-committee's recommendations, and decides which nominees best meet the published criteria and should be invited to interview.
 - Stage 6: a sub-committee of the Commission interviews the selected nominees. At least two of the Commission members, including the Chairman, meet each interviewee.
 - Stage 7: following the interviews, the Commission reviews all the information about a nominee before reaching a decision on the outcome. The Commission may also decide that it wishes to invite the nominee back for a second interview before reaching its final decision.

Unsuccessful Nominations

28. Please be patient in following up your nomination. The Commission is not able to respond within the same time as you would expect from a “normal” job application. Once the Commission has decided, however, not to recommend a nominee for appointment, it will let the nominee know as soon as possible. **Please note that the Commission does not undertake to provide reasons as to why a nominee has been unsuccessful.**
29. Your nomination form will be destroyed three months after you are informed of the Commission’s decision in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Nomination forms and supporting material will not be returned.

Vetting

30. The Commission is charged with vetting nominations for life peerages to ensure nominees have upheld the highest standards of propriety.
31. The Commission will wish to be satisfied that, amongst other things, nominees are not, and never have been, a threat to the national security of the United Kingdom or any other country; that they have complied, in a straightforward way, with their obligations in relation to taxation and the receipt of benefits; and that there are no serious doubts about their integrity in relation to their working life. The Commission expects nominees to be resident in the United Kingdom for tax purposes, and to accept the requirement to remain so.
32. Past criminal convictions will not automatically disqualify candidates. The Commission will take into account convictions for serious criminal offences but believes in the rehabilitation of offenders. In that spirit, nominees are encouraged to provide details of convictions or any other matters that they believe should be brought to the Commission’s attention.
33. The Commission’s vetting of nominations considers financial relationships between nominees and political parties. Please see paragraph 16.
34. Nominees are asked to sign the declaration and consent page of the nomination form. This allows the Commission to undertake checks with former employers, Government departments and agencies and other organisations and individuals. If you are submitting your nomination form electronically we will accept a scanned signed version in PDF format.

Chairman and Members of the Commission

Chairman—Lord (Ajay) Kakkar

Professor the Lord Kakkar is Professor of Surgery at University College London and Consultant Surgeon University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Lord Kakkar's research interests focus on the prevention and treatment of venous and arterial thromboembolic disease and cancer associated thrombosis. He was appointed an independent non-party-political peer by the House of Lords Appointments Commission in 2010 and is a member of EU Sub-Committee B. He is Chair of the Health Honours Committee, a member of the General Medical Council and he is a Commissioner of the Royal Hospital in Chelsea.

The three other non-party-political members are:

Lord (Colin) Low of Dalston CBE

Lord Low is the former Chair, now Vice President of RNIB, and President of ICEVI (International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment). Colin Low (CBE) taught Law and Criminology at Leeds University, before becoming Director of the GLC's Disability Resource Team. He then carried out research into theories of disability as Senior Research Fellow at City University, and was appointed to the crossbenches of the House of Lords by the Commission in 2006.

Gillian Peele

Gillian is a Fellow and Tutor in Politics at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. She has published widely on British, American and comparative government. Her current research interests are focused on the problems associated with the regulation of public ethics in modern states.

Sir Malcolm Ross GCVO OBE

After 25 years in the Regular Army (Scots Guards) Malcolm Ross joined The Queen's Household where, for the majority of the next 20 years he served as Comptroller of The Lord Chamberlain's Office. He was then Master of the Household of The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall before retiring in 2008. Since then he has been Lord-Lieutenant of The Stewartry of Kirkcudbrightshire, Prior of Scotland (Chairman of the Order of St John), and Chairman of the Westminster Group plc.

The other three members of the Commission were nominated by the main political parties:

Lord (Garry) Hart of Chilton (Labour)

Lord Hart is Chancellor of the University of Greenwich. Before entering public service as a Labour Peer, he was a partner in the city law firm Herbert Smith, specialising in planning and administrative law. Lord Hart is a member of the House of Lords Select Committee on the Merits of Statutory Instruments and the Select Committee on the Constitution. He is also a member of the Development and Strategy Committee of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Past appointments include terms as Chairman of the Almeida Theatre and Deputy Chairman of the Architect Foundation. He has served as a trustee of the British Architectural Library Trust and is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of

British Architects and a Fellow and former Lay Member of Council at University College London.

The Rt Hon Lord (Michael) Howard of Lympne QC (Conservative)

Lord Howard is a former leader of the Conservative Party, having served as a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons for nearly three decades. Lord Howard served as Secretary of State for Employment, Secretary of State for the Environment and Home Secretary in the Conservative government before taking the front-bench opposition roles of Shadow Chancellor and Shadow Foreign Secretary. He was elected to Parliament in 1983 and served as an MP until April 2010 before being appointed a Conservative Life Peer. Prior to his career in government, Lord Howard practised as a barrister for over 20 years, achieving the rank of Queen's Counsel in 1982. Since leaving politics, he has pursued a variety of international business interests. He is Chairman of Northern Racing Limited, Chairman of Luup Limited, deputy chairman of Entree Gold Inc., and a senior adviser to Hawkpoint Partners Limited.

Baroness (Ros) Scott of Needham Market (Liberal Democrat)

Baroness Scott was created a Life Peer in 2000 after a career in local government in Suffolk. In addition to holding significant positions within Suffolk County Council, Baroness Scott has been a senior member of the Local Government Association, Member of the Board of the Audit Commission, and a UK delegate to the European Union Committee of the Regions. Since becoming a member of the House of Lords, Baroness Scott has held front bench positions as the Liberal Democrat spokesman for Local Government and Communities, and for Transport. Between 2008 and 2010 she held office as President of the Liberal Democrats.

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