



## Job Description

Details of a current vacancy in the House of Lords. To apply for this post, please ensure you complete all sections of our online application form found at <http://www.parliament.uk/about/working/jobs/>

### Job Description

Job title

Media and Communications Officer

Reference number

2056

Office

Communications

Grade

HL6

Starting Salary

£32,085 per annum

Term

This post is permanent

### Scope of the job

Background

The House of Lords plays an important role as the second chamber of the UK Parliament. It has approximately 800 members and is independent from, and complements the work of, the elected House of Commons. The Lords has three main roles: helping to make laws; investigating public policy, especially through its select committee work; and holding government to account through questions and debates. There are considerable challenges for the UK Parliament as a whole, and the Lords specifically, and the House is very much in the public eye.

The Communications team is here to increase understanding of the role and membership of the House; promote the impact and outcomes of its work; demonstrate its relevance to UK citizens; ensure that the House is open and accountable to the public; and deliver the best possible internal communications to members and staff. It provides an enquiry service for members of the public, promotes the work of the House to the press and media, runs marketing activities and outreach events, produces publications, manages web and social media content, and communicates with the staff and members of the House. Lords staff are strictly impartial, supporting the work of the entire House, and all its members.

Our team of Media and Communications Officers play a key role in delivering the House of Lords' communications strategy and developing public understanding of the House's function and work. Each of them is responsible for leading communications with the media and other external stakeholders for a number of the House's influential select committees, developing integrated communications plans to support inquiries and other campaigns and responding to incoming media inquiries on a wide range of issues relevant to the House.

House of Lords committees cover a wide range of public policy areas, producing high quality and high impact reports. This position provides an exciting opportunity to develop communications across the full range of public policy areas and requires an ability to quickly get to grips with complex issues in order to successfully communicate them to the media and other stakeholders.

The successful candidate will be a creative and effective communicator with experience of working in media relations in a high-profile environment. They will also have a good understanding of Parliament and politics and broad communications skills to develop effective stakeholder engagement plans and integrated communications.

#### Main objective

The key objective of this role is to play an active part in the Media Team and wider Communications Office in planning and delivering communication activities that promote the House of Lords to the media and to other external stakeholders.

This includes supporting the work of the Head of Press and Media, responsibility for leading on the planning and delivery of proactive communication strategies for a selection of House of Lords committees, developing stakeholder mapping and engagement opportunities for those committees and other House activity, and acting as a spokesperson for the House, including as part of an out-of-hours media service.

#### Key internal and external relationships

##### **Internal**

- Members of the House of Lords including, but not limited to, committee chairs and members
- The Lord Speaker's office
- The Senior Deputy Speaker and his private office
- Staff at all levels in the House of Lords including Management Board members.

##### **External**

- The media, particularly political and lobby journalists as well as regional and specialist media
- All levels of House of Commons and bicameral staff
- Third sector organisations, community groups, academics and other external stakeholders
- Suppliers and contractors of communication services
- Other outside agencies.

## **Main responsibilities**

#### Line management and budgetary responsibilities

These roles do not currently have line management or budgetary responsibilities.

#### Other responsibilities of the post

- Contribute to the delivery of the House of Lords communications strategy and achievement of its communication objectives, particularly in the area of media relations and stakeholder engagement.

- Develop integrated communication plans for allocated Lords select committee inquiries and maximise the influence and impact of committee reports and other activities. Ensure media activity supports each committee's wider communications and policy objectives.
- Draft and place/publish media articles, online content and other written materials on behalf of the House of Lords and its committees.
- Act as a House of Lords media spokesperson for reactive inquiries and respond effectively to breaking news stories to minimise reputational risk to the House.
- Take part in the Media team's out-of-hours media service including anticipating potential reputational risk and taking appropriate steps to mitigate that risk.
- Identify and take forward opportunities to proactively promote business in the House of Lords chamber to the media and other external stakeholders and to explain the impact of the House of Lords in making and improving laws.
- Work with the bicameral engagement team to promote Lords outreach activities including those of the Lord Speaker and other members by developing communications and media plans to maximise the impact of this area of work.
- Advise senior staff on communications and media handling.
- Develop and maintain good relationships with Parliament's Press Lobby and wider media through ongoing engagement and building on successful approaches.
- Ensure that accurate, impartial and high-quality information is provided to the media in a timely way in response to enquiries.
- Work with other Communications colleagues in the House of Lords and with other parts of the Administration to develop social media content to communicate the work of the House of Lords.
- Undertake media monitoring and contribute to the production of a daily news summary used by staff and members of the House of Lords.

## Person specification

The qualifications required for the post are:

Educated to degree level or equivalent or to be qualified by experience.

The knowledge, skills and experience required for the post are outlined below. Each element will be assessed in the examples you provide in your application form. Should you be shortlisted these areas will be assessed in more depth at interview and, if appropriate, in a test.

## Our Values

The House of Lords Administration has four values: respect, inclusivity, professionalism and responsibility. Our behaviours sit alongside our values, translating them into day-to-day actions and demonstrating how we bring our values to life. They outline what we can expect from each other at work and ensure we all play our part in building an inclusive and respectful workplace culture.

The [values and behaviours](#) are applicable to everyone who works for the House of Lords. As colleagues and representatives of the Administration, everything we do and say counts.

The post holder will be expected to operate in line with the House of Lords workplace values which are:

**Respect** - We treat people with respect and expect to be treated with respect.

**Inclusivity** - We embrace and value difference and diversity –whether from a person’s race, gender, other characteristics, background or experience.

**Professionalism** - We aim for and value a high level of skills and expertise. We act with integrity and openness, putting public service first.

**Responsibility** - We take ownership of our work and actions. We hold each other to account, take appropriate risks and continue learning.

### **Competencies:** Essential

- A track record of proactive and reactive media planning and delivery, working with national, regional and international media and dealing with complex issues for a high-profile organisation;
- Experience of acting as a media spokesperson with honesty and integrity for a high-profile organisation, dealing with challenging issues, anticipating risks and taking steps to mitigate them. The ability to effectively brief the media on a proactive and reactive basis including as part of an out of hours media service
- Excellent tact, diplomacy and influencing skills, and the capacity to balance the sometimes conflicting demands of different stakeholders and to build alliances;
- A good understanding of the House of Lords and Parliament and the political environment in which they operate, and specifically of select committees and their role and work;
- Excellent communication skills both orally and in writing;
- Strong team working, with the ability to work effectively and collaboratively with colleagues across the Administration, House of Commons and external stakeholders.

## **Terms and conditions**

### **Salary and allowances**

The post is paid in accordance with House of Lords grade HL6 (£32,085 per annum). Pay increases usually depend on performance as assessed in annual performance reviews, up to the current band maximum of £38,373.

Salary is paid monthly by bank transfer.

**Probation**

There is a probationary period of six months.

**Term and hours**

The post is permanent and is for 41 hours per week (including break-time).

Consideration will be given to candidates expressing a wish to perform the role on a flexible working arrangement such as those set out below:

- **Job-share**
- **Compressed hours**
- **Home working (1-2 days a week)**

If you are selected for interview, please inform the panel of the days/hours you are available to work.

**Benefits**

As an employee of the House, you will be entitled to our benefits such as a season ticket loan, a Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service, including access to a dedicated Employee Assistance Programme and many more. Full details can be found on our [Employee Benefits](#) page.

**Pension**

The House of Lords participates in the [Civil Service Pension Schemes](#). As an employee of the House, you will be entitled to join one of these highly competitive pension scheme arrangements.

**Annual leave**

Annual leave entitlement is 30 days (increasing to 35 days after one year's service) plus public and bank holidays. In most offices annual leave may be taken only during periods when the House is in recess and must always be agreed in advance with the line manager and Head of Office.

**Inclusion and Diversity**

The House of Lords Administration is committed to increasing diversity and maintaining an inclusive workplace culture. We welcome applications from all candidates regardless of their age, caring responsibilities, disability, gender/sex, gender reassignment/trans status, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. The Administration will also consider flexible working arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

**Pre-appointment checks**

For external candidates, appointment depends on satisfactory references, health and security checks and where necessary proof of qualifications.

Successful candidates' publicly open social media profiles will also be checked under this stage of the process and information obtained may be used to review suitability for the job role.

**Baseline Security Standard**

The House of Lords (along with all government departments) has to comply with a Baseline Security Standard. The standard requires that we ascertain the identity of the applicant, their right to work in the UK, their employment or

academic history over the last three years, and their address history over the last three years.

Successful candidates will be required to complete pre-employment checks. This includes security vetting to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) level unless otherwise specified. All successful candidates are required to pass these checks before an offer can be confirmed.

Applicants should be aware that if they have resided outside of the UK for a total of more than two of the last five years, they are not eligible for vetting.

Please see the [National Security Vetting booklet](#) for further information.

In addition, applicants are required to give a reasonable account of any significant recent periods of time (more than six months) spent abroad.

Applicants who have been unemployed or self-employed for over six months in the last three years (whose last three years' employment/academic history are not covered by references) will be asked to provide further documentation to prove their history.

### **Returning your completed application**

Please complete your online application by 10am on Monday 14 March 2022.

If you require any reasonable adjustments during the application process, please contact [HLHumanresources@parliament.uk](mailto:HLHumanresources@parliament.uk) or call 020 7219 3185.

### **Telephone enquiries**

If you wish to find out more information about this post please contact Michael Winders on 020 7219 0671.

No recruitment agencies