Guidance on Media releases and other media activity

The SPCB appreciates that there can sometimes be a fine line between something that is parliamentary and party political and Members have to use their judgement accordingly in line with the guidance provided.

1. Can I describe myself in a media release as the [party name] MSP?

If a Member wishes to refer to their political party in any communication, they shall do so by using the following template to describe themselves:

“Media/ Press release issued by [Name] Member of the Scottish Parliament for [constituency/ region] (party affiliation in brackets)”

Where a communication is issued by a parliamentary party group pool they must use the following template:

“Media/ Press release issued by the [party] parliamentary group”

2. Can I refer to a position I hold within the party group?

It is permissible within a communication to refer to the Member’s portfolio role for example if the Member is a spokesperson for the parliamentary party on a specific matter.

Communications should not refer to a position held within the wider political party.

3. Can I use my party logo to highlight my party affiliation on any media/ press?

No. Party political logos should not be used on any form of communication which is prepared and/ or issued using parliamentary resources.

4. What about the content of media/ press releases?

Any media/ press release must be parliamentary in nature.

Media/ press releases should not be used to promote, criticise or campaign for or against anyone seeking election.
5. Can I refer to comments made by myself or another MSP during a debate in a media/press release?

Yes, where it is in relation to a parliamentary issue being pursued by the Member references can be made to debates.

Members should have regard to the Members’ Code of Conduct in how they treat other Members.

6. Can I refer to comments made by an MP during a Westminster debate in a press release?

Where it is in relation to a parliamentary issue being pursued by the Member references can be made to debates in other legislatures. However, parliamentary resources should not be used to promote the views of others such as MPs, MEPs local authority councillors, election candidates (for any election) or campaign groups.

7. Can I include quotes of endorsement from the local councillor for the area in any press release?

No. Parliamentary resources should not be used to promote quotes from local authority councillors.

This also applies to MPs, MEPs, election candidates (for any election) or campaign groups.

8. Can I organise photocalls in the Parliament?

Yes, but photocalls should be organised with respect for the privacy of other building users in mind and in a way which ensures that there is no disruption to parliamentary activities, including Garden Lobby events.
9. Can I film myself for the purposes of my website or other social media in the Parliament?

Yes. Members and/or their staff are entitled to carry out their own recording / filming / photography in relation to their parliamentary duties. Any filming should be carried out respecting the privacy of other building users and in a way which ensures that there is no disruption to parliamentary activities. Recording / filming in the Chamber requires the prior permission of the Presiding Officer.

Recording / filming / photography of a party political nature or for party political purposes are not permitted within the parliamentary complex.

10. Can I hold a media conference in the Parliament?

Yes. Meeting rooms may be used by a Member for media briefings and media conferences on parliamentary matters and may be attended by external parties. Meeting rooms should not be used to enable third parties to brief the media or to hold media conferences even if the event is hosted by a Member.

Enquiries

Any enquiries on media/press photocalls and conferences should be addressed to the Media Relations Office on 0131 348 6852.