Guidance on Political party affiliation

1. Can I refer to my party political affiliation when issuing external letters using parliamentary headed paper?

Yes. Members may include a reference to their party affiliation together with the description of their electoral status as part of their signature. You must not incorporate this, or any additional logo, beside the Parliament’s corporate identity in any parliamentary communication.

Members should describe themselves in the following terms:

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

An example letter is available at Annex A.

2. Can I use my party logo to highlight my party affiliation on any parliamentary funded communication?

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

3. Can I refer to the fact that I am a member of a particular political party on any communication?

A communication issued using parliamentary resources must relate to a Member’s parliamentary duties. Similarly, any communication issued by a party group pool must be parliamentary in nature.

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:

“[Communication] 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 ensure the following template is used:

“[Communication] issued by the [party] parliamentary group”
You must not incorporate this, or any additional logo, beside the Parliament’s corporate identity in any parliamentary communication. References to a political party must be beneath the mid-line of any communication.

4. Can my staff refer to a particular political party on any communication?

No. Staff must not refer to a particular political party affiliation on any communication or material and this includes business cards.

5. Can I refer to the position I hold within the party?

Yes but only in relation to a portfolio role where you are the spokesperson for the parliamentary group on a specific matter.

Communications must not include any reference to a position held within the wider political party.

6. Can I provide my parliamentary contact details or those of my staff for a political party event?

No. The contact details provided for a political party event, such as a conference or seminar, should be those of the political party. A parliamentary telephone extension or e-mail account, either in the parliamentary complex or at a local office, should not be used for any non-parliamentary event.

Members are reminded that, under the Reimbursement of Members’ Expenses Scheme, staff must not undertake any significant party political activity during any hours of work which are included within claims made by Members to meet staff salary costs.

7. Can I use my parliamentary e-mail account or telephone to contact or correspond with my party headquarters?

This is a matter of judgement for Members. Any use must be minimal in nature and frequency and must not result in the significant use of resources.
8. Can I refer to my political party on invitations and/or other materials for an event or exhibition I am sponsoring at Parliament?

No, Members are not permitted to refer to their political party affiliation on invitations and/or other materials for an event or exhibition they are sponsoring at Parliament.

Members are responsible for ensuring that third parties issuing invitations on their behalf comply with this guidance.

9. Can I use my political party logo on invitations and/or other materials for an event or exhibition I am sponsoring at Parliament?

No. Members must not use their political party logo on invitations and/or other materials for an event/exhibition they are sponsoring at parliament.

Members are responsible for ensuring that third parties issuing invitations on their behalf comply with this guidance.

**Improper use of the SPCB’s policy on party affiliation**

Members attention is drawn to the Members’ Code of Conduct (paragraph 7.2.11).

**Enquiries**

Any enquiries on the policy on the use of the SPCB’s policy on party affiliation should be addressed to Huw Williams on 0131 348 6836.
Dear

Yours sincerely

[Name]
Member of the Scottish Parliament for [constituency/ region] [(party affiliation in brackets)]