GUIDANCE ON THE CORRECTION OF INACCURACIES OF INFORMATION PROVIDED IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS THROUGH THE OFFICIAL REPORT

1. This guidance applies when a member supplies incorrect information that the Official Report is unable to correct, either before or after publication, because such a correction would not reflect what happened during the meeting or accord with the understanding by those who were present of what was said. The Official Report’s remit, which governs pre and post-publication corrections, is not affected by this guidance. Further information about its remit can be found on the Official Report web pages.

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/14906.aspx

2. If the member realises during the debate (or during the committee meeting) that the error has been made, he or she may correct it immediately, for example by making a point of order. Such an error might, for example, be saying that something cost £1 million when it fact it cost £1 billion.

3. Any member may request that an error that they have made and which has been recorded in parliamentary proceedings be corrected to reflect the accurate information. (“Parliamentary proceedings” includes answers to oral questions, statements and debates, in the Chamber and in committees).

4. This request should be made on the application form which is available on the dedicated corrections webpage.

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/43105.aspx

This form should be sent to the Official Report who will confirm whether this is a correction they can make. If it is not a correction the Official Report is able to make, it will then be passed to the Parliamentary Business Team.

5. Each request should reproduce the text that is to be corrected, followed by the text of the correction.

6. The correction will be published as soon as possible after it is notified, on the dedicated corrections page.

7. The corrections page should be used for no other purpose and should not present new information.
8. Only the member who made the error in the first place may request a correction (and not anyone “on behalf of” the member).

9. Members may also wish to inform other members of their correction, especially if the incorrect information was given in direct response to another contribution.

10. There will be a hyperlink from the correction to the *Official Report* containing the original error.

**Admissibility criteria for requesting a correction**

The correction should—

- be made to factual information only (i.e. to matters of fact such as dates, figures, names of organisations);
- not be used to provide new information or to continue an argument;
- be submitted within 20 working days of the publication of the original *Official Report*;
- set out—
  - the name of the member requesting the correction,
  - what the original error was (with a cross-reference to where the error appeared),
  - the correction that is to be made.

Example of correction format:

**Correction to the *Official Report***

**X MSP**

Report at col 999.

Original text:

“X MSP: The project will cost £100,000.”

Corrected text:

“X MSP: The project will cost £200,000.”

Members signature
11. Members can submit requested corrections in the following ways:

- In person, with a completed and signed correction form, to the Official Report Office, Room T2.01
- By e-mail, direct from the members parliamentary e-mail account, either with the correction form attached or written in the correction format, detailed above, to (officialreport@scottish.parliament.uk.)

Resolution of disputes on admissibility

If a member disagrees with a clerk’s decision on the admissibility of a correction, the clerk will refer the matter to the Parliamentary Business Team Leader or the Head of Chamber and Reporting Group. If the member remains dissatisfied, the final decision rests with the Presiding Officer.
GUIDANCE ON STEPS TO REQUEST CORRECTIONS TO POSSIBLE INACCURACIES IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

1. This guidance sets out a number of ways in which members may seek to highlight and request corrections where it is believed that inaccurate or incomplete information has been given in parliamentary proceedings and such information has not been corrected.

2. Members (and ministers) have a personal responsibility to be accurate and truthful.

3. Where a member believes that a member (or minister) has been inaccurate during parliamentary proceedings (such as in a plenary debate, during Question Times, in proceedings on a statement or in committee proceedings), he or she may consider taking the following steps—

   • Resolution during the proceedings

Where a member believes that there has been an inaccuracy during parliamentary proceedings, that member should seek to intervene during the proceedings to make that point, inviting the member to reflect on the veracity of what has been said.

   • Resolution in person/through correspondence

If it has not been possible to raise the matter at the time, the member may wish to raise the matter in person or in writing with the member (or minister) in question.

   • Seek action through other parliamentary processes and/or procedures

Other action which the member may wish to pursue could include—

   • written questions/follow-up questions;
   • lodging a motion calling for a debate on the policy matter in question;
   • where the incident involves a minister, writing to the First Minister/lodging a motion urging the First Minister to refer the complaint to the independent advisers established under the Scottish Ministerial Code.

4. Where a minister or member has made a correction to an inaccuracy, they should take steps to make the correction widely known, such as—

   • ensuring that the correction is made at the earliest possible opportunity in the Official Report (see Guidance on the correction of inaccuracies of information provided in parliamentary proceedings through the Official Report);
   • writing to the member who raised the matter;
   • placing a copy of the correction in the SPICe library;

Publicising where a correction has been made
• copying any correspondence to the Presiding Officer, relevant party spokespersons and business managers.