



HOUSE OF LORDS

Staff Handbook

2014

Contents

Chapter 1: About this Handbook	1
Useful contacts	1

Chapter 2: Introduction to the House of Lords	3
The House of Lords	3
The House of Lords Administration	3

Chapter 3: Your Appointment	8
Terms and Conditions of Service	8
Induction Course	9
Probation	9
Security Clearance	11
Change of Personal Details	11

Chapter 4: Equality and Diversity	12
Principles	12
Equality and Diversity Training	12
Discrimination, Harrassment and Victimisation	12
Rights and Responsibilities of Staff and Managers	15
Staff with a Disability	17
Complaints	17

Chapter 5: Security	18
Roles and Responsibilities	18
Security Clearance	19
Security Passes	20
Security Alerts	21
Personal Property	21

Chapter 6: Health, Safety and Wellbeing	22
Roles and Responsibilities	22
Fire Safety	23
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policies	25
Accidents	28

Medical Facilities and First Aid	29
Welfare	30

Chapter 7: Facilities and Benefits for Staff	31
---	-----------

Catering and Retail Services	31
Sports and Social Facilities	32
Other Organisations	33
Church and Prayer Room Facilities	34
Transport Loans	35
Childcare Costs	36
Access to Parts of the Palace	37
Special Events	38
Other Facilities	38
References	39
Lost Property	39
Access to Westminster Abbey	39
Car Parking	40
Late Night Transport Service	40

Chapter 8: Consultation	41
--------------------------------	-----------

Principles	41
Recognised Trade Unions	41
Whitley Committee	42
Pay Negotiations	43

Chapter 9: Career Progression	44
--------------------------------------	-----------

General Principles	44
Managed Moves	44
Recruitment, Promotion and Level Transfer	45
Progression in Post	47
Secondments	48

Chapter 10: Pay and Allowances	49
---------------------------------------	-----------

Pay	49
Overtime	53
Allowances	54

Chapter 11: Travel and Subsistence Expenses	56
General Arrangements	56
Travel Expenses	58
Day Subsistence	59
Overnight Subsistence	61

Chapter 12: Working Hours and Patterns	62
Introduction	62
Working Time Regulations	63
Flexible Working	64
Home Working	67
Severe Travel Disruption	69

Chapter 13: Annual Leave	70
Annual Leave Entitlement	70
Taking Annual Leave	71
Becoming Ill while on Annual Leave	72

Chapter 14: Special Leave and Career Breaks	73
Special Leave	73
Career Breaks	75

Chapter 15: Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Parental Leave	79
Maternity Leave	80
Before the Baby is Born	80
Maternity Leave and Pay	82
Returning to Work	84
Adoption Leave	86
Paternity Leave	87
Ordinary Paternity Leave	88
Additional Paternity Leave	89
Parental Leave	90
Special Leave	91

Chapter 16: Sickness Absence	92
Introduction	92
Reporting Sickness Absence	93
Returning to Work	95
Sickness and Disability	96
Action in Cases of Unsatisfactory Attendance	97
Chapter 17: Performance Management	100
Introduction to Performance Management	100
Annual Appraisals	101
Mid-Year Development Reviews	103
Unsatisfactory Performance	103
Chapter 18: Learning and Development	104
Introduction to Learning and Development	104
Mandatory Training	105
Work-Related Training	107
Professional Training	107
Further and Higher Education	110
Expenses	112
Chapter 19: Conduct	113
General Principles	113
Political Impartiality	113
Behaviour at Work	115
Safeguarding Official Information	116
Gifts and Hospitality	116
Comment: Social Networking, Publications, Speeches and Broadcasting	117
Criminal Offences and Behaviour Outside Work	118
Private Financial Affairs	119
Family Relationships and Married, Civil and Unmarried Partnerships at work	119
Searches	120
Fraud and Malpractice	121

Chapter 20: Disciplinary and Performance Improvement Procedure 122

Introduction	122
Informal Measures	125
Formal Disciplinary and Performance Procedure	125
Stage One: Investigation	125
Stage Two: Written Notice	126
Stage Three: The Hearing	126
Stage Four: The Outcome of the Hearing	127
Stage Five: Appeal	131

Chapter 21: Grievance Procedure 134

Introduction	134
Informal Measures for Resolving Grievances	137
Formal Grievance Procedure	138

Chapter 22: Using the Parliamentary Network, Information Security and Records Management 142

Using the Parliamentary Network	142
Email Use	142
Internet Use	143
Viruses	145
Information Security	146
Data Protection	150
Freedom of Information	151
Records Management	151

Chapter 23: Resignation, Retirement and Dismissal 154

Resignation	154
Retirement	155
Redundancy	157
Ending of Fixed-Term Contracts	158
Dismissal	159
Last Day of Service	160

Chapter 24: Pensions	161
House of Lords Pension Schemes	161
Supplementing your House of Lords Pension	162
Auto-Enrolment	163
State Second Pension	164
Pension Benefits	164

Appendix A: Gifts and Hospitality Policy	167
Principles	167
Guidance Relating to Certain Offers of Gifts and Hospitality	168
Registration and Publication	170
Offering Hospitality	171
Internal Events	173
Annex: Visits Listed in Guide to Code of Conduct for Members, para 69	173

Appendix B: Fraud and Bribery Policy	174
Definitions	174
Policy	174
Responsibilities of Management	175
Responsibilities of Staff	176
Contracts	176
Learning from Experience	177
Annex: Fraud and Bribery Response Plan for Staff and Managers	177
Investigation	178

Appendix C: Policy on Disclosing Malpractice	179
When This Policy Applies	179
How to Raise Your Concern	179
What Happens After You Raise a Concern	180
Where Malpractice is Found to Have Taken Place	180
Review	180
Status of This Policy	180

Index and list of acronyms	181
-----------------------------------	------------

Chapter I: About this Handbook

1.1 This handbook sets out important information about working for the House of Lords Administration and provides a guide to your terms and conditions of employment. It should be read together with your contract of employment. It applies to all staff of the Administration, except where indicated otherwise.

1.2 This handbook aims to tell you what to expect from the House of Lords Administration as your employer, and what the Administration expects from you as an employee. You should take time to become familiar with the contents of this handbook so that you understand the policies and procedures that operate within the House of Lords.

1.3 The text of this handbook has been agreed between the Administration and staff representatives of recognised trade unions in the Whitley Committee.

1.4 An index and list of acronyms are at the back of the handbook.

1.5 You will be informed of any changes in your conditions of service by the Human Resources Office (HRO) when they occur. This handbook will be updated periodically to take account of changes in policies and procedures within the House of Lords, or changes to legislation that affect your employment.

Human resources intranet pages

1.6 This handbook is supported by the employment intranet pages. On those pages you can find the text of this handbook, relevant policies and procedures, guidance notes and forms. The employment pages can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/>

Useful Contacts

1.7 If you would like more information about anything in this handbook, or you have a question about your conditions of service, you should ask your line manager in the first instance. Depending on the issue, you may also wish to contact one or more of the following:

Human Resources Office: The Human Resources Office (HRO) is responsible for this handbook and provides support to all staff on employment and management issues. You can contact the HRO on ext. 3185. The HRO is located on the first floor of Millbank House.

Finance Department: You may wish to contact the Finance Department if you have a question about the payment of your salary, for example about Income Tax or National Insurance deductions. You can contact the Finance Department on ext. 3323.

Trade unions: Recognised trade unions play an important role in negotiating your conditions of service and supporting staff who have problems at work. If you are a member of a trade union, or you are interested in joining a trade union, you can contact your trade union staff representative using the contact details on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/terms--conditions/staff-representation--employment-relations/trade-unions--whitley-committee/>

1.8 The staff of the House of Lords work in a number of different offices, each led by a 'Head of Office'. An organisational chart is on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/people-offices/office-departments/lords/HoL-Administration-Structure-Chart.CMS.pdf>

1.9 The specific duties and hours of work in each office are a matter for the Head of that office. There are, however, general provisions concerning appointments, probation, pay and grading, hours of work, overtime, holidays, staff reporting, promotion, discipline and termination of employment and various other matters which apply to all staff of the House and which are explained more fully in this Handbook.

1.10 In all matters relating to the employment of staff, the Clerk of the Parliaments and Heads of Office are assisted by the Human Resources Office. The duties of the Human Resources Office include the recruitment and retention of staff; pay, grading and pay negotiation; superannuation; allowances; staff reporting; the deployment and mobility of staff; grade management; staff welfare and personnel matters. The Human Resources Office can be contacted on ext. 3185 or by email: humanresourceshol@parliament.uk.

Chapter 2: Introduction to the House of Lords

2.1 This chapter provides a brief introduction to the work of the House of Lords and the House of Lords Administration.

The House of Lords

2.2 The House of Lords ('the House') is the second chamber of the UK Parliament. It is independent from, but works alongside, the elected House of Commons. The work of the House includes:

- considering and amending bills before they become Acts of Parliament
- debating and reporting on matters of public policy in the Chamber and in select committees
- scrutinising the work of the government during question time and debates in the Chamber, and through select committee inquiries.

2.3 Members of the House fall into one of three categories:

- **life peers:** life peers are appointed by the Queen on the advice of the House of Lords Appointment Commission or the Prime Minister. Most Members are life peers.
- **hereditary peers:** there are 92 hereditary peers in the House.
- **archbishops and bishops:** the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and 24 bishops of the Church of England are entitled to sit in the House.

2.4 The House decides its own procedures and practices and supervises its administration through domestic committees. The House Committee, chaired by the Lord Speaker, is the principal supervisory body for the House of Lords Administration.

The House of Lords Administration

2.5 The core task of the House of Lords Administration ('the Administration') is to support the work of the House and its committees, and to support Members of the House in their Parliamentary work. In addition, the Administration is responsible for maintaining the House's buildings and collections, and making the House and its work accessible to the public. To do this the Administration employs approximately 500 staff across a number of different offices.

2.6 In conducting its work the Administration is guided by the following values and principles:

- respect for the constitutional importance and dignity of Parliament
- professional excellence
- honesty, impartiality and integrity
- openness and accountability
- fairness and respect for all staff
- obtaining value for money while recognising its corporate responsibility to wider society
- environmental sustainability.

The Administration as employer

2.7 The House of Lords Administration is a separate employer from the House of Commons Service and Parliamentary Information and Communications Technology (PICT). The Administration is also separate from the Civil Service. Pay and conditions of service are, however, kept broadly in line with terms and conditions in the House of Commons and the Civil Service.

2.8 As Corporate Officer of the Administration, the Clerk of the Parliaments is the employing authority who appoints staff and terminates contracts of employment. The Clerk of the Parliaments appoints and may terminate the employment of all staff except the Clerks at the Table and Black Rod. The Clerk of the Parliaments and Black Rod are appointed by the Crown, and the other Clerks at the Table are appointed by the Lord Speaker.

2.9 Some legislation that normally applies to employers in the UK does not apply to the Clerk of the Parliaments as employer. You do, however, have the same rights to equal opportunities and employment protection as other employees. These rights include:

- the right not to be unfairly dismissed
- the right to receive a written statement of reasons for dismissal
- the right to receive a written statement of employment particulars
- safeguards for staff who wish to join an independent union or take part in its activities
- time off work for trade union activities, public duties, etc.
- job security during pregnancy

- entitlement to maternity, paternity and adoption pay and leave
- equal pay for work of equal value
- the right to work in an environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Leadership of the Administration

2.10 The Administration is led by the Clerk of the Parliaments, who is the Accounting Officer, Corporate Officer and the House's chief procedural and constitutional adviser. The Clerk of the Parliaments also chairs the Management Board, which is the body responsible for taking strategic and corporate decisions for the Administration.

2.11 The members of the Management Board are the directors of key functions in the House of Lords. You can see the current members of the Management Board on the Management Board and Heads of Office structure chart on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/people-offices/administration/lords-administration/lords-management-board/board-contacts/>

2.12 Agendas, minutes and other papers from Management Board meetings can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/lords/house-lords-administration/how-the-lords-is-run/lords-administration/house-of-lords-management-board/lords-management-board-papers/>

Offices of the Administration

2.13 The Administration is organised into fourteen offices:

The Clerk of the Parliaments' Office supports the Clerk of the Parliaments in his role as Accounting Officer, Corporate Officer, Chairman of the Management Board and the House's chief procedural adviser.

Black Rod's Office is responsible for controlling access to and maintaining order within the House and its precincts. The Parliamentary Security Director has overall responsibility for security on the Parliamentary Estate. Black Rod and the Serjeant at Arms in the House of Commons have day-to-day responsibility for security in their respective Houses.

Catering and Retail Services (CRS) provide catering services for Members and staff within the Parliamentary Estate.

The Committee Office provides procedural and legal advice and administrative support for the select committees of the House. The office also works with the House of Commons to support joint committees made up of members of both Houses.

The Finance Department provides accounting and financial services to the House, including payments to Members and staff.

The Human Resources Office (HRO) provides the personnel service for all House of Lords staff. The office recruits staff, maintains pay and grading systems and other conditions of service, negotiates and authorises pay, and has overall responsibility for learning and development.

The Information Office provides information about the House to the public and press.

The Journal Office provides a research and record-keeping service and advises on present and past procedural developments. The Journal Office oversees the Table Office, where Members go to table questions for the government and questions for debate, and the Printed Paper Office, which provides documents, reports and copies of legislation to Members.

The Legislation Office supports the House's consideration of public and private legislation and its scrutiny of delegated legislation, and authorises, on behalf of the Clerk of the Parliaments, the publication of Acts of Parliament.

The Library provides research, information and bibliographic services to Members.

The Department of the Official Report (Hansard) provides an edited verbatim record of the proceedings of the House. The Official Report also contains written answers from the government in response to questions from Members and written ministerial statements.

The Overseas Office is responsible for relations between the House of Lords and overseas parliaments, and the Lords members of the delegations to inter-parliamentary assemblies.

The Parliamentary Archives provides a records management and archives service to both Houses of Parliament and assists Members, staff and the public to use the archives.

Property and Office Services is responsible for the accommodation of the House and the Administration, and plans and supervises maintenance and conservation projects across the House of Lords Estate in conjunction with the Parliamentary Estates Directorate.

PICT

2.14 PICT provides ICT services, including ICT training, to Members and staff in both the House of Lords and the House of Commons:

Heads of Office

2.15 Each office has a Head of Office who is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day business of their office and for making sure that the Administration's policies and procedures are followed within their office. Heads of Office are also responsible for determining the specific duties and hours of work of staff in their office. Your line manager should be your first source of information and advice at work. Sometimes, however, you will need to speak to your Head of Office, for example if you want to apply for special leave, or if you want to apply to do a professional or higher education course.

Chapter 3: Your Appointment

3.1 This chapter provides an overview of the most important things that you should know when you start working at the House of Lords. It covers:

- your terms and conditions of employment
- induction
- your probationary period
- security clearance in the House of Lords
- what to do if you change your personal details

Some of these topics are also dealt with in more depth in later chapters of this handbook.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

3.2 Your terms and conditions of employment are contained in your letter of appointment and your Principal Statement of Employment Particulars. This handbook serves as a guide to these terms and conditions. In particular, you may wish to familiarise yourself with the sections on:

- facilities for staff (chapter 7)
- pay and allowances (chapter 10)
- working hours and patterns (chapter 12)
- annual leave (chapter 13)
- conduct (chapter 19)
- pensions (chapter 24).

Types of appointment

3.3 The different types of appointment are:

Permanent: A permanent appointment is of indefinite duration and can be terminated only if you resign, retire, or are dismissed. You will normally have been selected through fair and open competition.

Fixed-term appointments: A fixed-term appointment is made for a limited period. This period will normally be between three months and four years. This sort of appointment may be made where the work is of a limited duration, or where there is a good reason for appointing somebody for a limited period, for example to cover maternity leave. Normally fixed-term appointments

may only be extended or converted to permanent appointments if this possibility was set out in the recruitment advertisement.

Temporary appointments: Temporary appointments are usually for a short period of three months or less to cover a specific piece of work or short project. These appointments do not normally lead to permanent employment with the Administration.

Zero-hours appointments: If you have a zero hours contract, you can be called in as and when you are required. You are not obliged to accept an offer of work and the Administration is not obliged to offer you any work.

Secondments: If you are on secondment into or out of the Administration, your terms and conditions of service will be in accordance with your secondment agreement.

Induction Course

3.4 Soon after you start work you will be invited to attend an induction course. During the induction course you will be given information about the House of Lords and the work of the Administration. The course will also cover important statutory issues, including equality and diversity, health and safety, fire safety, and security. You must attend the induction course. Your line manager will also arrange an induction programme for you.

Probation

3.5 Your employment is subject to a probationary period lasting at least nine months. This period allows you to demonstrate that you are suitable for your post and that you can be relied upon to perform to the required standard.

3.6 During your first week at work you will have a meeting with your line manager to discuss your probation period. At that meeting your line manager will tell you what will be expected of you during your probation, including what you will be expected to achieve and by when. They will also identify any training you will do in order to help you achieve the expected standard of performance.

3.7 Your performance, conduct and attendance will be reviewed after three months, six months and eight months. At each of these points you will have a further meeting with your line manager to discuss your progress. Your line manager will complete a probation review form in advance of each meeting. On that form they will grade your performance, outline any areas of concern, and state whether you have met the objectives set during that part of your probation. Your line manager will explain their comments on the review form at the meeting and you will discuss together how to proceed before the next review stage.

Completing probation

3.8 In order to complete your probationary period successfully you must show that you can meet the requirements of the post to which you have been recruited. You must also have a satisfactory record of conduct and attendance. You will be notified in writing that you have passed your probation.

3.9 If your performance, conduct and/or attendance has not reached the required standard by the end of your probationary period, your appointment will normally be terminated. In exceptional circumstances, however, your probation may be extended, for example if you show clear signs of improvement towards the end of the probation period.

Termination of appointment during probation

3.10 The Administration has the right to terminate your appointment at any time during your probation period if it is clear that you are not suitable for permanent appointment.

Fixed-term and temporary staff

3.11 If you have a fixed-term or temporary appointment of less than nine months you will not be managed under the probation procedure. Your line manager will, however, monitor your performance, conduct and attendance and may terminate your appointment without notice if you do not meet a satisfactory standard.

Appeal

3.12 If your appointment is terminated during or at the end of your probation period you may appeal against this decision. If you wish to appeal you should set out your grounds of appeal in writing to the Director of Human Resources (DHR). The DHR will arrange for your appeal to be heard by an impartial panel.

Security Clearance

3.13 It is a condition of your employment that you have security clearance. If you do not get security clearance your offer of employment may be withdrawn. If your security clearance is subsequently withdrawn for any reason you may be dismissed. If your security clearance is withdrawn you may appeal against this decision. If you wish to appeal you should contact the Pass Office. The appeal procedure can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/terms--conditions/security-passes--access/photo-identity-passes/>

Change of Personal Details

3.14 If your personal details change at any time during your employment, you must notify the relevant person or department. You should tell:

- your **Head of Office** or the person in your office with responsibility for business continuity if you change your contact telephone number
- the **Human Resources Office** on ext. **3185** if you change your name, address, telephone number or marital status
- the **Finance Department** on ext. **3323** if you change your bank details.

Chapter 4: Equality and Diversity

4.1 This chapter concerns equality and diversity. It provides information about:

- the general principles of the House of Lords' Equality and Diversity Policy
- equality and diversity training
- rights and responsibilities of all members of staff
- rights and responsibilities of managers
- making a complaint if you believe that you have been treated unfairly or inappropriately.

4.2 The House of Lords Equality and Diversity Policy is set out below.

4.3 The Equality and Diversity Officer can be contacted on ext. 3220.

Principles

4.4 The Administration values all members of staff equally. Every member of staff has the right to respect and fair treatment, and the right to equality of opportunity in all aspects of their employment. The Administration therefore seeks to ensure that every member of staff will:

- be treated fairly and with respect regardless of their age, gender, gender identity or reassignment, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious affiliation or religious belief, marital or civil partnership status, disability, or any other factor that is irrelevant to performance
- be considered on merit for opportunities, including training, development and promotion
- be given all reasonable help to overcome problems at work which are associated with a disability.

Equality and Diversity Training

4.5 Under the Equality and Diversity Policy, all staff must receive regular equality, diversity and inclusion training every three to four years.

Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

4.6 You have the right to work in an environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation, and you are also responsible for ensuring that you

do not discriminate against, harass or victimise anybody else. It is important, therefore, that you understand what constitutes discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Direct discrimination

4.7 Direct discrimination takes place when one person is treated less favourably than another person because of a 'protected' personal characteristic. Under the Equality Act 2010, the following characteristics are protected:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

4.8 Examples of direct discrimination include:

- refusing to promote an employee because of their sex
- deciding not to recruit a candidate because of their race.

Indirect discrimination

4.9 Indirect discrimination takes place when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to a person which discriminates in relation to a protected characteristic of that person. Indirect discrimination is illegal when the provision, criterion or practice is not objectively justified.

4.10 Examples of indirect discrimination include:

- requiring a certain level of physical ability as a condition of employment when that level of physical ability is not necessary for performing the job (indirect discrimination against those with a physical disability)
- imposing a ban on all employees wearing anything on their heads while at work (indirect discrimination against those who cover their heads for religious reasons).

Harassment

4.11 Harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a physical, verbal or non-verbal nature which is related to a protected characteristic and which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Examples of harassment include:

- spreading malicious rumours about a colleague
- ridiculing or demeaning a colleague
- making threatening remarks or performing threatening actions towards a colleague
- making comments intended to undermine the confidence or dignity of a colleague
- making repeated unwelcome sexual advances towards a colleague
- undermining an employee by overloading them with work and then criticising them for failing to complete it
- preventing an employee's career progression by intentionally blocking promotion or development opportunities.

Bullying

4.12 Bullying is any behaviour which is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, or which is an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates, denigrates or injures the recipient. Bullying is therefore broader than harassment, which relates only to unwanted behaviour relevant to a protected characteristic, and it is not unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. Bullying is, however, an act of gross misconduct. If you have a complaint about bullying you should raise it under the grievance procedure in the normal way (paragraph 4.21). If you bully any other member of staff disciplinary action will be taken against you.

Victimisation

4.13 Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010, or raised any other grievance, or because they are suspected of doing so. You will not be protected from the possibility of disciplinary action if you make or support a malicious or vexatious complaint (for examples of malicious complaints, see chapter 21, paragraph 21.5). If you make a complaint in good faith that complaint is not malicious or vexatious regardless of whether it is upheld or dismissed.

Rights and Responsibilities of Staff and Managers

Rights of all staff

4.14 You can expect to:

- be treated with dignity, respect and courtesy by managers, colleagues, Members of the House of Lords and their staff, contractors, visitors and members of the public
- be valued for the work that you do
- be free from any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying, or victimisation when you are at work
- work in an environment free from offensive behaviour or language.

Responsibilities of all staff

4.15 You should:

- conduct yourself in a professional and respectful manner
- be fair and honest in all workplace dealings
- appreciate that what is acceptable behaviour to you may not be acceptable to others
- help and protect the rights of others
- listen to the views of others
- understand the difference between normal work disagreements and discrimination or harassment (paragraphs 4.7 to 4.11).

4.16 You should also understand the difference between legitimate actions which your manager may need to take in order to carry out their role properly, and discrimination or harassment. Legitimate actions by your manager may include:

- issuing reasonable instructions and expecting you to carry them out
- setting expected standards of performance and monitoring your performance through the appraisal system
- using the disciplinary and performance management procedure if your conduct or performance falls below the expected standard.

This does not mean that your manager may use their position to harass you or discriminate against you.

Rights of managers

4.17 If you are a manager, you are entitled to the same rights as all other staff (paragraph 4.14). You also have the right to manage your staff free from unfounded allegations of discrimination or harassment.

Responsibilities of managers

4.18 If you are a manager you have the same responsibilities as all other staff (paragraph 4.15). You should also:

- encourage and foster an atmosphere of respect and understanding within your team
- lead by example through a fair, consistent and open management style
- carry out your management duties in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner
- give legitimate, constructive and fair feedback about conduct and performance
- ensure that your staff are aware of the behaviour expected of them and that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated
- act swiftly and appropriately if you become aware of unacceptable behaviour or a complaint. Depending on the circumstances, you may be required to act under the grievance procedure (chapter 21) or the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure (chapter 20).

Staff with a Disability

4.19 Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, adverse and long-term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. ‘Long-term’ means that the condition has lasted, or is expected to last, more than a year or for the rest of the person’s life. If you would like advice about whether a particular condition amounts to a disability you should contact the Equality and Diversity Officer on ext. 3220.

4.20 The House of Lords Administration will support members of staff with disabilities. If you are disabled, the Administration will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to your job or your working environment to alleviate the effects of your disability. This may include changes to your duties or your hours of work, or flexible working arrangements.

Complaints

4.21 If you believe that you have been the victim of discrimination, harassment or bullying, or victimisation, it is open to you to bring a complaint using the grievance procedure set out in chapter 21 of this handbook. Chapter 21 includes information about:

- sources of support if you have raised a grievance or if a complaint has been made against you (21.7)
- the informal steps you should take, or that others may take, to try to resolve disputes before using the formal grievance procedure (21.12–14)
- how to start the formal grievance procedure, and how your complaint will be considered under that procedure (21.15–25)
- what to do if a complaint has been made against you (21.6)
- malicious or vexatious complaints (21.5).

4.22 If you have a complaint about a Member of the House of Lords you should raise this using the procedure set out in chapter 21, paragraph 21.33.

Chapter 5: Security

5.1 This chapter explains:

- what to do if you notice somebody behaving suspiciously on the Parliamentary Estate
- bringing visitors onto the Estate
- security clearance and security passes
- security alerts, including what to do if you receive suspicious mail.

5.2 This chapter does not deal with ICT security or information security, which are covered in chapter 22 of this handbook.

Roles and Responsibilities

5.3 The Parliamentary Security Director is responsible for the strategy, planning and overall delivery of security standards across the Parliamentary Estate. The day-to-day responsibility for the delivery of security lies with Black Rod in the House of Lords and the Serjeant at Arms in the House of Commons. They are assisted by the Metropolitan Police and the security officers.

5.4 You are also responsible for helping to ensure security on the Parliamentary Estate. In particular you should assist security staff by:

- **reporting any suspicious behaviour:** you should remain alert. If you see anybody behaving suspiciously, or notice any suspicious incidents, you should report this immediately to Security Control on ext. 5311 or to a nearby security officer or Police Officer.
- **wearing your pass at all times:** you should always wear your pass and ensure that it is visible when you are on the Parliamentary Estate.
- **challenging anybody who is not wearing a security pass:** if you see somebody on the Parliamentary Estate who is not wearing a pass you should challenge them if you feel confident to do so. Otherwise you should report them to Security Control on ext. 5311 or to a nearby security officer or police officer. You should also challenge any unescorted visitor in a non-public area of the Estate, and take them either to their passholder escort or to a security officer or Police Officer.

5.5 Security Control is staffed at all times. You can contact Security Control on ext. 5311. **In an emergency you should use ext. 3333.**

Responsibility for visitors

5.6 You are responsible for any visitors you bring onto the Parliamentary Estate. You must:

- ensure that your visitors go through one of the designated security search points; search points are located at Black Rod's Garden, Cromwell Green, Portcullis House, Derby Gate and 1 Parliament Street
- ensure that your visitors wear their visitor pass and that it is visible at all times
- accompany your visitors at all times and ensure that they behave appropriately
- ensure that your visitors leave by an appropriate exit in the event of a fire alarm or evacuation signal.

5.7 If you leave your visitors unaccompanied on any part of the Parliamentary Estate at any time, disciplinary action may be taken against you. Depending on the circumstances, leaving visitors unaccompanied could be an act of gross misconduct (see paragraph 20.30).

Security Clearance

5.8 You must have security clearance to work on the Parliamentary Estate. This security clearance is a condition of your appointment (chapter 3, paragraph 3.13). You will be re-vetted for security clearance every three years. The Human Resources Office (HRO) will let you know when you need to complete a new vetting form. If you have any questions about your security clearance you can contact the Pass Office on ext. 5920.

5.9 You must tell your line manager and the HRO (ext. 3185) as soon as practicable if you are convicted of a criminal offence. This may affect your security clearance. You do not need to disclose a traffic offence conviction unless the penalty includes imprisonment (or the requirement to drive is an integral part of your job). Failure to report an unspent conviction may result in disciplinary action being taken against you (chapter 19, paragraph 19.28).

Security Passes

5.10 Every member of staff is issued with a photo identity pass once they have security clearance. You must always wear your pass and display it prominently when you are on the Parliamentary Estate, unless you are covered by paragraph 5.11.

5.11 If you wear ceremonial dress in the course of your duties, or if you work in Catering and Retail Services, you may not need to display your pass but it must be on your person and easily accessible at all times. Your line manager will advise you if this applies to you.

5.12 Security staff may check your pass at any time. You must co-operate with any pass checks, and if your pass is not displayed you must produce it when asked. If you fail to wear your pass, or if you do not co-operate with pass checks, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

5.13 If you forget your security pass you should go to one of the pass offices (located at Black Rod's Garden or 1 Canon Row) to collect a day pass. If you lose your pass you should report this immediately to Security Control (ext. 3333) and to the Pass Office (ext. 5920). You will receive a letter with instructions for returning your Parliamentary Pass to the Human Resources Office.

5.14 You must not misuse your photo pass. You are committing a criminal offence for which you may be prosecuted if you:

- use or keep your pass when you are not authorised to do so
- alter or destroy your pass when you are not authorised to do so
- give your pass to another person to use.

Whether or not you the matter is referred to the police, these offences, and any other misuse of your photo pass, will lead to disciplinary action.

5.15 If you knowingly allow or assist access to the Parliamentary Estate for anyone who does not have security clearance and who is not your guest, disciplinary action will be taken against you.

Security Alerts

5.16 A voice alarm system is normally used to convey information about security incidents. Voice alarms are not, however, used in all buildings on the Parliamentary Estate and you should be aware that other alarms may be used instead. In the event of a security alert on the Parliamentary Estate, you should follow the instructions given over the public address system. If you are instructed to evacuate the building you should do so immediately.

Suspicious mail

5.17 Mail is screened for explosive device, powders and other material before it reaches the Parliamentary Estate. If you receive a suspicious letter or parcel, however, you should:

- make no further attempt to open the letter or parcel
- place the letter or parcel carefully on the nearest firm surface
- telephone Security Control (ext. 3333).

Personal Property

5.18 You should not leave your personal belongings lying around or in unlocked drawers. Many people have access to the Parliamentary Estate and there have been instances of theft. If you are careless with your personal belongings you will receive no compensation in the event that they are stolen.

Chapter 6: Health, Safety and Wellbeing

6.1 This chapter sets out arrangements relating to health, safety and wellbeing. It covers:

- fire safety and what you should do in an emergency
- health and wellbeing policies and assessment
- how to report an accident or incident at work
- medical facilities and first aid.

6.2 Formal health and safety policies and other useful information are available on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/health-safety-welfare/>

Roles and Responsibilities

6.3 The Clerk of the Parliaments is responsible for ensuring that the House of Lords Administration fulfils its health and safety responsibilities to employees. Day-to-day responsibility for health and safety rests with the Department of Facilities and Heads of Office. They are supported in this role by:

- **line managers** who must ensure that health and safety policies and guidance are followed within their own teams
- **the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service (SHWS).**

6.4 In addition, you are also responsible for looking after your own safety and the safety of those around you. In particular, you are responsible for following the Administration's Health and Safety Policy and any additional arrangements to safeguard health and safety which may be in place in your own department. You must follow all instructions and guidance given in any health and safety training. If you intentionally disregard, misuse or interfere with anything provided for health, safety and welfare purposes, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

6.5 If you have any questions or concerns about your own or other people's health, safety or wellbeing, you should first speak to your Office's Health and Safety Co-ordinator or your line manager. You can contact the SHWS team for further advice on ext. 1484 for the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Team or ext. 4782 for the Parliamentary Safety Team.

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service (SHWS)

6.6 SHWS provides an advisory service to management and staff of both Houses on all aspects of occupational health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace. You can make an appointment to see a member of the SHWS team directly or after referral by your line manager. To make an appointment, or to discuss a safety issue with the SHWS team, you should call the Parliamentary Safety Team on ext. 4782. For the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Team, call ext. 1484.

The House of Lords Health and Safety Committee

6.7 The Health and Safety Committee meets regularly to review health and safety in the House of Lords and to promote a positive health and safety culture within the Administration. The Health and Safety Committee includes representatives of staff and management. Each Office is represented on the Committee by its Health and Safety Co-ordinator, who is appointed by the Head of Office. The minutes of the Committee meetings can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/people-offices/groups-associations/lords-groups/health-and-safety-committee/>

Fire Safety

6.8 When you join the House of Lords or move to a new office, your line manager will show you the emergency escape routes.

Fire training

6.9 All staff must receive regular fire awareness training. Your line manager will ask you to undertake online fire awareness training during the first week after you start work at the House of Lords. You will receive further fire awareness training when you attend the Induction Course for new members of staff. You must then complete online fire awareness training annually. The online training can be accessed on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/access-buildings/evacuation-emergencies/fire/>

If you do not have access to the intranet, your line manager will arrange for you to receive your annual fire awareness training in person.

Fire alarm system

6.10 Fire alarms on the Parliamentary Estate consist of voice messages and sirens transmitted over a public address system. All messages are preceded by a tone signal and are tested and demonstrated regularly. If you are not able clearly to hear tests, you should report this to your line manager.

Action in the event of a fire

6.11 In the event of a fire on the Parliamentary Estate, you should follow the instructions given over the public address system and by the Fire Evacuation Marshals. If you are instructed to evacuate the building, you should do so immediately and go to your designated assembly point. You must not return to the building until you are instructed to do so.

6.12 If you discover a fire you should raise the alarm straight away by using the nearest fire alarm call point or by calling Security Control on ext. 3333. You must not call 999 directly.

6.13 Blue fire procedure notices are displayed around the Parliamentary Estate. These notices provide further information about what you should do in the event of a fire, including details of the appropriate assembly point in the case of an evacuation. You should familiarise yourself with the notices closest to where you work.

Staff with a disability

6.14 If during your employment with the House you have or incur a permanent or temporary disability that might affect your evacuation or the evacuation of others in the event of an emergency, or your ability to recognise the fire alarm, you must tell your line manager. Your line manager will make sure that a personal evacuation plan is drawn up for you by the Fire Safety team, and that colleagues in the locality are aware of its contents.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policies

Risk assessments

6.15 Heads of Office must ensure that risk assessments of their office's activities are carried out and reviewed at least annually. New risk assessments should also be carried out if the nature of the Office's work changes significantly. Risks assessments are completed electronically using the Accidents, Incidents and Permits (AIP) system. Each Head of Office must also ensure that any appropriate control measures are identified and put into place. They will be assisted by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator for their office.

6.16 The House's Risk Assessment Policy may be obtained on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/people-offices/groups-associations/lords-groups/health-and-safety-committee/local-module-set-related-information/health--safety-policies>

Protecting expectant mothers

6.17 After you have told your line manager that you are pregnant, they will undertake a risk assessment to identify any changes that are necessary to protect your health and that of your unborn baby. The assessment should be reviewed by you and your line manager as your pregnancy progresses to check if any further adjustments are necessary. If you have any concerns after completing the risk assessment you should contact the SHWS team on ext. 1484.

Display screen equipment

6.18 If you use display screen equipment (DSE) you must complete DSE user awareness training and a DSE risk assessment. Your Office's DSE Assessor will help you to complete the risk assessment. The risk assessment should be reviewed annually, and whenever your work location or equipment changes. You should also read the relevant SHWS web pages which contain information about your desk environment, your posture, work patterns and eyesight tests. These web pages also explain how DSE risk assessments should be completed.

6.19 You can get further guidance and information about DSE training and risk assessments from the DSE Assessor for your Office.

6.20 If you experience any adverse symptoms which may be related to DSE work you should report them to your line manager and to your Office's DSE Assessor in the first instance. You may also contact the SHWS team on ext. 1484 for further assistance.

Eyesight tests

6.21 If you use display screen equipment at work for more than two hours a day you may request an eye examination and sight test once every two years. To make a request you must complete the online request form in full. The form can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/health-safety-welfare/information-for-managers-and-staff/eyecare>

Physiotherapy

6.22 SHWS offers a limited physiotherapy service to members of staff. Only the Director of Human Resources can refer staff to this service. If you think you require physiotherapy you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185.

Smoking policy

6.23 Smoking is not permitted on the House of Lords estate except in the following designated areas:

- the smoking shelter in Black Rod's Garden
- outside the entrance to the Sports and Social Club
- a designated area on the Lords Terrace (subject to the normal rules governing access to the Terrace).

6.24 Similarly, smoking is not permitted on the House of Commons Estate except in the following designated areas:

- a designated area on the Commons Terrace (subject to the normal rules governing access to the Terrace)
- a designated area on Speaker's Green
- North Terrace (between Portcullis House and Norman Shaw South)
- outside the south-west corner of Norman Shaw North.

You may smoke in these areas only if you would normally be allowed access to them.

6.25 It is your responsibility to ensure that you smoke only in the designated areas. If you smoke in a no smoking area, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

Alcohol and drug misuse policy

6.26 Excessive drinking during working hours is not permitted. If your alcohol consumption results in deterioration in your performance or conduct, or jeopardises your safety or the safety and wellbeing of others, capability or disciplinary procedures may be started against you.

6.27 Alcoholism (or alcohol-related illness) will be treated sympathetically, like any other illness, subject to your co-operation in receiving appropriate treatment. If you refuse help and your performance or conduct is unsatisfactory, capability or disciplinary procedures may be started against you.

6.28 The principles set out in paragraph 6.27 also apply to the misuse of drugs except that the taking of illegal drugs during working hours will always be viewed as a serious disciplinary matter. The possession, buying, selling or distribution of illegal drugs is not only a serious disciplinary matter but a criminal offence and, without exception, will be reported to the authorities.

Further policies

6.29 The Administration has additional health and safety policies and guidance which only apply to certain members of staff working in some Offices. Your line manager will tell you if any of them apply to you. You should ensure that you are familiar with the policies and guidance which are relevant to your role. The policies and guidance are available on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/people-offices/groups-associations/lords-groups/health-and-safety-committee/local-module-set-related-information/health--safety-policies>

If you do not have access to the intranet, you should ask your line manager for a copy of any relevant policies or guidance.

Accidents

Reporting an accident at work

6.30 If you have an accident or near-miss on the Parliamentary Estate, however trivial, you should report it to your line manager. Any accident on the Parliamentary Estate must also be reported using the online AIP reporting system. You can make this report yourself or it can be made by anybody else who is aware of the accident. The report should make the cause of the accident clear. The reporting system can be accessed on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/health-safety-welfare/information-for-managers-and-staff/safety-at-work/accidents>

6.31 Once your line manager is aware of the accident, they will investigate the circumstances to make sure that appropriate action is taken to avoid further accidents. SHWS reviews all accident reports and may assist or lead investigations which are not straightforward or where there may be serious repercussions.

Absence from work due to an accident at work

6.32 If you are absent from work as a result of an accident on duty, you will be subject to the normal rules on sickness absence (chapter 15). You should consider whether to seek legal advice from your trade union or from a solicitor specialising in personal injury compensation in relation to the accident.

Accidents outside work

6.33 If you are absent from work because of an injury you did not sustain in the course of your employment, you will be subject to the normal rules on sickness absence (chapter 15). Where appropriate, however, the Administration may:

- require you to make a specific loss of earnings claim from the third party responsible for your injury
- provide you with an advance of salary in place of any sick pay (or other pay) due to you
- require you to repay proportionately any advance of salary if your claim for loss of earnings is wholly or partly successful.

6.34 If you are required to repay any advance of salary following a successful, or partially successful, claim against a third party, the period of time during which you were absent from work as a result of the accident will not count towards any of the thresholds for sickness pay (see chapter 16, paragraph 16.5).

Medical Facilities and First Aid

6.35 In the event of a serious accident or illness, or if an ambulance is required, you should call Security Control on ext. 3333 and tell them:

- the name of the casualty (if known)
- the location of the casualty
- the nature of the casualty's symptoms. If you believe that there is an immediate risk to the casualty's life you should make this clear.

Security Control will make any necessary arrangements for an ambulance to be called and escorted to the scene. You must not call 999 for an ambulance directly because it may be denied access to the Parliamentary Estate.

First aid facilities

6.36 If you or another member of staff requires first aid assistance, you should contact the nearest Attendants, who will send the closest available first aider to you. Outside normal working hours you should contact Security Control on ext. 3333 for assistance.

6.37 First aid is provided by staff who hold current first aid certificates. First aid may also be provided by Police Officers, all of whom are trained in basic first aid. All trained first aiders have access to first aid facilities and equipment. The names of all first aiders (except Police Officers) are listed on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/health-safety-welfare/information-for-managers-and-staff/first-aid/>

Medical room

6.38 There is a medical room, staffed by a practice nurse during normal office hours, in the Lower Waiting Hall, off the Central Lobby in the Palace of Westminster. You can telephone the medical room on ext. 5103.

Welfare

6.39 The SHWS team offer a confidential counselling and support service to staff. If you are encountering problems at home or at work, you can make an appointment to see a member of the SHWS team in confidence either during working hours or at another mutually convenient time. If you want to be seen during working hours, you should inform your line manager but you do not need to tell them the reason for the visit. To make an appointment call ext. 1484.

Welfare Fund

6.40 In emergencies, the SHWS team may be able to provide you with short-term financial support from the Welfare Fund. Any payment you receive from the Fund is a loan and you will be required to repay it. For further information call ext. 1484.

The Charity for Civil Servants

6.41 The Charity for Civil Servants (formerly the Civil Service Benevolent Fund) provides assistance to all serving and retired members of staff and their dependants, whether or not they contribute to the Charity. The Charity provides residential nursing home care, convalescent facilities and financial assistance to those in need. If you would like further information about the Charity, you should call the SHWS team on ext. 1484.

Chapter 7: Facilities and Benefits for Staff

7.1 This chapter explains the facilities and benefits available to staff. It provides information about:

- catering and retail facilities
- the gym and other sports and social facilities
- church and prayer room facilities
- bicycle and season ticket loans
- the House of Commons Nursery and the availability of childcare vouchers
- access arrangements for parts of the Palace of Westminster, including how to gain access to the Terrace and the Visitor Route
- applying for tickets for special events
- cash dispensers, Post Office, travel office and souvenir shops
- car parking and the late night transport service.

Catering and Retail Services

7.2 You can find details of the catering and retail services on offer across the Parliamentary Estate on the intranet. The relevant pages contain a description of the services on offer in the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and the restaurants' weekly menus, access arrangements and opening times. You can find the pages on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/catering-outlets/>

Access to Catering and Retail Services

7.3 If you are a permanent member of House of Lords staff, you may:

- use the House of Lords Bar, the River Restaurant and the Millbank House Cafeteria
- use the House of Commons Terrace Cafeteria, Moncrieff's restaurant, Bellamy's restaurant in Parliament Street, the Portcullis Cafeteria in 7 Millbank and the Debate cafeteria in Portcullis House
- use the officials' table at the members' end of the Peers' Dining Room for lunch or dinner; the table operates on a first-come, first-served, basis
- use the Bishops' Bar sandwich counter after 9pm to purchase food to take away

- drink in the Bishops' Bar if you are invited to do so by a Member
- entertain up to two guests in the Lords Bar and River Restaurant, the House of Commons Terrace Cafeteria, and Bellamy's at any time
- entertain guests in the Peers' Dining Room on any non-sitting day; tables should be booked in advance
- with the approval of your Head of Office, entertain official visitors in the Peers' Dining Room or the Barry Room on any sitting day; you will only receive approval if you have a specific business need to entertain visitors; tables in the Peers' Dining Room should be booked in advance
- with the approval of your Head of Office, entertain official visitors in the Peers' Guest Room. You will only receive approval if you have a specific business need to entertain visitors.

7.4 If you are a temporary member of staff, you may:

- use the House of Lords Bar and the River Restaurant
- use Bellamy's restaurant in Parliament Street.

7.5 The following categories of permanent staff have additional rights of access:

- clerks who sit at the Table, Black Rod and the Yeoman Usher may use the Bishops' Bar at any time
- all staff at Grade A2 and above, including Administrative Fast stream (AFS) clerks and Library clerks, may use the Peers' Guest Room at any time.

7.6 You should consult the Gifts and Hospitality Policy and the rules on Official Entertainment in the Finance Manual before you entertain an official visitor.

Sports and Social Facilities

Westminster Gymnasium

7.7 If you are a permanent member of staff, you are eligible to join the Westminster Gym. The Gym, which is situated in the basement of No. 1 Canon Row, provides a range of fitness activities, including a gym, exercise classes, saunas and steam room. If you would like further information about the Gym, including the cost of membership, you should call ext. 5546. Further information can also be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/health-safety-welfare/services-provided/westminster-gym/>

Sports and Social Club

7.8 If you are a permanent member of staff, you are eligible to become a member of the Houses of Parliament Sports and Social Club. The Club, which is situated on the ground floor of the Palace of Westminster off Peers' Inner Court, has two bars, two games rooms and organises a range of sporting and social activities for its members. If you would like further information about membership of the Club, including details of the annual subscription, you should ask at one of the bars.

Other Organisations

Civil Service Organisations

7.9 You may be eligible to join a number of Civil Service organisations, including:

Civil Service Club: The Club, which is situated at 13 Great Scotland Yard, has dining and drinking facilities and some overnight accommodation. If you would like further information about membership you should call 020 7930 4881. Further information can also be found at: <http://www.civilserviceclub.org.uk>.

Civil Service Sports Council: This organisation provides a range of sports facilities and activities. For information about membership you should call 020 8930 4881 or visit www.cssc.co.uk.

You can obtain further information about other Civil Service organisations from the SHWS team on ext. 1484.

Church and Prayer Room Facilities

St Margaret's Church

7.10 You are welcome to attend the regular services at St Margaret's and the church is available to staff of the Administration for baptisms, weddings and memorial services. You can find more information about St Margaret's by visiting <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/st-margarets>. You can also contact the Rector's secretary on 020 7654 4847.

Chapel of St Mary Undercroft

7.11 The Speaker's Chaplain celebrates Holy Communion in the Chapel on Wednesdays at 10.15am and 12.45pm, except in recesses. A Roman Catholic Mass is held on Wednesdays at 6pm, except in recesses. You are welcome to attend these services. If you would like further information about the Chapel, or spiritual guidance or support, you should contact the Speaker's Chaplain on ext. 3768.

Multi-Faith Prayer Room

7.12 The Multi-Faith Prayer Room is located on the 5th floor of Millbank House. You are welcome to use the Multi-Faith Prayer Room for individual contemplation or prayer. The room is non-denominational and you may use it whatever your faith, or if you are of no faith. You must not use the room for congregational prayer. If you would like to use the room during your normal working hours, you should ask your line manager in advance. The room can be booked through the Attendants.

Transport Loans

7.13 If you are a permanent or fixed-term member of staff and you have been working at the House of Lords for at least two months, you can apply for a loan to buy:

- a season ticket to cover your journey to and from work
- a bicycle for travel to and from work.

7.14 If you are granted a loan the following conditions will apply:

- you must only use the loan to cover the cost of a season ticket or the cost (or part of the cost) of a bicycle and associated accessories
- the loan will be recovered by deductions from your salary over a maximum of twelve months
- if you leave the House of Lords, you will have to repay the outstanding loan in full
- if you surrender your season ticket, or sell or return your bicycle, you will have to repay the outstanding loan in full
- you must purchase your season ticket within fourteen days, or your bicycle within 21 days, of the date you receive the loan money. You must provide evidence of your purchase to the Human Resources Office.

7.15 If you breach any of the conditions of the loan, disciplinary action will be taken against you.

7.16 If you would like to apply for a loan, you can download an application form from the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/hr-forms--checklists>

If you do not have access to the intranet you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185 for an application form.

Childcare Costs

Childcare vouchers

7.17 If you have been working at the House of Lords for more than two months and you have children under five, or aged five to twelve who require care during the school holidays, you may be entitled to claim childcare vouchers to help with the cost of childcare while you are at work. You may be eligible to claim vouchers if:

- you are a single parent; or
- you have a spouse or partner who works at least eighteen hours a week or is in full-time education. You may not claim for vouchers if your spouse or partner is already claiming for childcare costs in a similar scheme.

7.18 You can only claim vouchers for one child at any one time. You may, however, transfer the benefit to another eligible child. If you wish to transfer the benefit, you must provide the Human Resources Office with the details of the other child.

7.19 The House of Lords' childcare vouchers scheme is run by the provider KiddiVouchers. For more information about the scheme, including an application pack, you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185. You can also find further information about the conditions of the childcare vouchers scheme, including the amounts you may be eligible to receive, on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/benefits--facilities/work-life-support/>

Childcare costs during training

7.20 You may reclaim any additional childcare costs that you incur as a result of attending a training course recommended by your line manager. You must provide receipts in support of your claim.

Access to Parts of the Palace

The Terrace

7.21 Access to the House of Lords Terrace is limited to prevent overcrowding. If you are a permanent member of staff, you are entitled to use the Terrace as follows:

- If you are at Grade B2 or above, you may use the Terrace with up to two guests at any time.
- All staff may use the Terrace on non-sitting days and from thirty minutes after the House rises on Thursdays and Fridays.

At busy times, all staff should exercise their discretion when deciding whether to use the Terrace.

Visitor Route

7.22 If you are a permanent member of staff, you may take up to six guests along the Visitor Route when it is open. You must accompany your guests at all times. This facility is not open to temporary pass holders. Access arrangements may vary during summer opening when the House is in recess. If you would like further information about the Visitor Route, including the opening hours, you should call ext. 3070.

Elizabeth Tower

7.23 If you are a permanent member of staff and you have completed your probation, you may apply for a tour of the Elizabeth Tower for yourself. You cannot arrange a tour for guests unless it has a business-related purpose. You must have the permission of your Head of Office in order to arrange a business-related tour.

7.24 You should note that demand for tours is high and spaces are often booked several months in advance. If you would like to apply for a tour, or for further information about tours, you should call the Big Ben Tours Team on ext. 6544.

Library

7.25 If you have a specific business need, you may enter the Queen's Room of the Library to consult Library staff or reference books. If you need to withdraw a book, you may do so provided that the book remains on the Parliamentary Estate and is returned immediately if required by the Library staff. If you are undertaking a course of study supported by the Administration you may borrow books on Friday to take home over the weekend. These books must be returned the following Monday morning.

Black Rod's Garden

7.26 You may use Black Rod's Garden during the summer (after the Whitsun Recess).

Special Events

7.27 You may be given the opportunity to apply for tickets for special events, for example the State Opening of Parliament and the Queen's Birthday Parade. If these opportunities do arise, you will be given notice by the Human Resources Office. Tickets are normally allocated through a ballot system.

Other Facilities

Cash dispensers

7.28 You may use any of the cash dispensers on the Estate. The dispensers are located:

- in the corridor leading to the House of Lords Bar and River Restaurant
- in the corridor adjacent to the House of Commons Terrace Cafeteria
- next to the Post Office in Portcullis House.

Post Office

7.29 You may use the Post Offices located in:

- Central Lobby
- Portcullis House.

Travel Office

7.30 The Travel Office, situated in the basement of Chamber Court, provides services to Members and staff, including discounted air and rail travel and commission-free foreign exchange. Personal travel is subject to an 8% administration charge. If you would like further information about the services provided by the Travel Office you should call ext. 4232.

Gift shop

7.31 You may purchase House of Lords souvenirs from the gift shop, which is situated off Royal Court opposite Committee Room G. The shop is open on Mondays to Thursdays from 11am to 8pm, and on Fridays from 11am to 3pm.

7.32 The House of Commons gift shop is situated in the Medals Corridor adjacent to the House of Commons Terrace cafeteria.

References

7.33 If you need a reference, for example for a mortgage application, personal loan or tenancy agreement, you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185.

Lost Property

7.34 If you find any unidentified property on the Parliamentary Estate, or if you think that you have lost property on the Estate, you should contact the relevant Attendants' Office.

Access to Westminster Abbey

7.35 Access to Westminster Abbey is free upon production of a permanent Parliamentary pass. As well as entrance to the Abbey, the passholder is entitled to a complimentary audioguide. This facility applies to the passholder only – their guests will have to pay the usual visitor fee.

Car Parking

7.36 A limited amount of car parking space is available for permanent staff. Priority will normally be given to staff on regular night duty and staff with mobility problems. If you would like to apply for a parking permit you should contact the Human Resources office on ext. 3185.

7.37 The Administration is charged on an hourly or daily basis for car parking in the Abingdon Street car park. Parking for extended periods, including overnight or weekend parking, involves an unnecessary cost to the Administration and is therefore not permitted. The use of car parking spaces is monitored by the Department of Facilities and the Human Resources Office, which check the monthly invoices. If you misuse a parking permit, it may be withdrawn and disciplinary action may be taken against you. You may also be required to pay any costs incurred by the Administration arising from the misuse.

7.38 If you park on the Parliamentary Estate without authorisation, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

Late Night Transport Service

7.39 You will be offered late night transport (normally by shared taxi-cab) if you are required to be on duty until, or after, the House rises and the House rises after 10.40pm (and before 9am). You will also be offered transport if you are required to work later than 10.40pm for any other reason. At times of serious transport disruption an earlier threshold time may be announced. If you hold a parking permit you will not normally be offered late night transport.

7.40 You will receive free transport if you live within 25 miles of the House. If you live more than 25 miles from the House you will be charged the additional cost of your journey beyond the 25 mile limit. Further information about late night transport can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/policies--guidance/late-night-transport/>

Chapter 8: Consultation

8.1 This chapter contains information about consultation with trade unions. It explains:

- the House of Lords Administration's position on trade unions
- the Administration's consultation procedures.

Principles

8.2 The Clerk of the Parliaments attaches importance to effective consultation with, and involvement of, staff. A trade union can represent your point of view on questions affecting pay, conditions of service and welfare. Whether or not to join a trade union is, of course, a personal decision for you. You are, however, encouraged to join an appropriate trade union and play an active role within it so that your views are represented.

Recognised Trade Unions

8.3 The Administration recognises four trade unions for the purposes of discussing pay and conditions of service:

Trade union	Staff Represented
Prospect	Staff in professional and specialist posts in bands A to C
Public and Commercial Services (PCS) Union	All staff in bands A to D except Hansard Reporting staff
GMB	All Catering and Retail Services staff in bands C3, D and E

8.4 If you would like more information about any of the trade unions, or to contact your trade union representative on any another matter, you can find their contact details on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/terms--conditions/staff-representation--employment-relations/trade-unions--whitley-committee/>

Whitley Committee

8.5 The Whitley Committee is a joint body of management and staff.

Membership of the main Whitley Committee comprises:

- **management side:** members of the Management Board
- **trade union side:** officials and staff representatives from the recognised trade unions.

8.6 In summary, the aims of the Whitley Committee are to:

- secure the greatest measure of co-operation between the Clerk of the Parliaments (and other management) and staff represented by the trade unions with a view to increasing efficiency and ensuring the wellbeing of staff
- provide a mechanism for consultation, discussion, negotiation and dealing with issues
- bring together the points of view of all concerned so far as is possible without affecting the privileges of the House.

The full terms of reference of the Whitley Committee can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/terms--conditions/staff-representation--employment-relations/trade-unions--whitley-committee/>

8.7 The Whitley Committee is not involved in pay negotiations (see paragraph 8.9). The Whitley Committee does:

- determine the general principles governing the conditions of service of staff, including their pay and allowances, overtime rates, hours of work and leave entitlement
- discuss the application of general principles governing staff pensions
- consider proposed legislation insofar as it has a bearing upon staff
- discuss and agree amendments to this handbook.

8.8 The Whitley Committee meets once a year. Minutes of its meetings are made available to all staff on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/terms--conditions/staff-representation--employment-relations/trade-unions--whitley-committee/>

Pay negotiations

8.9 Pay is negotiated annually by the Director of Human Resources and representatives from the recognised trade unions (see chapter 10).

Chapter 9: Career Progression

9.1 This chapter explains:

- managed moves
- how you can apply for other jobs within the House of Lords
- temporary promotion arrangements
- who is eligible for progression in post
- how you can apply for a secondment.

General Principles

9.2 The House of Lords Administration is committed to recruiting, transferring and promoting individuals on the basis of suitability for a job. When a potential vacancy is identified, Heads of Office and the Human Resources Office (HRO) will consider the most appropriate method of filling that vacancy. Depending on the circumstances, the vacancy may be filled by:

- a managed move
- an internal competition for level transfer or promotion
- an internal and external competition.

9.3 When a vacancy is advertised, it will always be filled by selection on merit following a fair and open competition. This means that:

- the vacancy will be advertised to all staff
- selection will be fair and objective at each stage
- the individual appointed must satisfy the criteria in the advertisement, which may include relevant qualifications and experience.

Managed Moves

9.4 The Administration has the right to move staff within and across Offices to different posts at the same grade for business reasons. You will always be consulted by your Head of Office, or another senior manager, if a managed move is being considered for you. Every effort will be made to take your views into consideration but sometimes it will not be possible to accommodate your preferences.

9.5 You may register your interest in a managed move with your line manager. Your line manager will inform your Head of Office and the HRO, and they will give ongoing consideration to whether there are any suitable opportunities for you to move. There is no guarantee, however, that you will be offered a move. You may, of course, apply for any suitable vacancies that are advertised in the meantime.

Recruitment, Promotion and Level Transfer

9.6 Vacancies may be advertised internally only, or both internally and externally. You are eligible to apply for both sorts of vacancy if you are a permanent or fixed-term member of staff, or you are employed on a zero-hours contract. If a vacancy is advertised both externally and internally the competition is likely to include applicants from outside the House of Lords.

9.7 You may make an application for an advertised vacancy if the post is at your current grade (a level transfer) or at a higher grade than your current post (a promotion). Your application will be considered in the same way regardless of whether you have applied for a level transfer or a promotion. If you are successful in an application for a post at a higher grade you will be promoted on appointment to the new post. Your promotion will normally be effective from the date on which you start your duties in the higher grade. You can find information about pay on promotion in chapter 10 of this handbook.

9.8 Vacancies are advertised on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/careers-development/jobs/current-lords-vacancies>

If you do not have access to the intranet your line manager will make sure that you are aware of any vacancies, for example by posting advertisements on staff noticeboards.

9.9 Before making any application you should consider carefully the requirements of the post.

Selection boards

9.10 The HRO will appoint a selection board to consider applications for an advertised vacancy. Most selection boards will be made up of three or four people. The board will sift the applications to generate a shortlist of candidates who will be invited to interview. If the vacancy has only been advertised internally the board will be shown the candidates' last two performance appraisals. The board will not see any appraisals if there are both internal and external candidates.

9.11 If you are invited to interview, you will be interviewed by the selection board. Following the interviews, the chairperson of the board will prepare a short report which is agreed by all members of the board. You will be informed of the result of the board in writing as soon as possible after the board report has been agreed.

9.12 If you would like feedback on your performance at a selection board, or why you were not selected for interview by the board, you should contact the HRO on ext. 3185 within five working days of the date you were told that you were unsuccessful. The HRO will put you in touch with the chairperson of the board, who will arrange a time to discuss your application with you.

Appealing against the decision of a selection board

9.13 If you are unhappy with the results of the selection board or the board's decision not to call you for interview, you may raise this with your line manager under the grievance procedure set out in chapter 21. If you wish to do this, you must raise your grievance within five working days after you are notified of the board's decision. You should only raise a grievance if you believe that you can:

- prove that there was some substantial irregularity in the selection procedure
- demonstrate that there are relevant facts which were not within the knowledge of the selection board
- produce evidence of some other special reason why you have been treated unfairly.

9.14 You may not raise a grievance about the result of the selection board if you are unhappy because:

- you are more senior than the successful candidate

- you believe that you perform better in your current post than the successful candidate
- you think that the selection board made the wrong decision.

9.15 If your grievance is upheld, the Clerk of the Parliaments will decide, taking into account all of the circumstances, what action should be taken.

Long-term temporary promotion

9.16 A temporary promotion may be made where a vacancy arises and it cannot be filled substantively in the short term. A competition will be held for the temporary promotion, and the competition will be advertised to all staff in the normal way.

9.17 If you are successful in the competition, you will be required to carry out the full duties of the post at the higher grade. You will be paid at the rate which you would have received on substantive promotion to the post and you will be subject to all of the conditions of service of the post in the higher grade for the period of your temporary promotion. You will not, however, be eligible for a level transfer to another post at the higher grade and you must apply to be considered for any such post should it be advertised. If there is a competition for the permanent post that you are filling on temporary promotion you will have to apply for that permanent post in the normal way.

9.18 If you wish to return to your former role during the period of temporary promotion you may do so after giving a reasonable period of notice. You will be returned to the point on the pay scale you would have been on had you remained in your original job.

Progression in Post

9.19 Under the Pay and Grading Agreement 2013, if you fall within one of the following categories you may be eligible for progression to a higher grade while in your current post:

- **Fast stream clerks, Library clerks and assistant clerks of the records** may progress from the AFS grade to the A2 grade if they meet the core competencies for progression.

- **Assistant librarians** may progress from the C2 grade to the B2 grade if they meet the core competencies for progression.
- **Commis Chefs** may progress from the E1 grade to the D2 grade if they achieve the required level of proficiency for progression.

9.20 If you apply for progression, you will be asked to attend a progression board. The board will assess whether you have met the requirements for progression to the higher grade.

Secondments

9.21 You may apply to undertake a period of secondment to a public or private sector body. The Administration recognises the potential value of secondments for career and skills development and, if you make an application, every effort will be made to accommodate your request. You should note, however, that the Administration is a small organisation and it can therefore be difficult to deal with staff absences.

9.22 To make an application, you must set out your request in writing to your Head of Office. You must also send a copy of your application to the HRO. Your application should be submitted as early as possible and normally at least three months before the start of your proposed secondment.

9.23 Your Head of Office will consider your request in consultation with the HRO. If your request is refused, your Head of Office will explain the reasons for the decision. Their decision is final.

Regular secondments

9.24 Some secondments, for example to posts in government departments, come up regularly and are often filled by staff from the Administration. These opportunities will be advertised to all staff in the same way as internal vacancies.

Chapter 10: Pay and Allowances

10.1 This chapter sets out arrangements relating to pay in the House of Lords. It includes information about:

- how and when you will be paid
- how your pay is determined and pay systems in the House of Lords
- what to do if you receive an overpayment
- eligibility for and the payment of overtime
- eligibility for and the payment of allowances, including allowances for night duty.

Pay

10.2 Salaries and allowances are paid by the Finance Department on the authorisation of the Director of Human Resources. Your salary will be paid monthly in arrears; each month you will receive one-twelfth of your gross salary less deductions, for example Income Tax, National Insurance and pension contributions. You will normally receive your salary on the penultimate working day of the month into a bank account nominated by you. You will also receive a pay advice slip which shows the details of your pay and the deductions which have been made.

10.3 If you have any questions about your entitlement to pay or allowances you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185. If you have any questions about how your salary is paid or deductions from your salary, for example Income Tax or National Insurance contributions, you should contact the Finance Department on ext. 3323.

How pay is determined

10.4 Pay in the House of Lords is kept 'broadly in line' with pay in the Civil Service and the House of Commons Service. Pay is negotiated annually between the Director of Human Resources and the recognised trade unions. The mechanism for those pay negotiations is set out in the Procedural Agreement for the Negotiation of Pay and Related Conditions of Service ('the Procedural Agreement'). You can find a copy of the Procedural Agreement on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/finances/pay/lords-staff-pay>

10.5 Following negotiations with the trade unions the Administration will inform staff of the details of the pay agreement that has been reached. Negotiated changes to pay will take effect from 1 April. Any agreed pay increase will take one or more of the following forms:

- **Revalorisation of current pay:** revalorisation means a uniform percentage increase to all fixed salaries, pay band minimums and maximums, and spine or pay points. Revalorisation increases are consolidated and count towards your pension.
- **Upwards movement within your pay band:** this might consist of spine point or pay point moves, or a percentage increase in your pay (depending on the relevant pay structure). These payments are consolidated payments and will count towards your pension.
- **Non-consolidated pay awards:** these awards are one-off payments and will not count towards your pension.

10.6 Except for revalorisations, all pay increases are related to performance. If your performance is graded 'not satisfactory' in your appraisal you may receive no pay increase for the year concerned.

10.7 If you were appointed to the House of Lords within the twelve months preceding 1 April, you will receive a full negotiated pay increase with effect from 1 April if you started work on or before 31 December (and if your performance has been satisfactory). If you started work on or after 1 January, you will receive only the benefit of any revalorisation.

Pay structure

10.8 Your pay will depend on your department and your grade. Most staff are graded according to one of five overlapping pay bands (bands A to E). Different arrangements apply to Housekeepers, Fast stream and Library clerks, and senior staff.

Bands A to E: If you are in bands A to E you will be paid a salary which falls within the salary range for your band. Each band has a minimum and a maximum salary, and between the minimum and maximum there are incremental pay spine points. Each post is allocated to a band according to job weight. Movement between spine points is determined by negotiation with the trade unions. If spine point moves are agreed, you will benefit only if your performance has been satisfactory.

Fast stream clerks and Library clerks: If you are a Fast stream clerk or Library clerk you will be paid according to the AFS pay scale, which consists of a series of fixed pay points. Subject to your satisfactory performance, you will move up two pay points on the anniversary of your appointment until you reach the maximum of the scale. These pay points may be revalorised.

Further information can be found in the Pay and Grading Agreement, which is available on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/finances/pay/lords-staff-pay/>

Housekeepers: If you are a Housekeeper, you will be paid a fixed salary according to one of three fixed salary points. These fixed salaries may be revalorised.

Senior Staff: If you are a senior member of staff, you will be paid according to the pay bands used by the Senior Civil Service (bands 1 to 3). Each band has a minimum and a maximum. Posts are allocated to a band according to job weight. Pay progression between the minimum and maximum payable in each band is by percentage increases and depends on performance as assessed in annual appraisals. You may also receive a non-consolidated performance-related pay award. The amount of money available to fund pay awards is determined annually with reference to the recommendations of the Senior Salaries Review Body. These arrangements do not apply to the Clerk of the Parliaments, who is paid according to Judicial Salary Group 4.

Pay on promotion

10.9 If you are promoted from your current pay band to a higher pay band, your new salary will be either the minimum salary for the higher pay band or your existing salary (excluding allowances) plus an additional 10%, whichever is greater.

10.10 Subject to your satisfactory performance in your new post, you will receive the next full salary increase negotiated for your new pay band regardless of when you were promoted.

Underpayment and overpayment

10.11 The House will make every effort to ensure that you receive the correct payment each month. Occasionally, however, errors do occur and you may be paid an incorrect salary or allowance. If you receive an incorrect payment, you must

inform the Finance Department as soon as you are aware of the mistake on ext. 3323. If you fail to disclose an overpayment once you have detected it, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

10.12 If you have been overpaid but you received the payment in good faith, you will be asked to repay the money at a rate that is convenient for you. Normally the maximum period for repayment will be one year.

Deductions from pay

10.13 The House will make certain deductions from your salary. These may be statutory deductions or voluntary deductions. Statutory deductions include Income Tax, National Insurance contributions and contributions to the House of Lords' pension schemes (unless you have opted out of the schemes).

10.14 Voluntary deductions are deductions that you have asked the House to make. Examples of voluntary deductions include:

- subscriptions to recognised trade unions
- donations to charities through the 'Give As You Earn' scheme
- payments to benevolent funds and societies.

10.15 If you would like to arrange to make a voluntary deduction from your salary, or for further information about deductions from your salary, you should call the Finance Department on ext. 3323.

London Mutual Credit Union

10.16 The London Mutual Credit Union (LMCU) provides financial support and advice to staff on managing their personal finances. In addition it offers financial products such as savings and loans. It is for you to decide whether you wish to take up any of the financial arrangements offered by the LMCU after taking any advice you consider to be appropriate; the Administration offers no view on whether it is appropriate for individual members of staff to participate in any LMCU arrangement.

10.17 If you wish to make any payments to the LMCU, these can be deducted directly from your salary as a voluntary deduction (see paragraph 10.14 above). You can obtain more information about the LMCU by calling 020 7787 0770.

Overtime

Eligibility for overtime

10.18 Staff in band A and above will not normally be eligible for overtime payments. If you are in band A or above you will usually be expected to work the hours required to fulfil the demands of your post. You may, however, receive an allowance for regular late night working (paragraph 10.24).

10.19 If you are in bands B to E you will be eligible for overtime payments if you work more than 41 hours in a week (the normal weekly full-time hours of work). You must, however, seek authorisation from your line manager or your Head of Office in advance of working any overtime. If your overtime is not authorised, then you will not receive any overtime payment.

10.20 If you work part-time you will not be eligible for overtime payments until you have worked for more than 41 hours in a week. If you work extra hours within the 41-hour limit you will be paid for the extra hours at your normal hourly rate. These payments will count towards your pension.

Requirement to work overtime

10.21 If you work in Catering and Retail Services, you may be required to work overtime depending on the requirements of Catering and Retail Services.

Overtime rates

10.22 Overtime rates are made up of your normal hourly pay ('plain time' rate) plus an additional premium. Rates for overtime worked Monday to Friday are as follows:

Pay band/Role	Monday to Friday
Band B	Plain time (normal rate of pay)
Bands C to E	Plain time plus 50%

10.23 Overtime payments will not count towards your pension.

Saturday and Sunday payments

10.24 If you are required to work on Saturdays or Sundays, you will be paid at a higher hourly rate whether or not you have worked for more than 41 hours that week. Like overtime rates, this higher hourly rate is made up of your plain time rate plus an additional premium. The Saturday and Sunday rates are as follows:

Pay band/Role	Saturday and Sunday
Bands B to D (excluding CRS staff)	Plain time plus 100% Note: This rate applies whether you have worked more or less than 41 hours that week.
CRS staff (in any pay band)	On Saturdays, plain time plus 100% if you have already worked 41 hours during that week, or plain time plus 50% if you have worked less than 41 hours during that week. Sundays, plain time plus 100%.

10.25 If you have worked for less than 41 hours that week, all payments that you receive for working on a Saturday or Sunday will count towards your pension. If you work on a Saturday or Sunday beyond the 41-hour limit, only a percentage of the additional premium payment will count towards your pension (50% of the Saturday premium and 100% of the Sunday premium); the plain time element will not count towards your pension.

Allowances

10.26 The additional allowances for which you may be eligible include:

Late duty allowance

If you regularly work late for reasons connected with the sittings of the House, you may receive a night duty allowance. Details of this allowance will be shown in your letter of appointment (if you are eligible on appointment) or another written notification (if you subsequently become eligible). Your night duty allowance will be calculated by reference to the following factors:

- the number of late nights you work each week
- the average sitting hours of the House over the preceding five years
- an hourly rate calculated with reference to your grade.

Deputising allowance

If you undertake the duties of a vacant or temporary post in a higher pay band, or the duties of a member of staff in a higher pay band who is absent from work, for a period of at least six consecutive days, you may be paid an additional allowance in recognition of those additional duties. This allowance will only be available if the duties cannot be shared among other staff and cannot wait for the return of the absent member of staff. The additional allowance will be 8% of the band maximum of your pay span. The allowance will not reckon for the calculation of overtime or starting pay on promotion, but it will be pensionable. If you are deputising part-time you will receive an allowance calculated on a pro-rata basis. Your deputising allowance will end when your period of deputising ends. A deputising allowance will not normally be paid for periods of more than three months. If the vacancy is likely to be long-term the post may be offered on Long Term Temporary Promotion (LTTP). A competition is required for LTTP (see paragraph 9.16).

Accountancy allowance

If you have relevant accountancy qualifications you may be paid an allowance in recognition of those qualifications.

Recruitment and retention allowance

Under the Pay and Grading Agreement, the Human Resources Office has the discretion to offer an allowance to meet specific recruitment and retention problems.

Uniform allowance

If you have to wear a uniform at work, you will be paid an allowance to cover the cost of laundering your uniform.

This list is not exhaustive.

10.27 Any allowances you receive except uniform allowance will count towards your pension.

Chapter 11: Travel and Subsistence Expenses

11.1 This chapter explains:

- when you can claim travel and subsistence expenses
- the procedure for making a claim for travel and subsistence expenses
- rates and allowances.

11.2 If you have any questions about how to claim expenses, or the amount you can claim, you should call the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185.

General Arrangements

11.3 The provisions of this chapter may apply to you if, in connection with your work, you have to:

- travel to and from destinations other than the House of Lords
- spend time away from the House of Lords
- stay overnight away from home.

11.4 The provisions relating to travel costs may also apply if you are travelling to and from a summer school as part of a professional or higher education course funded by the Administration.

11.5 This chapter applies whether your expenses are paid using your own money and reimbursed, or settled by your Office on the basis of an invoice or by using a corporate credit card, or through a cash advance.

11.6 This chapter does not apply if you incur expenses while you are travelling:

- **with a Select Committee:** your expenses will be paid or reimbursed according to the arrangements determined by the Clerk of Committees.
- **to work for an international parliamentary assembly:** your expenses will be paid or reimbursed according to the arrangements determined by the assembly. You should note that if the assembly requires you to purchase your own travel (and later reclaim the cost), you may apply to the Clerk of the Overseas Office for an advance of salary where purchasing your tickets would otherwise cause you hardship.

11.7 Most staff travelling in a representative capacity will have their arrangements made for them by the Overseas Office which will also meet travel, overnight and day subsistence costs.

Prior authorisation

11.8 You will not be reimbursed for any expenses unless your Head of Office has approved in advance:

- the purpose of your travel
- the nature and scale of the expenses likely to arise from your travel, including the mode of travel
- insurance arrangements (see 11.19 and 11.27)

11.9 Your Head of Office may decide, however, that their prior authorisation is not required for each of a programme of visits, or for travel within Greater London.

11.10 If you intend to travel overseas, your Head of Office must inform the Clerk of the Parliaments in writing that they have approved your travel, including the reason and likely costs.

11.11 You should submit a copy of your authorisation with your claim or corporate credit card statement.

Making a claim

11.12 If you would like to make a claim, you must complete a claim form and submit it to a person in your Office who may authorise invoices at the appropriate level. You must submit your form by the end of the month following the month in which you incurred the expense. You may not authorise your own claim form in any circumstances. You can download claim forms from the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/hr-forms--checklists>

If you do not have access to the intranet, you can obtain a claim form from the Human Resources Office by calling ext. 3185.

11.13 Except for incidental overnight expenses within the limits stated in paragraphs 11.28 and 11.30, your claim should be supported by suitable receipts or tickets, which will be checked by the person authorising your claim. In exceptional circumstances it may not be possible to obtain a receipt. Where an explanation has been provided and the amounts are small, the expense may be reimbursed. To comply with HMRC requirements such claims will be monitored.

11.14 If your claim is authorised it will be submitted to the Finance Department by the authoriser for payment.

Cash

11.15 If you are given a cash advance (including an advance of foreign currency), or you draw foreign currency on a corporate credit card, you must complete a Cash Advance Form, return any unspent cash and provide receipts wherever possible. You should give these to the relevant authoriser on the first working day after your return. Note that you cannot draw cash with a Purchasing Card. You can download the Cash Advance Form from the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/HR-Forms/Cash-Advance-Form.pdf>

Corporate credit card

11.16 If you settle travel and subsistence expenses with a corporate credit card, you must attach receipts to the card statement for authorisation in the usual way, plus a copy of your authorisation to travel (but see 11.9).

Travel Expenses

11.17 You will only be reimbursed for travel expenses if, having regard to all the circumstances, you have used the most economic mode of travel. The following rules generally apply:

- you should use an existing travelcard or season ticket where possible
- you should use a taxi only where it is likely to be cheaper than public transport (for example, because you are sharing the taxi with others) or where public transport is impractical
- car mileage and parking costs for travel by private car will be reimbursed only when driving is more convenient than travelling by rail
- if you travel by rail, you should travel in standard class and at the most cost-efficient rate
- if you travel by air, you should travel in economy class and at the most cost-efficient rate.

You must justify any departure from these general rules on your claim form.

11.18 If you travel directly from your home, you may not claim reimbursement for any part of your journey which coincides with your normal journey to work. This provision may be waived by the authoriser where ticketing arrangements make it impractical to separate the different parts of the journey.

Travel by private car

11.19 If you travel by private car you must have comprehensive insurance for work-related travel covering bodily injury to or death of third parties and passengers, damage to the property of third parties and damage to or loss of your vehicle. If you do not have such insurance you will not be reimbursed for any costs arising from your car travel.

Mileage rates

11.20 The House of Lords uses the statutory system of mileage rates approved by HM Revenue and Customs. The current rates are:

Vehicle	First 10,000 miles in the tax year (per mile)	Each mile over 10,000 miles in the tax year
Car or van	45p	25p
Motorcycle	24p	24p
Bicycle	20p	20p

Reward schemes

11.21 If you receive reward points from the use of your personal credit card to meet work-related travel expenditure you may keep the benefit. Apart from this, you should not accept reward points offered in connection with work-related travel as these might be viewed as a gift which could compromise your judgement.

Overseas travel

11.22 If you are travelling overseas, paragraphs 11.17 to 11.21 apply except that you may not claim car mileage for any travel outside the UK. You may claim mileage for journeys in the UK at the beginning or end of an overseas journey.

Day Subsistence

In the UK

11.23 You may not claim reimbursement for day subsistence if you attend a residential course or conference and your meals are included in the overall fee.

11.24 If your meals are not included in your course or conference fee, or you are away for some other work-related reason, you may claim up to:

- £5.00 for breakfast,
- £5.00 for lunch, and
- £20.00 for dinner, or
- £25.00 for lunch and dinner.

Within these limits, your claim may include a tip of up to 10% where appropriate. If you choose to buy more expensive meals you will not be reimbursed for the full cost of your meals.

11.25 All claims should normally be supported by receipts (see paragraph 11.13).

Overseas

11.26 If you are travelling overseas, you may claim day subsistence to cover the cost of all meals (excluding breakfast if covered by the room rate – see below). Your subsistence expenses will be reimbursed up to the HMRC total residual rates. You can find the current rates on the internet at:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scale-rate-expenses-payments-employee-travelling-outside-the-uk>

These rates apply from the time of arrival in the foreign country to the time of departure.

You may also claim:

- minor travel expenses
- official phone calls
- other incidental business-related costs
- travel insurance (paragraph 11.27).

Travel Insurance

11.27 If you travel overseas, you should take out comprehensive travel insurance covering medical treatment and other insurable losses, for example loss of baggage. The cost of your insurance premiums may be reimbursed. If you travel to another EU Member State, you should take an EHIC.

Overnight Subsistence

In the UK

11.28 It is rare for any staff to have to stay away overnight for work except when on a course or a conference. If you are on a course or conference and your accommodation is included in the price you cannot claim overnight subsistence. You may, however, claim up to £5.00 for each night that you spend away from home to cover any incidental non-business expenses incurred (e.g. newspaper, laundry, phoning home). Receipts are not required for these incidental expenses. You may also be able to claim day subsistence (paragraphs 11.23 to 11.25).

11.29 If you have to stay away overnight and you pay the cost of your accommodation yourself, you can claim the actual cost of your accommodation up to the cost of a room with a bath at a three-star hotel (or equivalent). If you choose to stay at a more expensive hotel, you will not be reimbursed for the full cost of your accommodation. You may claim the cost of any meals taken up to the normal day subsistence rate (paragraph 11.24). All claims should normally be supported by receipts (paragraph 11.13).

Overseas

11.30 If you stay away overnight overseas, you will be reimbursed the actual cost of your accommodation up to the HMRC authorised room rates. You can find more information about these rates on the internet at:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scale-rate-expenses-payments-employee-travelling-outside-the-uk>

These rates apply from the time of arrival in the foreign country to the time of departure.

You will not be reimbursed for the full cost of your accommodation if you choose to stay at a more expensive hotel unless other considerations, for example location or security, have made it necessary for you to do so. You may also, however, claim up to £10.00 for each night that you spend outside the UK to cover any incidental non-business expenses incurred (e.g. newspaper, laundry, phoning home). Receipts are not required for these incidental expenses.

Chapter 12: Working Hours and Patterns

12.1 This chapter contains information on:

- working hours
- flexible working and home-working
- the Working Time Regulations
- what you should do if there is severe disruption to travel.

Introduction

Contractual hours

12.2 Your contractual hours are the number of hours that you are required to work. Your contractual hours are set out in your contract of employment. This requirement may be expressed as:

- **net contractual hours:** this means the hours that you are required to work, excluding any breaks
- **gross contractual hours:** this means the hours that you are required to work, including your paid breaks.

If you are a full-time member of staff, your gross contractual hours will be 41 hours per week and this figure is used for the purposes of calculating pay, night duty allowances and overtime.

12.3 If you work part-time, your hours will be calculated on a pro-rata basis depending on the terms of your appointment.

12.4 In addition to your contractual hours, you may be eligible to receive payment for overtime (see chapter 10).

Working hours

12.5 The requirements of the House make it necessary for different groups of staff to work at different times. The exact times at which you will be required to be at work will be arranged by your Head of Office. You must be punctual.

'Zero-hour' contracts

12.6 If you have a 'zero-hour' contract, your working hours will depend on when you are needed to work.

Working Time Regulations

12.7 The Working Time Regulations ('WTR') are intended to help safeguard the health and safety of people at work. Under the WTR, you are entitled to:

- an average working week of no more than 48 hours, including overtime; this will be averaged over a 26-week period under a collective agreement with the trade unions
- a 24-hour weekly rest period
- a 20-minute daily rest break if you work for more than six hours
- an eleven-hour break between spells of duty
- 28 days' paid annual leave if you work a full-time five-day week including eight bank holidays (pro rata for part-time staff).

Opting out

12.8 Under the WTR, it is possible for employees to agree in writing to opt out of the 48-hour maximum working week. The House will not require you to opt out of the 48-hour limit but you can choose to do so, for example if you want to work overtime or if you have a second job. The fact that you are prepared to opt out of the 48-hour limit, however, does not mean that the House will allow you to exceed the limit.

Breaks between duties

12.9 Under the WTR, an employee's entitlement to an 11-hour break between spells of duty may be varied by agreement. Occasionally, if you have had to work late because of a late sitting of the House, you may not be able to observe the rest period before beginning your duties the following morning. Under a collective agreement with the trade unions, where it is not possible for you to observe the rest period immediately, you may take compensatory rest, equal to the rest time which you have missed, as time off in lieu on the following Friday.

Second jobs

12.10 If you have another job or you are considering taking on any additional work with another employer you must tell your line manager and the Human Resources Office (ext 3185). You may not take up any work with another

employer or engage in any other occupation without the consent of the Director of Human Resources (DHR).

12.11 You will only be allowed to take on additional work that requires you to be absent during your normal working hours in exceptional circumstances, for example where the other job or activity is related to your work for the Administration. If you think this applies to you, you should apply to the DHR who will seek permission on your behalf from the Clerk of the Parliaments.

12.12 The DHR may refuse permission for you to take or continue with the second job if they feel that the additional hours are excessive and detrimental to your ability to undertake your responsibilities to the House effectively, or if there could be any conflict of interest. They will not refuse permission unreasonably.

12.13 If the DHR feels that the additional hours are not excessive but they are concerned that they may cause you to approach or exceed the 48-hour average working week limit, you will not be able to take on the additional work unless you sign a waiver form (paragraph 12.8).

Procedure for dealing with concerns regarding the Working Time Regulations

12.14 If you believe that you are exceeding the limits on your working hours or are not getting the breaks and rest periods to which you are entitled, you should speak to your line manager. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, it is open to you to bring a grievance using the grievance procedure outlined in chapter 21 of this handbook.

Flexible Working

12.15 Flexible working means any arrangement that allows an employee to have a varied working schedule (rather than having to comply with a standard work schedule). All staff who have completed 26 weeks' continuous service may request flexible working.

Staff should follow the procedure for making an application set out in paragraphs 12.20 to 12.22. If your request is refused, you may appeal against the decision (paragraphs 12.26 to 12.28).

Flexible working arrangements

12.16 Flexible working arrangements may involve:

- a change in the number of hours you work per week
- a change to how your contractual hours fit into a weekly pattern
- a change in your place of work for part or all of the week.

12.17 Examples of flexible working arrangements include:

- **part-time:** working less than the standard full-time contractual hours
- **variable hours:** having some flexibility about the hours during which you work
- **compressed hours:** working your total contractual hours over fewer working days whilst ensuring appropriate rest periods as shown at paragraph 12.7
- **job share:** working less than 41 hours per week and sharing the responsibilities of one full-time employee with another part-time employee
- **working from home:** carrying out a proportion of your duties from your own home.

Who has a statutory right to request flexible working?

12.18 You have a statutory right to request flexible working if you have worked continuously for the House of Lords for at least 26 weeks.

12.19 You are entitled to make one application every twelve months.

Making a request for flexible working

12.20 If you would like to make an application for flexible working, you must set out your request in writing to your Head of Office. The request should provide details of your proposed new working pattern, what effect you think the requested change would have on your Office and how, in your opinion, any such effect might be dealt with. You should also send a copy of this letter to the Human Resources Office.

12.21 Within 28 days of your request being received by your Head of Office, you will be invited to attend a meeting with your Head of Office and a member of

staff from the HRO. At this meeting you will discuss your request and how it might be accommodated. You may bring a colleague or trade union representative with you to this meeting.

12.22 Within fourteen days of the meeting, your Head of Office will write to you to tell you whether your request has been granted. If your request has not been granted, they will provide reasons for their decision. You may only appeal against your Head of Office's decision if you have a statutory right to request flexible working. Otherwise, their decision is final.

Grounds for refusing a flexible working request

12.23 A statutory flexible working request can only be refused on business grounds. The grounds on which an application can be refused are:

- the burden of additional costs
- the detrimental effect on the Administration's ability to meet demands
- the inability to re-organise work among existing staff
- an inability to recruit additional staff
- a detrimental impact on quality
- a detrimental impact on performance
- an insufficiency of work during the period that you propose to work
- planned structural changes.

12.24 Even if you do not have a statutory right to request flexible working, your request will only be refused for one of the above reasons.

12.25 You should note that all staff, including those working flexibly, must be able to keep in regular contact with their Office. If you ask to work hours that are significantly different from the normal working hours of your Office, it is likely that your request will be refused.

Appeals under the statutory procedures

12.26 If your application for flexible working is refused, and you wish to appeal, you must tell the DHR in writing within ten working days after your Head of Office notifies of your their decision. You should set out why you think that your Head of Office's decision was unjustified.

12.27 Your appeal will be heard by a member of staff who has had no previous involvement in your case. The appeal will normally be heard within ten working days after the DHR receives your notice of appeal. You will receive at least three working days' notice of the appeal.

12.28 You will be notified of the outcome of your appeal in writing within ten working days after the date of your appeal hearing. The appeal decision is final.

Home Working

12.29 There are two types of home working:

- **Regular (or contractual) home working** involves a permanent or time-limited variation to your contract of employment. If you would like to work from home on a regular basis you should make an application using the procedure set out above (paragraphs 12.20 to 12.22). If regular home working is approved you will have a trial period of at least one month. The arrangement will be reviewed regularly.
- **Occasional home working** may be allowed from time to time when the circumstances are such that it is necessary or desirable for you to work from home.

12.30 The Administration's full home working policy can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/benefits--facilities/work-life-support/flexible--home-working/>

Occasional home working

12.31 Occasional home working may be authorised if you are:

- completing a particular report or project with a deadline, which requires an environment free from distractions
- experiencing difficulty with travel arrangements due to public strikes or adverse weather conditions
- faced with unexpected short-term caring difficulties, for example if you have to care for a sick child or elderly parent for a few days. Home working

is not a long-term solution for childcare or other caring difficulties. Depending on the circumstances, you may be asked to take special leave to cope with caring responsibilities (see chapter 14, paragraph 14.3).

Occasional home working may also be authorised on an ad hoc basis by your Head of Office.

12.32 You will normally be allowed to work from home only if:

- the nature of the work you need to do is such that it can be done from home
- your absence does not cause your colleagues additional work, or inconvenience members of the House or its committees
- appropriate arrangements have been put in place to enable you to work from home, for example you have access to an Office laptop or remote access to the Parliamentary Network
- there are no risks to your health and safety.

Your Head of Office will also consider these criteria if you request regular home working.

12.33 You will not be allowed to work from home if you:

- have to be on the Parliamentary Estate to do your job
- received a 'not satisfactory' marking in your last performance and development appraisal
- have not been producing work of a satisfactory standard, including if your level of work output has not been satisfactory
- require clear supervision in order to deliver an acceptable quality of work, or an acceptable level of work output
- have a poor record of timekeeping or attendance.

Your Head of Office will also take these factors into account if you request regular home working.

Severe Travel Disruption

12.34 You are expected to make every reasonable effort to get to work during a transport emergency, for example during industrial action or severe weather, but you should not place yourself or others at risk by doing so. If you believe that you will be unable to get to work, or that you will arrive late, you should tell your line manager, or another manager in your Office, as soon as possible.

12.35 There are some tasks in the House and the Administration which are essential and must be done even when travel is disrupted. Your Head of Office will decide how these tasks will be covered depending on the circumstances, including the circumstances of each member of staff. So far as possible, your Head of Office will ensure that the burden caused by travel disruption is shared fairly among the staff in your Office.

12.36 If your line manager is satisfied that you have taken all reasonable steps to reach work but have been unable to do so, and you are unable to work from home, they may approve your absence on full pay. This is at your line manager's discretion. You may, however, be asked to take the time as unpaid special leave or as annual leave, or you may be required to make up the time missed at a later date.

12.37 You can find a copy of the Severe Travel Disruption Policy on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/house-of-commons/conditions-of-service/severe-transport-disruption/>

Chapter 13: Annual Leave

13.1 This chapter contains information about your entitlement to annual leave. It explains:

- how your annual leave is calculated
- restrictions on when you can take annual leave
- how you might be affected if the House is recalled
- what will happen if you become ill while on annual leave.

Annual Leave Entitlement

13.2 Your leave entitlement is shown in your contract of employment. Your paid annual leave entitlement will depend on how long you have been employed by the House of Lords and the hours you work:

	First 12 months	After first 12 months
Full-time staff	30 days	35 days
Part-time staff	Pro-rata calculation according to your contractual hours based on 30 days' full-time entitlement	Pro-rata calculation according to your contractual hours based on 35 days' full-time entitlement
'Zero-hour' staff	Pro-rata calculation according to the number of days or hours you have worked per week based on 30 days' full-time entitlement	Pro-rata calculation according to the number of days or hours you have worked per week based on 35 days' full-time entitlement

13.3 If you work an unusual pattern, for example compressed hours, your annual leave entitlement will reflect that pattern.

13.4 In addition to your annual leave, you are entitled to bank holidays.

Taking Annual Leave

Leave year

13.5 The annual leave year runs from 1 September to 31 August each year. You must take all of your leave during the leave year to which it relates unless you are:

- on maternity leave (chapter 15, paragraph 15.31)
- on long-term sickness absence.

13.6 If there are exceptional circumstances which mean that you have been unable to take all of your annual leave in the relevant leave year, you may be able to carry over up to nine days into the next leave year. This is at the discretion of your Head of Office.

Arranging leave

13.7 Each Office has its own arrangements for annual leave. You must comply with the arrangements in your Office and you must always obtain your line manager's and your Head of Office's permission to take leave. If you take leave without authorisation, or you return late from leave which has been authorised, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

13.8 You must ensure that your annual leave is authorised by your line manager and Head of Office and recorded on MyHR.

Restrictions on when leave may be taken

13.9 Most staff may take annual leave only during recesses. If this rule applies in your Office, you must comply with it. Heads of Office are responsible for ensuring that sufficient staff are available in their Offices to support a recall of the House during recesses, and they will take this into account when making decisions on leave requests. In certain circumstances you may be able to take paid or unpaid special leave on days when the House is sitting (chapter 14, paragraph 14.3).

13.10 If the arrangements in your Office mean that you can take leave when the House is sitting, you must take your leave in accordance with your Office's leave policy.

Recess dates and recall of the House

13.11 The House is normally in recess for a period over Christmas, Easter, the spring bank holiday (the late May bank holiday), and the summer. Recess dates may vary, however. In the event of a recall, absent staff must return to work if they are required by their Head of Office. If there is a recall while you are on holiday, you should make arrangements to return only if your Head of Office contacts you to confirm that you are required to work.

13.12 If you are required to return to work in accordance with paragraph 13.11 and this disrupts a holiday that you have already booked, you may be reimbursed for any financial loss that you incur. You should not make any arrangements to cut a holiday short until your Head of Office has confirmed that you will be reimbursed.

If you are on holiday outside Europe you will not normally be required to return to work if the House is recalled unless there are exceptional circumstances and the Clerk of the Parliaments has approved the reimbursement of any financial loss that you incur.

13.13 To make a claim, you must provide details of the losses that you have incurred to your Head of Office in writing. You should provide evidence to support your claim.

Becoming Ill while on Annual Leave

13.14 If you are sick during a period of annual leave, this is treated as sickness absence and not annual leave. You must contact your line manager, or another manager in your Office, to report that you are sick and to let them know when you are fit again. This enables the Administration to keep a proper record of statutory sick pay. You should also submit a self certificate or fit note from your GP as soon as you can. The relevant day, or days, will be restored to your leave allowance for the current leave year.

Chapter 14: Special Leave and Career Breaks

14.1 This chapter covers:

- principles governing special leave and career breaks
- how to apply for special leave or a career break, and how your application will be considered
- what you should do if you receive a jury summons
- if you take a career break, what you will be required to do during your break and how the break will affect your conditions of service.

14.2 This chapter does not deal with maternity, paternity or adoption leave (chapter 15), or study leave when you are completing an approved further education or professional qualification (chapter 18).

Special Leave

14.3 You will be expected to use your normal annual leave as far as possible for attending to your private affairs. Where this is not possible, you may request special leave. If you would like special leave, you must make an application as far in advance as possible. Special leave may be paid or unpaid.

14.4 If you wish to request paid special leave, you must apply to your Head of Office. Your application will need to be approved by different people depending on the length of leave you require:

- **1 or 2 days:** your Head of Office
- **3 to 5 days:** the Director of Human Resources (DHR)
- **more than 5 days:** the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Your Head of Office will approach the DHR or the Clerk of the Parliaments on your behalf if necessary.

14.5 Whether your request is granted, the period of leave which you are allowed, and whether that leave is paid or unpaid, is at the discretion of your Head of Office, the DHR and/or the Clerk of the Parliaments. Their decision is final.

14.6 If you wish to request a period of unpaid leave you must apply to the DHR in writing. The DHR will seek the consent of your Head of Office. Unpaid special leave will not count towards your reckonable service for the purposes of pay, sick pay, leave or pension entitlement.

When special leave may be granted

14.7 Examples of situations in which special leave may be allowed include:

- **family emergencies**, for example the serious illness or death of a close relative
- **caring emergencies**, for example the need to provide assistance if a dependant falls ill or if your regular care arrangements are unexpectedly disrupted. Caring leave is available to enable you to fulfill your caring responsibilities in cases where your assistance is urgently needed.

It is intended to cover short-term emergencies rather than caring responsibilities for which it is possible to plan. This means that it is available only to enable you to deal with the initial needs of somebody who depends on you or to make arrangements for their care. If you wish to stay off work longer to provide care yourself, or if you know in advance that you will need to take time off work, you may be able to arrange this with your line manager by taking another form of leave such as annual leave or unpaid leave

- **domestic emergencies**, for example a burst pipe
- **performance of public duties**, for example if you are a Justice of the Peace or a member of the auxiliary or reserve forces. You should speak to your line manager and the HRO if you are considering volunteering for civic or public duties, or joining the auxiliary or reserve forces
- **official duties connected with a trade union or the Whitley Committee**
- **observance of religious festivals**
- **performance in elite sporting events.**

This list is not exhaustive.

14.8 When considering any request for special leave, your Head of Office, the DHR and/or the Clerk of the Parliaments will consider:

- your reason for requesting special leave
- what would be a reasonable amount of time off in the circumstances
- whether you have already taken any paid or unpaid special leave, and the reason for that leave
- whether it would be appropriate for you to take annual leave instead of special leave

- whether it would be appropriate for you to work other days in lieu of days taken as special leave
- whether your leave should be paid or unpaid.

Jury service

14.9 If you receive a jury summons, you should tell the Human Resources Office straight away. You will receive your normal pay during any period of jury service. If you wish to defer your jury service, or to excuse yourself completely, it is up to you to negotiate this with the Courts Service.

Career Breaks

14.10 The career break scheme allows you to take an extended break from work without leaving the employment of the Administration. Common reasons for career breaks include:

- domestic commitments or responsibilities, for example the provision of care to a dependant
- accompanying a partner when their employment has been transferred to a distant area.

Eligibility

14.11 No member of staff has an automatic right to a career break. The following general principles apply to all applications:

- You are eligible to apply for a career break if you have completed your probation, you are permanently employed by the Administration, and you have a good record of attendance and performance.
- You are eligible to apply regardless of your pay band.
- You will not be allowed to take a career break for more than four years in total. If you apply for a shorter period, you may apply to extend your career break within the four-year limit.
- You may have more than one career break but the combined length of your breaks cannot exceed the four-year limit.

Applying for a career break

14.12 To apply for a career break, you must set out your request in writing to the DHR. You should apply as early as possible, and normally you will be expected to give at least three months' notice.

14.13 If you make an application, every effort will be made to accommodate your request. The House of Lords is, however, a small organisation and it can therefore be difficult to deal with lengthy staff absences.

14.14 The DHR will consider your request in consultation with your Head of Office. In particular, they will consider the work needs of your Administration and your Office. If your request is refused, the DHR will tell you the reasons for the refusal. The decision by the DHR is final.

Before your career break

14.15 Before you start your career break, your line manager will complete a review of your performance in the period since your last annual appraisal (unless it has been less than six months since the end of the last reporting year). If, as a result of this appraisal, you are entitled to receive an increase in pay at the end of the reporting year, that increase will be credited to you on your return to work.

During your career break

14.16 During your career break you will normally be expected to undertake up to ten 'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) days each year. These days may involve work activity or training. You will be paid for KIT days at your normal rate. You should also keep in regular contact with the Human Resources Office.

14.17 You must not undertake any other permanent paid employment during your career break. If you wish to take a temporary job, you must get permission from the DHR first.

Effect on your conditions of service

14.18 If you take a career break, your conditions of service will be affected as follows:

- Your pay and allowances will cease.

- You will remain an employee of the House of Lords Administration, and the terms and conditions of your appointment will still apply.
- You will remain a member of your chosen pension scheme and will remain eligible for death-in-service benefits.
- The time spent on your career break will not count towards your reckonable service for the purposes of pay, sick pay, leave or pension entitlement. It will, however, count as qualifying service and will affect death benefit and certain other benefits.
- Any time you spend working or training during your career break by agreement with the Human Resources Office will be paid and this payment will count towards reckonable service for your pension.
- You will receive the benefit of any pay revalorisation during your absence.
- You must continue to observe the Administration's rules on conduct and behaviour (chapter 19).
- You will remain eligible for promotion; you will, however, be required to attend a promotion board in the normal way. If successful, you may be required to curtail your career break in order to take up your new appointment.
- You will not be eligible for paid maternity leave if you become pregnant during your career break (this also applies to any other sort of paid parental leave). You may, however, be able to claim Maternity Allowance from Jobcentre Plus (chapter 15, paragraph 15.22).

Returning to work

14.19 You must give the Human Resources Office at least six months' notice of your return to work. The period of notice may be longer and, if so, this will be agreed with you before you take your career break. Once you have given notice of your intention to return, the HRO will discuss with you the jobs available, any training needs and your return date. If you wish to return to a different pattern of hours, you should apply for flexible working in the normal way (chapter 12, paragraphs 12.20 to 12.22).

14.20 You will return to work in a suitable job at the same pay band, but not necessarily in the same post or the same department.

14.21 If you decide during your career break that you do not wish to return to work at the House of Lords, you should give notice of your resignation in the

normal way (chapter 23, paragraph 23.3). You will not be required to work out your notice period.

Career breaks and maternity leave

14.22 You may apply to take a career break following your maternity leave. If successful, you will be entitled to take a break of up to four years in addition to your full entitlement of paid and unpaid maternity leave (see chapter 15). If you choose to do this, you will not be required to repay any of your maternity pay (unless you resign during your career break, in which case chapter 15, paragraph 15.36 will apply).

Chapter 15: Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Parental Leave

15.1 This chapter explains:

- your rights and responsibilities while you are pregnant and on maternity leave
- details of arrangements for maternity leave and pay
- your entitlement to adoption leave
- your entitlement to paternity leave and additional paternity leave
- your entitlement to parental leave.

15.2 In this chapter, the following definitions are used:

- **‘Childbirth’** means the live birth of a child, or a stillbirth, after a pregnancy lasting 24 weeks or more. If your baby is stillborn after 24 weeks, you are eligible to receive the full normal allowance of maternity leave and pay.
- **‘Expected week of childbirth’** (EWC) is the week, starting on a Sunday, during which your doctor or midwife expects your baby to be born.
- **‘Maternity Allowance’** (MA) is a benefit paid weekly by Jobcentre Plus to pregnant women who cannot get Statutory Maternity Pay from their employers.
- **‘MAT BI form’** is a certificate confirming that a woman is pregnant. The form is normally issued when the woman is about 22 weeks pregnant.
- **‘Statutory Maternity Pay’** (SMP) is the pay that employers must give to their pregnant employees (when certain conditions are met). The rate of SMP is set by the Department for Work and Pensions. You can claim SMP using an SMP 1 form.
- **‘Qualifying Week’** (QW) means the beginning of the fifteenth week before the expected week of childbirth.

15.3 If you have any questions about maternity, adoption, paternity and parental leave, including questions about maternity pay, you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185.

Maternity Leave

Before the baby is born

Notifying the House of Lords Administration

15.4 You should tell your line manager and the Human Resources Office (HRO) that you are pregnant as soon as possible after your pregnancy is confirmed. This allows them to take account of all relevant health and safety considerations.

15.5 You must tell your line manager and the HRO about your pregnancy by the Qualifying Week of your pregnancy (see paragraph 15.2 for definitions). You must tell them in writing:

- that you are pregnant and wish to take maternity leave;
- your Expected Week of Childbirth; and
- the date on which you want your maternity leave to start.

15.6 You must provide the HRO with a MAT BI form when you receive one. The MAT BI is a certificate confirming your pregnancy from your doctor or midwife, which will normally be given to you when you are around 22 weeks pregnant. You will not receive any maternity pay unless you provide the MAT BI form.

15.7 The HRO will respond in writing to your request for maternity leave within 28 days. This letter will confirm the date on which you will be expected to return to work if you take your full 52-week entitlement to maternity leave.

15.8 If you change your mind about when you would like to start your maternity leave, you must notify your line manager and the HRO in writing at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Pregnancy risk assessment

15.9 Once you have told your line manager that you are pregnant, they will undertake a risk assessment to identify any changes that are necessary to protect your health and that of your unborn baby. The assessment will be reviewed by you and your line manager as your pregnancy progresses to check if any further adjustments are necessary. If you have any concerns after completing the risk assessment, you should contact the SHWS team on ext. 1484.

15.10 If the risk assessment suggests that work-related health and safety risks cannot be avoided or reduced to an acceptable level, your line manager will review your working conditions and hours of work. Your line manager may be able to alter your working conditions or find you suitable alternative work. If this is not possible, you may be given paid special leave in order to protect your own and your baby's health.

15.11 If you are concerned at any time about the impact of your work on your pregnancy, you should tell your line manager or the HRO straight away.

Time off for antenatal care

15.12 You will receive reasonable paid leave for medical and antenatal appointments and also, for example, for relaxation classes or parentcraft classes. If you would like to take paid leave, you must be prepared to show your line manager:

- your MAT B1 form (paragraph 15.6);
- an appointment card or other details of your appointment; and
- if it is not a medical appointment, evidence that the appointment was made on the advice of a medical practitioner, midwife or health visitor.

15.13 If you are an expectant father, you may also ask your line manager for paid or unpaid leave to attend antenatal classes or appointments. You may be asked to make up the hours at another time.

Sickness absence due to pregnancy

15.14 If you are absent from work for a health reason related to your pregnancy, you will be entitled to sickness absence leave and pay in the normal way (chapter 16). Any pregnancy-related absence will be recorded separately from other sickness absence, if it is identified as such on your sickness certificate, and will not be taken into account when considering absence levels with a view to attendance management action.

15.15 If you are absent from work for a reason related to your pregnancy after the beginning of the fourth week before your EWC, your maternity leave will start automatically. You must notify the HRO in writing of your illness, and the fact that it is related to your pregnancy, as soon as possible.

A suitable place to rest

15.16 While you are pregnant, you will be able to make use of a suitable place to rest. If you need a place to rest, you should ask the HRO for details of the most convenient location (ext. 3185).

Annual leave

15.17 If your maternity leave will extend into the next leave year (i.e. beyond 31 August) and you have not yet taken all of your annual leave for the present leave year, you must normally take any outstanding annual leave before you start your maternity leave. Where possible, you should take any outstanding leave during recesses, or in accordance with your Office's leave policy, in the normal way (chapter 13, paragraph 13.8). If this is not possible, you should take your outstanding leave immediately before the start of your maternity leave.

Maternity Leave and Pay

Maternity leave entitlement

15.18 You are entitled to take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave. By law, you must take at least two weeks maternity leave immediately after the birth of your child. During your maternity leave, your contract of employment continues and you are entitled to receive all of your contractual benefits, except your salary.

Maternity leave period

15.19 Your maternity leave can begin any time after the start of the eleventh week before your EWC and will start on whichever date is the earlier of:

- your chosen start date;
- the day after you give birth; or
- the day after any day on which you are absent for a pregnancy-related illness in the four weeks before your EWC (paragraph 15.15).

15.20 If you give birth before your maternity leave was due to start you must notify the HRO in writing as soon as possible.

Maternity pay entitlement

15.21 It is likely that you will be eligible to receive some pay during the first 39 weeks of your maternity leave. If you choose to take the final thirteen weeks of your maternity leave you will receive no pay for this period.

15.22 The amount that you receive during the first 39 weeks will depend on your length of service at the House of Lords by the Qualifying Week (see paragraph 15.2 for definitions).

Less than 26 weeks' service: If you have been employed by the House of Lords for less than 26 weeks by the end of the QW, you will not receive any salary or any Statutory Maternity Pay. You may, however, be able to claim Maternity Allowance from Jobcentre Plus for up to 39 weeks of your maternity leave. You should contact the HRO on ext. 3185 for a Form SMPI which you should take to Jobcentre Plus to make your claim.

More than 26 weeks' service: If you have been employed by the House of Lords for more than 26 weeks by the end of the QW, you will normally be entitled to full House of Lords maternity pay. This consists of your full salary for the first 26 weeks of your maternity leave, followed by Statutory Maternity Pay paid at the lower rate for the following thirteen weeks.

15.23 For clarification, the different maternity pay entitlements are set out in the tables below:

Staff with less than 26 weeks' continuous service by the end of the QW			
Period of maternity leave	Weeks 1–26 of maternity leave	Weeks 27–39 of maternity leave	Weeks 40–52 of maternity leave
Pay	Maternity Allowance (from Jobcentre Plus)	Maternity Allowance	No pay

Staff with more than 26 weeks' continuous service by the end of the QW			
Period of maternity leave	Weeks 1–26 of maternity leave	Weeks 27–39 of maternity leave	Weeks 40–52 of maternity leave
Pay	Full pay	Statutory Maternity Pay (lower rate)	No pay

15.24 The pay you receive during your maternity leave is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to PAYE and National Insurance deductions.

15.25 You will receive any contractual pay increases during your maternity leave.

Maternity pay and your pension

15.26 The first 39 weeks of your maternity leave (the period of paid leave) will count towards reckonable service for your pension. If you take it, the final thirteen weeks of your maternity leave will not count towards reckonable service for your pension but you will remain a member of your chosen pension scheme.

15.27 During the first 39 weeks of your maternity leave, you will pay pension contributions based on the amount of pay you are actually receiving (even if this is less than you would be receiving if you were still at work). The House of Lords Administration will continue to pay its employer contributions based on the salary you would be receiving if you were still at work.

Returning to Work

Right of return

15.28 If you take 26 weeks' maternity leave or less, you are entitled to return to the same job on terms and conditions that are no less favourable than those which would have applied if you had not been absent.

15.29 If you take more than 26 weeks' leave, you are entitled to return to the same job unless it is not reasonably practicable for you to do so. If it is not reasonably practicable for you to return to the same job, you are entitled to return to another suitable job on similar terms and conditions.

Date of return

15.30 The HRO will assume that you intend to take the full 52 weeks' maternity leave unless you notify them of your intention to return to work earlier. If you want to return to work earlier you must give the HRO at least eight weeks' notice in writing of your intention to return. The earliest you can return to work is two weeks after the birth of your child.

Accrued annual leave

15.31 You will continue to accrue annual leave during your maternity leave. You can choose to take this accrued leave in one of two ways:

Option 1: You can return to work as planned at the end of your maternity leave and then take your accrued annual leave during recesses, or in compliance with your Office's leave policy, in the normal way, following your return. If it is not possible for you to take all of your accrued leave in the normal way before the end of the leave year, other arrangements may be made.

Option 2: If you have chosen to take the full 52 weeks of maternity leave, you can take your accrued annual leave during the final unpaid part of that leave. This will mean that for a number of weeks before you return to work, when you would otherwise not have received any pay, you will be re-instated onto the payroll and be paid your full salary. You will still return to work on the date planned for the end of your maternity leave. The number of weeks for which you will be paid will depend on the number of weeks of annual leave you have accrued.

15.32 You will not normally be able to take your accrued annual leave immediately following on from your maternity leave unless your maternity leave ends during a recess.

Keeping in touch (KIT) days

15.33 You may attend up to ten days of training or other work at the House of Lords during your maternity leave. If you choose to take them, they will not bring your maternity leave to an end or affect your maternity pay. You will be paid your usual rate for days that you work or attend training.

15.34 You must take any KIT days before the end of your maternity leave (i.e. the date on which you have told the HRO that you intend to return to work). You will not normally be allowed to take more than two consecutive KIT days.

A suitable place to express milk

15.35 If you are breastfeeding when you return to work, you will be able to make use of a suitable place to express milk. If you need a place to express, you should ask the HRO for details of the most convenient location for you (ext. 3185).

No return to work

15.36 If you decide not to return to work following maternity leave, you must give notice of your resignation as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms of your contract of employment (chapter 23). If you received full pay for the first 26 weeks of your maternity leave and you do not return to work for at least four weeks following your maternity leave, you will have to repay the full salary that you received less any Statutory Maternity Pay and any payment you are owed in lieu of annual leave. This seven-week period may, however, be covered, or partially covered, by accrued annual leave.

Adoption Leave

15.37 The arrangements for adoption leave are, in essence, the same as those that apply to maternity leave (paragraphs 15.18 to 15.36). In particular, if you are eligible, you are entitled to take the same amount of leave and your leave will be paid at the same rate.

15.38 Some information about who is eligible for adoption leave, and when you should notify the House of Lords Administration if you intend to take adoption leave, is set out below. If you would like further information about adoption leave, you should contact the HRO on ext. 3185.

Eligibility

15.39 You may be eligible for adoption leave and pay if you adopt alone, or you are the nominated person from a couple who are adopting jointly. If you are adopting jointly, you and your partner must decide who will take adoption leave.

If your partner is taking adoption leave you may be entitled to paternity leave (whatever your gender).

15.40 To qualify for adoption leave you must:

- be newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency;
- have notified the agency that you agree to the placement and the date of the placement; and
- have worked continuously for the House of Lords for 26 weeks at the start of the week in which you are notified of being matched with a child for adoption.

Notifying the House of Lords Administration

15.41 You must inform your line manager and the HRO in writing of your intention to take adoption leave within seven calendar days of being notified by the adoption agency that you have been matched with a child for adoption. If this is not possible, you should inform them as soon as is reasonably practicable. You must tell them:

- when the child is expected to be placed with you, and
- when you want your adoption leave to start.

Paternity Leave

15.42 There are two sorts of paternity leave:

- **Ordinary paternity leave:** if you are eligible for ordinary paternity leave, you will be entitled to take up to ten days' paid leave.
- **Additional paternity leave:** if you are eligible for additional paternity leave you may take up to 26 weeks' additional leave. A portion of this leave may be paid at the lower rate of SMP. Your exact entitlement will depend on the mother's maternity leave arrangements.

15.43 The arrangements for both sorts of paternity leave are summarised below. If you would like further information about paternity leave, including what you need to do to prove that you are eligible for paternity leave, you should contact the Human Resources Office on ext. 3185.

Ordinary Paternity Leave

Eligibility

15.44 In order to qualify for ordinary paternity leave you must:

- be the biological father of the child or the mother's husband, civil partner or partner, or the spouse or partner of a person who has adopted a child, or one of a couple who have jointly adopted a child; and
- have worked continuously for the House of Lords for 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the EWC, or the start of the week in which you are notified of being matched with the child.

Leave period and pay

15.45 You are entitled to take up to two weeks' ordinary paternity leave. The statutory position is that you should take your leave as a single block and you must complete it within 52 weeks of the baby being born (or of the child's placement). However, the Administration is usually prepared to agree to requests to take two one-week blocks of leave. Your leave can start on any day of the week.

15.46 You will receive full pay during ordinary paternity leave.

Notification

15.47 You must tell your line manager and the HRO that you intend to take ordinary paternity leave, and the date on which you would like to start your leave, by the Qualifying Week, or within seven days of your being notified by your adoption agency that you have been matched with a child.

15.48 If you change your mind about when you would like to start your paternity leave, you must notify your line manager and the HRO in writing at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Additional Paternity Leave

Eligibility

15.49 In order to qualify for additional paternity leave, you must:

- be the father of the child, or be married to the child's mother or primary adopter, or be the civil partner or partner of the child's mother or primary adopter;
- expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child together with the child's mother or primary adopter;
- be seeking additional paternity leave in order to care for the child
- have worked continuously for the House of Lords for 26 weeks by the Qualifying Week, or the start of the week in which you are notified of being matched with the child; and
- remain in continuous employment until the week before the first week of additional paternity leave.

15.50 In addition, the mother (or primary adopter) of the child must:

- be entitled to maternity leave, Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance and
- have returned to work and stopped receiving any Statutory Maternity Pay or Maternity Allowance.

Leave period

15.51 If you are eligible, you are entitled to take up to 26 weeks of additional paternity leave. You may not start additional paternity until 20 weeks after the day on which your child was born (or the day of your child's placement for adoption). Your paternity leave must end no later than 52 weeks after that date.

15.52 Additional paternity leave must be taken as a single block made up of a number of complete weeks.

Eligibility for additional paternity pay

15.53 You are likely to be eligible for additional paternity pay if the mother (or the primary adopter) of the child has returned to work and forfeited at least two weeks of her paid maternity leave (i.e. she has taken less than 39 weeks of

maternity leave). You will only receive additional paternity pay for any period of additional paternity leave that falls within the unexpired part of the mother's 39 weeks' paid maternity leave. For example, if the mother has taken 35 weeks' leave, you will only be entitled to receive paternity pay for four weeks.

15.54 Depending on when the mother of the child returns to work, you may receive additional paternity pay for a maximum of 19 weeks. This does not affect your entitlement to take further additional unpaid paternity leave up to the limit of 26 weeks.

Rate of additional paternity pay

15.55 You will be paid the lower rate of Statutory Maternity Pay during your additional paternity leave.

Notification

15.56 You must tell your line manager and the HRO in writing that you intend to take additional paternity leave, and the date on which you would like to start your leave, at least eight weeks before the start of your leave.

15.57 If you change your mind about when you would like to start your paternity leave, you must notify your line manager and the HRO in writing at least six weeks before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Parental Leave

15.58 If the eligibility requirements are met, both parents of a child are entitled to take parental leave in addition to any maternity, adoption or paternity leave. Parental leave is unpaid leave, and will not count towards your reckonable service for pension. You will remain employed during any period of parental leave and your normal terms and conditions of employment will apply, except for your pay.

Eligibility

15.59 In order to be eligible to take unpaid parental leave to care for a child you must have been in continuous employment with the House of Lords Administration for one year. In addition, the child concerned must be:

- a child for whom you have legal parental responsibility; and
- below the age of five; or
- if they have a disability, below the age of eighteen.

15.60 If your child is adopted, you are eligible for leave until the fifth anniversary of your child's placement with you, or until their eighteenth birthday, whichever comes first. If your child is disabled, you are eligible to take leave until their eighteenth birthday in the normal way.

Leave period

15.61 You may take up to thirteen weeks' parental leave for each child who meets the above conditions (less the amount of any parental leave which you have already taken to look after that child while working for a previous employer). You may not take more than four weeks' unpaid parental leave in one year.

15.62 In accordance with a workplace agreement with the recognised trade unions' you will normally be expected to take unpaid parental leave during recesses, or otherwise in accordance with your office's leave policy. If you are allowed to take unpaid parental leave at another time, you may be required to work in lieu during recesses. This does not affect your entitlement to 35 days' annual leave.

Notification

15.63 Before making an application for parental leave you should discuss your needs with the Human Resources Office (ext. 3185). You should normally give your line manager and the HRO at least three weeks' notice in writing of your intention to take parental leave.

Special Leave

15.64 You may also be able to take special unpaid leave to care for your child, for example if your child is unwell or your normal childcare arrangements are unexpectedly disrupted and you cannot use annual leave. Arrangements for special leave are set out in chapter 14.

Chapter 16: Sickness Absence

16.1 This chapter contains information about:

- sickness absence and sickness pay
- how sickness absence is monitored
- what you must do if you are absent due to sickness
- your return to work after sickness absence
- how the Administration will seek to support staff with a disability
- procedures for managing unsatisfactory attendance.

Introduction

Sickness absence

16.2 You should not come to work if:

- you are ill and unable to attend work
- you are ill, and your illness could endanger the health or wellbeing of others
- you have been exposed to a potentially contagious illness and your GP has recommended that you should stay away from work.

16.3 If the amount of time you are absent due to sickness gives cause for concern, informal or formal procedures for managing unsatisfactory attendance may be started in an attempt to help you improve your attendance (16.28 to 16.32).

16.4 You should not claim sickness absence if you have to take time off work for any other reason, for example the illness of a child or elderly dependant. Instead you should take annual leave or apply for special leave (see chapter 14).

Sickness pay entitlement

16.5 If you are a permanent or fixed-term member of staff you will normally receive full pay for periods of sickness absence (provided that you follow the sickness absence procedures set out below). In cases of lengthy sick absences, however, your pay will be reduced as follows:

- after 91 days absence in one year, any allowances you receive for additional duties will be withdrawn
- after 182 days absence in one year, your pay will be reduced to half rate
- after 365 days absence over four years, your pay will be reduced to sick pay at pension rate.

16.6 Your sickness absence is calculated on a rolling basis. This means that the relevant period for the purposes of calculating your sickness pay are the 12 months and the four years immediately preceding the day on which you are absent. If your sickness absences in those twelve months and/or four years exceed one of the limits in paragraph 16.5 your pay will be affected.

16.7 If you are employed on a temporary or zero-hour contract, you may be allowed sick leave on a pro-rata basis.

Monitoring

16.8 All sickness absences are recorded on the Human Resources Office (HRO) database. The HRO supplies the Management Board and Heads of Office with reports of sickness absence at regular intervals and when requested. These reports are intended to help managers see if patterns of absence are developing.

16.9 Anonymised sickness absence records will also be shared with the Health and Safety Committee when requested, and with the trade unions.

Reporting Sickness Absence

Notification

16.10 If you cannot attend work because you are unwell, you should telephone your line manager or the designated member of your Office. If you leave a message, your line manager may need to call you back to confirm certain details relating to your absence. Only in exceptional circumstances should somebody telephone on your behalf, for example, if you are too ill to call or are in hospital.

16.11 When you telephone, you should explain what is wrong and when you expect to return to work. You do not have to disclose the precise nature of your illness if you wish to keep it confidential.

16.12 You should contact your Office by phone, text or email on each of the second to fifth days of your illness. If your absence goes beyond five days you should agree with your line manager when you will next contact them. During an extended period of sickness absence you must keep in regular contact with your line manager.

16.13 If your absence is due to an accident at work, the accident must be

reported using the online AIP reporting system (chapter 6, paragraph 6.30). If you are unable to make the report yourself you should ask your line manager to make the report on your behalf.

16.14 It is your responsibility to know the procedures that apply if you are absent from work. If you are uncertain about any aspect of the procedures you should ask your line manager. If you do not properly report your absence or provide the appropriate self certificate or fit note (paragraph 16.15), your absence (or part of it) may be treated as unauthorised. As a result, your absence may be unpaid and disciplinary proceedings may be started against you.

Self certificates and fit notes

16.15 You must provide:

- **if you are absent for seven calendar days or less**, a self certificate. You must provide a self certificate even if you are absent for only one day. You must send your self certificate to the HRO within one week of returning to work.
- **if you are absent for more than seven calendar days**, a self certificate covering the first seven days and a fit note from your GP covering the rest of your absence. If you have visited your GP within the first seven days of your absence and they have issued a fit note covering a period beyond the end of the first seven days, you need only provide a self certificate for the days before you visited your GP. You must provide your self certificate and fit note to the HRO by the ninth day of your absence.

16.16 You can download a self-certificated sickness absence form from the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/hr-forms--checklists>

If you do not have access to the intranet, you can obtain a form from the HRO on ext. 3185.

Sickness during annual leave or recesses

16.17 You must notify your line manager, or another manager in your office, in the normal way if you are unwell during a period of annual leave or recess. This enables the Administration to keep a proper record of statutory sick pay. You should also submit a self certificate or fit note from your GP as soon as you can. If you do not do this, you may not receive any sick pay, or your sick pay may be delayed.

16.18 If you are unwell during a period of annual leave, the relevant day, or days, will be restored to your contractual leave allowance for the current leave year.

Pregnancy-related sickness absence

16.19 If you are absent from work for a reason related to your pregnancy, you should notify your manager in the normal way. Any pregnancy-related absence will be recorded separately from other sickness absence if it is identified as such on your self certificate or fit note, and will not be taken into account when considering absence levels with a view to attendance management action.

16.20 If you are absent from work for a reason related to your pregnancy after the beginning of the fourth week before your Expected Week of Childbirth (see chapter 15, paragraph 15.2 for definitions), your maternity leave will start automatically. You must notify the HRO in writing of your illness, and the fact that it is related to your pregnancy, as soon as possible.

Returning to Work

Return-to-work interviews

16.21 When you return to work following any sickness absence you should contact your line manager to let them know that you have returned. They will speak to you about your absence in a return-to-work interview. Your return-to-work interview will normally be a brief chat and its principal purpose will be to ensure that you are well enough to return to work. Return-to-work interviews will always be conducted in private and you should not feel that you have to reveal personal information to your line manager.

16.22 At your interview you should provide your self certificate and/or fit note if you have not done so already, and your line manager will sign your self certificate form. You should then return the relevant documents to the HRO.

16.23 In certain circumstances, your line manager may decide that the return-to-work interview should be more formal. This is likely to be the case when your line manager has concerns about your health or about your level of absence. Your line manager may discuss with you and record a course of action, including:

- referring you to the SHWS if medical advice is needed or if there is a welfare problem affecting your attendance
- changing your working conditions
- beginning the unsatisfactory attendance procedures.

Rehabilitation after sickness absence

16.24 If you are returning to work after a serious illness or an operation, a rehabilitation programme may be agreed in advance between yourself, your line manager, the HRO and SHWS. The purpose of this programme will be to help you adjust to returning to work and may include:

- working fewer hours or a shortened working week
- taking time off during the working day, for example for rest breaks or physiotherapy
- changes to your work duties.

16.25 Rehabilitation programmes will not normally last longer than three months.

Sickness and Disability

16.26 If you become disabled due to sickness (or you have an existing disability which becomes worse), the Administration will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to your job to help alleviate the effects of your disability (see chapter 4, paragraphs 4.19 to 4.20). If there is no prospect of you returning to work, even after adjustments are made, you may wish to consider retirement on medical grounds (see chapter 23, paragraph 23.14).

16.27 Line managers should consult the Equality and Diversity Officer before considering action under the managing attendance procedures against a member of staff who has a disability.

Action in Cases of Unsatisfactory Attendance

16.28 The HRO will notify you, your line manager and your Head of Office when you have been absent:

- for more than ten days in a twelve month period
- on more than five separate occasions in a twelve month period.

These triggers may be varied when the absence constitutes a 'reasonable adjustment' within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

16.29 Following such a notification, or if your line manager is otherwise concerned about your attendance, you and your line manager should discuss whether anything ought to be done to improve your attendance. It is possible that no action will be needed, for example if the reason for your absence was a single bout of illness or a minor accident, and long-term consequences are unlikely.

16.30 If your line manager remains concerned about your absences following the discussion, they will consider whether to:

- refer you to SHWS
- take management action, for example to change your working conditions
- instigate the unsatisfactory attendance procedure.

Unsatisfactory attendance procedure

16.31 If your line manager considers that the unsatisfactory attendance procedure should be started, it will normally consist of the following stages:

Informal action: Your line manager will discuss with you the causes for your absences and how you can improve your attendance. They will offer you support to help improve your attendance, including by referring you to SHWS if appropriate. A note will be made of the meeting but it will not be placed on your personnel file. If your attendance improves sufficiently following the meeting, no further action will be taken.

First formal warning: If your attendance has not improved sufficiently following informal action, you will receive a formal written warning from the HRO and be given a defined period in which to improve your attendance. You will be set reasonable and measurable attendance targets. During this period you will continue to receive support from your line manager and from SHWS. A record of

this trial period will be placed on your personnel file and will remain there for the duration of the trial period. If your attendance improves sufficiently during the trial period, no further action will be taken.

Final formal warning: The procedure is the same as for a first formal warning. You will receive a final written warning from the HRO and be given a final period during which to improve your attendance.

Final action: If your attendance has not improved sufficiently following the final formal warning, further action may be taken against you, including dismissal, or a move to another post or a lower pay band.

Appeal: You have a right to an internal appeal in relation to any final action taken against you. You should notify the Clerk of the Parliaments of your intention to appeal in writing. The procedure during the appeal hearing will be the same as that under the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure (chapter 20, paragraphs 20.40 to 20.48). If you are dismissed you may also be able to bring a claim before an employment tribunal (see chapter 20, paragraph 20.49).

16.32 In most cases, it is expected that improved supervision, guidance, medical treatment, counselling or training will be enough to improve your attendance satisfactorily. Only rarely will further action be needed.

Right to be accompanied at formal meetings

16.33 You are entitled to be accompanied at formal meetings by a trade union representative or a colleague. If you choose to be accompanied, your companion may address the meeting and you will be allowed to confer with each other. Your companion will not, however, be allowed to answer questions on your behalf.

Staff on probation

16.34 In order to complete your probation period satisfactorily you must demonstrate that you are capable of meeting the requirements of the post to which you have been recruited. This includes demonstrating satisfactory attendance. If your attendance record during probation is unsatisfactory your appointment is unlikely to be confirmed.

16.35 If your attendance gives cause for concern during your probation, you will normally be taken through the procedure for managing unsatisfactory attendance

(paragraph 16.31). In order to complete the procedure before the end of your probation, however, trial periods may be reduced or steps omitted. Where it is appropriate, your line manager will still encourage you to seek support from your doctor or SHWS if it appears that you have a health, personal or domestic problem.

16.36 In consultation with Heads of Office and the HRO, line managers have discretion to consider an extension to the probation period in exceptional circumstances. Your line manager will only extend your probation period in cases of unsatisfactory attendance if they have real reasons to believe that your attendance is likely to improve, and that you will achieve, and maintain, an acceptable standard of attendance during the extended probation period.

Chapter 17: Performance Management

17.1 This chapter explains:

- the aims and principles of the performance management system
- the basic elements of annual performance and development appraisals and mid-year reviews
- the consequences of unsatisfactory performance.

Introduction to Performance Management

17.2 The performance management system includes an annual performance and development appraisal and a mid-year review. The main purpose of the system is to encourage regular, honest discussions between you and your line manager about your performance. These discussions should allow you to:

- understand what is required from you and how your work relates to the House of Lords' business requirements
- receive an objective assessment of your current level of performance
- set training and development goals.

17.3 Your pay is linked to your annual appraisal (see chapter 10, paragraph 10.6).

Terminology

17.4 The manager who completes your appraisal is your Reporting Officer. Your Reporting Officer will normally be your line manager (but not necessarily). Most staff appraisals are also countersigned by a Countersigning Officer. Your Countersigning Officer will normally be your line manager's manager.

Reporting year

17.5 The reporting year for all staff runs from 1 April to 31 March each year. Everybody who joins the House of Lords on or before 31 December will receive an annual appraisal the following April.

Probation

17.6 While you are on probation your line manager will complete a probation review three months, six months and eight months after your appointment (chapter 3, paragraph 3.7). This is separate from but related to the annual performance and development appraisal and mid-year review.

17.7 If you started work before 31 December and you have not completed your probation by the end of the reporting year, you will also receive an annual performance and development appraisal. This appraisal will include an overall assessment of your performance and make development recommendations for the forthcoming year, but it will not normally include a detailed report on your performance. Your appraisal will reflect any probation reviews which your line manager has already completed.

Confidentiality

17.8 Your annual appraisals and mid-year reviews will normally only be seen by you, your Reporting Officer, your Countersigning Officer and the Human Resources Office. If you apply for a promotion or another post within the House of Lords, they may also be shown to the selection board. They may also be seen by nominated staff dealing with any action brought against you under the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure, or by a trade union representative if you have asked them to support you during this procedure. You should not disclose the details of your appraisal or mid-year review other than to discuss it with your Reporting Officer, Countersigning Officer or the Human Resources Office, or with a trade union representative or colleague accompanying you at an appeal hearing (paragraph 17.14).

Training

17.9 Before your first annual appraisal you will be required to attend training on the performance management system. You may be required to attend further training if the performance management system undergoes a material change, or if you become a line manager.

Annual Appraisals

17.10 You will use one of four different annual appraisal forms depending on your pay band:

Pay bands A to E: Your Reporting Officer will:

- grade your performance in each of the tasks and objectives in your job plan as 'exceeded', 'met' or 'not met'

- grade your overall performance as ‘exceptional’, ‘good’ or ‘not satisfactory’
- make development recommendations for the forthcoming year.

Your Countersigning Officer will then add their comments. Once the form is completed, your appraisal will be shown to you and you will discuss it in an interview with your Reporting Officer. You will have an opportunity to say whether or not you agree with the appraisal, and to add your own comments. You may also have an interview with your Countersigning Officer.

Fast stream clerks and Library clerks: Your appraisal will be completed in the same way as appraisals for staff in bands A to E (see above). In addition, your Reporting Officer will comment directly on the competences required for progression to band A2.

Housekeepers: Your Reporting Officer will grade your performance as ‘excellent’, ‘good’ or ‘not satisfactory’. Your Countersigning Officer will then include their comments. Once the form is completed, you will have an interview with your Reporting Officer to discuss your appraisal. You will have an opportunity to say whether or not you agree with the appraisal, and to add your own comments.

Senior Staff: You will complete a self-assessment of your performance against the tasks and objectives in your job plan. Your Reporting Officer and your Countersigning Officer (if you have one) will then add their comments on your performance. Your Reporting Officer will grade your overall performance using a five-box marking system. Once the form is completed, you will have an interview with your Reporting Officer to discuss your appraisal. You may also have an interview with your Countersigning Officer.

17.11 The appraisal forms, and further guidance on the appraisal process, can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/hr-forms--checklists>

Disputed appraisals

17.12 If you believe that your appraisal is inaccurate or unfair, you should discuss this with your Reporting Officer or Countersigning Officer at interview. You should also record your comments on your appraisal form. If you wish to pursue the matter further, you should speak to your Head of Office (if they are not your

Reporting Officer or your Countersigning Officer). If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you have a right of appeal to the Clerk Assistant or, if the Clerk Assistant has been involved in your appraisal process, to the Clerk of the Parliaments.

17.13 To start an appeal, you must write to the Clerk Assistant (or the Clerk of the Parliaments) setting out your grounds of appeal. The Clerk Assistant will appoint a panel of two people to hear your appeal and you will be given at least five working days' notice of the date of the appeal hearing.

17.14 You have the right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a colleague or a trade union representative. The decision of the appeal panel will be final.

Mid-Year Development Reviews

17.15 Mid-year reviews are completed each autumn. Your Reporting Officer will arrange a meeting with you to discuss your performance since your annual appraisal and any progress you have made in addressing the learning and development needs identified in your appraisal.

Unsatisfactory Performance

17.16 If your performance is failing to meet expectations, you will always be made aware of this before your annual appraisal. Normally, you will receive an overall 'not satisfactory' grading in your appraisal only if you have already received an informal warning about your performance (chapter 20, paragraph 20.14). In exceptional circumstances, however, you may receive an overall 'not satisfactory' grading without having received an informal warning.

17.17 If you are graded 'not satisfactory' in your annual appraisal you will receive a letter from the Human Resources Office setting out whether any further action will be taken in relation to your performance and, if so, what form that action will take. If you are graded 'not satisfactory' it is likely that formal disciplinary and performance improvement proceedings will be started against you.

Chapter 18: Learning and Development

18.1 This chapter explains:

- the arrangements and opportunities for learning and development in the House of Lords
- what training you will be required to do
- how to organise work-related training
- how to apply for a professional qualification or further/higher education course
- the funding and support available for professional qualifications and further/higher education courses.

18.2 If you would like more information about learning and development, you should speak to your line manager, your Office's Training Liaison Officer or the Learning and Development Manager in the HRO on ext. 6004.

Introduction to Learning and Development

18.3 The House of Lords Administration is committed to:

- providing learning opportunities so that you have the skills, knowledge and capability to support the Administration's business objectives and perform your current job competently
- providing opportunities for you to learn additional skills
- supporting your development so that you can work towards roles with different or increased responsibilities.

18.4 In order to achieve this, you will be required to undertake mandatory training and you will be offered discretionary work-related training. During the course of your career, you may be offered the opportunity to undertake professional training and/or a further or higher education course.

Learning and development: roles and responsibilities

18.5 When you begin work in the Administration, or when you move to a new role, your line manager is responsible for ensuring that you complete any mandatory training that which applies to you. Your line manager should also discuss with you areas where you require new or enhanced skills and knowledge to perform your role competently and may suggest appropriate formal or informal work-related training which you may wish to undertake (see paragraphs 18.12 to

18.14). If appropriate, your line manager will also discuss professional training with you (see paragraphs 18.15 to 18.27).

18.6 You should discuss your learning development objectives, and appropriate training opportunities, with your line manager in the course of performance appraisal discussions and during the annual autumn development review.

18.7 Each Office has a Training Liaison Officer, who is responsible for advising staff in their Office about training opportunities, and for identifying (with Heads of Office) particular learning and development areas which are relevant to the work of their office. Training Liaison Officers are also responsible for ensuring that staff in their Office record any training which has been undertaken.

18.8 The Learning and Development Manager in the Human Resources Office works together with Training Liaison Officers and Heads of Office to ensure that identified learning and development needs are met. The Learning and Development Manager analyses the development needs identified in annual appraisals and the autumn development review, and is responsible for producing an Administration-wide plan for the provision of learning and development activities, which may be delivered internally or sourced from external providers. The Learning and Development Manager is also responsible for ensuring the provision of mandatory training, and for the procurement of training to satisfy particular needs in individual offices where necessary. The Learning and Development Manager can be contacted on ext. 6004.

Mandatory Training

18.9 When you join the House of Lords you will be required to attend an Induction Course, which will include introductory training on:

- fire awareness
- security on the Parliamentary Estate
- information security, data protection and freedom of information requests.

18.10 You will also be required to complete the following further training:

- **Fire Awareness Training:** you must complete fire awareness training annually (chapter 6, paragraph 6.9)

- **Equality and Diversity Training:** you will be required to complete equality and diversity training every three or four years (chapter 4, paragraph 4.5). The Human Resources Office will notify you when this training is taking place.
- **Performance and Development Appraisal Training:** you must complete training in the performance and development system before you complete your first annual performance and development appraisal (chapter 17, paragraph 17.7). You may be required to complete further training if the system undergoes a material change, or you become a line manager.

18.11 You may also be required to complete further training depending on your office and the nature of your current role, or if you hold positions of additional responsibility within your office or the wider Administration:

Catering and Retail Services: All staff who handle food must complete Food Hygiene Training.

First Aiders: All first aiders must complete First Aid and Defibrillator Training.

Fraud and Bribery Training: All staff who work in finance, procurement or human resources, and managers in the Department of Facilities, must complete Fraud and Bribery Training. All desk-based staff will be offered this training.

Health and Safety Training: The following additional health and safety training must be undertaken by certain groups of staff:

- Control of Hazardous Substances Training: staff who use chemicals at work
- Fire Marshal Training: staff who are designated fire marshals
- Hazard Analysis Training: staff who work in a hazardous environment
- Manual Handling Training: staff who lift heavy or large loads
- Risk Assessment Training: staff who assess risks, including DSE risk assessors
- Working at Heights Training: staff who work at heights.

Interview Skills Training: All staff who sit on a recruitment panel or an interview board must complete interview skills training.

Work-Related Training

18.12 You may be offered, or you may request, the opportunity to complete training related to your work in the House of Lords. This training may relate to your current post or to your future career development. It may consist of informal learning opportunities within the House of Lords or short formal training courses provided by an external organisation.

18.13 Examples of internal training might include:

- shadowing a colleague
- visiting a different Office within the House of Lords or House of Commons
- attending procedural seminars.

18.14 If you would like to undertake internal or external work-related training you should first discuss it with your line manager. This sort of training is funded by Heads of Office. You will need the approval of your line manager and your Head of Office before organising any training.

Professional Training

18.15 If you would like to pursue a professional qualification, you can apply for funding and paid leave to allow you to complete that qualification. Professional qualifications are funded by each Office. Any application you make will therefore be considered by your Head of Office.

Eligibility

18.16 You may only make a professional training application if:

- you are employed by the House of Lords on a permanent or fixed-term basis;
- you have completed your probation;
- you have a satisfactory record of attendance, performance and conduct;
- the training is relevant to your current role or to your future career development within the House of Lords; and
- the training falls within the definition of professional training (paragraph 18.17).

18.17 In the House of Lords, professional training is defined as ‘external training undertaken over an extended period of time to secure a recognised professional qualification’.

Your application

18.18 You should first discuss the professional training that you would like to undertake with your line manager. You and your line manager should then prepare an application to send to your Head of Office for consideration. Your application should address:

- the intended benefits of the training
- why you have chosen a particular training provider or mode of study
- your commitment and the commitment of your line manager to the training
- the extent of the financial support you are seeking
- your plan for study leave.

18.19 When considering your application, your Head of Office will take into account the following factors:

- the link between the training and the performance and development needs identified in your annual performance and development appraisal
- whether you have the capacity to benefit from the course
- the expected benefits to your Office and the House as a result of your successfully completing the qualification
- whether you will be able to manage the additional commitments alongside your workload
- whether you have already received funding from the Administration for a professional or education qualification
- the costs of the training and the existing training budget; and
- if you are on a fixed-term contract, the length of your contract.

18.20 If your Head of Office approves your application it will be sent to the Director of Human Resources for final sign-off. This process is intended to ensure consistency between the outcomes of applications made in different Offices. The Director of Human Resources will only overturn the decision of your Head of Office in exceptional circumstances. The decision of the Director of Human Resources is final.

18.21 If your Head of Office refuses your application, their decision is final.

Funding

18.22 If your application is successful, the amount of funding you receive will depend on the nature of the professional training you wish to undertake. Funding for course fees will normally be granted as follows:

100% funding for:

- a basic or foundation course which provides an expected level of competence for your current role; or
- a qualification which is an essential element of your current role and is necessary for business performance.

40% to 90% funding for:

- a qualification which is not essential to your current role but would improve your performance in a measurable way; or
- any course or qualification if you have already received financial support from the House to achieve a professional qualification.

80% funding for:

- a qualification which is related to your long-term career development rather than directly linked to your current role.

18.23 Funding for books will normally be granted as follows:

- 100% funding if the books are purchased by the Administration and retained by the Administration after the course
- 50% reimbursement up to a limit of £150 per course if you purchase the books.

18.24 You will normally receive 100% funding for the costs of any exams not included in the cost of your course. You will receive no funding for re-sits.

Study leave

18.25 Your paid study leave allowance will depend on the nature of the professional training you are undertaking. Paid study leave will normally be granted as follows:

- **foundation courses:** five days per academic year including exam days
- **intermediate and advanced qualifications:** five days per academic year up to a total of ten days over the whole course, including exam days
- **degrees (and courses of equivalent length and rigour):** ten days per academic year up to a total of 20 days over the whole course, including exam days but excluding additional time off to attend evening classes.

18.26 It is open to you to apply for additional paid study leave. Additional paid leave is most likely to be granted when you have an unusually high number of exam days. If additional paid leave is not granted, you must take any further time-off as annual leave. Where possible this should be taken during recesses in the normal way. You may also request unpaid special leave (chapter 14).

18.27 You must give your line manager at least two weeks' notice of study leave. You should take more than two days consecutive study leave (excluding exam leave) only in exceptional circumstances.

Review and completion

18.28 When you have finished your training, you must provide evidence that you have successfully completed the course and achieved the qualification. Where appropriate, this should include evidence of your examination results. If you have to take examinations at a number of different stages in your course (for example, at the end of each academic year), you should provide the HRO with your results at each stage.

18.29 During your training you must attend review meetings with your line manager every six months. These review meetings may coincide with your annual performance and development appraisal and mid-year review (chapter 17) but they need not do so.

Further and Higher Education

18.30 If you would like to pursue a further or higher education course, you can apply for funding and paid leave to allow you to complete that course. Further and higher education courses are funded centrally by the Human Resources Office. Any application you make will therefore be considered by the Director of Human Resources.

Eligibility

18.31 You may make a further or higher education application only if:

- you are employed by the House of Lords on a permanent or fixed-term basis;
- you have completed your probation;
- you have a satisfactory record of attendance, performance and conduct; and
- the course leads to a recognised educational qualification, certificate or diploma.

Your application

18.32 You should first discuss the course that you would like to undertake with your line manager. You and your line manager should then discuss the course with your Head of Office and prepare an application to send to the Director of Human Resources for consideration. You must get permission from your Head of Office before making an application to the Director of Human Resources. Your application should address the same points as a professional training application (see paragraph 18.18).

18.33 When considering your application, the Director of Human Resources will take into account all of the factors in paragraph 18.19 and the following additional factors:

- whether you will attend the course mainly in your own time; and
- whether the course is within the public education system.

18.34 The decision of the Director of Human Resources is final.

Funding

18.35 If your application is successful, you will normally receive funding of up to 80% of the amount of course fees not paid by your Local Education Authority.

18.36 You will normally be reimbursed 50% of the cost of any books that you purchase, up to a limit of £150 per course.

18.37 You will normally receive 100% funding for the costs of any exams not included in the cost of the course. You will receive no funding for re-sits.

Study leave

18.38 Your paid study leave allowance will depend on the nature of the course you are undertaking. Normally, paid study leave will be granted as follows:

- **GCSE and equivalent courses:** five days per academic year including exam days
- **GCE 'A' Level and equivalent courses:** five days per academic year up to a total of ten days over the whole course, including exam days
- **degrees (and courses of equivalent length and rigour):** ten days per academic year up to a total of 20 days over the whole course, including exam days but excluding additional time off to attend evening classes.

18.39 It is open to you to apply for additional paid study leave. Additional paid leave is most likely to be granted when you have an unusually high number of exam days. If additional paid leave is not granted, you must take any further time off as annual leave. Where possible this should be taken during recesses in the normal way. You may also request unpaid special leave (chapter 14).

18.40 You must give your line manager at least two weeks' notice of study leave. You should take more than two days consecutive study leave (excluding exam leave) only in exceptional circumstances.

Review and Completion

18.41 The requirements that apply to professional training courses also apply to higher and further education courses (paragraphs 18.25 to 18.27).

Expenses

18.42 You may be reimbursed for some of the travel and subsistence costs that you incur when attending training courses. The arrangements for the reimbursement of expenses are set out in chapter 10 of this handbook.

Chapter 19: Conduct

19.1 This chapter covers:

- how you are expected to behave at work
- the need for political impartiality
- how you should respond to offers of gifts and hospitality
- restrictions on publications, speeches, broadcasting and other comment, for example on social networking sites
- what you must do if you are convicted of or charged with a criminal offence or if you are facing bankruptcy
- what you must do if you are considering taking on a second job
- procedures for dealing with fraud and malpractice.

19.2 Examples of misconduct and gross misconduct are set out in chapter 20, paragraphs 20.30 to 20.31). Chapter 20 also sets out the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure. This procedure may be used if you breach any of the rules of conduct set out in this chapter.

General Principles

19.3 While working for the House of Lords you are expected to:

- give your undivided allegiance to the Administration when it has a claim on your services, and to co-operate with all reasonable requests made of you
- uphold the reputation of the Administration in all your work-related and private activities
- put your official duties before your private interests, and avoid any conflicts of interests between your work and your private life
- be honest and not use your job for unfair private advantage
- safeguard official information
- be politically impartial.

Political Impartiality

19.4 The core task of the Administration is to support the work of the House and its committees, and to support individual Members in their Parliamentary work. Members are entitled to expect that these services are provided with complete political impartiality and that briefing and advice are not influenced by the personal political opinions of individual members of staff.

19.5 If you advise Members you must be, and clearly appear to be, impartial. If your impartiality is compromised, your ability to do your job is likely to be impaired and the reputation of the Administration may also suffer. As a result, unless you are a Housekeeper or you work in Catering and Retail Services, you must obtain the permission of the Director of Human Resources (DHR) before you engage in any political activity.

19.6 Political activity includes, but is not restricted to:

- holding office in a party political organisation
- speaking in public on matters of national or local political controversy
- expressing views on political matters in letters to the press, or in books, articles, leaflets or on social media
- making any political comment on the internet or social networking sites
- being a candidate for parliament (including the European Parliament) or a local authority
- canvassing on behalf of a candidate for Parliament or a local authority, or on behalf of a political party
- attending conferences or functions arranged by a party political organisation
- being involved in a national referendum campaign.

19.7 If you apply for permission to engage in a political activity, the DHR will consider:

- the extent to which your impartiality may be compromised by the activity
- the extent to which impartiality is a requirement of your post
- the possible impact on the Administration of your impartiality being compromised.

19.8 If you are given permission to engage in a political activity, you must not do so in a manner from which it could reasonably be assumed that you were acting as a representative of the House of Lords Administration.

19.9 If your request is refused, the DHR will give you a full explanation of the reasons for their decision in writing.

19.10 Impartiality is a fundamental requirement for the following categories of staff:

- Heads of Office and staff in SCS bands

- staff who are in regular direct contact with Members in support of the business of the House and its committees
- staff who provide information, briefing or advice to Members on subjects of political significance.

If you fall within one of these categories you will not normally be given permission to take part in any political activity. The DHR will, however, assess your application against the criteria listed in paragraph 19.7 and, if you can demonstrate that your ability to give impartial service will not be compromised, permission may be granted.

Behaviour at Work

Behaviour to colleagues and third parties

19.11 You must behave in a courteous, considerate and helpful manner to your colleagues and to third parties. The Administration will not tolerate oppressive, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour. For more information about how you are expected to treat other people at work see chapter 4 of this handbook.

Dress

19.12 If you are provided with a uniform or protective clothing for work you must wear it while on duty. All other staff are expected to dress in accordance with the standards normally observed by Members. This is particularly important if you come into contact with Members in the course of your duties. These standards should also be met during recesses by any member staff on the Principal Floor. If you work anywhere else on the Estate, your Head of Office may authorise a more relaxed dress code during recesses. If you have any questions about appropriate dress, you should ask your line manager.

Private telephone calls

19.13 When necessary, you may make private calls from your office telephone (your desk telephone or office mobile telephone) when the call is not likely to be of long duration. This privilege should not be abused. If you have an office mobile telephone and you spend more than £5 in any one month on personal calls you will be required to repay the cost of your personal calls above the £5 limit.

19.14 If you need to make an international call you must do this through the switchboard. You will be required to repay the cost of any private international calls.

19.15 In some Offices, for example in Catering and Retail Services, you may not be allowed to use a mobile phone during working hours for health and safety reasons.

Use of email, internet and Office Communicator

19.16 The rules governing the use of email, the internet and Office Communicator are set out in chapter 22, paragraphs 22.2 to 22.15. If you use a computer in the course of your work, you must read and comply with these rules. If you fail to comply, you may face disciplinary action.

Official stationery and photocopying

19.17 You must not use official stationery for any purpose other than House of Lords business. You must not use official paid envelopes and franking stamps for private correspondence.

19.18 You may make occasional personal use of photocopiers.

Safeguarding Official Information

19.19 You must not misuse sensitive or confidential information. You must not talk about sensitive or confidential information to anyone outside the House of Lords or pass it on to anyone outside the House of Lords unless specifically authorised to do so. You must observe any procedures which apply to the handling or storage of sensitive or confidential information (chapter 22). If you have any doubt about whether you can disclose information, or how you should store information, you should ask your line manager.

Gifts and Hospitality

19.20 The Administration's full policy on gifts and hospitality can be found in Appendix A at the end of this handbook. It is important that the personal judgement and integrity of staff are not, and are seen not to be, compromised. You must therefore exercise caution if you are offered any gifts or hospitality in relation to your official duties or your employment by the Administration.

You must:

- never solicit or encourage a gift or hospitality
- never accept cash gifts
- report any offer of a cash gift
- only accept other gifts or hospitality when they are occasional and of a trivial or modest character
- register any gifts or hospitality which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater with the Secretary to the Finance Director (ext. 3322)

19.21 If you are unsure about when you may accept a gift or hospitality, you should consult the Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Appendix A) or ask your line manager.

Comment: Social Networking, Publications, Speeches and Broadcasting

19.22 You must seek permission from your Head of Office before you publish an article or book, give a speech or broadcast on radio or appear on television on any subject related to your work.

19.23 You must also seek permission before commenting on a personal basis on any subject connected with Parliament, the House of Lords or your work on the internet, for example on a social networking site. Disciplinary action may be taken against you if you make any comment or reveal any information that:

- undermines security on the Estate;
- brings the Administration into disrepute; or
- amounts to bullying or harassment.

Criminal Offences and Behaviour Outside Work

19.24 You must tell your line manager, Head of Officer or the DHR as soon as practicable if:

- you are charged following an arrest or convicted by a court of any criminal offence; or
- you receive a conditional caution.

If you fail to do this, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

19.25 You do not need to notify the Administration if:

- you are convicted of a traffic offence, unless the penalty includes imprisonment; or
- you receive an ordinary caution.

19.26 If you are charged with, or are being investigated in relation to, a criminal offence following an arrest, you may be suspended from work until the criminal proceedings are concluded. Suspension will normally be appropriate only if you are charged with a particularly serious offence. If you are suspended, your pay may be withheld wholly or in part during your suspension.

19.27 If you are convicted of a criminal offence, this does not automatically mean that you will be dismissed. The circumstances of your conviction will be considered before any decision is taken. An offence will normally be of concern to the Administration if it is:

- relevant to your duties as an employee;
- likely to affect adversely the reputation of the Administration; or
- likely to affect adversely your working relationship with your colleagues or third parties.

19.28 Any information that you provide to the Administration about unspent criminal convictions is held in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Private Financial Affairs

Borrowing and lending money

19.29 You are discouraged from borrowing or lending substantial sums of money to your colleagues. You must not borrow substantial sums of money from a junior colleague unless it is necessary in an emergency. You must not appropriate official funds for any reason even if you intend to return the money in the very short term.

Bankruptcy/insolvency

19.30 If you become bankrupt or have serious financial difficulties, you must report this to your line manager, your Head of Office or the DHR. You must provide them with a complete statement of the facts. If your situation could cause any risk in your current post, the DHR will consider whether to take any action.

Family Relationships and Married, Civil or Unmarried Partnerships at Work

19.31 The Clerk of the Parliaments has a duty to ensure that the existence of family relationships, or relationships such as marriage, civil partnership, or cohabitation, between staff does not adversely affect the rights of other members of staff, the work of the House, or the propriety of the management of the Administration. You must tell your line manager or your Head of Office if you are related to or you are the partner of another member of staff. Your line manager will notify the DHR.

19.32 The DHR will consider whether adjustments need to be made as a result of your relationship. Adjustments will normally need to be made only if your relationship has the potential to:

- harm the reputation of the House or compromise the integrity of its financial management or administration
- infringe the rights of other staff
- jeopardise the position of you or your relative or partner.

19.33 If adjustments are required, the nature of those adjustments will depend on the circumstances. You and your relative or partner will be fully consulted before any action is taken. The House of Lords Administration is, however, a small organisation and in some cases the need to make adjustments may affect the normal career development of you or your relative or partner. Adjustments may include:

- changing line management and reporting arrangements
- changing the avenues for performance management and the disciplinary or grievance procedures
- altering the roles and responsibilities of you and/or your relative or partner. This will normally be necessary only when other adjustments cannot be made without causing disproportionate disruption to the functioning of the Administration.

Searches

19.34 The Administration has the right to search you, your desk, your emails and electronic files, and your personal property and effects when there is reason to believe that you have taken part in unauthorised or criminal activity. Such activity may include:

- secreting or withholding work-related documents
- having unauthorised possession of official equipment or property
- accepting inappropriate gifts
- having possession of illegal objects or materials.

19.35 Searches will be carried out by an authorised security officer or Police Officer on the Parliamentary Estate, or a member of the HRO. Any personal search will be carried out by a person of the same sex as you. The manager who has requested the search, or the DHR or their representative, may also be in attendance. You are entitled to be accompanied by a colleague during any search.

Fraud and Malpractice

Fraud and bribery

19.36 The Administration has a policy on fraud and bribery, which sets out how the Administration will try to prevent and detect fraud and bribery, and the procedures that will be followed if fraud is detected or suspected. The policy also explains what constitutes a fraud or an offence under the Bribery Act 2010. You can find the full policy and response plan in Appendix B at the end of this handbook.

19.37 You have a duty:

- to act honestly and with integrity at all times
- not to accept or offer gifts, hospitality or benefits which might be seen to compromise your judgement or integrity or somebody else's
- to comply with controls and seek to safeguard any public funds for which you are responsible
- to take special care when handling receipts and payments and dealing with contractors and suppliers
- to report immediately any actual or suspected act of fraud or bribery which you discover (in accordance with the Fraud and Bribery Response Plan).

Malpractice

19.38 The Administration has a policy on disclosing malpractice (sometimes known as 'whistleblowing'), which sets out how you can raise a concern about malpractice and how that concern will be investigated. You can find the full malpractice policy in Appendix C at the end of this handbook.

19.39 You are encouraged to express any concerns you have about possible malpractice within the House of Lords to the Director of Human Resources.

Chapter 20: Disciplinary and Performance Improvement Procedure

20.1 This chapter describes the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure. It sets out:

- the purpose of the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure
- informal measures which may be taken to improve your conduct or performance
- the stages of the formal disciplinary and performance improvement procedure
- disciplinary sanctions and performance actions
- examples of misconduct and gross misconduct
- how to appeal against a disciplinary sanction imposed against you.

20.2 If concerns have been raised about your conduct or performance you may wish to seek additional support from:

- the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service (ext. 1484)
- a trade union representative, if you are a member of a trade union.

Introduction

20.3 The disciplinary and performance procedure has two strands: one for disciplinary/conduct issues and one for performance issues. Distinctions between the disciplinary and performance strands are set out at each stage of the process. Typically, the disciplinary strand applies to matters of alleged deliberate misconduct (see 20.30–20.31 below). The performance strand will usually apply where concerns relate to an employee's ability to meet the required standards of performance. It may not always be obvious whether an employee's poor performance is due to capability or conduct. In some cases it will be a combination of the two. In those circumstances, the responsible manager will take advice from the HRO, investigate the concerns (see 20.16 below) and adopt the most appropriate procedure.

20.4 Performance concerns that arise from sick absence will usually be dealt with under the Attendance Procedure (see 16.31 above) and will be subject to appropriate advice and support from SHWS.

20.5 The Disciplinary and Performance Improvement Procedure ('the formal procedure') is designed to ensure that all staff are dealt with fairly, consistently and

with dignity if a concern arises over conduct or performance. The HRO will advise at all formal stages of the process.

20.6 Many concerns about conduct and performance can be handled informally. Informal measures which may be taken to improve your conduct or performance are set out in paragraphs 20.14 to 20.15. When these informal measures have not worked or informal discussions are not appropriate, the formal procedure will normally be used.

Overview of the formal procedure

20.7 The key stages of the formal procedure are as follows:

- **Stage one:** depending on the nature of the concerns which have been raised about your conduct or performance, an investigation may be carried out. An investigation will always be carried out if concerns have been raised about your conduct. An investigation is unlikely to be carried out if concerns have been raised about your performance.
- **Stage two:** you will receive a letter setting out the concerns about your conduct or performance.
- **Stage three:** a meeting will be organised (under this procedure, a 'hearing') to discuss the concerns with you and allow you to respond to those concerns. Depending on whether the issue is performance improvement or discipline, the hearing may involve a manager or a panel.
- **Stage four:** if the panel hearing your case decides that a concern is justified, it may recommend disciplinary and/or performance management action. You will be informed in writing of any action to be taken.
- **Stage five:** you may appeal against any outcome of a disciplinary and/or performance management procedure.

20.8 The approach taken under this procedure may vary according to the nature of the concerns raised. For example, you are more likely to be made subject to a review period (see paragraph 20.34) where the concerns are about your performance rather than your conduct.

Roles and responsibilities

20.9 The Clerk of the Parliaments, as your employer, is ultimately responsible for exercising disciplinary powers. This responsibility, and the authority to

impose disciplinary action, is delegated on a day-to-day basis to the Director of Human Resources (DHR). In the first instance, concerns about your conduct or performance will normally be investigated by your line manager.

20.10 The Human Resources Office (HRO) will play a significant role if concerns are raised about your conduct or performance. In particular, where relevant, the HRO:

- may appoint an impartial person to investigate your conduct or performance
- will write to you setting out the concerns that have been raised about your conduct or performance
- will arrange the hearing under the formal procedure
- will appoint the impartial panel that hears your case
- will write to you setting out the outcome of the hearing and, if it has been decided that disciplinary and/or performance management action should be taken, the nature of that action.

Suspension

20.11 Where appropriate, for example if it is alleged that you have committed an act of gross misconduct (for examples see paragraph 20.30), you may be suspended until the formal procedure has been completed. The Director of Human Resources will decide whether or not to suspend you. Suspension does not imply that any concerns about your conduct or performance are justified and is not disciplinary action under this procedure.

20.12 If you are suspended pending the outcome of a criminal investigation or proceedings, the DHR may decide to withhold your pay wholly or in part during your suspension.

Grievances

20.13 If there is an overlap or connection between matters relating to your conduct or performance and matters that have been raised under the grievance procedure (either by you or by somebody else), the order in which these matters are dealt with will depend on the circumstances. This formal procedure or the grievance procedure may be modified so that all matters can be dealt with fairly.

Informal Measures

Informal discussions

20.14 If your line manager is concerned about your conduct or performance they may discuss these concerns with you informally. During an informal discussion your line manager will explain their concerns and listen to your response. If it is appropriate, you will discuss together what might be done to improve your conduct or performance. As a result of the discussion, your line manager may, for example, organise training for you or refer you to SHWS for medical advice or counselling and support. Your line manager will produce a short note of the discussion and give you a copy.

20.15 In some circumstances, for example where allegations of serious misconduct have been made against you, it will not be appropriate for your line manager to discuss their concerns with you informally. Instead the formal procedure may be started straight away.

Formal Disciplinary and Performance Procedure

Stage One: Investigation

20.16 If concerns are raised about your conduct, an investigation will be carried out. If concerns are raised about your performance, there will not normally be an investigation and this stage of the procedure will normally be omitted. An investigation may, however, be appropriate in some circumstances. For example, an investigation may be helpful in deciding whether the concerns relate to performance or conduct or a combination of both.

20.17 Any investigation will normally be carried out by your line manager. If your line manager is not available, or it would not be appropriate for your line manager to investigate, the HRO will appoint an impartial investigator. The investigation may involve interviewing staff and others, and reviewing documents. You may be interviewed during such an investigation (but not necessarily).

20.18 If an investigation is started, the decision about whether to hold a hearing will only be made once that investigation has finished. If the investigation concerns your performance, the same person may perform the role of investigator and

decision-maker. If it concerns your conduct, the two roles will normally be kept separate. You will receive a letter from the HRO setting out the results of the investigation and the decision.

Stage Two: Written notice

20.19 If it is decided that a hearing should be held, you will receive a letter setting out the concerns that have been raised about your conduct or performance in advance of that hearing. If statements have been taken from staff or others, or if there are important documents, you will normally receive copies of these before the hearing to give you a proper opportunity to respond. You will be given notice of any witnesses who have been asked to appear at the hearing. You will also have the opportunity to ask witnesses to attend the hearing at the discretion of the panel or deciding officer.

20.20 You will normally receive at least five working days' notice of the date of a hearing. A hearing may be held with less notice, if you agree to it, or if it is clear that there is no dispute about whether or not a concern is justified, for example. If you are intending to call witnesses at the hearing, you should tell the HRO in advance. You may submit written representations to the hearing, through the HRO, in advance of the hearing.

20.21 You must take all reasonable steps to attend the hearing. If, for any reason, you are not able to attend on the date or at the time fixed, you should tell the HRO at once and explain why. If you cannot attend, having said that you would (for example because you are ill), you should tell the HRO as soon as possible.

Stage Three: The hearing

Your right to be accompanied

20.22 You are entitled to be accompanied at the hearing by a colleague or a trade union representative ('your representative'). If the person you wish to attend the hearing with you is unavailable on the date proposed, you should suggest a reasonable alternative time within five days following the original date of the hearing.

At the hearing

20.23 If the hearing is to consider your conduct, your case will be heard by an impartial panel appointed by the HRO. Normally the panel will have two members.

The members of the panel will have had no prior involvement in your case. If the hearing is to consider your performance, it will normally be conducted by an HRO manager.

20.24 What happens at a hearing will vary depending on the circumstances, but normally:

- the chairman will ensure that you understand the concerns raised
- both you and the chair may call witnesses; if witnesses attend, the panel will normally conduct any questioning in the absence of the parties
- you will be given an opportunity to respond to the concerns raised, for example by referring to documents or statements from witnesses.

20.25 Your representative may address the meeting and you will be allowed to confer with each other. Your representative will not, however, be allowed to answer questions on your behalf.

20.26 At the end of the hearing, or shortly afterwards, the decision-taker will confirm in writing:

- in a disciplinary case, what they think happened; or, in a performance case, whether the stated concerns are justified;
- if they cannot reach a decision, what further investigation is necessary;
- whether or not your conduct or performance is below the level required; and
- whether or not to take any disciplinary and/or performance management action (see paragraphs 20.27 to 20.38 for information about what that action might be).

Stage Four: The outcome of the hearing

Written reasons

20.27 If the panel decides that disciplinary and/or performance management action should be taken, they will make a recommendation to the Director of Human Resources. You will then receive a letter from the Director of Human Resources, or their representative, setting out the recommendation of the panel and the action which the DHR has decided to take. That letter will also set out the reasons for the DHR's decision and tell you about your right of appeal if you are not satisfied with the decision.

Disciplinary action – in the case of a conduct hearing

20.28 Disciplinary action will normally take one of the forms set out below. Action will normally be taken progressively, but in appropriate cases one or more of the levels may be omitted or repeated.

- **Level one:** first written warning
- **Level two:** final written warning
- **Level three:** dismissal.

20.29 You will not be dismissed for a first act of misconduct (for examples see paragraph 20.31). You may, however, be dismissed for a first act of gross misconduct (for examples see paragraph 20.30). To assist the panel in applying necessary judgement in distinguishing between different forms of misconduct, the HRO will advise on the correct levels of misconduct and disciplinary action in each case (see 20.30 to 20.31 below).

Gross misconduct

20.30 If following the hearing the panel concludes that you have committed an act of gross misconduct, you will normally be dismissed without any notice or payment in lieu of notice. The following are examples of conduct that will often amount to gross misconduct:

- conviction for a serious criminal offence (see chapter 19, paragraphs 19.29 to 19.32);
- theft or fraud, or other dishonesty or deliberate falsification of records;
- violence, threats of violence or fighting;
- disorderly or indecent conduct;
- bullying, harassment or victimisation of staff or others;
- deliberate damage to property;
- unreasonable failure to follow instructions, or other serious insubordination or refusal to co-operate;
- offering, promising, giving, requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a bribe or inappropriate inducement;
- being incapable of working properly during working hours through the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- serious negligence which causes, or might cause, unacceptable loss, damage or injury;

- giving misleading or untrue information during the recruitment process;
- breach of House of Lords security policies;
- serious breach of health and safety rules;
- serious breach of House of Lords policies on the use of computers, or of email and internet;
- serious breach of the House of Lords policies on information security;
- unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- engaging in unauthorised employment during hours when contracted to work for the House of Lords or during sick leave; or
- conduct that adversely affects the reputation of the House or the effective discharge of its business.

This list is not exhaustive.

Misconduct generally

20.31 The following are examples of conduct which may lead to disciplinary action short of immediate dismissal:

- poor time-keeping;
- unauthorised absence;
- failing to observe terms and conditions of your employment as set out in this handbook;
- using abusive or offensive language, or other rude or disrespectful behaviour; or
- failing to maintain effective working relationships.

Serious or repeated cases of conduct such as the above may, however, result in your dismissal. Subject to HR advice on the consistent and fair application of sanctions, it will be open to a disciplinary panel to recommend a final written warning for a first breach of discipline where the findings of misconduct are particularly serious but fall short of gross misconduct.

Performance action – in the case of a performance hearing

20.32 Performance action will normally take one of the forms set out below. Action will normally be taken progressively, but in appropriate cases one or more of the levels may be omitted or repeated.

- **Level one:** first written warning. This will include the required performance improvement, the timescale for improvement, any relevant support for achieving this (see 20.35 below) and will advise you of the likely consequences of not meeting the required standards within the given timescale.
- **Level two:** final written warning. This will include the required performance improvement, the timescale for improvement, any relevant support for achieving this (see 20.35 below) and will advise you of the likely consequences of not meeting the required standards within the given timescale.
- **Level three:** dismissal.

20.33 Misconduct and performance will normally be treated as separate issues.

Review periods

20.34 In addition to disciplinary or performance action, the panel may suggest, or the DHR may decide, that you should be made subject to a review period. A review period is likely to be appropriate, for example, in cases of poor performance or repetitive lateness. During a review period, you will be set targets for improvement. If you fail to improve sufficiently during or by the end of a review period, further disciplinary or performance action may be taken against you.

Training, support, alternative work and demotion

20.35 In addition to disciplinary or performance action, the panel may suggest, or the DHR may decide, that you should receive training or other support. This is most likely to be relevant in cases of poor performance.

20.36 Alternatives short of dismissal may be considered at the absolute discretion of the Director of Human Resources in appropriate circumstances. One or more of the following may be applied, depending on the circumstances:

- demotion to a more suitable job, if available
- transfer to another department/office.

The alternatives short of dismissal are not exhaustive and the House of Lords may take any action considered appropriate in the circumstances.

How long does a written warning last?

20.37 Unless a shorter or longer period is set in your case, your written warning or performance warning will normally be disregarded for disciplinary/performance purposes as follows:

- **first written warning:** disregarded after twelve months
- **final written warning:** disregarded after 24 months.

20.38 While a written warning or performance warning is in force, it will be disclosed as part of any internal promotion or recruitment process. Warnings will be disregarded after the period of the warning has ended.

Stage Five: Appeal

Written reasons

20.39 If you wish to appeal against any disciplinary or performance decision made against you, you must tell the Clerk of the Parliaments in writing. You must set out:

- whether you are appealing against the decision that your conduct or performance is below the level required or against the level of disciplinary penalty (or both); and
- your grounds for appeal.

20.40 You can appeal on the one or more of the following grounds:

- new evidence has come to light
- there were procedural irregularities in the formal process
- the decision is wrong or unreasonable
- the penalty imposed is inappropriate.

20.41 You must make any appeal within a reasonable period of time after the decision and normally within ten working days after you are told about the decision

Appeal hearing

20.42 An appeal hearing will normally be held within ten working days after the Clerk of the Parliaments receives notice of your appeal. You will receive at least five working days' notice of the hearing. As at the first hearing, you may choose to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a colleague or trade union representative.

20.43 You must take all reasonable steps to attend the hearing. If, for any reason, you are not able to attend on the date or at the time fixed, you should tell the HRO at once and explain why. If you cannot attend, having said that you would (for example because you are ill), you should tell the HRO as soon as possible.

20.44 Your appeal will normally be heard by a panel of two people appointed by the Clerk of the Parliaments. The members of the panel will not have been involved in your case before.

20.45 The procedure at the hearing may vary according to the nature of the appeal. Appeal hearings will not normally repeat factual investigations. You will, however, be given the opportunity to introduce or comment on any new evidence arising before or during the appeal before any decisions are taken.

20.46 At the end of the hearing, the appeal panel will normally adjourn to consider the decision. They may:

- overrule the original decision that the concerns (or some of them) were justified
- decide to reject the appeal
- impose a less serious disciplinary sanction.

You will be informed of the panel's decision in writing. The decision of the panel is final unless you are dismissed, in which case you may have a right of appeal to an employment tribunal (see paragraph 20.49 below).

20.47 If the original decision is overruled, the details of the decision will be removed from your personnel file.

20.48 If you have appealed against a decision to dismiss you and the decision is upheld, the original notice period, or date of termination if you were dismissed without notice, will stand.

External appeal

20.49 If you are dismissed, you have the right to appeal to an employment tribunal if you have been employed by the House of Lords for two years or if you have been employed for less than two years and the ground of dismissal was automatically unfair. The principal automatically unfair grounds for dismissal are:

- pregnancy
- maternity leave, parental leave, paternity leave, adoption leave or time off for dependants
- health and safety, such as reporting a health and safety risk or acting as a health and safety representative
- working time, such as refusing to opt out of the 48-hour week
- making a public interest disclosure (i.e. whistleblowing)
- refusing to work for less than the national minimum wage
- trade union membership or activities.

If you wish to appeal against your dismissal to an employment tribunal, you must do so within three months of the effective date of your dismissal.

You can obtain further information on employment tribunals from ACAS (www.acas.org.uk).

Records management

Written warnings will be disregarded for disciplinary and performance purposes after the period of the warning has ended. Written warnings will be disposed of in line with Authorised Records Disposal Practice.

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/intranet/records-archives/records-management/ARDPs/Human-Resources.pdf>

Chapter 21: Grievance Procedure

21.1 This chapter explains:

- what a grievance is and how you can raise a grievance
- what to do if a grievance is raised against you
- sources of support if you have a grievance, or if a complaint has been made against you
- what you can expect if you are called as a witness in a dispute
- the informal measures that may be used to try to resolve grievances
- the stages of the formal grievance procedure
- how to appeal against decisions made in grievance proceedings.

Introduction

21.2 Any grievance that you raise will be taken seriously. Where it is appropriate, you should make every effort to resolve grievances informally (paragraphs 21.12 to 21.14). If informal measures do not work or are not appropriate, you may use the formal grievance procedure set out at paragraphs 21.15 to 21.26.

What is a grievance?

21.3 A grievance is a complaint about:

- treatment by your colleagues, including allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation (for definitions see chapter 4, paragraphs 4.7 to 4.12);
- a failure by the Administration to observe your statutory employment rights;
- the way in which the Administration's policies or procedures are applied;
- working practices that apply to you and which you consider to be unfair;
- the allocation of overtime, work duties or annual leave dates; or
- the nature of your work, working conditions, pay and benefits, working hours or working relationships.

21.4 The grievance procedure should not normally be used if you have concerns about:

- **health and safety issues:** if you have a concern about health and safety, you should raise it with your line manager (see chapter 6, paragraph 6.5)
- **malpractice:** if you believe that malpractice is taking place, you should raise it with a senior member of the Human Resources Office (see chapter 19, paragraphs 19.38 to 19.39)

- **fraud or bribery:** if you suspect fraud or bribery, you should act in accordance with the response plan (see chapter 19, paragraph 19.36).

Malicious or vexatious complaints

21.5 If it is discovered that you have made a complaint maliciously or vexatiously, disciplinary proceedings will be started against you. Examples of malicious or vexatious complaints may include:

- an unfounded complaint intended only to distress the person against whom it was made
- a planned group or series of complaints made without reasonable grounds
- a series of complaints made between two or more people where one complaint is made only in response to another ('tit-for-tat' complaints).

If you make a complaint in good faith, that complaint is not malicious or vexatious regardless of whether it is upheld or dismissed.

What to do if a complaint is made against you

21.6 If a complaint is made against you by one of your colleagues, you will be fully informed of the allegation and encouraged to make use of the support available within the House of Lords (paragraph 21.7). Where appropriate, you and the complainant will be encouraged to find an informal solution to the problem (paragraphs 21.12–21.14). If the formal grievance procedure is started against you, you will have the same rights as the complainant during the process. In particular you will:

- normally receive at least five days' notice of any grievance hearing;
- be entitled to be accompanied to any grievance hearing;
- be entitled to provide documents at the hearing or to call witnesses;
- be entitled to see any documents provided by the complainant and receive notice of any witnesses they intend to call;
- have an opportunity to respond to the grievance against you and to put your own case;
- be informed of the outcome of the hearing in writing; and
- if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the hearing, have the right to appeal the decision.

Sources of support

21.7 If you wish to make a complaint, or if a complaint has been made against you, the following people are available within the House of Lords to help you in confidence:

Line manager: Normally your line manager will be the best person to approach first. Your line manager will be able to provide you with confidential advice and may approach the other party on your behalf. If you have a complaint about your line manager, you should speak to the next person in your line management chain (normally your Countersigning Officer).

Equality and Diversity Officer: If you have a complaint about discrimination, victimisation or harassment, the Equality and Diversity Officer will discuss your complaint with you in confidence and advise you on the options for pursuing your complaint. If a complaint has been made against you, they will advise you of the process for determining complaints, your rights in that process and the nature of other support available to you. You may contact the Equality and Diversity Officer on ext. 3220.

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service: The SHWS team offer confidential counselling support to all members of staff. If you would like to speak to a member of the SHWS team, you should call ext. 1484.

Trade union representative: If you are a member of a trade union, your trade union representative can offer confidential advice and support.

21.8 You can seek external advice from the following organisations:

- ACAS: <http://www.acas.org.uk>
- Citizens Advice: <http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>
- Equality and Human Rights Commission: <http://equalityhumanrights.com>.

Disciplinary and Performance Improvement Procedure

21.9 If there is an overlap between matters that have been raised under the grievance procedure (either by you or by somebody else) and matters relating to your conduct or performance, the order in which these matters are dealt with will depend on the circumstances. The disciplinary and performance improvement procedure or this procedure may be modified so that all matters can be dealt with fairly.

21.10 If disciplinary proceedings are started against you after the conclusion of the grievance procedure, the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure may be modified to take account of what has happened during the grievance procedure and the findings of the grievance panel or appeal panel.

Witnesses

21.11 If you are asked to be witness during a grievance procedure, you will normally be expected to provide as much assistance as you can. This may involve providing a witness statement during an investigation or attending a grievance hearing (or both). If you do attend a grievance hearing, you may ask to be accompanied by a colleague or a trade union representative. At the hearing you will be questioned by the panel in the absence of the parties.

Informal Measures for Resolving Grievances

21.12 Where it is appropriate to do so, you will be expected to try to resolve your grievance informally before resorting to the formal grievance procedure. Where possible, you should talk directly, politely and objectively with the person against whom you have a grievance. You should explain clearly to that person the nature of your grievance and what you would like to do about it.

21.13 You may prefer to ask for your line manager's help in resolving your grievance informally. You can discuss your concerns in confidence with your line manager and they may try to resolve the matter by talking to the person against whom you have a grievance on your behalf. If your complaint is about your line manager, you should approach your Countersigning Officer or speak to a member of the Human Resources Office.

21.14 It may be possible for your complaint to be resolved through workplace counselling or mediation:

- **Counselling** is most likely to be appropriate if someone is experiencing personal, domestic or welfare problems which are affecting their workplace relationships. For further information about counselling you should contact SHWS on ext. 1484.
- **Mediation** is more likely to be appropriate in cases involving workplace disagreements. For further information about mediation you should contact the HRO on ext. 3185.

Formal Grievance Procedure

21.15 If informal measures are ineffective or inappropriate, you may start the formal grievance procedure by setting out your grievance in writing to your line manager. You should provide as much detail as possible about the nature of your grievance. Your line manager will notify the HRO of your grievance. If your grievance is about your line manager, you should submit your grievance to your Countersigning Officer or to the HRO directly.

21.16 A grievance hearing will be organised by the HRO within ten working days of the receipt of your grievance. You will normally have at least five working days' notice of the hearing. You should provide the HRO with any documents on which you intend to rely and the names of any witnesses you intend to call. The other party will receive copies of any documents that you provide and will be notified of the names of your witnesses.

Your right to be accompanied

21.17 You are entitled to be accompanied at the hearing by a colleague or a trade union representative. If the person you wish to attend the hearing with you is unavailable on the date proposed, you should suggest a reasonable alternative time within five days following the original date of the hearing.

At the hearing

21.18 The hearing will be conducted by an impartial panel appointed by the HRO. Normally the panel will have two members.

21.19 What happens at the hearing will vary depending on the circumstances, but normally:

- you will be given the opportunity to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved
- the other party will be able to respond to your grievance
- both sides may provide documents or call witnesses. If witnesses attend, the panel will normally interview witnesses separately.

21.20 If you choose to be accompanied, your companion may address the meeting and you will be allowed to confer with each other. Your companion will not, however, be allowed to answer questions on your behalf.

21.21 At the end of the hearing, or shortly afterwards, the panel will decide:

- what it thinks happened
- if it cannot reach a decision, what further investigation is necessary
- whether or not to take any action.

Investigation

21.22 If the panel thinks that further investigation is necessary, it may carry out the investigation itself or appoint somebody else to investigate. The investigation may involve interviewing staff and others, and reviewing documents. You may be interviewed during such an investigation (but not necessarily).

21.23 The outcome of the investigation may be discussed at a further hearing, or you may receive a letter from the HRO setting out the results of the investigation.

The panel's decision

21.24 You will receive a letter from the HRO setting out the decision of the panel in writing and the reasons for its decision. The letter will also set out what further action, if any, will be taken and will provide details of the appeal procedure.

21.25 If you have raised a grievance against another member of staff:

- **if your grievance is upheld**, that person's behaviour may be the subject of separate disciplinary proceedings.
- **if your grievance is dismissed**, you have a right to appeal against the decision of the panel. If you do not appeal, or your appeal is dismissed, the person about whom you complained may have the right to seek redress from you. If it is found that your complaint was malicious or vexatious, disciplinary proceedings may be started against you.

21.26 If a grievance has been raised against you:

- **if the grievance is upheld**, you have the right to appeal against the decision of the panel. If you do not appeal, or your appeal is dismissed, disciplinary proceedings may be started against you.
- **if the grievance is dismissed**, you may have the right to seek redress from the complainant.

Appeals

21.27 If you wish to appeal against the decision of the panel, you must tell the Director of Human Resources in writing and set out your grounds of appeal. You must make any appeal within a reasonable period of time after the decision and normally within ten working days after you are told about the decision.

21.28 The appeal hearing will normally be held within ten working days after the DHR receives notice of your appeal. You will receive at least five working days' notice of the hearing. As at the first hearing, you may choose to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a colleague or a trade union representative.

21.29 Your appeal will normally be heard by a panel of two people appointed by the DHR. The members of the panel will not have been involved in your case before.

21.30 The procedure at the hearing may vary according to the nature of the appeal. Appeal hearings will not normally involve any factual investigation. You will, however, be given the opportunity to introduce or comment on any new evidence arising before or during the appeal before any decisions are taken.

21.31 At the end of the hearing, the appeal panel will normally adjourn to consider its decision. It may uphold or overrule the original decision. You will be informed of the panel's decision in writing.

Political and outside pressure

21.32 Staff of the House should not attempt to bring political or outside pressure to bear in support of their grievances. This rule does not override any statutory rights of appeal, such as those conferred by the Equality Act 2010 and employment protection legislation which applies to staff of the House. Its object is to preclude members of staff from using outside influence to gain for themselves special concessions which are not available to others.

Complaints against Members of the House

21.33 If you have a complaint about the way in which you have been treated by a Member of the House of Lords, you should raise the issue with your line manager in the first instance. The grievance procedure set out in this chapter is not used for grievances raised against Members but your complaint will be taken as seriously as if you had made a complaint against a colleague or the Administration.

Your line manager will pursue the complaint on your behalf, normally in collaboration with senior management, including the Clerk of the Parliaments. Your complaint will be investigated and will usually be addressed by the relevant Member's Whips' Office, or the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers.

Chapter 22: Using the Parliamentary Network, Information Security and Records Management

22.1 This chapter covers:

- use of the parliamentary network and computer equipment
- information security, including what you must do to safeguard sensitive information
- dealing with personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998
- the Administration's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoI) and what you should do if you receive an FoI request
- records management.

Using the Parliamentary Network

22.2 This section applies when you are using a computer on the Parliamentary Estate and when you access the Parliamentary network using a remote link.

Email use

22.3 You may make occasional personal use of the email system, provided that this does not interfere with the performance of your normal duties. You should note, however, that the Administration reserves the right to monitor emails, and therefore your privacy cannot be guaranteed.

22.4 When drafting emails, you should always be aware that emails form part of the official business record of the Administration, and the Administration may be required to disclose them, for example in response to an FoI request (see 22.41).

22.5 When using the email system you must not:

- send email messages or attachments using language or containing images that may reasonably be considered to be discriminatory, obscene, derogatory, offensive, threatening, illegal, harassing or otherwise harmful to the recipient
- originate or distribute chain letters via email.

22.6 If you receive:

- **a malicious or threatening email** from any source, you should tell your line manager immediately.

- **an internal email that you consider to be inappropriate**, you should reply briefly to the sender explaining that you do not wish to receive any further emails of that nature. If the sender continues to send inappropriate emails you should tell your line manager immediately.
- **an inappropriate SPAM email from outside the House of Lords**, you should move the item into the HOP Spam samples folder in Outlook Public Folders. This will help to prevent future emails for the same source. Guidance on how to do this is on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/computers-equipment/getting-set-up/working-securely/ict-security-policies-and-advice/>

- **an email from an address that you do not recognise and which you think may contain a virus**, you should not open it and contact PICT immediately on ext. 2001. You should not open attachments or click on links from senders that you do not recognise.

Internet use

22.7 You may make occasional personal use of the internet, provided that this does not interfere with the performance of your normal duties. You should note, however, that the Administration reserves the right to monitor your use of the internet, and therefore your privacy cannot be guaranteed.

22.8 When using the internet, you must not:

- download information or pictures which are likely to cause offence to any potential observers unless you are required to do so for your work
- deliberately visit websites or retrieve or disseminate information or software which contains material of an offensive, obscene or discriminatory nature
- download software without the prior agreement of PICT
- use the internet for any illegal purpose
- use the internet for the purposes of any commercial activity, including personal commercial activity.

22.9 If you inadvertently access an inappropriate website you should immediately navigate away from the site by using the 'back' button or the 'home' button in your browser.

22.10 You should familiarise yourself with the guidance on how to avoid viruses (paragraph 22.17).

22.11 PICT blocks access to websites which may constitute a threat to the network and its users. If it is necessary for you to access a blocked website in the course of your duties you should contact PICT on ext. 2001.

Use of Office Communicator

22.12 Office Communicator enables you to communicate in an easy and efficient manner with people around Parliament. You may make occasional use of Office Communicator for social conversations provided this does not interfere with your normal duties.

22.13 When using Office Communicator you must not send messages using language or containing images that may reasonably be considered to be discriminatory, obscene, derogatory, offensive, threatening, illegal, harassing or otherwise harmful to the recipient.

22.14 If you receive:

- **a malicious or threatening message**, you should tell your line manager immediately.
- **a message that you consider to be inappropriate**, you should reply to the sender explaining briefly that you do not wish to receive any further messages of that nature. If the sender continues to send inappropriate messages you should tell your line manager immediately.

22.15 Your conversations on Office Communicator will not be saved or archived. Once your conversation is over, it is deleted from the system. If you wish to save, archive or journal a conversation in accordance with the records management policy (paragraph 22.48), you should use email or written documents.

Computing equipment

22.16 You must use computers and other related equipment in a responsible and careful manner. You should:

- not drink or eat too close to your computer keyboard
- not use pirate software or other unlicensed software
- not load software without the knowledge or assistance of PICT

- keep your work laptop and other portable devices in a locked drawer or cabinet when you are not using them.

Viruses

22.17 Viruses and other malicious software ('malware') programmes have the potential to cause many problems, including corrupting or stealing your data. You must:

- check for viruses before loading anything onto your computer
- check for viruses before using portable media, for example USB sticks, CDs or DVDs
- not download programmes from the internet without the authorisation of PICT
- not attach personal USB sticks to your work computer.

22.18 If you suspect that your computer has been infected with viruses or malware you should contact PICT immediately on ext. 2001.

Data storage

22.19 Data stored on your work computer's hard disk are not backed up and are vulnerable to corruption or loss. All work documents should be saved to the appropriate part of the SPIRE system or departmental network fileshares.

22.20 Only work-related data should be stored on the network. Your personal fileshare is provided only for the temporary storage of:

- sensitive information which cannot be stored in SPIRE (22.47), for example your performance development appraisals or line management information
- information of a personal nature
- reference material
- very early drafts of documents.

ICT security

22.21 You are responsible for helping to maintain the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the data and systems of the Parliamentary ICT system. This is an important part of information security (paragraph 22.23). You must:

- not disclose your network password to anybody else or write it down
- only remove Parliamentary data or systems from the Estate, for example

by storing the data on personal devices or forwarding official documents to private email accounts, with the permission of your line manager

- take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of unauthorised access to data, loss or theft of data or equipment, or virus infection
- get PICT authorisation before connecting any personal device to the Parliamentary ICT system
- get PICT authorisation before downloading software from the internet or other sources to your work computer
- report the deliberate misuse of computer facilities, or the loss or theft of computer equipment, to your line manager immediately.

22.22 This list is not exhaustive. For further information you should look at the Parliamentary ICT Security Policy which you can find on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/computers-equipment/getting-set-up/working-securely/ict-security-policies-and-advice/>

Information Security

What is information security?

22.23 Information security means the technical and organisational measures that the Administration takes to protect the security of all of the information held by it. It may sometimes be referred to as 'data security'. Information security applies to information in any format.

22.24 Information security is particularly important for sensitive information. Information is sensitive if the loss of it might:

- adversely affect the smooth running of operations and services;
- damage the reputation of either House or the Administration;
- place individuals at risk, for example from identity theft, fraud or acts of terrorism;
- breach confidentiality; or
- affect anybody's personal security or privacy.

22.25 You can find more on information security on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/computers-equipment/getting-set-up/working-securely/ict-security-policies-and-advice/>

Your information security responsibilities

22.26 This paragraph provides a summary of your information security responsibilities. It should be read in conjunction with paragraph 22.21 which provides information about ICT security. More information on some elements of information security is set out in paragraphs 22.28 to 23.35. If you are unsure about any aspect of information security, you should ask your line manager.

You must:

- make sure that you understand your responsibilities to protect information whether in paper or electronic form and are familiar with the policies and procedures relating to information security
- make sure that personal and sensitive information that you handle is properly protected from the risk of loss or inappropriate disclosure both within and outside the Parliamentary Estate
- take particular care to protect sensitive information, including personal data
- report promptly the loss of any Parliamentary information to your line manager
- use only PICT-supplied encrypted memory sticks to store information
- store all portable work devices (for example, mobile phones, laptops and memory sticks) in a secure place and protect them with a password or pin number
- lock your work computer whenever you are away from your desk
- lock filing cabinets containing sensitive information outside business hours and when rooms are left empty during the day, and store the cabinet keys in a secure place
- shred or arrange for the secure disposal of sensitive information
- use the Protective Marking Scheme where required.

You must not:

- take any sensitive information away from the Parliamentary Estate without the permission of your line manager
- talk about confidential information to anyone outside the House of Lords or pass it on to anyone outside the House of Lords unless you are authorised to do so
- leave sensitive information in view on your desk.

Information security and social media

22.27 If you use social media, you should be aware that giving too much personal information can lead to your being a target for malicious emails or ‘phishing’.

Protective Marking Scheme

22.28 The bicameral Protective Marking Scheme is an important element of the information security responsibilities of all staff. The marking given to a document sets the minimum standards for the storage, handling and transfer of the information. You must:

- familiarise yourself with the Scheme
- apply the Scheme to sensitive information
- correctly mark information requiring protection under the rules of the Scheme
- properly handle information that you create or receive according to its marking
- tell your line manager if you are unable to apply the Scheme effectively
- tell your line manager immediately if any protected information is or might be compromised. You should also report it to the Information Compliance team using an information loss form (paragraph 22.34).

22.29 You can find more information about the Scheme, including training and guidance on using the Scheme, on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/data-protection-security/information-security/parliamentary-protective-marking-scheme/>

Sensitive information beyond the Parliamentary Estate

22.30 Sensitive information should be kept within the Parliamentary Estate whenever possible, and Heads of Office will endeavour to ensure that there is no need for information to be removed from the Estate. You will only be allowed to work on sensitive information away from the Estate when it is necessary for you to do so and you have taken steps to minimise the risk of losing or inadvertently allowing unauthorised access to the information. Sensitive information should always be protectively marked.

22.31 You should never remove sensitive information from the Estate without

the permission of your line manager. Removing information includes forwarding documents to your private email address or using externally provided services for the production and/or storage of official information.

22.32 If you do take sensitive information away from the Estate you must:

- only take the minimum amount of information necessary
- transport paper documents in sealed envelopes marked with a return address
- lock away documents at your home or final destination when you are not working on them
- take great care when travelling on public transport or working in public areas not to leave documents or electronic devices, for example laptops, unattended at any time; you should take care to ensure that sensitive information cannot be seen by people around you
- use only PICT-supplied encrypted memory sticks to transport sensitive information
- request remote ICT access if you regularly have a need to work on Parliamentary information at home.

22.33 You can find more information about how to protect sensitive information away from the Estate on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/data-protection-security/information-security/working-away/>

What to do when information is lost or compromised

22.34 If you lose or mislay any Parliamentary information or equipment, or if information or equipment is stolen, you must:

- report it immediately to your line manager; and
- complete an information loss form.

If you fail properly to report loss or theft, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

22.35 You can download an information loss form from the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/data-protection-security/information-security/loss-theft-misuse/>

Data Protection

22.36 Data protection refers to the protection of personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998). As data controller for the Administration, the Clerk of the Parliaments is responsible for deciding when and why personal information will be held by the Administration, and how that information will be processed. It is a criminal offence to obtain personal data unlawfully or to disclose personal data without the consent of the data controller.

22.37 The DPA 1998 provides eight principles of data protection, which state that personal information must be:

- processed fairly and lawfully;
- processed only for specified, lawful and compatible purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate and up to date;
- kept for no longer than necessary;
- processed in accordance with the legal rights of the people to whom the information relates;
- kept secure; and
- transferred outside the European Economic Area only if there is adequate protection.

22.38 You must handle personal data appropriately, taking these principles into account. In particular, you must not:

- access personal data in any format or use personal data unless you are authorised to do so;
- allow another person to access personal data or pass personal data to somebody else unless you are authorised to do so; or
- destroy personal data unless you are authorised to do so.

22.39 You are entitled to ask to see any personal data that the Administration holds about you. If you would like to see this information you should write to the Human Resources Office setting out your request. Your request will be granted unless there is a legal reason why you should not see the information, for example because it includes legal advice or references of a confidential nature.

22.40 You can find the Administration's Data Protection Policy Statement on the intranet at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/site-information/foi/data-protection/lords-data-protection/>

Freedom of Information

Freedom of Information requests

22.41 Under the Freedom of Information Act 2001 (FoI), members of the public have the right to request information held by the Administration. If you receive a request for information you should notify the Information Compliance team on ext. 8481.

Information about you

22.42 As a result of a FoI request the Administration may need to consider whether to release information about you. Some information, for example your name, job title and job-related responsibilities will normally be disclosed. Other information, for example your sickness or performance records, will not normally be disclosed. You can find more information about the disclosure of personal information about staff on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/employment/lords-staff/policies--guidance/disclosure-of-personal-information-about-staff/>

Records Management

What is a record?

22.43 The terms 'record', 'data', 'document' and 'information' are often used interchangeably. The records management policy does not distinguish between these terms and uses simply the term 'record'.

22.44 Records include all business information that has been recorded, irrespective of the format or media on which it is held, created or used. This includes, but is not limited to, electronic and hard copy documents, email, web content and data held in structure systems.

22.45 The term ‘record’ refers to the documents that you create, edit, file and consult every working day, not just historic documents which are preserved in the Parliamentary Archives. For example, if you write a work email, draft minutes of a meeting or order stationery, you are creating a record.

Where are records held?

22.46 The majority of Parliament’s current business information is held electronically in a range of systems and locations, including:

- SPIRE (paragraph 22.47)
- SharePoint
- shared network drives
- parliamentary email accounts
- databases
- the intranet and internet content management system.

Some records remain in hard copy. Hard copy records are still covered by records management policies.

22.47 SPIRE is a corporate system for managing information which is central to the work of Parliament. All staff who use a computer are expected to use the system to store their work-related information. More information about SPIRE, including information about training and other support, is on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/information-management/records-archives/spire/>

Your responsibilities

22.48 The records you create and receive in the course of your work belong to the Administration. You are therefore responsible for creating and receiving, organising and maintaining records in accordance with the Administration’s policy and procedures, including:

- the **Parliamentary Records Management Policy**, which sets out the practices which Parliament must follow in relation to the creation, maintenance, management and destruction of its records;

- the **Classification Scheme for Parliamentary Record**, which is the corporate system for categorising and organising business information in paper and electronic format; and
- the **Authorised Records Disposal Practice**, which is linked to the Classification Scheme and which explains how long records are retained and when they should be disposed of.

Copies of all records management policies and procedures can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/information-management/records-archives/records-management/about/classification-scheme-modification/>

22.49 If you use any mobile devices in the course of your work, you must ensure that business information and records held on these devices are disposed of in accordance with the Authorised Records Disposal Practice.

22.50 If you are unsure about what you need to do in relation to any aspect of records management, you should ask your Record Officer. A list of Record Officers can be found on the intranet at:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/information-management/records-archives/records-management/record-officers2/record-officer-network/who-is-my-record-officer/house-of-lords-record-officers-and-record-officer-assistants/>

For further information and advice you should contact the Records Management team based in the Parliamentary Archives on ext. 8483.

Chapter 23: Resignation, Retirement and Dismissal

23.1 This chapter explains:

- what to do if you want to resign
- what happens if you want to retire
- voluntary and compulsory redundancy
- what happens when a fixed-term contract comes to an end
- dismissal.

Resignation

23.2 If you wish to resign from the Administration, you should write to the Clerk of the Parliaments or to your Head of Office. You should also send a copy of the letter to the Human Resources Office. You do not have to provide reasons for your resignation.

Notice periods

23.3 Your letter of appointment will state the amount of notice you need to give if you wish to resign. In most cases this will be one month. If you are at grade A2 or higher and you were appointed or promoted after 1 April 1990, however, you will need to give at least three months' notice.

Outstanding leave

23.4 If you have outstanding annual leave, you should normally take this leave during your notice period. If your Head of Office agrees that this is not possible, for example because of recess dates, you may be paid for any days that are left. If you have exceeded your leave entitlement, the appropriate amount will be deducted from your final pay.

Pension benefits

23.5 If you are a member of a House of Lords pension scheme, you will have a choice about what to do with your pension benefits when you leave:

- **If you have less than two years of qualifying service**, you can either transfer your pension benefits to a new registered pension scheme, or apply for a refund of contributions. If you apply for a refund of

contributions, an amount will be deducted from this to cover the cost of reinstating you in the state second pension scheme. An amount for tax will also be deducted.

- **If you have two or more qualifying years of service**, you can either transfer your pension benefits to a new occupational or personal pension scheme, or your benefits can be retained in the scheme and paid at retirement age.

Retirement

23.6 The Administration has a ‘no retirement age’ policy for all staff. This means that there is no specific age at which you must retire. You may retire and draw your pension benefits at any time on or after reaching pension age. Your pension age will depend on what pension scheme you are a member of:

- **Classic, Classic Plus or Premium:** pension age 60
- **Nuvos:** pension age 65
- **Partnership:** pension age 55.

The age at which you may draw your state pension is calculated according to your year of birth.

23.7 You must give at least three months’ notice to the pensions manager of the date of your retirement. If you do not do this, there may be a delay before you receive your pension benefits. You can contact the pensions manager on ext. 5142.

Pension benefits

23.8 Each year you will be sent a statement of your pension benefit. This will provide an estimate of your pension benefit entitlement at pension age. If you intend to work beyond your pension age, you may ask the pensions manager for a forecast for retiring at a later age.

Early retirement

23.9 You may wish to retire before your pension age, or the Administration may invite you to retire early. There are a number of options for early retirement:

- **Flexible or early retirement (or severance):** you may be invited to retire early or leave the employment of the Administration because of a

drop in your level of performance. The amount of pension benefit you will receive will depend on the circumstances.

- **Actuarially reduced retirement:** if you are aged 50 or over you can retire and draw an actuarially reduced pension. This means that both your pension and any lump sum are reduced on a permanent basis by around 5% for each year before pension age. If you wish to claim an actuarially reduced pension you must give at least six months' notice to the pensions manager.
- **Voluntary redundancy:** if you decide to leave the Administration as part of a voluntary redundancy exercise (paragraph 23.18) and you have reached the minimum pension age of 55 (50 if you are a member of the Classic scheme), you may take early retirement and start to draw your pension benefit. The amount of pension benefit you will receive and your severance payment will depend on the circumstances, including your age and length of service at the House of Lords.

23.10 You can get detailed information about the criteria for early retirement from the pensions manager on ext. 5142.

Partial retirement

23.11 Partial retirement allows you to 'downshift' by working fewer hours or at a lower level in order to reduce your pensionable earnings by at least 20%. While you continue to work (fewer hours and/or at a lower level), you will be able to draw some or your entire pension. The purpose of partial retirement is to allow you to move gradually into retirement.

23.12 If you wish to take partial retirement, you must apply to your Head of Office. In consultation with the Human Resources Office, they will decide whether your job can be downsized. Partial retirement is not an automatic right.

23.13 For more information about partial retirement, you can contact the pensions manager on ext. 5142.

Retirement on health grounds

23.14 If your health deteriorates to a point where you cannot carry out your duties effectively and your incapacity is likely to be permanent:

- you may apply for retirement on health grounds, or
- the Administration may consider retiring you on ill-health grounds.

23.15 Once an application for ill-health retirement is made by you or by the Administration, your case will be referred to the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service (SHWS). A member of staff from SHWS will consider the available medical evidence and, if necessary, ask for your consent to arrange a medical examination. This examination could be with your own GP or with a hospital specialist. Following an examination, your doctor will write a report. You have the right to see the report under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988.

23.16 If SHWS advises in favour of ill-health retirement, the Director of Human Resources (DHR) will consider your case. If the DHR decides that you should be retired on medical grounds, you will be given between nine weeks and thirteen weeks' notice of the date on which your retirement will take effect. You will not be able to return to the employment of the House of Lords.

23.17 You may appeal to the DHR if you are not happy with a decision to retire you (or a refusal to retire you) on medical grounds and if you have additional medical evidence.

Redundancy

23.18 Before the Administration decides to make any staff redundant it will consult the recognised trade unions on the reasons for redundancies, the process and criteria to be used when deciding whether to make redundancies, and the terms that may be offered to staff. If redundancies are necessary, the Administration will hold a voluntary redundancy exercise, inviting people to apply for voluntary redundancy. If it is necessary for the Administration to select individual staff for redundancy following that exercise, the selection will be made by an internal board against objective criteria.

23.19 If you are selected for redundancy, you will be offered a suitable alternative post in the House of Lords wherever possible. If you are offered a suitable alternative post and you refuse that post, you will be treated as if you had resigned (paragraphs 23.2 to 23.5).

Compulsory redundancy

23.20 You will only be made compulsorily redundant if you have been selected for redundancy by the internal board and you have refused an offer of voluntary redundancy.

Compensation

23.21 If you are made redundant, your termination payment will be calculated according to the terms of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme 2010. Your payment will depend on a number of factors, including:

- whether you accepted voluntary redundancy or were made compulsorily redundant
- your length of service
- your salary
- your age.

Finding alternative employment

23.22 If you are serving notice of redundancy, you will be allowed reasonable time off on full pay to look for alternative employment.

Ending of Fixed-Term Contracts

23.23 If you are on a fixed-term contract, your contract of employment or any subsequent extension letters will state the end date of your employment. Your end date will be confirmed in writing at least six weeks before your contract is due to end, unless your contract is to be extended.

23.24 Before the end of your contract, you will be invited to a meeting with your line manager and the Human Resources Office (HRO) to discuss the ending of your contract. You are entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a colleague. A note will be made of the meeting and you will be given a copy.

Notice period

23.25 You will normally be given the same notice period as if you had been dismissed for misconduct or poor performance (see paragraph 23.28).

Appeal

23.26 You may appeal against the ending of your fixed-term contract if you feel that you have been discriminated against or you have been treated unfairly. If you wish to appeal, you must set out your grounds of appeal in a letter to your Head of Office or, if your Head of Office is your line manager, to your countersigning officer. A hearing will be organised by the HRO and your complaint will be considered using the same procedure as a grievance hearing (chapter 21, paragraphs 21.18 to 21.21).

Dismissal

23.27 Following the disciplinary and performance improvement procedure set out in chapter 20, you may be dismissed for misconduct or poor performance. If you are dismissed, you will receive a letter setting out the reasons for your dismissal in writing.

Notice periods

23.28 Unless you are dismissed summarily for gross misconduct, the following period of notice will normally apply:

- **if you have less than four years of continuous service:** 5 weeks' notice
- **if you have four years or more of continuous service:** one week for each year of your continuous service plus one week up to a maximum of 13 weeks.

23.29 In exceptional circumstances (other than summary dismissal) the Administration may not be able to give you the normal notice period. In that case, you will be paid in lieu of the unexpired period of notice.

Appeals

23.30 Chapter 20 explains how you can appeal against a decision to dismiss you for misconduct or poor performance. You also have the right to appeal to an employment tribunal if you have been employed by the House for two years or if you have been employed for less than two years and the ground of dismissal was automatically unfair (chapter 20, paragraph 20.49).

Last Day of Service

23.31 Your last day of service will be confirmed to you in writing by the HRO. You will receive a letter with instructions for returning your Parliamentary Pass and your car parking permit and corporate credit card (if you have one). You will be issued with a day pass, which you must return when you leave the Parliamentary Estate for the last time.

23.32 If you have any House of Lords property, for example computer equipment or mobile telephones, you must return it to your line manager before leaving. Your line manager will arrange for your email account to be closed.

23.33 Your final pay slip and P45 form will be sent to your home address.

Chapter 24: Pensions

24.1 This chapter provides general information about:

- House of Lords pension schemes
- how you can supplement your House of Lords pension
- opting out of the House of Lords pension schemes
- pension benefits
- what to do if your personal details change.

24.2 If you would like more information about pensions, you should contact the pensions manager on ext. 5142.

24.3 Information about retirement, and what happens to your pension if you resign from the House of Lords, is set out in chapter 23.

House of Lords Pension Schemes

24.4 From 1 November 2013, all staff will be automatically enrolled into one of the House of Lords' staff pension schemes (HLSPS). These schemes operate by analogy to the Civil Service pension arrangements. If you choose to remain in HLSPS, your pension arrangements will be the same as Civil Service pension arrangements in most respects. All pension schemes in the House of Lords are administered by the pensions company MyCSP.

24.5 Your pension is a valuable part of your pay package but having a House of Lords pension is not a condition of your employment. Although you will be automatically entered into a pension scheme (paragraph 24.13), you may choose not to have a House of Lords pension. Instead, you may rely on State benefits or make your own pension arrangements, for example by contributing to a personal pension.

Schemes available

24.6 There are five House of Lords pension schemes. Which schemes are available to you will depend on when you started working for the House of Lords:

- **Nuvos:** for staff who joined on or after 30 July 2007.
- **Premium:** for staff who joined on or after 1 October 2002, and before 30 July 2007. This scheme is also for staff in service before 1 October 2002 who opted to join this scheme from that date.
- **Classic:** for staff in service before 1 October 2002.

- **Classic Plus:** for staff in service before 1 October 2002 who opted to join this scheme from that date.
- **Partnership scheme:** an alternative to the Premium scheme for staff who joined between 1 October 2002 and 29 July 2007, and an alternative to the Nuvos scheme for staff who joined after 30 July 2007.

24.7 When you start work at the House of Lords you will be given information about the schemes for which you are eligible. You can get more information about the schemes from the pensions manager or from MyCSP.

Supplementing your House of Lords Pension

24.8 You can supplement your House of Lords pension by any or all of the following methods (subject to the limits on pension contributions set out by HMRC):

- added pension (paragraph 24.9)
- added years (only available to staff who started paying added years contributions before 1 March 2008)
- additional voluntary contributions (paragraphs 24.10)
- the House of Lords' designated stakeholder scheme (paragraph 24.11)
- your own savings arrangements.

Added pension

24.9 You may purchase added pension either on a monthly basis or by a lump sum. You may make only one lump sum purchase each year. You will buy a fixed amount of added pension, which will increase in line with price inflation, and which will be paid with your pension when you retire. You may purchase added pension for yourself only, and/or for your dependants depending on the scheme you are in. The amount of pension that a certain sum of money will buy depends on your age and current interest rates.

Additional voluntary contributions

24.10 You may make additional voluntary contributions under a money purchase arrangement in order to secure additional pension when you retire. Your additional contributions will generate a fund which you will invest with one (or both) of two providers: Scottish Widows and Standard Life. On or after

retirement, you can use the fund to buy an annuity (a pension for life) from an insurance company. The level of the fund will depend on the contributions you have made, investment returns and annuity rates when you retire. You can make contributions by regular payments or lump sum payments.

Stakeholder pensions

24.11 If you are a member of HLSPS (other than the Partnership scheme) you may contribute to a stakeholder pension with the House of Lords designated stakeholder pension provider Standard Life in addition to your normal contributions. The Administration will deduct the additional contributions from your pay and pay them directly to Standard Life. The provider will invest the money.

24.12 The Partnership scheme is a stakeholder pension scheme. You should not confuse this with the arrangements set out in paragraph 24.11, which are separate to the Partnership scheme.

Auto-Enrolment

24.13 From 1 November 2013 all staff who start work at the House of Lords will automatically be entered into the Nuvos scheme. Any staff in post on 1 November 2013 who were not members of HLSPS were also automatically entered into the relevant scheme on that date. The purpose of auto-enrolment is to encourage all employees to begin saving for their retirement as early as possible.

24.14 If you have been automatically entered into the Nuvos scheme, you may choose to join the Partnership scheme instead or you may opt out of HLSPS completely.

Opting out

24.15 You may choose to opt out of HLSPS at any time. You should, however, seek independent financial advice before deciding to do so. The decision to opt out may have a significant impact on your own benefits and benefits for your family.

24.16 If you opt out of HLSPS, you will not be contracted out of the State Second Pension (paragraph 24.18) and so you will pay a higher rate of National Insurance contributions. In return, you will accrue rights in the State Second Pension as well

as the Basic State Pension in respect of your service in the House of Lords.

Subsequent automatic enrolment

24.17 If you opt out of the HLSPS, you will be automatically enrolled into the scheme again every three years. You may also be automatically entered into the scheme again if:

- you were aged 21 or under when you opted out, you will be automatically entered into Nuvos again when you reach the age of 22.
- your earnings were below a threshold amount set by the government when you opted out, you will be automatically entered into Nuvos again if your earnings rise above the threshold.

If you do not wish to have a House of Lords pension, you will need to opt out again each time you are automatically re-enrolled into the scheme.

State Second Pension

24.18 If you join HLSPS (except the Partnership scheme), you will be contracted out of the State Second Pension (S2P). As a result, both you and the Administration will pay a lower rate of National Insurance contributions. In return, HLSPS must provide you with a pension that is at least as good as the S2P you have foregone. This pension is called the Guaranteed Minimum Pension and forms part of the HLSPS pension. You will still receive the Basic State Pension (subject to contribution limits).

24.19 If you are a member of the Partnership scheme, you are not contracted out of the S2P and you pay the standard rate of National Insurance Contributions. In return, you will accrue rights in the S2P as well as the Basic State Pension (subject to contribution limits) in respect of your service at the House of Lords.

Pension Benefits

24.20 If you join Classic, Classic Plus, Premium or Nuvos, you will receive an annual statement of your pension benefits from MyCSP. If you have any queries about your statement, or you think that your statement is incorrect, you can contact MyCSP directly.

24.21 If you are a member of the Partnership scheme, you will receive annual benefit statements each year from your pension provider. You should raise any queries with your provider directly.

Death benefits

24.22 Two different sorts of benefits may be available in the event of your death:

- a lump sum payment to a nominated person or people
- an ongoing pension to your spouse, civil partner or nominated partner, and any dependent children.

24.23 You can nominate a person, or people, to receive any lump sum in the case of your death. If you have had at least twelve months' reckonable service, a lump sum may be paid to your nominee in the following situations:

- death in service
- death after leaving the scheme but before your pension is paid
- death within five years of retirement.

24.24 If you die without having made a nomination, any lump sums will be paid to your estate. You can download a death benefit nomination form from the MyCSP website.

24.25 If you have a spouse or civil partner, or you have nominated a partner to receive a pension (paragraph 24.26), they will receive an ongoing pension after your death. A pension will also be paid to any children who were dependent on you at death, up to a maximum age of 23.

Nominated partners

24.26 If you are a member of the Nuvos or Premium scheme, you may nominate a person who you live with as a partner to receive an ongoing pension after your death. To make a nomination, you must complete a partner declaration form. You can download a form from the MyCSP website. Your partner will not receive a pension after your death if you have not completed a partner declaration form.

24.27 If you have a spouse or civil partner, an ongoing pension will be paid to them automatically. You should tell the pensions manager if you get married or enter into a civil partnership (paragraph 24.32).

Transfer of pension benefits

24.28 If you have pension benefits with a previous employer or in a personal pension plan, you may transfer these benefits to HLSPS. For more information about how to do this, and the time limits that apply, you should contact the pensions manager on ext. 5142.

24.29 If you used to work for the House of Commons, the Civil Service, or a non-departmental public body, and you were a member of their pension scheme, your existing benefits will not be automatically transferred into HLSPS. You will need to apply for a transfer of your benefits. This transfer may be made on preferential terms.

Retirement age

24.30 If you are a member of the Classic, Classic Plus or Premium schemes, you may retire and draw your full pension benefits any time after you reach the age of 60. If you are a member of the Nuvos scheme, you can draw your full benefits after you reach the age of 65. Early retirement before age 60 or 65 is possible in some circumstances (see chapter 23, paragraph 23.9).

24.31 If you are a member of the Partnership scheme, you may draw your partnership pension at any time between the ages of 55 and 75. You do not have to stop working at the House of Lords to draw your pension benefit.

Change of personal details

24.32 It is important that the pensions manager and your pension provider have your current personal details. If your details are incorrect, you may not receive information you need, your pension benefits statements may be incorrect, and/or your benefits may not go to the right person. You should tell the pensions manager if:

- you change your address
- you get married or you enter into a civil partnership
- you want to change your nominated partner
- you want to change the details of the person who you would like to receive any lump sum payable in the event of your death.

Appendix A: Gifts and Hospitality Policy

1 This policy covers:

- general principles which always apply to gifts and hospitality
- specific rules about gifts and hospitality in certain circumstances
- arrangements for the registration and publication of gifts and hospitality
- using public funds to offer gifts and hospitality
- using official resources to fund refreshments at internal events.

2 This policy has been drawn up to protect you, the Administration and the House from any adverse consequences which may arise from the improper acceptance of gifts or hospitality, or if the acceptance of such items is misinterpreted.

Principles

3 The main principle underpinning this policy is that you must ensure that your personal judgement and integrity are not, and are seen not to be, compromised. All staff must be seen to be above reproach in everything they do.

4 You must never solicit (i.e. ask for or encourage) gifts or hospitality in relation to your official duties or your employment by the Administration. You must refuse such gifts or hospitality when it is appropriate to do so. You must always refuse cash or money in any form and report the offer to your line manager and Head of Office as soon as possible.

5 There are times when refusal would cause offence, and some staff need to maintain effective networks in order to do their job. So accepting gifts or hospitality may be in the interests of the Administration. We must, however, uphold high standards of propriety and guard against any reasonable suspicion of conflicts of interest, or the creation of any undue obligation. For this reason, you should not accept frequent gifts or hospitality, and you should refuse any offers which are disproportionately generous.

6 You must register any gifts or hospitality that you accept in relation to your official duties or your employment by the Administration which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater. You must register such things even if you receive them in personal time or following personal initiative. There are exceptions for staff accompanying members on certain kinds of visit (see paragraph 16), staff working for international bodies (paragraph 17) and hospitality (not gifts) at events where

your attendance is paid for by the House (paragraph 20). See paragraphs 21 to 22 for how to register.

7 You should bear in mind the Fraud and Bribery Policy and the risk of committing an offence under the Bribery Act 2010. The Act creates the following relevant offences:

- offering, promising or giving a bribe;
- requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a bribe; and
- bribing a foreign public official.

Broadly speaking, a bribe means an advantage intended to induce improper conduct. An advantage might include a gift or hospitality.

8 If you have any questions you should ask your line manager, your Head of Office or the Finance Director before committing yourself.

Guidance Relating to Certain Offers of Gifts and Hospitality

Gifts and hospitality from suppliers and prospective suppliers

9 In general you should avoid hospitality from suppliers and prospective suppliers unless it arises during the course of a meeting or visit to the company's premises. You must register any hospitality or gifts that you receive from suppliers or prospective suppliers which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater and you must never accept any gifts or hospitality from suppliers or prospective suppliers which might reasonably be valued at £25 or greater. You must not accept gifts or hospitality if you are aware that a supplier or prospective supplier is in dispute with or in breach of contract in relation to the House or the Administration.

10 If you are involved with the procurement or management of contracts you must be particularly aware of the possibility that a conflict of interest may arise if you accept gifts or hospitality from suppliers or prospective suppliers, or even a charge under the Bribery Act. If you are not directly involved in financial or contractual matters you should nonetheless consider the financial relationship between the organisation and the Administration before accepting any gift or hospitality. If you are in any doubt, you should seek advice from the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service.

11 Some companies hold events (for example, receptions) for clients and/or customers. Such events can be useful for building a relationship with the company and meeting other customers, but you should use your discretion when deciding whether to accept an invitation. You should not feel under any pressure to accept and, if in any doubt, you should decline.

Gifts and hospitality from Members of the House

12 You should not feel under any pressure to accept any gifts or hospitality offered to you by a Member of the House. Further, you should be careful to avoid any perception of favouritism between you and a Member or group of Members. If a Member offers you a money gift or personal tip you should refuse it and remind them of the appropriate mechanisms for such gifts, for example the Staff Christmas Fund and gratuities to Catering and Retail Services.

13 You must register any hospitality or gifts that you receive from Members which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater.

Gifts and hospitality from other third parties

14 You must register any hospitality or gifts that you receive from anyone else in relation to your official duties or your employment by the Administration which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater. You should be particularly aware that perceived conflict may arise from the acceptance of gifts or hospitality from government departments or any other body seeking to influence public policy or the work of the House (e.g. a committee witness or a party in private bill proceedings).

Representing the House

15 You must register any hospitality or gifts that you receive while representing the House or attending meetings in an official capacity which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater. You should make clear on the register that you received the gift or hospitality during official travel or while you were acting in an official capacity.

16 If you accompany Members who are making a visit falling under any of the categories set out in paragraph 69 of the Guide to the Code of Conduct for Members (see Annex), you do not need to register any hospitality or gifts that you

receive. If you receive any gifts or hospitality when accompanying Members for any other reason, you must register any item which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater in the normal way. You should make clear on the register that you received the gift or hospitality while you were accompanying a Member.

17 You do not need to register gifts or hospitality received when on loan to international bodies, for example the Council of Europe.

Public speaking engagements

18 In line with the objectives of the Administration, all staff are encouraged to promote the work of the House when invited to do by outside bodies. You must, however, seek permission from your line manager before you accept any invitation to undertake a public speaking engagement on the work of the House. If the engagement is part of a commercial event, the House may charge a fee; please consult the Finance Department.

19 The general prohibition on accepting cash or money gifts applies. You must register any gifts or hospitality that you receive in connection with a public speaking engagement on the work of the House which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater.

Events where the Administration has paid for your participation

20 You do not need to record hospitality, accommodation or refreshments that you have received at an event where the Administration has paid for you to participate, for example a conference for which a fee has been paid. If you receive a gift at such an event which might reasonably be valued at £10 or greater, you must declare this on the register.

Registration and Publication

21 The register of gifts and hospitality is maintained by the Secretary to the Finance Director. When registering an item you should provide the following information:

- your name
- the date on which you received the item

- the name of the giver (or the recipient if you have offered the gift or hospitality) (if the item is given on a corporate basis you should provide the name of the company; if provided on the basis of a personal relationship you should give the individual's name in addition to the name of the company where relevant)
- the value of the item (for items you have received either 'between £10 and £25' or the actual estimated value if higher; for items offered state the exact value)
- if you have received a gift, what you have done with it (for example, 'kept', 'consumed', 'in use/on display in Office', 'Office Christmas raffle', 'given to charity')
- if you have received any hospitality, whether you were accompanied by any guests at the host's expense
- any relevant notes (for example, 'received as part of a speaking engagement' or 'received when accompanying a Member').

22 You should list separate gifts and hospitality received during a single visit or programme of events as separate items.

23 Extracts from the register relating to members of the Management Board are published quarterly. The full register is not routinely published but it may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Offering Hospitality

24 Any gifts or hospitality provided to external bodies or individuals using public funds must be recorded in the register. This includes items valued at less than £10. Staff arranging hospitality for external organisations should have regard to value for money and the reputation of the House. It will usually be most appropriate for such hospitality to be offered on Lords premises using the facilities of Catering and Retail Services, but alternatives may be justified in particular cases. A discount may apply; you should discuss with CRS management in advance.

Hospitality for official guests or colleagues from institutions outside the House

25 The Administration will pay the reasonable costs of entertaining official guests or colleagues from outside institutions who are on an officially sponsored visit to Westminster. Most commonly these guests will be witnesses appearing before committees, or members or staff of other parliamentary institutions. The Administration will not normally contribute to the cost of hospitality when there is no formal basis for the visit.

Hospitality for current or prospective suppliers or contractors to the House

26 The provision of hospitality to contractors or suppliers can be effective in developing important relationships for the Administration or in reciprocating hospitality afforded to staff of the Administration. Any offer of hospitality to suppliers or contractors must, however, be in line with the principles set out in paragraphs 3 to 8 and it must be:

- modest;
- authorised by the person in charge of the contract or service in question, and authorised by the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service;
- in no danger of being seen as a bribe; and
- recorded in the register.

27 It is important that the Administration is seen to be impartial in its relations with commercial bodies. For this reason, you should not make any offer of hospitality to current or prospective suppliers when a relevant contract is being re-let.

Authorisation and notification

28 Under Appendix A of the Finance Manual, all expenditure on official entertainment over £250 requires direct authorisation from the Clerk of the Parliaments. The Finance Director should be notified of any expenditure on official entertainment between £150 and £250, except for Committee and Overseas Office lunches.

Internal Events

29 You may only use official resources for internal events which are:

- sponsored by the Human Resources Office; or
- sponsored or approved by the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Details of such events do not need to be recorded in the register.

30. If you request sponsorship or approval from the Clerk of the Parliaments to use official resources at an internal event, you must record your request and the outcome, and copy it to the Finance Director.

Annex to Appendix A: Visits Listed in Guide to Code of Conduct for Members, para 69

Staff accompanying a member on such a visit need not register any gifts or hospitality.

- Visits that are paid for by, or that are undertaken on behalf of, Her Majesty's Government, or which are made on behalf of an international organisation of which the United Kingdom Government is a Member;
- Visits abroad with, or on behalf of, a Select Committee of the House including a Joint Committee
- Visits undertaken on behalf of, or under the auspices of, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the British–Irish Parliamentary Assembly, the British American Parliamentary Group, the Council of Europe, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly or the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
- Peers' Representative Travel, paid for by the House of Lords Overseas Office
- Official travel by the Lord Speaker or her representative
- Visits to European Union parliaments and institutions paid for by the House on the authority of the Clerk of the Parliaments
- Visits arranged and paid for wholly by a political party
- Visits paid for wholly by an institution of the European Union or by a political group of the European Parliament.

Appendix B: Fraud and Bribery Policy

Definitions

- 1** The Fraud Act 2006 provides the following specific definitions of fraud:
- Fraud by false representation: a fraud is committed if a person dishonestly makes a false representation and, in so doing, seeks to make a gain of money or property or to cause a loss to another.
 - Fraud by failing to disclose information: a person is in breach of the Act if he seeks gain through a failure to disclose information where there is a legal obligation to do so.
 - Fraud by abuse of position: a fraud is committed if a person occupies a position of trust and seeks gain through the abuse of that position. The abuse can be through act or omission.

2 Fraud therefore involves the use of deception to gain an unfair advantage, avoid an obligation or cause loss to another party. Attempted fraud is as serious an offence as accomplished fraud and all references to fraud in this policy should be deemed to include attempted fraud. Fraud can be perpetrated by persons both inside and outside the organisation (e.g. by staff or by clients/contractors). It may or may not involve theft.

- 3** The Bribery Act 2010 creates the following offences:
- offering, promising or giving a bribe;
 - requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a bribe;
 - bribing a foreign public official; and
 - (for an organisation carrying on a business) failing to prevent bribery.

Broadly speaking, a bribe means an advantage intended to induce improper conduct.

4 This policy covers any case of fraud or bribery that involves anyone in the House of Lords Administration, whether as victim, witness or suspect, or of which the Administration is the target.

Policy

5 Fraud and bribery of any type represent a threat to the good name and standing of the House of Lords and to the public resources for which it is responsible. The policy therefore is:

- to promote awareness among staff of the risk of fraud and bribery;
- to establish and maintain controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud and bribery; and
- to take effective action whenever fraud or bribery is discovered or suspected.

6 Where a member of staff is suspected of having perpetrated fraud, theft or a Bribery Act offence, the Director of Human Resources reserves the right to refer the matter to the Police. Where a member of staff is found to have perpetrated fraud, theft or a Bribery Act offence, and whether or not the matter is referred to the Police, disciplinary action will be taken against the member of staff concerned. All staff should be aware that there is an extremely low tolerance in this area and related disciplinary action is likely to reflect this.

Responsibilities of Management

7 The Finance Director is responsible for this policy, the Gifts and Hospitality Register, the Fraud Risk Register and the Fraud and Bribery Response Plans, and owns the relevant corporate risk. If a Head of Office reports a prima facie case, the Finance Director is responsible for subsequent investigation, either personally or through an appointed investigator. The Director of Human Resources is responsible for related disciplinary procedures and (where staff are involved) liaison with the Police, and for the policies on gifts and hospitality and on disclosing malpractice (whistleblowing).

8 Heads of Office, in conjunction with the Finance Director, are responsible for:

- a. ensuring that their staff are aware of the risks of fraud and bribery and of the responsibilities of individuals with regard to prevention and detection;
- b. identifying risks to which systems and procedures may be exposed;
- c. developing and maintaining appropriate controls to manage such risks and ensuring that they are complied with; and
- d. investigating any actual or suspected cases to see whether there is a prima facie case.

9 Management is guided by the Treasury guide 'Tackling Internal Fraud'.

Responsibilities of Staff

- 10** All members of staff have a duty:
- a. to act honestly and with integrity at all times
 - b. not to accept or offer gifts, hospitality or benefits that might be seen to compromise their judgement or integrity or somebody else's
 - c. to comply with controls and seek to safeguard the public funds for which they are responsible
 - d. to take special care when handling receipts and payments and dealing with contractors and suppliers
 - e. to report immediately any actual or suspected act of fraud or bribery that they discover (in accordance with the Fraud and Bribery Response Plan for Staff and Managers).

Contracts

11 The Administration's standard terms and conditions for contracts will prohibit canvassing and collusion, will impose duties and sanctions in relation to bribery, and will provide contractors with a channel to report offences by staff.

Training

12 All desk-based staff will be offered training in support of this policy. Staff in the following areas will receive specific training: Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, and management in the Department of Facilities.

Register

13 The Head of Internal Audit will record in a register the circumstances, decisions and action taken in each case drawn to his attention under the Fraud and Bribery Response Plan and any losses incurred. Cases of theft should also be reported even though these do not fall within the statutory definition of fraud.

Learning from Experience

14 Where an instance of fraud has occurred, management must consider what changes need to be made to systems and procedures to ensure that such frauds do not recur. The advice of the Head of Internal Audit should be sought and any agreed changes should be put into practice with a minimum of delay.

Annex to Appendix B: Fraud and Bribery Response Plan for Staff and Managers

Reporting

- 1** If you suspect fraud or bribery you should:
 - a. act quickly to ascertain what has occurred or is suspected;
 - b. document the details as clearly and factually as possible, e.g. names, dates, times, transactions, invoice numbers; and
 - c. report it (see below).
- 2** You should not:
 - a. ignore the concern;
 - b. approach or accuse any individual directly, as this may alert a suspect;
 - c. try to investigate the matter yourself;
 - d. remove documentation;
 - e. discuss the concern with friends or colleagues; or
 - f. delay reporting.
- 3** All members of staff have a duty to report immediately any actual or suspected act of fraud or bribery that they discover. If in doubt, you should report, and management will support you in doing so. If you request confidentiality, this will be respected as far as the law allows.
- 4** You may report to any appropriate member of staff. In most cases the appropriate person will be your line manager, their Head of Office, the Finance Director or the Head of Internal Audit.
- 5** Alternatively you may prefer to use the reporting options in the policy on disclosing malpractice ('Whistleblowing' – Staff Handbook Appendix C). These

are: a senior member of the HR Office, the Chairman of the Audit Committee or Public Concern at Work.

6 A line manager receiving a report should not:

- a. investigate it themselves, or
- b. discuss it with other members of staff, especially those under suspicion.

7 They should:

- a. be responsive and act sensitively to the person making the report
- b. record and document any evidence provided
- c. report onward, promptly and accurately, to their own Head of Office, the Finance Director or the Head of Internal Audit.

8 A Head of Office receiving a report should inform the Finance Director and the Head of Internal Audit.

9 The Finance Director and the Head of Internal Audit, on receiving a report, will inform the Head of the Office where the suspected action is taking place, if that person is not already aware. They will also notify the Clerk of the Parliaments and the Director of Finance in the House of Commons and keep them informed.

10 Theft should be reported to Security Control (ext. 5311) and to Black Rod's Office (ext. 3100). Loss of ICT equipment or phishing email should be reported to PICT (ext. 2001). Loss or misuse of data should be reported using the form on the intranet:

<http://intranet.parliament.uk/information-management/data-protection-security/>

Investigation

11 Heads of Office are responsible for investigating immediately any actual or suspected cases of fraud or bribery. They may seek guidance as to how such an investigation should be conducted from the Finance Director. They should investigate only so far as is necessary to see if a prima facie case exists. They should avoid alerting the suspect or disturbing the evidence.

12 If a prima facie case is established, the Head of Office should report to the Finance Director. The Fraud and Bribery Response Plan for Senior Staff applies from this point.

Appendix C: Policy on Disclosing Malpractice

This policy sets out the Administration's policy on disclosing malpractice (sometimes known as 'whistleblowing'). It applies to all staff employed by the Administration.

When this Policy Applies

- 1** The Administration wants to encourage a working environment where employees feel comfortable expressing concerns about possible malpractice. If you believe that malpractice is taking place or is likely to take place within the Administration, you are encouraged to raise this in accordance with this policy.
- 2** Malpractice might cover criminal activity, breach of legal regulations, endangering somebody's health or safety, environmental damage, abuse of office or position or any attempt by any person to conceal any such matters. Malpractice can involve activities other than fraud, which is usually linked to the pursuit of financial advantage.
- 3** This policy is not a grievance procedure. If you have a concern about the way you are being treated as an individual at work (as opposed to a concern about malpractice within the workplace), you should use the grievance procedure instead.

How to Raise your Concern

- 4** If you have a concern about malpractice, you should raise this with a senior member of the Human Resources Office. They will discuss your concern with you and, following that discussion, decide how to proceed. If you have a concern about a very senior member of staff you may wish to contact the Chairman of the House of Lords Audit Committee.
- 5** If you have a concern about malpractice by a Member of the House, you should raise it with the Director of Human Resources. If your concern is that a Member may have breached the Code of Conduct, you may approach the House of Lords Commissioner for Standards and may do so anonymously if you have a good reason to do so.
- 6** If you do not wish to contact a member of the Human Resources Office initially or if you wish to talk through your concerns with an independent person, you might want to contact Public Concern at Work, an independent charity providing confidential advice on whistleblowing. They can be contacted on 020 7404 6609. Their website is at www.pcaw.org.uk.

7 Subject to paragraph 6 above, it is important that you do not publish your concerns outside the Administration without giving the Administration the opportunity to address them internally.

What Happens After You Raise a Concern

8 Following their discussions with you the Human Resources Office or the Chairman of the House of Lords Audit Committee will decide how to proceed. They may decide that an investigation is required. This process may include interviews with you and with anyone who might be involved in the suspected malpractice. The Administration will ensure that any investigation is proportionate and as independent as possible.

9 Where requested, reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that your identity is not revealed to those who might be involved in suspected malpractice. Your identity will be revealed only where this is reasonably necessary to investigate or deal with suspected malpractice and, if this happens, all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that you are not disadvantaged as a result.

10 You will be kept informed of any investigation and any action taken in relation to your concern. You will not be penalised for raising a concern.

Where Malpractice is Found to Have Taken Place

11 If malpractice is found to have taken place, those staff responsible will be subject to the Administration's disciplinary procedure.

Review

12 These arrangements will be regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective.

Status of this Policy

13 This policy is not part of any contract of employment and does not create contractual rights or obligations. It may be amended by the Administration at any time.

Index

A

Absence management 93, 97

Acceptance of gifts and hospitality *see* Fraud and bribery; Gifts and hospitality

Access to facilities 31–2, 37

Accidents 28–9, 94

Accidents, Incidents and Permits (AIP) system 2, 5, 28, 94

Accountancy allowances 55

Additional paternity leave and pay 87, 89–90

Adoption leave and pay 5, 86–7, 89–90, 91

Alcohol and drug misuse policy 27, 128

Alerts, security 21

Allowances 49, 54–5, 76

Ambulances 29

Antenatal care 81

Appeals appraisals 102–3; disciplinary action 131–2; dismissal and demotions 98, 131–2, 159; expiry of fixed-term contracts 159; flexible working requests 66–7; grievances 139, 140; recruitment process 46

Appointment 8–10

Appraisals appeals 102–3; 16, 100–3; career breaks 76; confidentiality 101; Fast stream and Library clerks 102; Housekeepers 102; mid-year reviews 100, 101, 103, 105; performance and pay 50, 51; performance management training 101, 106; probation 100–1; senior staff 102; staff in bands A to E 101–2; training requirements 105, 108; unsatisfactory performance 103

Archives, Parliamentary 7

Arrest or convictions 19, 118, 120, 124, 128

see also Fraud and bribery policy

Attendance management procedure performance improvement 122; probation 10; rehabilitation after sickness 95; unsatisfactory attendance 96–8
Authorised Records Disposal Practice 153

B

Bankruptcy and insolvency 119

Bars 31–2, 33

Behaviour *see* **Conduct; Disciplinary policy and procedure; Equality and diversity; Fraud and bribery policy; Grievance policy and procedure; Security**

Benevolent Fund, Civil Service 30

Bicycle loans 35

Big Ben (Elizabeth Tower) Tours 37

Black Rod 4, 18
 Black Rod's Garden 26, 38
 Black Rod's Office 5
 Borrowing and lending money 119
 Breaks 63 *see also* Working hours and patterns
Bribery and fraud policy 106, 121, 128, 135, 168, 174–6
 Bullying 14, 17, 115, 128 *see also* **Conduct; Disciplinary policy and procedure; Equality and Diversity; Grievance policy and procedure**

C

Cafeterias and restaurants 31–2
 Cancelled/disrupted leave 72
 Capability, disciplinary and grievance *see* **Disciplinary policy and procedure; Grievance policy and procedure**
 Car parking 40
 Car, work related travel by 59
 Career break scheme 75–8
 Career progression 44–8, 51, 77, 131
 Caring responsibilities 5, 68, 74, 75, 133 *see also* Dependants, care of; Maternity leave; Parental responsibilities
 Cash dispensers 38
 Catering and Retail Services 6, 20, 31–2, 116
 food hygiene regulations 106
 pay and overtime 53, 54
 Ceremonial dress 20
 Changes of personal details 11, 166
 Chapel of St Mary Undercroft 34
 Charities, payments to 52
 Charity for Civil Servants 30
 Childcare costs/vouchers 36
 Church, St Margaret's 34
 Civil Partnerships at work *see* Family Relationships and Married, Civil and Unmarried Partnerships at work
 Civil Service Benevolent Fund 30
 Civil Service Club 33
 Civil Service Organisations 33
 Civil Service Sports Council 33
 Clerk of the Parliaments Office 5
 Clock Tower (Elizabeth Tower) 37
 Committee Office 6

Commuting, disruption to see *also* Severe Travel Disruption 68, 69

Compensation

 damage to personal property 21

 disrupted, cancelled or delayed holidays 72

Complaints see **Equality and diversity; Grievance policy and procedure**

Compressed hours see Flexible Working Requests 65

Computer equipment, use of 143-9

Conduct 113-21

 see *also* **Disciplinary policy and procedure; Equality and diversity**

Confidentiality 129, 145-9

Counselling service see *also* SHWS 30, 137

Courses see **Learning and development**

Credit cards, corporate 57, 58, 160

Criminal offences and records 19, 118, 120, 124, 128 see *also* Fraud and bribery

D

Damage to property 128

Data Protection 150

Data security 145-9, 178

Data storage 145, 151-3

Day subsistence expenses 59-60

Death benefits, pension schemes 165

Defibrillator training 106

Delayed holidays 72

Department of Official Report (Hansard) 6

Dependants, care of 5, 68, 74, 75, 133 see *also* Parental leave

Deputising allowance 55

Disability 12, 17, 24, 40, 96

Disciplinary policy and procedure 16, 122-33; action resulting 128-30; dismissal 128-9, 130; formal procedure 123-8; grievances: overlap 124, 136-7, 139; hearings 123, 124, 125, 126-7; informal measures 125; investigations 123, 124, 125-6; malicious complaints 135; review periods 130; right to be accompanied 126, 127; roles and responsibilities 123-4; suspension 124; witnesses 126, 127; written warnings 98-9, 130-1, 133; see *also* **Conduct; Equality and diversity; Grievance policy and procedure**

Disclosing malpractice (whistleblowing) 121, 133, 175, 179-80

Disclosure of official information 129, 145-9

Discrimination 5, 12-14, 17, 134, 136 see *also* **Equality and diversity**

Dismissal 4, 98, 118, 128-9, 132-3, 159, 160

Display screen equipment (DSE) 25-6

Disruption to transport services 69
 Diversity see **Equality and diversity**
 Domestic emergencies 74
 Dress 115
 Drug and alcohol misuse policy 27, 128

E

Early retirement 155–6
 Elite sporting events 74
 Elizabeth Tower 37
 Email, rules on use 116, 129, 142–3, 160
 Emergency escape routes 23
 Emergency procedures for staff with disabilities 24
 Emergency services 24, 29
 Entertaining guests 32, 37, 39
 Equality and diversity 4, 5, 12–17, 96, 105–6, 115, 136 see also **Conduct; Grievances policy and procedure**
 Equality and Diversity Officer 12, 17, 96, 136
 Evacuations 19, 24
 Expectant fathers 81
 Expectant mothers 4, 25, 80–2
 Expenses 58–61
 Extension of career breaks 75
 Eyesight tests 26

F

Facilities for staff 31–40
 Family emergencies 74
 Family relationships at work 119–20
 Feedback, interview 46
 Finance Department see **Expenses; Pay**
 Fire alarms 19, 24
 Fire safety 23–4, 105
First Aid facilities and First Aiders 29, 106
 Fit notes 72, 94, 95
 Fixed-term contracts 8–9; 10; 35; 45; 92; 107–8; 111; 154; 158
 Flexible working 17, 64–7, 77
 Food hygiene regulations 106
 Fraud and bribery policy 106, 121, 128, 135, 168, 174–8 see also **Disciplinary policy and procedure; Gifts and hospitality**

Freedom of information and data protection 150–1
 Funding for study 107–9, 110, 111–12
 Further education 7, 56, 110–12 see *also* Professional qualifications

G

Gift shop 39
 Gifts and hospitality 32, 59, 116–17, 120, 121, 167–73, 175, 176 see *also* Fraud and bribery policy
 ‘Give As You Earn’ scheme 52
Grievance procedure 14, 16, 17, 134–41; appeals 46–7, 139, 140; complaints against the Administration 134; complaints against you 134, 135, 136, 139; disciplinary procedures: overlap 124, 136–7, 139; formal procedure 135, 138–9; hearings 135, 137, 138–9, 140; informal procedure 135, 137; investigations 139; making a complaint 134, 135, 136, 139; malicious or vexatious complaints 135, 139; against Members of the House 140–1; political and outside pressure 140 right to be accompanied 138; sources of support 136; witnesses 135, 137; see *also* **Conduct; Disciplinary policy and procedure; Equality and diversity**
 Gross misconduct 14, 19, 124, 128–9, 159
 Guests see Visitors 19, 32, 37, 39
 gymnasium, Westminster 32–3

H

Hansard 6
 Harassment 5, 12–13, 14, 17, 128, 134, 136; see *also* **Conduct; Equality and diversity**
 Heads of Office: responsibilities of 2, 7, 11, 32, 37; annual leave arrangements 71, 72; criminal offences and cautions 118; expenses authorisation 57; expiry of fixed-term contracts 159; flexible working applications 65–6; fraud and bribery policy 175, 177, 178, 179; gifts and hospitality policy 167, 168; health and safety 22, 25; impartiality 114; information security 148; lieu days 75, 91; managed moves 44–5; overtime authorisation 53; secondment applications 48; severe travel disruption 69; special leave arrangements 73, 74–5; staff bankruptcy/insolvency 119; staff conduct 115, 117, 118; staff resignation 154; staff retirement 156; staff training and development 105, 107–9, 110, 111; staff working hours 62
Health, Safety and Wellbeing 22–30; accidents at work 28; alcohol and drug misuse policy 27; breaches of health and safety policy 129; display screen equipment (DSE) 25–6; eyesight tests 26; fire safety 23–4; First Aid and medical facilities 29; HSC Committee 23, 93; line managers 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 134;

Office Health and Safety co-ordinators 22, 23, 25; physiotherapy 26; policies 22, 25–7; risk assessments 25, 80–1; smoking policy 26–7; training 22, 23, 25, 106
 see *also* Accidents; **First Aid**; Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service (SHWS)

Higher education 7, 56, 110–12 see *also* Professional qualifications

Holiday entitlement see **Leave**

Home working see Flexible Working 65, 67–9

Hospitality and gifts 32, 59, 116–17, 120, 121, 167–73

Hours of work see **Working hours and patterns**

Human Resources Office 2, 6; adoption 86, 87; annual appraisals 101, 103; bicycle loans 35; car parking 40; career break scheme 77; data protection 150; disciplinary procedures 122, 123–33; disclosing malpractice 179–80; expiry of contracts 158–9; eyesight tests 26; fixed-term and temporary staff 11; fraud and bribery policy 175; gifts and hospitality policy 173; grievances 134, 137, 138–9, 140; learning and development 104, 105, 106, 110; maternity leave and return to work 82, 83, 84; parental leave 91; paternity leave 88, 90; pay and/or allowance queries 49; physiotherapy 26; references 39; resignations 154; retirement 156, 157; security clearance 19; sickness absence 93, 96; staff searches 120; tickets for special events 36; unsatisfactory attendance procedure 97–8; your pregnancy 80, 81, 82, 95; see *also* Career progression

I

ICT security 145–9, 178

ICT services and training 7

Impartiality, political 113–15

Income Tax 2, 49, 52

Induction courses 9, 23

Information Office 6

Information security 145–9, 178

Insolvency and bankruptcy 119

Insurance arrangements see Travel and subsistence expenses

Internet, rules for use 116, 129, 143–4

Interview skills training 106

Interviews, job 46–7

Investigations, disciplinary and grievance 123, 124, 125–6, 139

J

Job shares 65 see *also* Flexible working requests

Job vacancies 44–7, 48

Journal Office 6

Jury service 75

K

'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) days 76, 85–6

L

Last day of service 160

Late duty allowance 54–5

Late-night transport 40

Learning and development

childcare costs 36; display screen equipment (DSE) 25; equality and diversity 12, 105–6; fire awareness 23, 105; First Aid 106; fraud and bribery 106, 176; further and higher education 7, 56, 110–12; health and safety 22, 106; interview skills 106; performance management/appraisal system 101, 106; probation 9; professional qualifications 7, 55, 56, 107–10; roles and responsibilities 104–5; specialist and professional 107–8; staff appraisals 105, 108; Training Liaison Officer 105; work-related 107;

Leave

adoption 86–7, 89–90, 91; annual 63, 70–2, 82; antenatal care 81; disrupted, cancelled or delayed 72; expectant fathers 81; lieu days 64, 75, 91; observance of religious festivals 74; outstanding on resignation 154; parental and caring 68, 74, 90–1; paternity and adoption 86–90; during pregnancy 82; recess and recall to House 71–2, 85, 91; special 68, 71, 73–5, 91, 92; study and educational 109–10, 112; Whitley Committee 42, 74 *see also* Career breaks scheme;

Maternity leave; Sickness absence

Legislation Office 6

Lending and borrowing money 119

Level transfers 45, 47

Library 6, 38

Library clerks 32, 47, 51, 102

Lieu days 64, 75, 91

Line managers

attendance management action 96, 97–8; disciplinary procedures 124, 125; expiry of fixed-term contracts 158–9; fraud and bribery policy 177–8; grievances 136, 137, 138, 140–1; health and safety 22, 23, 24, 25, 28; ICT and information security 116, 144, 145–6, 147, 149; investigations 125; leave 71; notification of pregnancy 80; overtime authorisation 53; performance improvement procedure 121; risk assessments 81; severe travel disruption 68, 69; sickness absence 72, 93, 95–6, 99; special leave arrangements 73, 74–5; staff bankruptcy/insolvency 119; staff training and development 104, 107–8, 110, 111, 112; your last day of service 160 *see also* **Appraisals, annual**

Loans 30, 35

London Mutual Credit Union (LMCU) 52
 Loss or theft of equipment or data 149, 178
 Lost property 39, 149, 178

M

Mail, suspicious 21
 Malicious and vexatious complaints 135, 139
 Malpractice, disclosing (whistleblowing) 121, 133, 175, 179–80
 Malware (malicious software) 145
 Managed moves (career progression) 44
 Married and unmarried partners at work see *also* Family Relationships and Married, Civil and Unmarried Partnerships at work 119–20
Maternity leave 79–86, 133; accrued annual leave 85; career break scheme and 77, 78; ‘Keeping in Touch’ (KIT) days 85–6; leave entitlement 82; overlap with sickness absence 95; pay entitlement 5, 78, 83–4, 85, 86; pensions 84; resignation 86; returning to work 84–6;
 Mediation in workplace disputes 137
 Medical facilities 29
 Members of the House, complaints about 140–1, 179
 Misconduct 14, 19, 124, 128–9, 159; see *also* **Conduct; Disciplinary policy and procedure; Equality and Diversity; Grievance policy and procedure**
 Multi-faith prayer room 34

N

National Insurance deductions 2, 49, 52, 163, 164
 Network and system security 129, 145–9
 New mothers 84–6
 Night duty allowances 53, 54–5
 Notice periods
 dismissal 159; fixed-term contracts 158; resignation 154
 Notification
 of pregnancy 80; of sick absence 72, 93–4, 95
 Nurses and medical room 29

O

Occasional homeworking see *also* Flexible Working Requests 67–8
 Office Communicator, rules for use of 116, 144
 Offices of the Administration 5–7
 Official stationery and photocopying 116
 Organisational charts 2

Overnight subsistence 57, 61
 Overpayments of salary, allowances and expenses 51–2
 Overseas Office 6, 56
 Overseas travel and subsistence 59, 60, 61
 Overtime 42, 53, 54, 55, 62

P

P45s 160
 Parental leave 36, 68, 74, 90–1, 92, 133
 Parking 40
 Parliamentary ICT (PICT) 7, 143, 145–9, 178
 Parliamentary Security Director 18
 Part-time staff 53, 62, 65
 Partial retirement 156
 Passes 18, 19, 20, 37, 39, 40, 160
 Passwords and network access control 145, 147
 Paternity leave and pay 5, 87–90
Pay 49–55; adoption 5, 86, 89–90; appraisals and performance 50, 51; bands A-E 50, 53, 54; career breaks 76; Catering and retail staff 53, 54; Fast stream and Library clerks 51; Housekeepers 51; Income Tax 2, 49, 52; increases 50; maternity 5, 78, 83–4, 85, 86; National Insurance deductions 2, 49, 52, 163, 164; negotiations 6, 42, 43, 49–50; non-consolidated awards 50, 51; overpayments 51–2; overtime 42, 53, 62; night duty 54, 55, 62; on promotion 51; repayment of 28–9, 52; revalorisation 50, 51, 77; Saturday and Sunday working 54; senior staff 51; sick 28–9, 76, 81, 92–3; statutory maternity 79, 83–84; statutory paternity 5, 87, 88, 89–90; temporary promotions 47; underpayments 51–2; voluntary deductions 52; see also **Allowances; Expenses;** Financial assistance; Parental responsibilities; **Pensions;** Special leave; **Working hours and patterns**
Pensions 42, 52, 161–6; auto-enrolment 163–4; benefits 155, 164–5; career breaks 77; Classic and Classic Plus 161–2, 166; death benefits 165; early retirement 155–6; maternity leave 84; nominated partners 165; Nuvos 161, 163; opting out 163–4; overtime payments 53, 54, 55; Partnership scheme 162; Premium 161, 164–5, 166; on resignation 154–5; on retirement 155–6; Second State 163–4; stakeholder 163; supplementing 162–3; transfers 166;
 Performance issues, disciplinary procedure see **Conduct; Disciplinary policy and procedure; Grievance policy and procedure; Sickness absence**
 Performance management 100–3, 106 see also **Appraisals, annual**
 Performance of public duties 4, 74
 Personal belongings 21, 39

Personal details, change of 11, 166
Political activities 114–15
Political and outside pressure 140
Political impartiality 113–15
Post Office 38
Prayer Room, multi-faith 34
Pregnancy 4, 25, 133; annual leave 82; notification of 80; rest in work 82; sick leave during 81, 95; time off for antenatal care 81; workplace risk assessments 80–1
Principal Statement of Employment Particulars 8
Printed Paper Office 6
Private telephone calls 115–16
Probation 9–10, 98–9, 100–1
Professional qualifications 7, 55, 56, 107–9
Promotions *see* Career progression
Property and Office Services 7
Property, personal 21, 39
Protection of sensitive data beyond the Parliamentary Estate 147–8
Protective Marking Scheme 147
Public comment, work related 117
Public duties, performance of 4, 74

Q

Queen's Birthday Parade (Trooping the Colour) 38

R

Recall of the House 72
Recesses 37, 71–2, 85, 91, 95
Records management 7, 133, 151–3
Recruitment and retention allowance 55
Recruitment, selection and promotion 6, 44–8, 51, 77
References 39
Rehabilitation after sickness absence 96
Religious festivals, leave to observe 74
Resignation 77–8, 154–5
Restaurants and cafeterias 31–2
Retirement 96, 155–6, 160, 166 *see also* **Pensions**
Return to work interviews following sick absence 95–6
Returning to work
 after career breaks 77–8; after maternity leave 84–5, 95–6
Risk assessments 25, 80–1

S

Safeguarding official information 116, 145–51

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Service (SHWS) 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30, 33, 80, 96, 97–8, 122, 124, 136, 157

Saint Margaret's Church 34

Salaries see **Pay**

Saturday and Sunday working 54

Searches 19, 120

Season ticket loans 35

Second jobs and other outside occupations 63–4, 129

Secondments 9, 48

Security 17–21, 24, 29; alerts 21; clearance 11, 19; fire safety 23–4, 105; network and information 129, 145–9; passes and parking permits 18, 19, 20, 37, 39, 40, 160; passwords 145, 147; personal belongings 21; roles and responsibilities 17; searches 19, 120; suspicious mail and packages 21; visitors 19

Security Control 18, 20, 21, 24, 29

Selection board (recruitment) 46

Self certificates 72, 94, 95

Severe travel disruption 69

Sickness absence 92–9; accidents at work 28, 94; during annual leave 72, 95; attendance management action 95, 96–8; notification of 72, 93–4, 95; pay entitlement 92–3; during pregnancy 81, 95; during probation 98–9; during recesses 95; rehabilitation after 96; return to work interviews 95–6; second jobs 129; self certificates and fitness to work notes 72, 94, 95, 96

Smoking policy 26–7

Social media 148

Societies and associations, Civil Service 33

Software, use of 144, 146

Spam emails 143

Speaker's Chaplain 34

Special events 38

Special leave 7, 68, 73–5, 91, 92

SPIRE 145, 152

Sports and Social Club 26, 33

State Opening of Parliament 38

Stationery, official 116

Statutory Maternity Pay 79, 83–84

Study leave 109–10, 112

Subsistence 57–61

Support for staff 17, 136; see also **First Aid; Safety, Health and Welfare Service (SHWS); trade unions**

Suspension 118, 124

T

Table Office 6

Tax, Income 2, 49, 52

Telephone calls 115–16

Temporary

appointments 9, 10, 32, 36, 93; promotions 47, 55; see *also* Fixed-term contracts

Termination 154

Terrace, House of Lords: access 37

Theft 21, 128, 175

Time-keeping 69, 129

Time off see **Leave; Sickness Absence**

Trade unions 2, 4, 41–3, 52, 63, 74, 93, 98, 103, 122, 126–7, 133, 136, 137, 140, 157

Traffic offences 118

Training and development see **Learning and development**

Transport loans 35

Transport, late night 40

Travel and subsistence expenses 56–61; authorisation of expenses 56; cash advances 58; corporate credit cards 57, 58; disruption/emergency 68, 69; insurance 59, 60; learning and development 112; making a travel expense claim 57; mileage rates for private transport 59; overnight expenses 57, 61; overseas 57, 59, 60, 61; receipts 57, 58, 60; work related travel by car 58, 59

Travel Office 3

Tribunals, employment 98, 132–3

U

Unauthorised absence 94, 129

Unfair dismissal see **Appeals; Dismissal; Grievance policy and procedure**

Uniform allowances 55

Unions see **Trade unions**

Unpaid leave 7, 68, 69, 73–5, 90–1, 110, 112

Unsatisfactory attendance procedure 10, 95, 96–8, 122

V

Vacancies, job 44–7, 48

Victimisation 12–13, 15, 17, 128, 134, 136 *see also* **Conduct; Equality and diversity; Grievance policy and procedure**

Viruses, computer 143, 145

Visitor route 37

Visitors, staff responsibilities for 19, 32, 37, 39

Voluntary deductions from pay 52

Voluntary redundancy 156

Vouchers, childcare 36

W

Welfare Fund 30

Westminster Abbey 39

Westminster gymnasium 32–3

Whistleblowing policy 121, 133, 179–80

Whitley Committee 1, 42, 74

Working hours and patterns 2, 7, 17, 42, 53, 62–9; breaks between periods of duty 63; breaks during working hours 63; contractual hours 62; flexible working 64–7, 77; home working 65, 67–8; opting out of WTR 63, 133; severe travel disruption 68, 69; Working Time Regulations (WTR) 63, 64; Zero-hour contracts 62

Written warnings 98–9, 130–1, 133

Z

Zero-hours appointments 9, 45, 62, 70, 93

List of acronyms

ACAS	Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service	MyHR	House of Lords online HR Self Service
AFS	Administrative Fast Stream	ML	Maternity Leave
AIP	Accidents, Incidents and Permits (p.25)	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
CRS	Catering and Retail Services	OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
DHR	Director of Human Resources	P45	'Details of employee leaving work form'
DPA	Data Protection Act 1998	PAYE	Pay As You Earn
DSE	Display Screen Equipment	PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions	PICT	Parliamentary Information and Communications Technology
EHIC	European Health Insurance Card	PPCS	Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Services
EU	European Union	QW	Qualifying Week
EWK	Expected Week of Childbirth	S2P	State Second Pension
FoI	Freedom of Information	SCS	Senior Civil Service
FTA	Fixed Term Appointment	SHWS	Safety, Health and Welfare Services
HLSPS	House of Lords Staff Pension Scheme	SMP	Statutory Maternity Pay
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs	SMPI	Statutory Maternity Pay Form
HOP	Houses of Parliament	SPIRE	Parliamentary Corporate Information Management System
HR	Human Resources	TLO	Training Liaison Officer
HRO	Human Resources Office	TUS	Trade Union Side
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	WTR	Working Time Regulations
KIT	Keeping in Touch		
LEA	Local Education Authority		
LMCU	London Mutual Credit Union		
LTPP	Long Term Temporary Promotion		
MA	Maternity Allowance		
MAT BI	Maternity Certificate		
MyCSP	My Civil Service Pension Administrator		

