Becoming a Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate

*Code of Conduct & Application Form*

**If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or on coloured paper, please contact the LDHQ Candidates team on**  **candidates@libdems.org.uk****.**

# Code of Conduct

The Party considers that the actions and behaviour of approved and licensed candidates will be subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public or of the Party.

Approved and licensed candidates should be aware that their actions in both their public and their private life might have an adverse impact not only on their own reputation but also on that of the Party. Behaviour which is unlawful, dishonest, deceitful, violent or threatening in their public or private life may constitute bringing the Party into disrepute, which is grounds for permanent removal from the list of approved candidates under section 19.3 of the Federal Constitution.

In order to qualify for inclusion on the list of approved candidates, members must sign up to the following code of conduct. Failing to follow this code of conduct will constitute *prima facie* grounds for removal from the list of approved candidates. In addition, if elected, failing to follow this code of conduct may result in the Whip being withdrawn.

1. You must treat others with respect, and must not bully or intimidate any Party member, member of Party staff, member of Parliamentary staff, Party volunteer or member of the public.
2. You must act in such a way as to promote the values of the Liberal Democrats and must not act in a way that is contrary to the interests or values of the Party. This includes your use of language, whether spoken or written, and content on digital or social media platforms.
3. You must complete any declarations of private interest that the Party requires, and, if elected, must complete the Official Register of Interests or equivalent as supplied to Members and any declaration required by the Electoral Commission.
4. You must at all times comply with the current versions of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and the Representation of the People Act 1983 and any other relevant legislation and must provide information regarding expenses or donations as required by the Party.
5. You must at all times comply with the Party’s data protection and data security policies when dealing with any data to which you may be given access by the Party.
6. You must give consent to and provide the details necessary for the Party to undertake (or to authorise an approved third party to undertake) an audit of your social media profile when requested.
7. You must abide by the Party’s internal selection and election rules, and by any other Code of Conduct that has been signed up to by the Party.
8. If asked by your state party, you must complete a post-election review after each general election, whether or not you stood as a candidate.
9. You must appoint an election agent who has been trained and certified by the Party, provided that a suitable person is available and willing to undertake the role.
10. If asked by your state party, you must agree a Candidate Compact with the local party (or parties) within three months of being selected as the prospective parliamentary candidate for a seat.
11. If elected, and if asked by your state party, you must make a reasonable contribution towards ongoing party activity, which will include a financial element, the exact level to be determined following the election by agreement with the relevant regional party and by reference to any relevant guidance then in force.
12. You must signify your agreement to this Code of Conduct to the Returning Officer at the start of any selection process in which you participate.
13. You must not bring, or risk bringing, the Party into disrepute.

**Eligibility Criteria**

Certain categories of people are not legally eligible to stand for Parliament. It is the responsibility of Parliamentary Candidates to ensure that they are legally eligible to stand for election to the House of Commons or European Parliament. Details of the relevant Acts of Parliament can be found via the following link to the [Office of Public Sector Information website.](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1975/cukpga_19750024_en_1)

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the categories of people who are identified as ineligible to stand for Parliament in statute or common law. In some cases although a person may be legally ineligible to stand he or she may be eligible to become an approved candidate (e.g. if he or she is currently under 18 but is likely to turn 18 before nominations close for the next General Election). Therefore, if any of the following apply or may apply to you, **you must contact the Candidates’ Office with full details**. Failure to do so will constitute prima facie grounds for removal from the list of Approved Candidates.

 People who are not eligible to stand for Parliament (source: The Agent’s Manual 2007 ed.)

· **Aliens[[1]](#footnote-1)** - Westminster Parliamentary candidates must be citizens of the UK, the Republic of Ireland or the Commonwealth. European Parliamentary candidates must be citizens of the EU resident in the UK.

· **Infants\*** - people under the age of 18.

· **Peers of the Realm** - members of the current House of Lords (with the exception of Irish Peers). Ex-members of the House of Lords **are** entitled to stand for the House of Commons.

· **Bankrupts\*** - if they are currently un-discharged bankrupts, or if they were discharged less than five years ago.

· **Convicts\*** - currently detained at Her Majesty's pleasure, or at large when they should be detained!

· **Office Holders** - civil servants, members of the armed forces, police, those holding certain judicial offices, and members of named tribunals, commissions and bodies.

· **Disqualified** - by reason of having been convicted of corrupt practices and banned from standing.

 **Other legal issues**

Many standard election law reference works contain information suggesting that people who are “Deaf and Dumb” cannot stand for Parliament. This is an archaic term that is now generally considered offensive and is very difficult to define in modern terms. In addition, the relevant area of common law is a complex one that may be in conflict with subsequent Disability and Human Rights legislation. If you are concerned that this may affect you, please contact the Candidates’ Office for further advice. **This will not affect your eligibility to become an approved candidate.**

**Personal Disclosure**

In addition to signing the code of conduct, and confirming that they are legally eligible to stand for election the Party has identified the following specific circumstances which applicants for approval are required to disclose on application. If any of the following apply or may apply to you, **you must contact the Candidates’ Office with full details**. This will not necessarily affect your application for approval, but failure to disclose any relevant information will constitute prima facie grounds for removal from the list of Approved Candidates.

1. You have at any time been convicted of any offence by any court, whether civil or military, in the UK or elsewhere.
2. You have at any time, in the UK or elsewhere, been censured, disciplined or publicly criticised by any professional body to which you belong or belonged, or been dismissed on disciplinary grounds from any office or employment, or been refused entry to any profession or occupation.
3. You have at any time been adjudicated bankrupt by a court in the UK or elsewhere.
4. You have or have ever had any Court judgements against you.
5. You have, in connection with the formation or management of any body corporate, been adjudged by a court in the UK or elsewhere, civilly or criminally liable for any fraud, misfeasance or other misconduct towards such a body, or any members thereof, or to persons with whom the body corporate had dealings.
6. Any body corporate with which you were associated as a director or principal shareholder, in the UK or elsewhere, has been compulsorily wound up or made any compromise or arrangement with its creditors who did not receive or have not yet received full settlement of their claims, either whilst you were associated with it or within one year after you ceased to be associated with it.
7. There are any proceedings, whether criminal or civil, now pending or threatened against you, or any circumstances now subsist, which could give rise to any such proceedings following an affirmative answer to any of 1 to 6 above.
8. There are any aspects of your private or public life that might have a detrimental effect on your candidacy or your career if elected, or have the potential to bring you or the Party into disrepute.

**Declaration**

**The Liberal Democrats reserve the right at any time to check on any experience, achievements, qualifications and skills claimed by you on your application form and on any**

**information provided by you in support of your application. By signing this form you will be providing us with your agreement for us to proceed with this course of action.**

**I declare** that to the best of my knowledge and belief, all particulars I have given as part of my application for approval as a Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate are complete and true.

**I declare** that I will sign and keep up to date all personal and financial declarations as required.

**I declare** that I will abide by the Code of Conduct for Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidates.

**I declare** that I have read the Eligibility Criteria and Personal Disclosure information, and that I have notified the Candidates’ Office of any relevant information as required.

**I declare** that I will in the future notify the Candidates’ Office of any change in my circumstances in relation to the Eligibility Criteria and Personal Disclosure information.

**I understand** that any false declaration or misleading statement or any significant omission in the information I provide may constitute prima facie grounds for my removal from the list of approved candidates and, if elected to Parliament, may result in the Whip being withdrawn.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name: |   | Signed: |   |
| Witness name:  |   | Signed: |   |
| Address: |   | Date: |   |
| Occupation: |  |   |   |

**I agree** for any personal data I provide to the Candidates’ Office be held in accordance with the Liberal Democrat privacy policy, a copy of which is available at https://www.libdems.org.uk/privacy.

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# Application Form

**The approval process is divided into four parts:**

1. You submit a completed application pack to the Candidates’ Office.
2. The Candidates’ Office process your application, which will include a check of the code of conduct and references.
3. A Digital Risk Assessment is conducted into your social media history by a third-party company called “SocialMediaCheck.com”.
4. You attend an assessment day, where your performance in the exercises on the day is assessed against the competency framework.

**This application form does not form part of your assessment and it will not be seen by the assessors who will grade you on the assessment day.**

**The information gathered on this form is broken down in the following sections:**

1. **Personal details and contact information**

The contact information you give us here will be used to update your record on the membership database and to contact you to arrange your assessment day. If you are added to the approved list we will contact you to ask you to confirm your public contact details.

1. **Social Media & Digital Risk Assessment**

Upon submitting your application, you will receive an email from SocialMediaCheck.com, a Digital Risk Assessment Company, requesting consent to check publicly available information connected to your online activity. To progress through the application process, you will need to consent to this social media check.

1. **Logistical information**

This information is used by the Candidates’ Office and your State or Regional Party to arrange your assessment day.

1. **CV - work and life experience and brief biography**

This information will be used for background checks and will be checked with your referees if appropriate. It will also be used, if you are selected as a Parliamentary Candidate, as part of your profile on the Party website. You will be asked to update this information if it is used in this way. **The information on your application form is not seen by the assessment team; they will base their assessment purely upon your performance during the assessment day.**

1. **References**

Please provide the name of 3 referees who we can contact regarding your application before your assessment day.

1. **Training and development**

We ask members to give us details of any Party training that they have attended, and any other work they have done in preparation for the assessment day, to enable us to evaluate our pre-assessment support and development programme.

## How to complete these forms

* Please complete the attached forms electronically.
* Save this document to your computer as a Word document (with a .doc or .docx suffix).
* Return this document by email (as an attachment) to us at candidates@libdems.org.uk.
* We are committed to ensuring that the approvals process is accessible to all applicants. If you require any help filling in these forms, or would like the forms in an alternative format please contact us at candidates@libdems.org.uk.

## Return checklist

* One copy of the application form by email to: candidates@libdems.org.uk
* A recent photo of you, sent to: candidates@libdems.org.uk
* One signed copy of the declaration to: candidates@libdems.org.uk. *This can be in the form of a scan, photo or as a hardcopy in the post.*
* £75 Administration Fee through the portal at: <https://libdems.secure.force.com/DonationPage/donation/assessment-day-pay> *The Party is committed to ensuring that candidacy is open to all Party members regardless of ability to pay. If this fee would present you with any problems please contact the Candidates’ Office in complete confidence.*

## Personal details and contact information

If you enter your details on this website, the Liberal Democrats, locally and nationally, may use information in it, including your political views, to further our objectives, share it with our elected representatives and/or contact you in future using any of the means provided. Some contacts may be automated. You may opt out of some or all contacts or exercise your other legal rights by contacting us. Further details are in our Privacy Policy at [www.libdems.org.uk/privacy](http://www.libdems.org.uk/privacy)

**Please note that we expect all approved candidates to keep us informed of their most up-to-date contact details, including mobile number and email address, so that they can be contacted in the event of a General Election or Parliamentary By-election.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** |       |
| **First name** |       |
| **Last name** |       |
| **Any other name you have been known by** |       |
| **Membership Number** |       |
| **Postal Address**  |       |
| **Email address** |       |
| **Home No.** |       |
| **Work / Daytime No.** |       |
| **Mobile No.** |       |
| **Website Address** |       |

Are you aware of any unresolved complaints against you in the Party system? yes/no (please delete as appropriate.

If yes, please give a brief overview here:

**Logistical Information**

Assessment days will be organised by Regional Parties in England, or State Parties in Scotland and Wales, and are held in a variety of locations. The information below will be used to let your Region or State know where you are able to travel for an assessment day and if you require us to make any adjustments to the day to make it accessible for you.

Please indicate in which of the following areas you are able to attend an assessment day:

Devon and Cornwall ☐ East Midlands ☐ East of England ☐

London ☐ North West ☐ Northern ☐

South Central ☐ South East ☐ West Midlands ☐

Western Counties ☐ Yorks & Humber ☐ Scotland ☐

Wales ☐

If you would like any further information regarding specific locations for assessment days please contact us on candidates@libdems.org.uk.

**Accessibility**

We are committed to making our assessment process accessible to all applicants. The day includes 2 written exercises, both 45 minutes long, and separated by exercises that don’t require writing. Exercises will be timed and there is also some group work. We can make adjustments to ensure that all applicants can be assessed fairly.

Do you need us to make any specific adjustments in order to make the assessment day accessible to you? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please give brief details of your impairment and any specific adjustments you would like us to make:

And/or

Please indicate if you would like us to contact you to discuss what adjustments can be made: Yes ☐ No ☐

 **Equality and Diversity**

The Liberal Democrats are committed to encouraging equality and diversity across the Party and by completing this section of the application you will be helping us to achieve that, but this is entirely voluntary.

The information you provide will be used for monitoring purposes.

You can withdraw your consent for us to process this data at anytime by contacting the Candidates Office candidates@libdems.org.uk or by emailing data.protection@libdems.org.uk.

**Gender** Man ☐ Woman ☐ Intersex ☐ Non-binary ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here …………………….

 **Age** 16-24☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-34 ☐ 35-39☐ 40-44 ☐ 45-49 ☐ 50-54 ☐55-59 ☐ 60-64 ☐ 65+ ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

**What is your ethnicity?**

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. Please tick the appropriate box

***White***

English ☐ Welsh ☐ Scottish ☐ Northern Irish ☐ Irish ☐

British ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Any other white background, please write in:

***Mixed/multiple ethnic groups***

White and Black Caribbean ☐ White and Black African ☐ White and Asian ☐ Prefer not to say ☐ Any other mixed background, please write in:

***Asian/Asian British***

Indian ☐ Pakistani ☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Chinese ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Any other Asian background, please write in:

***Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British***

African ☐ Caribbean ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please write in:

***Other ethnic group***

Arab ☐ Prefer not to say ☐ Any other ethnic group, please write in:

**Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition?**

Yes☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

**What is your sexual orientation?**

Heterosexual ☐ Gay ☐ Lesbian ☐ Bisexual ☐

Prefer not to say ☐ If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here ……………………………………………….….

**What is your religion or belief?**

No religion or belief ☐ Buddhist ☐ Christian ☐ Hindu ☐ Jewish ☐

Muslim ☐ Sikh ☐ Prefer not to say ☐ If other religion or belief, please write in:

**CV – work and life experience**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Dates** |
| **Current occupation** |       |       |
| **Professional qualifications and/or degree** |       |       |
| **Experience (details of paid employment and voluntary work in the last 5 years)** |       |       |
| **Lib Dem experience (e.g. any Party Office held, any SAO posts held, any Council experience and posts held)** |       |       |
| **Memberships of any political, community, campaigning or religious groups outside the Lib Dems in the last 5 years (for biographical information only)** |       |       |
| **Any other relevant experience or qualifications.** |       |       |

**Brief Biography**

This will be entered into our database, so that we can create a website profile for you immediately if you are selected for a seat at a later date. For this reason, please make the biography as generic as possible. Please write in the third person, and in such a way that the biography will not date (i.e. “Vik has two teenage children”, rather than “Vik has 2 children, aged 13 and 15” or “Jane was elected to the council in 2007” rather than “Jane has been a councillor for 2 years”).

You will be asked to submit an up-to-date biography and photo if you are selected. Please note that we reserve the right to edit all biographies before publishing them.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Referees

Please provide us with the details of 3 people who we can contact about your application. **At least one of your referees must be an office holder of a Local, Regional or State Party within the Liberal Democrats.** The other 2 need not be Party members. Referees will be asked to give evidence of their experience of you in relation to:

1. Your good character;
2. Your suitability to hold public office;
3. Anything that could be a cause for concern in relation to the Code of Conduct or Eligibility Criteria.

Unsatisfactory references will be investigated, and may be considered grounds for rejecting an application for assessment, or for not adding an applicant to the approved list. Applicants have the right to appeal if they feel that their rights under the constitution have been breached.

Referees must not be:

* blood relatives or those with whom you are in a ‘spousal’ partnership;
* your employees;
* anyone who has a financial or contractual obligation to you, or who is in your debt.

You should have known your referees for at least 12 months, and they must be people with whom you have worked, in either a voluntary or paid capacity, or people who have been in a position to see how you work in the last 2 years. References may be considered unsatisfactory if the referee indicates to us that they are unable to provide any significant evidence because they have a limited knowledge of a candidate. Suitable referees might include, but are not limited to, the following groups of people:

* Former or current employers;
* Teachers from school or university;
* Community Leaders;
* Members of any Groups or Organisations with which you are involved;
* Members of any Campaign Team with whom you have worked.

**Referee 1 (Party Office holder)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Membership no.** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Party Office held** |  |
| **Email** |  |
| **Telephone (day)** |  |
| **Telephone (mobile)** |  |

**Referee 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Membership no. (if appropriate)** |  |
| **Postal Address** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Telephone (day)** |  |
| **Telephone (mobile)** |  |

**Referee 3**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Membership no. (if appropriate)** |  |
| **Postal Address** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Telephone (day)** |  |
| **Telephone (mobile)** |  |

## Training and development

In order that we can monitor our pre-assessment day training and support programme, please give us details of any Party training you have attended, mentoring you have had or activities you have undertaken in preparation for attending the assessment day. Please note that this will not form part of the assessment.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of activity (training, mentoring, campaigning in a by-election etc.)** | Details of which competencies were covered | Dates |
|  |       |       |
|  |       |       |
|  |       |       |
|  |       |       |

**Thank you for completing this form.**

Please return to candidates@libdems.org.uk

1. Please note that these are the legal terms as defined in standard election law reference works, which is why they may seem rather outdated! [↑](#footnote-ref-1)