

RULES ON LOBBYING FOR NON-DEPARTMENTAL PUBLIC BODIES

The rules set out below reflect the long standing principles that public bodies must be politically impartial and must at all times ensure the proper use of public money. **All NDPBs must comply with these restrictions.** Departments should ensure that these rules are reflected in individual bodies' Framework Documents. It will be a requirement of the new NDPB review process that Departments assure compliance with these restrictions on a regular basis. The Cabinet Office will build these principles into a new Code of Conduct for board members to ensure that boards of NDPBs are properly accountable for any failures to comply with these rules.

Any questions on these rules should be directed toward the Propriety and Ethics Team in the Cabinet Office.

Advertising

- NDPBs must comply with Government conventions on publicity and advertising¹. They should ensure that any publicity or advertising is:
 - relevant to their responsibilities;
 - objective and explanatory;
 - not party political and not liable to misrepresentation as being party political; and
 - produced and distributed in an economic and relevant way, having regard to the need to justify the costs as proper expenditure of public funds.

¹ NDPBs must also comply with the terms of the recent freeze.

- NDPBs must seek advice from their sponsoring department in all cases where the use of publicity and advertising might be regarded as novel or contentious.

PR and Marketing

- It should be exceptional for NDPBs to use PR or marketing consultants. Any requests to use PR or marketing consultants must be agreed by both the sponsoring Department and the Cabinet Office.
- NDPBs must never employ external firms or consultants to influence or attempt to influence Parliament, Government or political parties². This includes attempting to influence the awarding or renewal of contracts and grants and attempting to influence legislative or regulatory action. To do so would be a clear misuse of public money.

Attendance at Party Conference

- NDPBs must abide by Cabinet Office rules on attendance at Party Conferences. As the rules make clear, it should be exceptional for board members or staff of NDPBs to attend Party Conferences in an official capacity. Any requests to attend must be approved by both the sponsoring Department and the Cabinet Office.

² This includes firms and consultants engaged in “political consultancy”, “stakeholder management”, “strategic communications”, “public affairs”, “policy tracking”, “advocacy”, “strategic counsel” and “engagement with public policy makers and opinion formers”.