



Cabinet Office

Annual Report on Special Advisers 2025

17 July 2025



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Present to Parliament pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 4 of section 16 of the
Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010

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Special Advisers

Special advisers are a critical part of the team supporting ministers. They add a political dimension to the advice and assistance available to ministers while reinforcing the political impartiality of the permanent Civil Service by distinguishing the source of political advice and support.

Special advisers should be fully integrated into the functioning of government. They are part of the team working closely alongside civil servants to deliver ministers' priorities. They can help ministers on matters where the work of government and the work of the government party overlap and where it would be inappropriate for permanent civil servants to become involved. They are appointed to serve the Prime Minister and the Government as a whole, not just their appointing minister.

In accordance with section 16 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, the Cabinet Office publishes an annual report containing the number and costs of special advisers. This information is presented below and can be read alongside the Cabinet Office Annual Report and Accounts 2024-2025, which shall be published in due course.

The Cabinet Office also routinely publishes the names of all special advisers along with information on salaries and pay bands. In accordance with the approach taken by other government departments in balancing transparency with individuals' right to privacy, the salaries of those special advisers earning equivalent to senior civil servants (£76,000 and above) are given in bands of £5,000¹.

The information provided in this report relates to the 2024/25 financial year, from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025. As this period included the 2024 UK General Election, the Special Adviser total paybill include costs from the current administration and previous administration.

Number of Special Advisers

As at 31 March 2025, there were 130 (128.67 full-time equivalent) special advisers working across Government. The total Civil Service had 550,130 (516,455 full-time equivalent) civil servants as at March 2025². Special advisers represent 0.02 per cent of the Civil Service workforce (full time equivalent)³.

Cost of Special Advisers

The special adviser paybill for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 was £16.7 million. This includes £3.1 million paid in severance payments to special advisers, and a pay

¹ The first band of published salaries is given as a range of £4,000 (£76,000-£79,999).

² Information taken from [Public Sector Employment Dataset March 2025](#), Office for National Statistics.

³ Based on information taken from [Public Sector Employment Dataset March 2025](#), Office for National Statistics.

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award of 5% for eligible special advisers. The pay award was in line with the headline award for the Senior Civil Service.

A special adviser's appointment automatically ends when their appointing minister ceases to hold the ministerial office in relation to which the adviser was appointed to assist, or if earlier, immediately following a parliamentary general election. In accordance with paragraph 18 of the Model Contract for Special Advisers, a special adviser is entitled to receive a severance payment in these circumstances. Special advisers who are subsequently reappointed are required to repay their severance as laid out in the Model Contract for Special Advisers.

	1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
Salary Costs	£9.5m	£10.0m
National Insurance Contributions	£1.6m	£1.3m
Pension Contributions	£2.5m	£2.7m
Severance Costs	£3.1m	£0.3m
Total Pay Costs	£16.7m	£14.4m

Special Adviser Pay Policy

The Cabinet Office is responsible for Special Adviser Pay Policy. There are four pay bands for special advisers as set out below.

Pay Band 1 Junior Special Adviser - £42,525 to £55,650

Pay Band 2 Special Adviser - £59,850 to £88,200

Pay Band 3 Senior Special Adviser - £76,650 to £115,500

Pay Band 4 Special Adviser Leadership - £107,100 to £180,000

Each role is individually assessed and assigned a band according to the level and scope of responsibility required. Starting salaries are set within the relevant band reflecting the skill-set and expertise that an individual brings to the role.

Thorough benchmarking exercises are regularly carried out across the cohort to ensure the pay policy is being applied fairly and consistently. Salaries may be reviewed where there has been a material change in responsibility, or where an individual has demonstrated increased experience and their pay has not otherwise changed in the preceding two years.

A probation period was introduced for new special advisers in December 2023, during which time their suitability for the role will be assessed. If a special adviser fails to meet the expected standards of conduct, attendance or performance, then their employment may be terminated during the probation period.

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Special Advisers' Declarations of Interest

As with all civil servants, special advisers must ensure that no conflict arises, or could be perceived to arise, between their public duties and their private interests, financial or otherwise.

Special advisers declare interests to their Permanent Secretary in the appointing department for consideration, in line with the Declaration of Interests policy. The personal information which special advisers disclose to the Permanent Secretary is treated in confidence. All special advisers have submitted a completed declaration of interests form, including nil returns in instances where there was no actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest. Where relevant to the role, and to help manage a perception of conflict or to explain how a conflict is being managed, interests will be published on an annual basis in, or alongside, the relevant departmental Annual Report and Accounts. This provides a balance between transparency and privacy.

The declared interests of all those employed in the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 have been considered for publication, including those who have since left their department.

List of Special Advisers

This list reflects the special advisers in post as of 31 March 2025, working across the whole of government.

Appointing Minister	Special Adviser	Pay Band	Salary Band (if £76,000 or above)
The Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, Minister for the Civil Service, Minister for the Union – The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP	Vidhya Alakeson	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Varun Chandra	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Jill Cuthbertson	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Stephanie Driver	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Stuart Ingham	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Liz Lloyd	4	£145,000-£149,999
	James Lyons	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Morgan McSweeney	4	£155,000-£159,999
	Paul Ovenden	4	£115,000-£119,999
	Jonathan Powell	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Ravinder Athwal	3	£115,000-£119,999
	Lidia Fanzo	3	£80,000-£84,999
	Shu Fei Grindlay	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Amelia Impey	3	£80,000-£84,999
	Joy Johnston	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Alan Lockey	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Muneera Lula	3	£76,000-£79,999
	Charlotte Malton	3	£100,000-£104,999
	George Mason	3	£80,000-£84,999
	Calum Masters	3	£80,000-£84,999
	Sophie Nazemi	3	£115,000-£119,999
	Harvey Redgrave	3	£115,000-£119,999
	Pete Robbins ⁴	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Carys Roberts	3	£100,000-£104,999
	Elizabeth Robinson	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Caitlin Roper	3	£105,000-£109,999
	Alexander Roycroft	3	£80,000-£84,999

⁴ Works part time - the salary band shown represents the full time equivalent, the actual salary is prorated.

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	Rachel Statham	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Claire Stewart ⁵	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Tom Webb	3	£100,000-£104,999
	Nick Williams	3	£80,000-£84,999
	Isabel Abbs	2	
	James Carroll	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Joseph Cox	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Jessica George	2	
	Jason Keen	2	£80,000-£84,999
	Matt Langford	2	
	Abigail Martin	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Adam McNicholas	2	£80,000-£84,999
	Henna Shah	2	£80,000-£84,999
	Abby Tomlinson	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Tessa Tyler Todd	2	£76,000-£79,999
Deputy Prime Minister; Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government - The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP	Nick Parrott	3	£100,000-£104,999
	Isabel Bull	2	
	Daniel Coyne	2	
	Alex Jones	2	£80,000-£84,999
	Ffion Meagher	2	
	Kate Robson	2	
Chancellor of the Exchequer - The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP	Katie Martin	4	£115,000-£119,999
	John Van Reenan ^{5 6}	4	£145,000-£149,999
	Neil Amin-Smith ⁶	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Benjamin Nunn	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Matt Pound	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Rhodri Thomas	3	£100,000-£104,999
	Spencer Thompson ⁶	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Anna Valero ⁶	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Phoebe Plomer	2	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Minister for	Alaina MacDonald	3	£95,000-£99,999

⁵ Works part time - the salary band shown represents the full time equivalent, the actual salary is prorated.

⁶ The special advisers are part of the Council of Economic Advisers.

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Intergovernmental Relations - The Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP	John Stevens	3	£95,000-£99,999
	James Kilmartin	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Joseph Knight	2	
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs – The Rt Hon David Lammy MP	Jon Garvie	3	£95,000-£99,999
	Will Heilpern	2	£80,000-£84,999
	Ben Judah	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Thomas Raines	2	£80,000-£84,999
Secretary of State for the Home Department – The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP	Amy Richards	3	£100,000-£104,999
	Jessica Leigh	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Damian McBride	2	£85,000-£89,999
	Natasha McDonagh Collett	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Callum Tipple	2	£76,000-£79,999
Secretary of State for Defence – The Rt Hon John Healey MP	Daniel Harris	3	£80,000-£84,999
	Thomas Hughes	2	
	Rachel Smethers	2	
	Georgina Smith	2	
Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice – The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP	Sophie Linden	3	£115,000-£119,999
	Joshua Williams	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Natasha Brewis	2	
	Poppy Terry	2	
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care – The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP	Sarah Harrison	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Thomas Gardiner	2	
	Heather Iqbal	2	£80,000-£84,999
	Kirsty O'Brien	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Will Prescott	2	£80,000-£84,999
Secretary of State for Education; Minister for Women and Equalities – The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP	Owain Mumford	2	
	Rosy Roche	2	
	Vicky Salt	2	
	Tim Waters	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Ben Fazakerley	1	
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net	Tobias Garnett	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Tim Bliss	2	

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Zero – The Rt Ed Miliband MP	Jonty Leibowitz	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Oliver Nicholson	2	
	Eleanor Salter ⁷	2	
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions – The Rt Hon Liz Kendall MP	Graeme Cooke	3	£115,00-£119,999
	Bex Bailey	2	£85,000-£89,999
	Alex Zatman	2	£76,000-£79,999
Secretary of State for Business and Trade, President of the Board of Trade – The Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP	John Bachelor	2	
	Jack Glynn	2	
	Sophia Kewell	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Fionnuala McGoldrick	2	£76,000-£79,999
Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology – The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP Secretary of State for Transport – The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP	Nicola Bartlett	2	
	Billy French	2	
	Darren Murphy	2	£85,000-£89,999
	Ryan Denston	2	
	Stefanie Lehmann	2	£80,000-£84,999
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP	Joe Corry-Roake	2	
	Olly Longworth	2	
	Eleanor Salter ⁷	2	
	Jamie Williams	2	
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport – The Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP	Owen Alun-John	2	
	Richard Howarth	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Harjeet Sahota	2	
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland - The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP	Francis Grove-White	2	
	Claire Tighe	2	
Secretary of State for Scotland – The Rt Hon Ian Murray MP	Kieron Higgins	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Callum Munro	2	£76,000-£79,999
Secretary of State for Wales – The Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP	Rhys Clyne	2	
	Matthew Hexter	2	
Lord President of the Council; Leader of the	Anthony McCaul	2	

⁷ Works 50% time for the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Rt Ed Milliband MP and 50% time for the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs the Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP and so therefore appears in this list under both ministers. The salary band shown represents the full time equivalent, the actual salary is prorated.

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House of Commons –The Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP	Amy Provan	2	
Lord Privy Seal; Leader of the House of Lords - The Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Basildon	Ian Parker	3	£85,000-£89,999
	Ben Coffman	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Daniel Stevens	2	
	Clare Scally	1	
Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Chief Whip) – The Rt Hon Sir Alan Campbell MP	Hana Al-Izzi	2	
	Simon Puddick	2	
	Grace Wright	2	
Chief Secretary to the Treasury – The Rt Hon Darren Jones MP	Felicity Slater	3	£85,000-£89,999
Attorney General – The Rt Hon Lord Hermer KC	Chris McQuiggin	2	£76,000-£79,999
Paymaster General, Minister for the Cabinet Office (Minister for the Constitution and European Union Relations) – The Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP	James Bevan	2	£76,000-£79,999
	Robert Keenan	2	

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