Political Donations Overview: existing rules and what is changing

Handling instructions

- *This document is intended to support understanding of the changes proposed in the Government's Representation of the People Bill introduced on 12 February 2026 and subsequently amended.* ***It should not be considered formal guidance.***
- *The table presents an overview of the key steps in the donations process in these proposals. It has been simplified for ease of reference and* ***is not a substitute for official guidance*** *once legislation is finalised.*
- *The content reflects the current policy at the time of Bill introduction and is subject to amendment.*

Step 1.
Identify in what capacity are you receiving this donation, gift or hospitality.

If you are receiving a gift in a ministerial capacity, then you should follow the Ministerial Code.

If you are receiving a donation in your capacity as an MP, member of a political party or as a candidate standing for election, then the donations rules referred to below may apply to you.

Step 2. What is the value?
This will tell you whether it is a donation regulated by electoral law, and when you may need to declare it in Parliament's Register of Members' Financial Interests.

Parties	**MPs (or others in elected roles)**	**Candidates**	**Ministers**	**Unincorporated Associations (UAs)**
Under £500 – rules do not apply **£500 or above** – follow donation rules	**Under £300** – rules don't apply **£300 and above** - declare in Members' register **£500 and above** - declare in Members' register and follow donation rules	**Under £50** – rules do not apply **£50 and above** - follow donation rules	Ministers cannot accept financial donations. Gifts or hospitality accepted in a ministerial role must dealt with in line with the Ministerial Code.	UAs which make donations totalling more than **£11,180** in a calendar year must ensure that all gifts over **£500** used to make donations have come from permissible sources.

Step 3. Check the donation is from a permissible donor

If the donation is over the relevant threshold set out above, then you must follow existing permissibility rules (unless exempt).

For example, donations from individuals are only permitted if they are on a UK electoral register. The full list of permissible donors is set out in PPERA and the Electoral Commission provides guidance on the appropriate checks.

Additional rules changes sitting alongside the steps above

Step 4. New ban on political donations made in cryptoassets

Following the recommendation made by the independent Rycroft report, we are introducing a ban on the use of cryptoassets as political donations. Any donations made in the form of cryptoassets are not permitted and must be returned. This ban is retrospective, so any cryptoasset donations received from 25 March 2026 will need to be returned or forfeited within 30 days of the provisions coming into force.



Step 5. New criteria for company donations

We are proposing to introduce stricter criteria for donations received from companies or limited liability partnerships, unless the donation is exempt**. We intend to apply this to all recipients of donations under electoral law (parties, party members, MPs, candidates, etc.)

There are two new criteria that you (the recipient) must check:

1. **Persons of Significant Control (PSCs) of the company donating:**

- If there are any PSCs then they will need to meet conditions designed to ensure that majority control rests with UK electors or citizens.
- For example:
    - If the company is majority owned by another company, it will not pass this requirement.
    - If all PSCs are UK electors or UK citizens usually resident in the UK then the company will pass this requirement

2. **Assessment of sufficient profit**

- The company or LLP donating will need to have demonstrated making sufficient profit in the five years ending immediately before the beginning of the calendar year in which the donation is received to justify its donation.

Assessing these criteria will require checks using information on Companies House and following the Electoral Commission's guidance. In some cases, you may need to request information from the donor company to make your assessment.

**These stricter rules do not apply if the donation is non-cash in-kind support (specifically if it is sponsorship, paid expenses, or discounted services) *AND* the total value of non-cash in kind donation(s) from that donor in the same calendar year is £2,230 or less.

Step 6. New criteria for individuals with limited UK ties

We are introducing new rules to prevent individuals without substantive physical ties to the UK from donating or engaging in regulated transactions above an aggregated amount £100,000 per annum.

Before commencement, individuals who fall under the regime, and are referred to as 'overseas contributors' include:

- Registered overseas electors;
- Previously registered overseas electors who became resident after 25 March 2026 and have been not resident in the UK at any point since the beginning of the calendar year prior to the year in which the donation was made.
- Individuals who moved to the UK from abroad from 6 July 2026 who were not previously on the electoral register (limited to a £100,000 per calendar year donation cap per recipient)

After commencement, individuals who fall under the regime include:

- Registered overseas electors;
- Individuals who were not resident in the UK during any period since the beginning of the calendar year prior to the year in which the donation was made.

If you have no reasonable grounds to believe that this declaration is false, you are permitted to accept the donation, subject to other requirements noted in this flowchart.

If you have reasonable grounds to believe that the declaration is false, you must carry out additional checks or return the donation to the donor. A donation that would cause the donor to exceed the applicable annual cap must not be accepted.

Donations made after commencement which are deemed impermissible must be returned within 30 days of receipt. Impermissible donations made during the retrospective window must be returned within 60 days of commencement.

Step 7. New *Know Your Donor* requirements

If you receive donations from a donor of any type that amounts to more than £11,180 then you will be required to conduct enhanced due diligence in the form of "risk assessments".

These assessments will need to consider certain factors beyond strict permissibility, such as size and nature of the donation.

The Electoral Commission will produce guidance detailing how to conduct a risk assessment.