



 **House of Commons
Committees**

Select Committee Team Application Support Pack

Welcome from James Rhys, SCT Managing Director

Welcome to the Select Committee Team (SCT) at the House of Commons. We provide impartial support to select committees that scrutinise Government policy.

Joining us means being part of a collaborative and inclusive environment where your contributions will help committees to decide what to investigate, gather evidence on topical issues and make recommendations to Government.

We help committees achieve maximum impact for their work. This includes providing policy, operational, communications, engagement and procedural advice to MPs and arranging events and committee hearings.

If you're passionate about making a difference and thrive in a dynamic setting, SCT is the place for you.



Our values

We're proud of our organisational values, and we're looking for people who can bring them to life:



Inclusive: We value everyone equally. We respect each other and all have voice.



Courageous: We try new things. We own our actions and decisions and learn from our mistakes.



Trusted: We trust each other to do a good job. We're impartial and build confidence in Parliament through our integrity.



Collaborative: We share our knowledge and experience. We work towards a shared vision and know we work better in partnership.

How to use this guide

The Select Committee Team (SCT) in the House of Commons support those select committees who scrutinise government policy and administration – primarily the departmental select committees and also cross-cutting committees, such as the Public Accounts and Environmental Audit Committees.

This pack offers guidance on how to apply for roles in SCT.

Alongside this information pack, you should read the job description in full. The job description will provide an overview of the team you are applying for, as well as role specific responsibilities and requirements.

Quick links



Watch our [video on how select committees work](#) to find out more about what they do.



Explore the [work of select committees](#) on their websites or watch an evidence session on [parliamentlive.tv](#).



Read our [Guide for Select Committee Members](#) to learn about the impact select committee inquiries can make.



Application process

- For most of our roles, we ask you to fill out an online application form.
- This typically involves responding to competency related criteria. These describe the skills and experience we are looking for in a candidate.
- You will have 500 words to tell us how your skills, knowledge and experience meet the criteria.
- You can save your application and come back to it any time before the deadline.
- Depending on the role, we might ask for a CV and supporting statement instead of an application form.

Selection process

- For roles in Select Committee Team, the competency related criteria are tested at both written application and interview stage.
- For written applications, each answer is carefully scored against the criteria. The highest scoring candidates are invited to interview.
- For some roles, a written test or presentation may be required. We'll always clearly communicate which criteria you'll be tested on and how at every stage.
- At interview, we ask questions about the competency related criteria. This allows us to go into more detail, understand how you approach tasks and explore why you approach them in that way. You can use the same example at interview to tell us how you meet the criteria.

Approaching your application

- A common problem with applications is that they don't explain how someone accomplished something. We are interested in how and why you did something, not just what you did.
- Be specific. Give your answers depth, avoid sweeping or general statements.
- We need you to demonstrate good evidence for how you meet the criteria.
- Make sure you cover all aspects of the criteria.
- Most candidate use 1 to 3 examples for each criterion. For example, for communication, you might wish to use one example for written communication and one example for oral communication.
- Don't forget to use the word limit!



A helpful structure for answering criteria questions: STAR



Situation: What was the situation?

5%
of your
response



Task: What was your task or target?

10%
of your
response



Action: What did you do? How did you do it?

75%
of your
response



Result: What was the outcome of your actions?

10%
of your
response

Top tips

Be concise! Clear and focused answers make it easier for us to understand your skills and experiences

Ensure that your answer makes it clear what you did and why it demonstrates the competency.

Be careful about using words like “we”. Sometimes it might be necessary to describe what other people or your team did, but the panel can only give marks based on your actions.

Top tips

Think about whether the examples you use are relevant for the role you're applying for, and the criteria set out on the form. They should show the skills, knowledge and experiences that you need to meet for the role.

Have someone look at your application. Good applications tend to take multiple drafts and it's always valuable to have someone else look at your application and provide feedback wherever possible.



Common mistakes

Let's consider a communication competency, which is a standard requirement in many of our roles. Imagine a candidate gives the following answer:

"I was tasked with writing a report on the potential implications of [insert subject]. When I produced the report, my line-manager said it was extremely clear."

Common mistakes

Does this answer demonstrate that the candidate can communicate clearly and succinctly?

- No, because it provides no information on how the applicant made the information clear.
- Without information on how someone did something, it's hard for the recruitment panel to understand your approach.
- Sometimes this means saying things that may sound obvious.

Common mistakes

Instead, you could say:

“To help make the information clear, I used bullet points rather than long paragraphs. I also avoided using overly technical terminology and jargon.”

This is why the action element of the STAR approach is the most important. We advise that 75% of your answer explains the actions you took.

Improving your responses

If your response says you 'communicated effectively', we'd likely be looking for:

- An example of written communication
- An example of oral communication
- An explanation of how your communication was clear and succinct
- An explanation of how or why the information was in some way 'complex' and/or how you adapted your communication style to the situation
- What the result or outcome was

Support for you

We can make reasonable adjustments if you need support with completing your application, taking a test, or interviewing. As a Disability Confident Leader, we are committed to ensuring our selection process is equal and inclusive.

Please see our [website](#) or contact the House of Commons Recruitment team to see how we can meet your needs:

Email recruitment@parliament.uk or telephone **0207 219 6011**.

**Good luck with
your application**

