

Standing for a political party

This document is for

Candidates, political parties and election agents who want information about standing on behalf of a registered political party at a Scottish Parliamentary election. In this document we use 'you' to refer to the candidate or party list as appropriate.

The document covers

- Standing for a political party
- Certificate of authorisation to use a party name or description
- Joint descriptions
- Request to use an emblem on the ballot paper
- Use of emblems by candidates using a joint description

Related documents

- [Getting nominated](#)
- [Registering a political party](#)

Forms

- [Nomination papers](#)

Links

- [Register of political parties](#)

2

Standing for a political party

Constituency candidates

If you are standing as a constituency candidate on behalf of a political party, you can use the party's name as the description to appear next to your name on the statement of persons nominated and on the ballot paper.

To use a party's name you must have a certificate of authorisation signed by the party's Nominating Officer (or someone appointed to do this on their behalf).

If authorised, you may insert the word 'Scottish' before the party's name. If the first word of the party name is 'The', then 'Scottish' may be inserted as the second word.

For example:

Party name	Vote Party
Party name preceded by 'Scottish'	Scottish Vote Party

Party name	The Parliament Party
Party name preceded by 'Scottish'	The Scottish Parliament Party

You can also ask for one of the party's official emblems to be printed on the ballot paper.

Regional party list

A party submitting a party list must use the party's name as the description to appear on the statement of persons and parties nominated and on the ballot paper. The party name can be preceded by the word 'Scottish' if it is not already part of the name. If the party name begins with 'The', then 'Scottish' can be inserted after that word.

Important

As a constituency candidate, you can only request to use the party name, not any of the party's other descriptions that are registered with the Commission.

If you are thinking of registering a new party, please see our guidance document:

- [Registering a political party](#)

You can download the full range of nomination papers from our website:

- [Nomination papers](#)

For example:

Party name	Vote Party
Party name preceded by 'Scottish'	Scottish Vote Party

Party name	The Parliament Party
Party name preceded by 'Scottish'	The Scottish Parliament Party

In addition, the party may choose to follow the party name with one of the descriptions the party has [registered with the Commission](#). For example if Vote Party had registered a description of 'Democracy for all', then its regional list could use the following descriptions:

Party name	Vote Party
Party name preceded by 'Scottish'	Scottish Vote Party
Party name followed by description	Vote Party Democracy for all
Party name preceded by 'Scottish', followed by description	Scottish Vote Party Democracy for all

To use a party's name/description a party list must have a certificate of authorisation signed by the party's Nominating Officer (or someone appointed to do this on their behalf).

Regional lists can also request to have a party emblem on the ballot paper.

Joint descriptions

As a constituency candidate, you can stand for election for more than one party and use a joint description. In that case, the candidate would need a certificate of authorisation from the Nominating Officers for each party and they can allow the use of a joint description consisting of the names of each party.

4

For example, if a constituency candidate was standing on behalf of Vote Party and The Parliament Party, they could use any of the following joint descriptions:

Name of one party	Vote Party
Name of one party	The Parliament Party
Name of one party preceded by 'Scottish'	The Scottish Vote Party
Name of one party preceded by 'Scottish'	The Scottish Parliament Party
Names of both parties	The Parliament Party and Vote Party
Names of both parties preceded by 'Scottish'	Scottish Vote Party and The Scottish Parliament Party
Names of both parties, only one preceded by Scottish	The Parliament Party and Scottish Vote Party
Names of both parties, only one preceded by Scottish	The Scottish Parliament Party and Vote Party

A regional list cannot be submitted jointly by two political parties.

Completing the descriptions field on the nomination form

Particular care should be taken when completing the descriptions field on the nomination form. Except for the insertion of the word 'Scottish' to the party name, the party name/description used on the nomination paper must exactly match the party name/description on the [Commission's register of political parties](#). If it does not, the whole nomination paper will be rejected.

The certificate of authorisation

Constituency candidates

If you are a constituency candidate, the certificate of authorisation must state that you can stand on the party's behalf and allow you to use one of the following:

- the exact party name, or
- the party name preceded by the word 'Scottish'

Regional party lists

Regional lists must submit a certificate of authorisation, which must state that the candidates are authorised to stand on behalf of the party and authorise the list to use:

- the exact party name, or
- the party name preceded by the word 'Scottish'

In addition, the certificate may also authorise the list to use one of the party's registered descriptions alongside the party name.

Completing the certificate

Particular care should be taken when completing the certificate of authorisation. If the party name/description included on the certificate does not match the name/description on the nomination paper, the whole nomination will become invalid.

Delivering the certificate of authorisation to the Returning Officer

For the election on 5 May 2011, the certificate of authorisation should be delivered to the Returning Officer at the same time as

If someone who is not the Nominating Officer signs the certificate, it may be helpful for the Nominating Officer to provide evidence to show that they are authorised to act on their behalf in case the Returning Officer is in any doubt.

6

the nomination papers and must be delivered before the close of nominations at 4pm on Tuesday 29 March 2011.

Request to use an emblem on the ballot paper

If a candidate or regional list has been authorised to use a party name/description on the ballot paper, they can also request that one of the party's official emblems is printed on the ballot paper. Emblems can be viewed or downloaded from the [Commission's website](#).

The request to use an emblem must be made in writing. If you are a constituency candidate, the request must be made by you. If you are a party list, then the request must be made by the Nominating Officer (or someone authorised by them).

The Returning Officer will supply a form or, alternatively, you could use the [form produced by the Commission](#).

The request should state both the **name of the political party** and the **description of the emblem** to be used, as listed on the [Commission's website](#). Registered emblems cannot be varied in any way.

Use of emblems by candidates using a joint description

If you are constituency candidate standing under a joint description, you can choose one of the emblems from any of the parties to appear on the ballot paper.

How we can help

You can view our full range of guidance and up-to-date resources on our website.

If it's easier, you can also call us on our number below or email us. We are here to help, so please get in touch.

Call us on: 0131 255 0200

Email us at: infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk

Visit us at www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Translations and other formats

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