

GUIDE TO BECOMING A CONSERVATIVE MP

Are you interested in becoming a Conservative MP?

Do you know what's involved?

Here are some frequently asked questions. Feel free to read the whole document, or get the answers to the questions below by clicking on the question.

WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF BECOMING A PROSPECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE (PPC) THIS PARLIAMENT?

SO, I AM SURE I WOULD LIKE TO STAND. WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

WHAT DOES THAT ENTAIL?

SO WHAT ARE THE SKILLS NEEDED?

I'M A DISABLED APPLICANT. WHAT HELP WILL I GET TO BECOME AN MP?

WILL I NEED TO KNOW ALL YOUR MANIFESTO AND POLICY PROPOSALS?

SO IF I PASS THE PAB, AM I A CANDIDATE?

DO I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING ONCE I AM ON THE APPROVED LIST?

WHAT ABOUT SELECTION PANELS?

BUT I'VE NEVER MADE A SPEECH IN PUBLIC!

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We want to give local associations as diverse a range of potential candidates as possible, with a wide variety of skills and experiences so that our Parliamentary Party can truly represent and reflect the population of our society today. We are not looking for one particular type of person, but people from all backgrounds, all experiences, all ages, men and women from all parts of the country. We, therefore, welcome people from all sections of the community.

It is a responsibility and privilege to serve as a Member of Parliament. This is a vocation like no other. You have a ringside seat as the history of our nation is being made and you get the chance to have some influence over it.

Becoming an MP may seem a daunting and sometimes confusing process. Of course there are no guarantees of success and a great deal is down to your own determination, hard work and talents. But it is worth the effort.

WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF BECOMING A PROSPECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE (PPC) THIS PARLIAMENT?

At the beginning of each Parliamentary cycle, we start the process of establishing a new Approved List of Parliamentary Candidates.

The Candidates Team are keen to talk to you if you are interested in becoming a Parliamentary Candidate and to give you advice on what you can do to improve your chances of getting on to the Approved List. If you are interested in taking the first step please contact the Candidates Team at candidateenquiries@conservatives.com or telephone 020 7984 8127. The Candidates' Team will put you in touch with the Field Team who can help you to get involved in the campaigns near you. They will also arrange either to meet you personally or for you to see another member of their team to discuss your interest further.

SO, I AM SURE I WOULD LIKE TO STAND. WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

This Guide answers some of the questions you may have about standing for Parliament and becoming an MP. It is not meant to be an exhaustive guide, but if you don't find the answer to your questions here then please do not worry. Our Candidates Team is there to help.

The first thing to do is to contact the Candidates' Team at candidateenquiries@conservatives.com or telephone 020 7984 8127. They will be able to advise you on the next steps. Currently to stand for Parliament, you must be over 18 and be a UK, Irish or Commonwealth citizen and not otherwise disqualified. Secondly you will be asked to contact a

GUIDE TO BECOMING A CONSERVATIVE MP, CONTINUED

member of the Field Team, either a Party official or senior volunteer in your area. This will take the form of an informal chat about the process and affords you an opportunity to ask questions.

WHAT DOES THAT ENTAIL?

After you have met with a member of the Field Team, if you decide you do want to apply, you will be asked to fill in an extensive application form, which asks about your experiences, your career, and tries to discover more about you as a person. At the same time you will be asked to submit a Diversity Monitoring Form.

You will also be asked to provide three referees. This could be your employer, or someone else who knows you well, and someone connected with the Party. At least one of your referees should have known you for more than 5 years.

If on the basis of your application form and references it is felt that your experience and skills are suitable you will be invited to attend a Parliamentary Assessment Board (PAB). The PAB lasts for approximately 5 hours, you will be assessed by MPs and senior Party volunteers and is the final stage in the application process. We are looking to discover if you have the skills that are needed to make a good MP. In order to attend a PAB there is a requirement that you are a current Party member and have

been for a minimum of three months. A non-returnable fee of £250 will be charged to cover the Party's costs of hiring the venue and running the assessment day. Our Data Protection Policy for Candidate Applicants describes how we will use your personal data in considering your application.

The assessment process is a tried and tested process, over many years, involving very senior Party professionals, volunteers and MPs and is subject to ongoing monitoring, review and feedback. We are never complacent and are always looking to improve, but the process we have does serve us well and tests the skills we require.

SO WHAT ARE THE SKILLS NEEDED?

We look specifically at the competencies, skills and abilities which are most prevalent in successful candidates and effective MPs.

- Communication skills
- Intellect
- The ability to relate to people
- Leadership and motivational skills
- Resilience and drive
- Conviction (you will be asked about your core beliefs and values)

GUIDE TO BECOMING A CONSERVATIVE MP, CONTINUED

I'M A DISABLED APPLICANT. WHAT HELP WILL I GET TO BECOME AN MP?

We welcome applications from disabled people and if you want to discuss any particular concerns then please contact the Candidates Team. We have worked with the disability organisation, SCOPE, to survey our processes and help us to remove any barriers to disabled applicants. As part of the recruitment process you are asked what we can do to assist you to achieve your potential and we will make, after discussion with you, whatever reasonable adjustments we can to fit your personal circumstances.

If you become a selected candidate and then elected as an MP, the House of Commons will consult with you to ensure reasonable steps are taken to accommodate your needs.

WILL I NEED TO KNOW ALL YOUR MANIFESTO AND POLICY PROPOSALS?

No. We are interested in you as a person and your abilities. The process is designed to stretch, not stress. The PAB assesses how applicants approach an exercise and deal with different situations.

We are looking for men and women who have different skills. We want people with an interest and understanding of the modern world, but once you are on the

List, we will help you gain more knowledge and experience about political issues, and the Party's policies.

SO IF I PASS THE PAB, AM I A CANDIDATE?

People who pass the PAB then go onto our Approved List of Parliamentary Candidates. Not everyone passes the first time; some people do need some training or some more experience before trying again. If this applies you will be entitled to undertake another PAB in the next Parliament. Equally, sometimes we may decide that someone is not suitable to become a candidate, but there are many other ways in which you can still be involved and help our Party. If you fail the PAB we strongly urge you to undergo a full debrief at CCHQ.

Once you are an Approved Candidate, you can apply to constituencies that are selecting a candidate. You will be notified when selections take place. You will also be given training and support to further improve your skills.

DO I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING ONCE I AM ON THE APPROVED LIST?

We will expect you to work hard and actively support the Party. That may include campaigning in your local area, getting involved in social action projects, helping at by elections, participating in networking events and helping the Party nationally. We are in this together:

GUIDE TO BECOMING A CONSERVATIVE MP, CONTINUED

candidates are expected to be active and to get involved.

WHAT ABOUT SELECTION PANELS?

Local constituency associations have the final say in who they choose as their candidate. They will interview applicants, and through the selection process, decide upon their chosen person. The process is thorough and fair, and allows every applicant to present themselves to the best of their ability. Associations want to find out about the real you. You may be required to do a short presentation and answer questions.

BUT I'VE NEVER MADE A SPEECH IN PUBLIC!

Once you are on the Approved List, we can give you support and training. We can help you with things like public speaking, communication and presentational skills, to ensure that you make the most of your potential.

Useful Web Sites

www.conservatives.com

www.parliament.com

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