

How to register your political party | Electoral Commission

How to register your political party View the navigation tree Go to main guidance section: How to register your political party Before you register What you need to do to register Party details Are you intending to contest UK Parliamentary general elections? Your party's officers Identity marks on ballot papers How we assess your identity marks Your financial scheme Your party's constitution Your declaration of assets and liabilities Accounting units Submitting your application How we assess your application How do you object to our decision? After registration

How to register your political party This guidance tells you what you will need to know and do to register a political party or a minor party for the first time. We highly recommend you submit your application via our PEF Online system . We also have paper forms you can download from our website. The Electoral Commission maintains the registers of political parties for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. These are separate registers. Registered political parties and their officers must comply with the law, in particular as set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). These rules include continuous controls on donations, loans, campaign spending, annual accounts, keeping your registered details up to date and annual renewal of your registration. Before deciding to apply, it is important that you read all our published guidance on registering a political party and our guidance for party treasurers to get an understanding of the registration process and the financial reporting obligations. If you fail to comply with the law, you may be subject to civil or criminal sanctions. It is therefore an important part of the registration process that your party demonstrates that it has suitable arrangements and processes to enable the party to comply with the legal framework. In this guidance, we use 'must' when we refer to a specific legal or regulatory requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be minimum good practice, but which are not legal requirements. You do not have to follow this guidance, but if you do, you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Minor parties You can choose to register either a political party or a minor party. A political party can field candidates in all elections in the area they are registered - some or all parts of Great Britain, or in all of Northern Ireland. A minor party can only contest parish council elections in England and/or community council elections in Wales. Minor parties cannot contest elections in Scotland or Northern Ireland. Independent candidates at parish and community council elections can, at the discretion of the Returning Officer, use a description not registered with us provided that the description does not exceed six words in length and cannot be confused with a registered political party. Minor parties are not subject to the same financial reporting obligations that political parties are. Book traversal links for How to register your political party Before you register