

Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities | Electoral Commission Non-party campaigners: Where to start You are in the Non-party campaigners: Where to start section Home Non-party campaigners: Where to start View the navigation tree Go to main guidance section: Non-party campaigners: Where to start What are the rules for non-party campaigners? Elections Act 2022: Changes for non-party campaigners - overview Elections Act 2022: Code of Practice for non-party campaigners Elections Act 2022: New limits on campaigning by non-UK individuals and organisations Elections Act 2022: New notification threshold How to notify us to register as a non-party campaigner Elections Act 2022: Reporting threshold Elections Act 2022: Reporting at a UKPGE What spending is regulated? Does your campaign activity meet the purpose test? Purpose test: Intention Purpose test: Campaigning on an issue What happens if the policy I have been campaigning on is adopted by a political party? Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities Purpose test: The regulated period in an early UK Parliamentary general election Staff costs and other overheads Joint campaigning Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities Some organisations have restrictions on their political activities, for example in their constitution, or charities who are bound by charity law. These organisations may find that abiding by these separate restrictions means that they are less likely to carry out activities that meet the purpose test. This is because the restrictions mean that many of the sorts of campaigns that meet the purpose test are prohibited for those organisations. For example, charities must remain independent of party politics and must not support a political party or candidate, or create a perception of support as a result of their actions or participation. If you are a charity and abide by charity law and guidance from the relevant charity regulator, in most circumstances your campaign activity is unlikely to meet the purpose test. Part of UK Charity regulator Website link England and Wales Charity Commission for England and Wales Scotland OSCR Northern Ireland Charity Commission of Northern Ireland You will still need to be aware of the non-party campaigner rules in case your activities meet the purpose test. In some circumstances, charities can and do carry out campaign activity that is regulated under electoral law. In the recent past, for example the UK Parliamentary general elections in 2015 and 2017, charities have conducted campaigns that met the tests for regulated spending, and have registered with us in accordance with the rules. Our case studies from recent elections provide examples of issues-based campaigning that will be helpful when applying the purpose test to your own campaigns. If you are planning a campaign and you are still unsure how it fits in with the rules for non-party campaigners, please get in touch and we can provide advice. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities What happens if the policy I have been campaigning on is adopted by a political party? Purpose test: The regulated period in an early UK Parliamentary general election