

The idea for a question may originate with the Member, their staff or an agent external to Parliament.

The Member may ask their staff or the library for further research.

The question may be submitted by the Member or by a member of their staff. It may be submitted via email or in person on paper. Questions

cannot - yet - be submitted via PeerHub. Question submission must take place before 5pm either on a sitting day or on a tabling day during recess.

A Member of the House of Lords may table no more than six written questions per day and no more than 12 in a week. A spreadsheet of questions per Lords' Member is checked. This spreadsheet is updated the following day.

The Table Office may spot that the question is a duplicate of a recently tabled question. This is not well enforced.

The Table Office will check that the question is admissible. Questions are inadmissible if, for example: they are on a subject for which the

Government is not responsible, they seek a legal opinion, they ask for agreement from the Government. Rules for admissibility are set out in the Companion to Standing Orders though creative ambiguity may be required. Questions around admissibility may be escalated to the Clerk Assistant. A question being declared inadmissible is referred to as 'carded' in the House of Commons.

If the Table Office declare the question is inadmissible, the Member may reformulate the question over correspondence with the Table Office.

The Table Office may reword a question to match House style. Changes may include adding 'To ask Her Majesty's Government', list styling, stripping adjectives and rewording in neutral terms.

The Table Office will enter admissible questions into LBIS assigned to what they believe to be the appropriate department. The department may or

may not have been indicated by the Member.

From 5pm on a tabling day, the Table Office export submitted questions to Word. The Clerk of the Table Office and the Clerk Assistant edit using track changes. Further edits may be made to match House style at this point. Spell checking also takes place because the textarea in LBIS does not support spell check. Government Whips also have non-edit access and may petition that the question is on a subject that the Government is not responsible for. Sometimes a question may be declared inadmissible at this point.

The Table Office will enter any changes made in Word back into LBIS.

When the House rises on a sitting day, questions having made it this far

When the House rises on a sitting day, questions having made it this far are tabled. It is believed the question UID is generated at this point. The question is sent from LBIS to data.parliament. It is not yet clear of LBIS pushes to data.parliament or if data.parliament polls for changes. QnA polls data.parliament and writes changes to Q&A (internal). An email is sent to the tabling Member.

There is a 30 minute delay following the email to the Member, at which point the question is sent to the web database via Send Data and, from there, published on the website. The question is also made available to Search & Indexing and, via QnA, to the external WQA system and therefore made available to the answering department. WQA has an API, on top of which some departments have built their own management tools. Some departments manage questions via the WQA interface, some through external systems. The clock timing how long the department has to answer starts. The department is expected to answer within 10 working days. XML is exported from LBIS - though this could be from Q&A or data.parliament? The XML lacks markup for information which is structured in LBIS such the question number. The print unit right aligns all the numbers in In Design and outputs a PDF as part of Lords' Business Papers.

The Departmental Parliamentary Team check if the question should be allocated to a different department. Cross-departmental negotiations take place to identify the best home for the question. Once the appropriate home is found, they email the Table Office, who transfer the question in LBIS, from where it is transferred to data.parliament. QnA picks up the change in data.parliament and propagates to Q&A (and Search and

Indexing?) - and from there to the website - and WQA where it's picked up by the Departmental Parliamentary Team in the department the question

Should prorogation or dissolution be announced, the Gatekeepers in both Houses will email the Departmental Parliamentary Teams to inform them

prorogation / dissolution procedure commences. The Departmental Parliamentary Team enter a boilerplate answer into WQA explaining that there

and request answers are expedited. Should prorogation and / or dissolution happen within the 10 working days allocated for answer, a

was not time to provide a full answer. The answer then travels, via QnA, to Q&A - and from there to the website - to data, parliament and to Search and Indexing. Wherever possible, the Minister should also write directly to the Member concerned with a substantive answer within the usual 10 day period expected for a response. For this reason, the question is sent to the Minister's Red Box. The WQA database is wiped at the end of a In order to answer the question, the Departmental Parliamentary Team may need to speak to Special Advisors, policy experts or delivery managers within the department. Or they may also need to communicate with subject matter experts in arms length bodies. Once the information is gathered, the Departmental Parliamentary Team compose an answer. The answer goes to the Minister's Red Box. The Minister may communicate with the Departmental Parliamentary Team in order to clarify the answer. Once the Minister has signed off on the answer, it goes back to the Departmental Parliamentary Team who enter the answer into WQA. Still in WQA, the House of Lords Gatekeeper checks the answer against criteria such as: is it substantive, is it in response to the correct question, does it include a number if the Member asked for a number, are attachments mentioned attached, are links correct. Any tables given in the body text of the answer are copied into Word and Excel to check that they're not too big to work in the two column format of the Daily Report. It is not possible for the Gatekeeper to make textual changes to the answer even to correct typos. Minor corrections may be made in the Daily Report. The Gatekeeper may accept or reject the answer. There are five options for rejection: "Holding answer, inadmissible in the House of Lords", "Answer does not correspond to the question", Attachments missing or links nonfunctioning", "Answer is incomplete" and "Other". Sally only ever uses 'Other' with a free text rejection reason. If the answer is accepted the change in WQA is picked up by QnA and propagated to Q&A. Q&A emails the tabling Member. Following a 30 minute delay the answer is published to the website, data.parliament and Search and Indexing. It is not yet clear which system processes the 30 minute delay but assumed to

editor to check. The 30 minute delay can make the timing of this tricky.

Should the 10 working days - during which the answer is expected - expire with no substantive answer received, the Q&A system publishes the

be Q&A. On sitting days at 6pm - 3pm on Fridays - the Gatekeeper creates a tally of the day's questions in Excel from Q&A and emails it to the Table Office. A PDF is created - the Daily Report - of questions in receipt of an answer since the last sitting. The PDF is sent to the Hansard duty

puestion as part of a list of questions - and the departments they were allocated to - all having exceeding the expected time for answer. This is published as part of the Lords' Business Papers, both in print and online. Should an error with the original answer come to light within the same session, the Minister may issue a correcting answer which is input into WQA by the Departmental Parliamentary Team. If the changes are significant or an answer has already been corrected, a Written Statement will need to be made by the department instead. Again the Departmental Parliamentary Team may need to speak to Special Advisors, policy experts or delivery managers within the department. Or they may also need to communicate with subject matter experts in arm's length bodies. Once the information is gathered, the Departmental Parliamentary Team compose a correcting answer. The correcting answer goes to the Minister's Red Box. The Minister may communicate with the Departmental Parliamentary Team in order to clarify the correcting answer. Once the Minister has signed off on the correcting answer, it goes back to the Departmental Parliamentary Team who enter it into WQA. The correcting answer is appended to the original answer but highlighted as a correction. Still in WQA, the House of Lords Gatekeeper checks the correcting answer against the same criteria as in 16. Again, the Gatekeeper may accept or reject the correcting answer. If the content of an attachment has changed, the title of the attachment will be highlighted, even if the title is identical to that of the attachment in the original answer. However, the changes inside the attachment will not be highlighted. The departments will be asked to include a note to the Gatekeeper, providing a full explanation of the location and the nature of the changes requested. Based on this explanation, the Gatekeeper checks the content of the attachment against the version originally provided. If the correction is substantial, the Gatekeeper may suggest the Minister make a written statement. If the correcting answer is accepted the change in WQA is picked up by QnA and propaGated to Q&A. Q&A emails the tabling Member. Following a 30 minute delay the correcting answer is published to the website, data.parliament and Search and Indexing. It is not yet clear which system processes the 30 minute delay. It is not possible to correct an answer given in one session in a following session because WQA is wiped at the end of a session. A department can only publish one correction per answer each session. Any subsequent correction must be in the form of a written statement. When a correction is made to an answer on the same sitting day the answer is published, only the correct answer is printed in that day's Daily Report, whereas the website shows both versions. Correcting answers received on a date later than the original answer do not appear in the Daily Report. Should an error with an earlier answer or written statement come to light, the Minister may issue a correcting written statement which is input into WQA by the Departmental Parliamentary Team. Again the Departmental Parliamentary Team may need to speak to Special Advisors, policy experts or delivery managers within the department. Or they may also need to communicate with subject matter experts in arms length bodies. Once the information is gathered, the Departmental Parliamentary Team compose a correcting written statement. The correcting written statement goes to the Minister's Red Box. The Minister may communicate with the Departmental Parliamentary Team in order to clarify the correcting written statement. Once the Minister has signed off on the correcting written statement, it goes back to the Departmental Parliamentary Team who enter it into WQA. There is no data connection in WQA between the correcting written statement and the answer or written statement it corrects and therefore no link on the website. This information does not exist until added by IDMS at a later date. Still in WQA, the House of Lords Gatekeeper checks the correcting written statement against the same criteria as in 16. Again, the Gatekeeper may accept or reject the correcting written statement. If the correcting written statement is accepted the change in WQA is picked up by QnA and propagated to Q&A. Q&A emails the tabling Member. Following a 30 minute delay the correcting written statement is published on the website, data.parliament and Search and Indexing. It is not yet clear which system processes the 30 minute delay. On sitting days at 6pm - 3pm on a Friday - a PDF of written statements

since the last sitting day is checked by the Hansard duty editor, then sent to the repo unit to be printed as part of the Daily Report and placed online. The 30 minute delay can make the timing of this tricky. Unlike in the House of Commons, it is not possible to correct a Written Ministerial

Statement via WQA. Corrections to a statement can only be made by the department issuing another Written Ministerial Statement to highlight the