

Select Committees – Frequently Asked Questions

Which party will chair which select committee?

On 9 January, the Conservative, Labour and SNP leaders tabled a motion splitting the position of chair of each select committee between them, after advice from the Speaker on how allocation of these would represent the composition of the House of Commons following the election.

It splits the committees as follows:

- Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Labour
- Defence: Conservative
- Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Conservative
- Education: Conservative
- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Conservative
- Foreign Affairs: Conservative
- Health and Social Care: Conservative
- Home Affairs: Labour
- Housing, Communities and Local Government: Labour
- International Development: Labour
- International Trade: Scottish National Party
- Justice: Conservative
- Northern Ireland Affairs: Conservative
- Science and Technology: Conservative
- Scottish Affairs: Scottish National Party
- Transport: Conservative
- Treasury: Conservative
- Welsh Affairs: Conservative
- Women and Equalities: Conservative
- Work and Pensions: Labour
- Environmental Audit: Conservative
- Exiting the European Union: Labour
- Petitions: Labour
- Procedure: Conservative
- Public Accounts: Labour
- Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs: Conservative
- Standards: Labour

The motion was agreed by MPs on Thursday 16 January.

The Backbench Business Committee must be chaired by a non-Government MP, while the chair of the Liaison Committee (which is made up of the chairs of other committees) is elected from amongst its members.

When will we find out who the candidates are?

Nominations to be the chair of each committee are now open until 4pm on Monday 27 January. Candidates need to be nominated by 15 MPs from their own party (or 10% of their party's MPs if this is lower, as it is for the SNP) and can also be nominated by up to five other MPs. MPs cannot nominate more than one candidate for each chair. Candidates are entitled to submit a 500 word statement and must declare any relevant interests.

For the Backbench Business Committee (whose chair cannot be a member of the governing party, i.e. the Conservatives), 20 to 25 nominations are needed – at least 10 from the governing party, and at least 10 from other MPs.

When will the chairs be chosen?

The election will take place on Wednesday 29 January, from 10am to 4pm. The election uses the Alternative Vote system, with MPs ranking candidates for each chair in order of preference. The result

will be announced by the Speaker following the count; it is possible that this may be at the start of business on the next day.

How long will the chairs serve for?

The chairs will serve until the end of the Parliament, apart from the chair of the Backbench Business Committee who will serve until the end of the current session.

When will we know who the other committee members will be?

Each party elects from its own MPs the members for its places on each committee; a motion is then tabled for the House of Commons to agree the final committee membership.

The amount of time this takes has varied in the past. In 2010 it took 5-7 weeks from the announcement of the chairs; in 2015 it took 3-4 weeks (12 weeks for the Standards Committee); and in 2017 it took 9 weeks (15 weeks for the Standards Committee), although this included the summer recess period.