

MHoC 2.0 Standing Orders & Precedent Log



*V1.1 - Last Updated 17th October 2024
Presented by the Quadrumvirate*

Section 1: Establishing the House of Commons

(1) The Model House of Commons is hereby established and granted legislative authority within the Model UK Parliament. The Model House of Commons shall sit in /r/MHOC, and shall be composed of Members of Parliament elected at a General Election, who sit until Parliament is dissolved by Royal Prerogative. It may act with the full authorities and powers granted hereafter.

(2) Members elected to sit in the House of Commons at a General Election may number no more than 36, with players controlling a single seat as a maximum.

(3) Members will own their seats won, and will have agency to change parties and thus change the makeup of parliament throughout the term.

(4) Players will have the ability to choose a constituency as their own at the point of swearing-in [from this list](#).

(a) A Member must swear-in within a week of election, or the seat shall be deemed abandoned and go to a by-election.

(5) If, at any point, a Member for some reason wishes to resign their seat, they will have to modmail r/MHoC, choosing for it to go to a by-election or go to the next person on the list submitted by the party during the previous election.

(a) This will not apply for activity reviews, and all failed activity reviews (a Member voting in less than 75% of votes, assessed monthly) will go to a by-election.

Section 2: Order in the House

(1) The Members in the Lower House are to keep dignity and order.

(2) The Speaker, or Deputy Speaker, shall call any Member or Members whose conduct is disorderly to order. If the member persists, the Speaker, or the Deputy Speaker, shall name the Member.

(3) Whenever a Member shall have been named by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the chair, of being grossly disorderly, or of persistently and willfully obstructing the business of the House by abusing the rules of the House or otherwise, then if the offence has been committed by such Member in the House, the Speaker or Deputy Speaker shall either-

- (a) Suspend the Member immediately for a maximum of 48 hours, or
- (b) Request that the Speaker suspend the member.
- (4) Any Member who is suspended forfeits their right to vote in any division which starts during their suspension.
- (5) Should a Member feel they have been wrongfully called to order or suspended, they may appeal the decision in the first instance to the Speaker.
- (6) When any Member speaks, they are to address their speech to the Speaker of the House in general.

Section 3: Bills and Motions

- (1) Members are able to submit legislation in the form of Bills and Motions to be debated, as detailed in the [Legislative Guidance Document](#). The Legislation Guide shall contain the current details for the progression of the legislation and the specifics of each stage.
- (2) The House shall read and debate legislation proposed by a Member or a group of Members.
- (3) The length of readings shall be subject to the Speaker's judgement, but otherwise shall be no shorter than five full sitting days - and five full sitting days for the King's Speech.
- (4) Legislation must be original, or credit the original author, and must be materially different to MHoC 1.0 legislation and not a resubmission.
- (5) Members of Parliament may support Bills prior to submission by 'co-sponsoring' those Bills, however this is not a requirement for the Bill to be read.
- (6) The Government is required to submit a King's Speech within seven days of the Government forming, and that King's Speech is to be subject to amendments passed by the House, and is required to pass a Final Division of Members.
- (a) Amendments are made to the Humble Address, which takes the following form:

"Most Gracious Sovereign—We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, beg

leave to thank Your Majesty for the most gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.”

With Amendments taking the following form:

I beg to move an amendment, at the end of the Question to add:

“but respectfully regret that the Gracious Speech does not [...].”

(b) Amendments to the Humble Address can be submitted by the Leader of the Official Opposition (who is allowed two amendments), Unofficial Opposition Party Leaders, Independent Members, and political parties without Members of Parliament (who are all allowed one each).

(7) Members are entitled to submit Bills that are not tied to any particular party, called ‘Private Members Bills’, which are allocated time to be read in the House as per the discretion of the Speaker.

(a) Members of a Frontbench, as defined in Section 5, are not entitled to submit Private Members Bills, but they are allowed to sponsor those from others that they support.

(8) A Member may send a motion to the Speaker or Deputy Speakers, and it is read at the next available allocated slot.

(a) The reading of a motion shall last at least five full days.

(b) After the debate, there shall be a division of at least five full days.

(9) Any Member of Parliament may request to withdraw their Bill or Motion at any stage, however the Member and their party will not be able to resubmit it during the same term to prevent business of the same issue being repeated. However, another Member not in that party may take over the sponsorship of the Bill or Motion at the discretion of the Speaker to prevent Bills being withdrawn vexatiously.

(a) If the Speaker suspects a Bill to be submitted and/or withdrawn vexatiously, they may prevent it happening.

(b) If sponsorship is transferred at third reading, amendments shall also be transferred and the process continues as normal.

(10) Bills shall have a first reading, a second reading, an amendment vote, a third reading, and a Final Division. Unless stated otherwise at the Speaker’s discretion, the timings below are the default position:

(a) 1st Reading — Once a bill is submitted it is made public at the soonest available opportunity.

(b) 2nd Reading — The Bill is posted and is read for at least five full days. Amendments can be submitted at this stage by Members and Non-MPs and debated underneath the comments.

(c) Amendment Vote — MPs can vote on amendments. Generally, a vote is for at least five full days.

(f) 3rd Reading — If amendments are made, the Bill is posted and is read for at least five full days. The Speaker can skip this step if there are no amendments, however there may be situations where not having amendments pass may provoke an interesting debate, and one may be allowed in any case - but the presumption unless otherwise stated is that case is that no 3rd Reading will be necessary.

(g) Final Division — A vote takes place for at least five full days.

(h) Results — the result of the 3rd Reading Vote is published and the Bill either is sent for Royal Assent or thrown out.

(i) A Bill that has been thrown out may not be resubmitted until a new Parliamentary term.

(11) Motion to Recommit

(a) A Member may move that the question be returned to "a legislative stage". If the woolsack finds the move in order, a five day division should be held on moving the business to the proposed stage.

(b) When a Member moves to recommit business, the Speaker or Deputy Speaker shall state the following "The Companion is very clear, as when a motion to recommit be tabled is a most exceptional procedure and this house will not accept it save for circumstances the house believes necessary. So I must ask the mover, if they continue to move the motion to recommit?"

(c) If the moving Member confirms, then the division is to be held immediately on recommitting the business once it concludes its current stage. The successive stage shall continue if the Motion fails.

Section 4: Voting and absences

- (1) After a reading, a division shall be called by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker where the Question, or Questions, is put.
- (2) During a division, Members are asked if they are in favour of the legislation, and may reply 'Aye', 'No', or they may 'Abstain'.
- (3) If more Members vote 'Aye' than 'No', the Question is agreed to otherwise it is not.
- (4) The Speaker may only cast their vote in the event of a tie to break that tie, in favour of either more debate - or maintaining the status quo.
- (5) If fewer than 5% of the total number of sitting Members take part in the division, the Question is not decided, and the division must be rescheduled.
- (6) Members are entitled to leaves of absence for as long as needed, with the requirement of a reason given.
- (7) Members are also entitled to nominate a proxy from their party, or another party or none, of their choosing, so long as a reason is given - to a limit of two weeks maximum.
- (8) If a Member walks through the Division Lobby, the Speaker or Deputy Speaker shall deem that their first vote shall be the vote that is tallied.
 - (a) If a Member deletes a vote and places another, or edits a vote, then they shall be awarded no vote at all and put down as a non-attender to the Division and not tallied.
 - (b) If a Member votes but not in the correct format or spelling, but their vote can be discerned by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker as Aye, No, or Abstain, then their vote shall be tallied accordingly.
 - (c) If a Member's vote is not discernable then their vote shall not be tallied.
 - (d) If a Member has their vote disregarded by the Clerks [M: AutoModerator] then they are entitled to change their vote so that the Clerks can read their vote.
- (9) A Member may vote in any division which opened after they swore in. A Member may not vote on divisions which opened before they swore in.
- (10) At a King's Speech Division, the King's Speech must pass by Negative Majority

- so if it has 17 votes against, 16 votes for, and 3 abstentions then it will pass, for example.

(a) If a King's Speech fails its first vote, the Government will have one extra opportunity to present a King's Speech, before the call for Coalition Formation is re-issued.

(b) Should no Government be able to pass a King's Speech, then a new election will be held, with the term being shortened so as to not disrupt the schedule.

Section 5: Frontbenches

(1) The Government, Official Opposition, and Unofficial Opposition parties are all entitled to 'Frontbenches' - with the Government being the Cabinet, the Opposition being the Shadow Cabinet, and Unofficial Opposition being Spokespeoples.

(2) The Government Cabinet is limited to 66% of Members of Parliament who are Members of the Government, rounded up - so, for example, in a Government of seventeen MPs, the number of MPs in cabinet is limited to 12 (11.22 rounded up).

(a) The Prime Minister is entitled to allocate the role of 'Privy Councillor' to Members and Non-MPs, up to a maximum of ten per term.

(3) Junior Ministers and parliamentary private secretaries (PPS) count towards that cap.

(4) The cap for Official Opposition's Shadow Cabinet, and Unofficial Opposition Party Spokespeople shall be the number within the Government frontbench.

(5) Members of the Government's Cabinet, Junior Ministers or PPS' must be Members of Parliament. This does not apply for the Shadow Cabinet or Unofficial Opposition Spokespeople.

(6) The Leader of the House of Commons shall be entitled to use their position to reorder Government business, otherwise it shall be read in the chronological order that it was submitted. The Shadow Leader of the House of Commons is entitled to perform the same function, but with Official Opposition business.

Section 6: Ministers Questions

(1) At a schedule determined by the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, the Government will be called to answer questions from Members in the House from time to time.

(2) Sessions scheduled are one of the following;

(a) Prime Ministers Questions;

(b) Chancellors Questions;

(c) Foreign Affairs Questions;

(d) Home Affairs Questions;

(e) General Questions;

(f) Negotiated Portfolio Groups, to be decided between the Government and Official Opposition at the commencement of every term.

(3) Questions should be answered within a 5-day period, with new initial questions having been asked within the first 4 days of the session, with the session ending at the end of the fifth day.

(4) Members of Parliament who do not have a portfolio are entitled to ask 2 questions, with a further 2 follow up questions - one to each of their initial questions only, not to be combined and used elsewhere.

(5) Members that are the Shadow Secretary at a relevant session of Questions will get an extra four questions for their brief - if a Member is an Unofficial Opposition Spokesperson, they will get an extra two questions for their brief.

(a) Members that are the Shadow Secretary/Spokesperson for multiple briefs will still only get four/two extra questions - the Member will therefore have to choose which areas they prioritise.

Section 7: Topic Debates

(1) Members may submit questions on a specific Topic at any time in the form of Topic Debate Questions.

(2) These questions will be answered through a general debate in the House for five full days.

(3) These debates shall be held at a regular interval, at the discretion of the Speaker or Deputy Speaker, with any working day being eligible for Topic Debates to be posted.

(4) Relevant Secretary of States may be invited to debate the topic before the House.

(5) The Speaker reserves the right to reject questions, including on the grounds of:

(a) Parliamentarians have recently had the right to question the relevant Secretary of State about this Topic and

(b) The Topic submitted is excessive in length, covers many different Topics, not to the point, or are effectively statements.

Section 8: All-Party Parliamentary Groups

(1) Members may form and create a group of Members of Parliament on a particular cause or issue called an 'All-Party Parliamentary Group' (APPG).

(2) To be constitutional, when being formed and throughout the year, that APPG must consist of at least three Officers, who are also Members of Parliament, from three different Political parties. Those officers are:

(a) a Chairperson; and

(b) a Vice-Chairperson; and

(c) a Secretary.

(3) To form, an APPG must announce its Officers and formation in a post to /r/MHoCPress.

(4) Anyone is entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the APPG by invitation, but they are not entitled to vote unless they are a member of the APPG.

(5) An APPG may establish rules on holding parts of a meeting 'in camera' in exceptional circumstances, where only members will be entitled to attend and speak on that part of the agenda.

(6) MPs and Non-MPs may become members of an APPG by invitation only.

(7) To be constitutional, an APPG must hold a 'Quarterly General Meeting' (QGM) [M: A report to /r/MHoCPress advertising what the APPG has done] to update Members on the business of the APPG for the preceding three months. The first QGM of an APPG must be held three months after its formation.