

A career at Hansard

Working at Hansard

Hansard is an edited report of what was said in Parliament. We accurately report each Member's words during political events. We were there for historic moments such as the breakthroughs in same sex marriage, race discrimination law and equal pay. We also reported on the debates about the Iraq war, the EU referendum, and as MPs paid tribute to Jo Cox. We report everything said in the chamber of the House of Commons. We also report debates in Westminster Hall and Select Committees where the public and expert witnesses give evidence on subjects ranging from high heels in the workplace to prison reform.

Our reporters work to tight deadlines, turning speech into the written word. We stay impartial, state the facts and bring the words of Parliament to the public.

Our Job

Transcribing speech can be complicated. Reporters produce grammatical, fluent copy often from fragmented and lively exchanges. Words and sentences can have multiple interpretations, so reporters need to make subtle judgments.

Each debate, whether on cannabis legalisation or animal cruelty, presents unique challenges. Our reporters have a range of backgrounds, but we all share the ability to think on our feet and make difficult decisions under pressure.

"My first 18 months at Hansard have been great. I get to work with words every day and I spend my time learning about interesting political topics."

Our Team

We value a love of words, an eye for detail and an ability to understand complex arguments. Our collaborative approach allows staff to work together under pressure, producing reports of parliamentary debates that are available on the web just a few hours afterwards.

We look for people with good interpersonal and team working skills. Loyalty is important, and thanks to the interesting and challenging work, many of our staff stay at Hansard to progress their career. You will also have a chance to regularly work with other parts of Parliament on outreach and publication projects.

"We learn from each other. No one can know everything, but more often than not, someone will have the answer."

Our Training

A Hansard career begins with a three-month training course, followed by a further three months of work-based learning in a team of reporters. When reporters pass the assessed training course, they are awarded a postgraduate diploma in parliamentary reporting validated by City, University of London.

Small training groups are led by experienced reporters and editors, and focus on parliamentary reporting, the law-making process and parliamentary procedure. Trainees learn how to develop their writing skills in a fast-paced publishing environment.

Trainees also go behind the scenes and watch debates to see how Parliament really works. The training course features an engaging mix of classroom teaching, one-to-one support and independent learning. It prepares reporters to have the skills, experience and confidence they need to build a career at Hansard.

“The postgraduate diploma tutors really focused on my individual work, which helped me develop quickly.”

Career Progression and Development

Hansard offers a clear career progression with the training and support you need to learn and develop.

As a parliamentary reporter, you'll cover a range of business, from committees debating bills to high-profile parliamentary events.

House reporters sit in the press gallery and report everything in the House of Commons.

Sub-editors check and publish the copy that reporters produce and lead teams in producing Select Committee transcripts.

Overseeing the running of the organisation, the managing editors publish debates from the main chamber, handle MPs' queries, and have a range of management responsibilities.

The editor and deputy editor represent Hansard across the House service, setting strategy and direction.

Hansard staff also regularly work on outreach and publication projects, and you will have the opportunity to get involved. The House of Commons offers a range of internal and external training, shadowing and secondments, along with opportunities to pursue other career paths in Parliament.

Our Recruitment

When you make your application you will also do a short test so we can assess your grammar and current affairs knowledge.

If you're successful at this stage we then invite you to Parliament to test your ability to understand complex arguments and to work quickly and under pressure. As part of this you will be asked to produce a transcript of an MP's speech to a deadline.

In the interview, we will be looking for evidence of teamworking and interpersonal skills and someone who is interested in politics and the workings of democracy.

A Career at Parliament

The House is committed to attracting and retaining talented people from a diverse range of backgrounds. We want to allow every member of the team to contribute their best, regardless of ethnicity, sex, marital status, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

To help with these aims we have established workplace equality networks so people can discuss issues in a supportive environment, hold informative and educational events, challenge policies and practices and meet people with shared interests.

The five WENs are:

ParliREACH (race, ethnicity and cultural heritage issues)

ParliGENDER (gender and gender equality)

ParliOUT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning people)

ParliABLE (disabilities)

ParliON (inclusion and equality of opportunity, raising awareness of social mobility issues, and creating a supportive environment for all)

Think the job might be for you?

Get in touch

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