

S4C Guidelines to Political Parties or Designated Organisations for the Production of Party Political, Party Election or Referendum Campaign Broadcasts (PPB, PEB, RCBs)

March 2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 These Guidelines are designed to cover compliance issues and the 'rules' to be observed by all qualifying parties or designated organisations¹ when producing PPBs, PEBs and/or RCBs for broadcast on S4C. While parties/designated organisations are responsible for the content of the broadcasts, they are required to observe the following guidelines, which have been agreed between the broadcasters and will be applied equally to all parties/designated organisations.
- 1.2 These Guidelines are designed to reconcile the editorial standards of S4C and its audience's expectations with the freedom of political parties/designated organisations to convey their political messages, and to ensure that these are met on all outlets.

2. Compliance

- 2.1 As well as these Guidelines, all PPBs, PEBs and RCBs must comply with the following guidelines and policies as amended from time to time:
 - the Broadcasters Liaison Group ("BLG") Production Guidelines which are available on the BLG website at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/broadcastersliaisongroup/guidelines/production-guidelines-party-broadcasts>;
 - the S4C guidelines on '[Delivery of Party Political, Party Election and Referendum Campaign Broadcasts to S4C](#)' which are available on the S4C production website; and
 - the '[S4C Policy on Party Political Broadcasts \(PPB\), Party Election Broadcasts \(PEB\) and Referendum Broadcasts](#)' which is available on the S4C Unitary Board website.
- 2.2 All broadcasts must observe the law - for example, on copyright, libel, defamation, contempt, incitement to racial hatred or violence etc. Broadcasts must not infringe any of the convention rights as defined in the Human Rights Act 1998 of any person, any right of privacy, right of publicity or any other right of any other nature of any person or contravene the provisions of any statutes (including those relating to the promotion of equal opportunities and fair treatment) regulations or order.
- 2.3 Broadcasts must comply with all relevant codes, guidelines, policies and requirements of Ofcom as issued, amended or replaced from time to time including the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, and during an election or referendum period, the Ofcom Rules on Political and Referendum Broadcasts as amended or supplemented in relation to any particular election or referendum.

¹ as designated by the Electoral Commission under Section 12 of the Political Parties Elections and Referendum Act 2000.

- 2.4 Broadcasts must not be inaccurate or misleading.
- 2.5 Due impartiality on the part of S4C is achieved over the series of PPB/PEB/RCBs as a whole, and therefore there is no obligation to achieve due impartiality within each broadcast.
- 2.6 The party/designated organisation responsible for the broadcast will indemnify S4C in respect of any losses or legal or regulatory actions resulting from the contents of the broadcast or any breach by it of any obligations contained in these Guidelines.

3. Rights

- 3.1 All PPBs, PEBs and RCBs delivered to S4C must grant S4C a licence to broadcast the PPB, PEB or RCB on all services provided by, on behalf of or with the consent of S4C on all platforms worldwide.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the party/designated organisation to ensure that all necessary permissions and third party rights (such as for music and archive footage) have been secured prior to transmission. S4C may seek written confirmation of these rights clearances before transmission.
- 3.3 No identifiable individual should be featured prominently in a broadcast in a way that suggests support for the party making the broadcasts without that person's informed consent which should generally be recorded in writing and be made available to S4C on request. Parties/designated organisations must ensure that individuals who feature in the broadcast are fully informed and agree to participate. In addition, where a child under 16 years appears in the PPB/PEB/RCB, the written consent of the child's parent or guardian must be obtained, and where an individual is unable to give permission, written consent should be obtained from the person (over 18) with primary responsibility for their care.
- 3.4 Parties/designated organisations should take particular care regarding shots of protests featuring people who are not or may not be supporters of the party/designated organisation in question.

4. Third Party Footage & Images

- 4.1 Subject to conditions for licenced use of parliamentary footage (found in the licence and also download conditions of the respective institutions), extracts of recordings of proceedings in Senedd Cymru (the Welsh Parliament), the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly or the London Assembly may be used only if featuring a speech or extract by a member of the party/designated organisation making the broadcast, and the member's consent has been obtained.
- 4.2 Extracts featuring members of a party other than the party making the broadcast must have the consent both of the member and the other party concerned. Wide shots of the chambers of Senedd Cymru (the Welsh Parliament), the Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly are allowed, but wide shots of Westminster chambers during sittings are not.
- 4.3 Use of footage from proceedings in the Houses of Parliament is not permitted, due to the limitations on broadcast use of such footage required by the Parliamentary Recording Unit.

- 4.4 Extracts from party conference speeches of the party allocated the broadcast may be used and can be licenced in the normal way from the broadcasters.
- 4.5 Archive or news clips of members of any other political party should not be included without the consent of the individual and the party concerned. This applies to both visual and audio material alike. Undistorted stills that have been lawfully published previously can normally be used without the individuals' or their party's consent. Stills that have been distorted (for example through text, graphics or visual effects being placed over the political figure) should not be used. Archive footage or undistorted stills of international public figures can normally be used without such individuals' consent, where such use does not imply the support of that figure for the party making the broadcast.
- 4.6 News footage featuring a party/designated organisation's own leader and politicians may be purchased from broadcasters in the usual way but clips which identify the programme in which they featured (for example via on-screen logos, theme music or the voice or face of a presenter/reporter) should be avoided.
- 4.7 If any part of a broadcast has been produced by AI or is synthetic/deepfake content, the party submitting the broadcast must inform S4C when submitting it. AI-produced and synthetic content must not be used in a way that materially misleads viewers, or that results in the unfair treatment or an unwarranted infringement of privacy of a person. If a broadcast features AI-produced or synthetic content, it should be identified to make its use apparent. Subject to the forgoing, use of caricatures or cartoons of politicians should be acceptable in principle.

5. Other Content Issues

- 5.1 Where candidates are included in a party election broadcast there must not be any explicit visual or verbal reference stating the constituency, ward or (in relevant elections) region they are standing in.
- 5.2 In a party election broadcast, no candidate should make a constituency, ward or region point or reference. This is to avoid giving a candidate an unfair advantage, or raising their profile, in their constituency, ward or region.
- 5.3 Images or recordings including broadcasters, such as interviewers or reporters, should be avoided where the impartiality of S4C might be called into question by their inclusion in the broadcast.
- 5.4 The use of actors in a broadcast must be made clear to the audience if there is any possibility that the audience could be confused or misled by their appearance. The same applies to reconstructions.
- 5.5 PPB/PEB/RCBs which closely mimic the format of established programmes on any channel, particularly news programmes, run the risk of misleading the audience and therefore they must be clearly labelled throughout.
- 5.6 No revenue-generating telephone numbers are to be used in a broadcast. Parties who intend to include telephone or text numbers in their broadcasts must consult with S4C at least one week before the transmission date in order to ensure there is appropriate compliance with the strict rules which apply in this area, including the form of words to be used in text and voice. Broadcasts will not be transmitted

The logo for S4C, consisting of the letters 'S4C' in white, bold, sans-serif font, set against a teal-colored parallelogram background.

unless a form of words agreed with S4C is used. Appeals for members of the audience to contact the party/designated organisation at the end of the broadcast by telephone, SMS, URLs, QR code, e-mail etc are allowed, subject to consultation beforehand with S4C. Contact details should be on screen no longer than 30 seconds. Direct appeals for funds or links to such appeals (such as "Have your credit cards handy") are not allowed.

THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN WELSH