

SUBMISSION FORM

For Policy, Business or Emergency Motions and Amendments

Item	Requirement for Proposal of the Item	Deadline for Submissions
A Business or Policy Motion	<input type="checkbox"/> A Local Party or 10 Conference Reps	24 th July 2008
An Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> A Local Party or 5 Conference Reps	18 th September 2008
An Emergency Motion	<input type="checkbox"/> A Local Party or 5 Conference Reps	

Please note that 12 noon on each date is the closing time.

(For the purposes of this form an Associated Organisation shall constitute a Local Party.)

Please type or print the text of the item in this space or **PREFERABLY EMAIL** it to conference@scotlibdems.org.uk

Continue the item on a separate sheet if required.

Submitted by _____ (Signature) On behalf of _____ Local Party

(If the item is submitted on behalf of a number of Conference Representatives please arrange for their Signatures and names in BLOCK CAPITALS to be given on the reverse of this form)

Contact Person

In order to assist the smooth running of Conference the Conference Committee request the name of a person who should be contacted to discuss textual amendments, composition or any other proposed alterations to this item of Conference business.

Name: _____ Address _____

Post Code: _____

Telephone Numbers. - Home: _____ Work: _____

Email: _____

**All the above items of Conference business must be submitted to
The Conference Committee,**

**Scottish Liberal Democrats, 4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5DR - Fax (0131) 337 3566
or emailed to: conference@scotlibdems.org.uk**

How to Produce a Better Motion

1. What does the Conference Committee look for when selecting a motion for the Conference Agenda?

In order to increase the chances of selection a motion must be easy to understand, logically argued and well presented. If the Conference Committee finds it difficult to understand the purpose of a motion or to follow the case it argues it is likely that Conference will also have problems. Equally, and this is harder for anyone drafting a motion to predict, the subject and policy implications of the motion should be in a subject area which is desirable for the Party to make its existing policies or achievements known. Other things being equal, a shorter motion usually has an advantage over a longer one.

2. What features will reduce the chances of a motion being chosen?

Any motion which is unnecessarily long (i.e. a long shopping list of detailed points), uses too many words to convey its message, is incoherent or unclear in parts or seems to be making a speech (try reading it aloud) will reduce its chance of selection. Similarly if the motion says nothing new, restates existing policy, is on an area of policy which has recently been fully debated by Conference or is about to be subject of a policy paper debate, its chances of selection are reduced.

3. How should we go about deciding what our motion should be about and what it should say?

It is useful for anyone drafting a motion to do it around the three Ps:

- the Problem(s) which need to be solved
- the Principle(s) which underlie the solution
- the Proposals which must be the heart of the motion.

4. How should it be written?

Not everyone has the skills which enable spoken views to be translated into a motion which has clarity, coherence and style. You should try and find someone who has this skill - the ability to communicate a message as clearly and briefly as possible - perhaps your best Focus writer, a journalist, teacher or civil servant.

5. Useful words

Relatively few words provide the introduction and links in a motion. The preamble or introduction (which expresses increasing degrees of 'condemns' and 'denounces' to 'rejects'). Some are linked with a 'failure', usually of the government. The motion can then 'reaffirm', 'recognise', 'declare' or just list the principles that apply. Proposals are usually introduced by 'affirms', 'believes', 'calls for', 'recommends', 'proposes', 'urges', 'demands' or 'insists'.

6. Sample motion

The following is an example of a relatively well drafted motion from the Edinburgh 1999 Federal Conference:

Conference notes with dismay the inability of the National Health Service to accommodate recent outbreaks of seasonal disorders, and the resulting threats to ongoing health provision for all citizens.

Conference condemns the Labour Government for failing to address these predictable crises, and in particular their failure to reverse ill-conceived Tory health policies which have resulted in management, resource and staffing debacles.

Conference expresses its support for NHS employees in their struggle to provide high standards of care whilst burdened with inadequate resources, staff shortages and decreasing staff morale. Conference calls upon the Government to redress this appalling situation by:

1. Providing an immediate cash injection to underwrite an increase in high-dependency beds in all regions of the UK, to reduce the under-provision in critical care facilities to bring them up to the level of the rest of Western Europe.
2. Funding critical care training for enough nursing staff to support the additional high-dependency beds.
3. Guaranteeing to improve salaries, conditions and career prospects for nurses.
4. Taking urgent measures to attract back nurses who have left the profession.

Emergency Motions

An emergency motion is not simply a motion about something that happens to be important at the time it is written. An emergency motion is a motion which would otherwise qualify as a policy or business motion but is about a specific recent event which occurred after the deadline for submission of motions. In other words, an emergency motion will only be in order if it is about something that happened after 7th December 2006.

You may find it helpful to indicate the emergency nature of the motion, either by a clause in the motion itself or by attaching a note for information to the Conference Committee.

Emergency motions should be brief - 250 words is a good guide. The Conference Committee is unlikely to select for debate or the ballot motions which are substantially longer than this. Nor should they be capable of amendment.

Amendments

Amendments can be written to any motion on the Final Agenda.

Requests for separate votes are taken at the discretion of the Chair of each debate, but will be viewed less favourably where an opportunity to submit an amendment with the same effect by the usual deadline had not been taken.

Amendments are proposals to change a part of the original motion, or to add a new part or parts. The proposals they make should be of significant importance, should be within the scope of the original motion, and must not be a direct negative.

You may find it helpful to talk to the proposers of the original motion; it is often the case that they may be happy to accept into their motion the points you wish to make.