

PoliMonitor Briefing

PoliMonitor PQs Analysis

Thursday 6th March 2025



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The 2024 General Election saw a record number of new MPs elected to the Commons, following a blowout victory for the Labour Party led by the now Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer. Whilst being the most diverse Parliament in history, this is also arguably one of the most inexperienced, with MPs today still finding their way through the complex corridors of power.

Of course, for many first-term MPs the primary objective is to get re-elected in 5 years' time. For these MPs, the thing at the front of their mind is to communicate to their constituents the work they are doing on their behalf in Westminster. This might take the form of a weekly newsletter, a quarterly leaflet jammed through letterboxes or posts on social media.

But another key metric for their performance is also their work in Parliament. EDMs, PQs and speaking in debates are all effective ways to produce content to feed back to their constituents. But how effective are PQs? Who among the MPs in this latest session of Parliament has been making the most noise through Parliament's Table Office? Who is leading the way among the newest cohort of MPs first elected at last year's election? PoliMonitor has run the numbers. The following briefing outlines the process behind these procedures, and features 'league tables' of MPs measuring their activity in Parliament since the 2024 General Election.

PoliMonitor Briefing:

Parliamentary Questions

Named Day vs. 'Ordinary Questions'

There are two types of Written Parliamentary Questions: named day and ordinary Written Questions.

Named day: Members may table 5 named day questions a day, when the House is sitting, and Departments should provide an answer on the third sitting day after they are tabled. Departments deal with named day questions as a priority, so this is a useful tool for Members who wish to prioritise any Questions they plan to table.

Ordinary: Members can table as many 'ordinary' Written Questions as they'd like during sitting days in the House. Departments are expected to aim to provide an answer within five working days of the question being tabled. Questions answered beyond 10 working days are considered late.

How are Written Questions tabled?

All Questions are sent by MPs to the Table Office, either physically, over email or digitally through Memberhub, the e-tabling system available for members. Whilst there is no limit to the number of questions a Member can table, the House has limited Members to 20 PQs a day that can be tabled through Memberhub.

The Table Office will then ensure that the Question is eligible to be asked.

WPQs must:

- Be related to any matter falling within the responsibility of a minister;
- not offer or seek expressions of opinion;
- not convey information nor advance a proposition, an argument or debate;
- have a factual basis for which the tabling Member is responsible (it may not, for example, seek confirmation or denial of rumours or media reports);
- not seek an expression of opinion on, or an interpretation of, a question of law, since this is for the courts to decide;
- not refer to a matter active before a UK court or court martial (including a coroner's court);
- not ask for information: readily available elsewhere (including in Hansard); or provided or blocked / otherwise denied by the same Minister in the same session;
- not be hypothetical or obviously about opposition policy.

Questions can be ruled out of order by the Table Office because the Government does not have responsibility for that particular issue, such as spending by Local Authorities and Foundation Trusts, court decisions or operational police matters.

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Parliamentary Questions

Questions may not relate to devolved matters unless they seek information that the UK Government is empowered to require of the devolved executive, relate to matters covered or to be covered by legislation introduced in the UK Parliament, concern the operation of a concordat between the UK Government and the devolved executive, concern matters in which UK ministers have taken an official interest, or press for action in areas where UK ministers retain administrative powers.

A question may be withdrawn by the Table Office if the asking Member is appointed to the Government or is elected as Speaker, the question becomes subject to the sub-judice rule, or if the member is suspended on the day which the question is set down for answer.

How are Written Questions answered?

The Government Minister responsible for the department to which a question is answered will answer in writing. How quickly they respond depends on the type of Written Question delivered. The House of Commons Procedure Committee monitors the responses to questions, and can question Ministers and civil servants if response times are slow. Ministers must be accurate and truthful into the information they give. Like many ministerial communications, answers will be not be written by the Minister themselves but instead by civil servants. Government departments will typically have a Parliamentary team which will draft the responses to questions, and they can call on anyone from their department or related bodies to help writing the response.

PoliMonitor analysis - Rupert Runs Riot

An analysis of the PQs - and who asks them - confirms the political approach of the main parties, and also provides further insights into who might help shape policy positions as the opposition parties look to hold the Government to account. For example, it is no surprise that **Rupert Lowe MP** - who has made somewhat of a name for himself for his heavy-handed approach to making use of PQs since joining Parliament, consistently tables questions on the Government's approach to immigration and asylum policy. He has utilised some answers to devastating effect on social media, garnering significant traction on some of the Answers he's received.

The role of political attack dog in the Conservative Party has fallen to former senior Treasury Minister **John Glen MP**, who has been doggedly pursuing answers from the Cabinet Office about the recruitment, retention and remuneration of civil servants - Government waste and inefficiency being a clear dividing line that the Conservatives have been looking to exploit. Elsewhere, **Martin Wrigley MP** of the Liberal Democrats leads his Party's core issue in terms of PQs, tabling a range of questions on sewage, pollution and the environmental impact of private companies. Finally, **Alex Mayer MP** is the most active Labour MP in utilising PQs, a significant achievement for a new backbencher. Like her maiden speech, her PQs reflect her passion for buses and local transport. Notably, **Mike Amesbury MP** would have just pipped Mayer for the top spot, had he not had the whip removed last year. An honourable mention must also go to **Jim Shannon MP** - the veteran DUP MP who is one of the most prolific contributors in parliamentary history, who leads the pack in tabling questions to the Department for Health and Social Care. His contributions aren't just NI specific, but cover a range of areas from cancer screening to the uptake of flu vaccines. Finally, Leader of the Opposition **Kemi Badenoch MP** will be happy with her ranking as the highest ranked party leader in terms of number of PQs, at 25th.

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The top PQers by Party

**Alex Mayer MP**

Intake: 2024
Constituency: Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard
Number of PQs asked: 301 (overall rank: 14th)
Top department: Transport
Top topic: Buses

Labour**John Glen MP**

Intake: 2010
Constituency: Salisbury
Number of PQs asked: 679 (overall rank: 2nd)
Top department: Cabinet Office
Top topic: Recruitment and payment in the civil service

**Conservative****Martin Wrigley**

Intake: 2024
Constituency: Newton Abbot
Number of PQs asked: 259 (overall rank: 20th)
Top department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Top topic: Water and sewage

Liberal Democrats**Rupert Lowe MP**

Intake: 2024
Constituency: Great Yarmouth
Number of PQs asked: 862 (overall rank: 1st)
Top department: Home Office
Top topic: Immigration and asylum

**Reform**

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PoliMonitor PQs Analysis

Parliamentary questions are an important means by which MPs can hold the Government to account. When used thoughtfully that is...

- Andrew Griffith MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Business and Trade

Top of the P(Q)ops: league tables by Department

The following analysis compiled by PoliMonitor provides a breakdown of the number of PQs asked to each Department, as well as the top 5 MPs who are the most frequent 'tablers' of Parliamentary Questions. Notably, both the SNP and the Green Party fail to make the top 5 across any Department.

Are you looking to get an MP to table a PQ to a particular Department? Look no further than the following league tables to find out whom you can rely on to get that Question onto a Minister's desk.

Departmental Top 10

Department	No. Questions	MP asking most questions	Party
Department for Health and Social Care	4739	Jim Shannon	DUP
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	3108	Kevin Hollinrake	Conservative
Home Office	2440	Rupert Lowe	Reform
Department for Education	2389	Damian Hinds	Conservative
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	2219	Joe Robertson	Conservative
Department for Transport	2022	Alex Mayer	Labour
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office	2007	Wendy Morton	Conservative
HM Treasury	1987	John Glen	Conservative
Department for Work and Pensions	1654	Rupert Lowe	Reform

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Department for Health and Social Care			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Jim Shannon	164	DUP
2	Clive Jones	118	Liberal Democrats
3	Rachael Maskell	109	Labour
4	John Hayes	98	Conservative
5	Rupert Lowe	93	Reform

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Kevin Hollinrake	544	Conservative
2	Kemi Badenoch	222	Conservative
3	David Simmonds	170	Conservative
4	Mike Amesbury	139	Independent
5	Paul Holmes	53	Conservative

Home Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Rupert Lowe	285	Reform
2	John Hayes	93	Conservative
3	Ben Obese-Jecty	82	Conservative
4	Nick Timothy	80	Conservative
5	James McMurdock	71	Reform

Department for Education			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Damian Hinds	155	Conservative
2	James McMurdock	69	Reform
3	Neil O'Brien	65	Conservative
4	Laura Trott	46	Conservative
5	John Hayes	45	Conservative

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Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Joe Robertson	60	Conservative
2	Martin Wrigley	51	Liberal Democrats
3	Ben Maguire	50	Liberal Democrats
4	John Hayes	48	Conservative
5-	Andrew Rosindell	48	Conservative
5-	Neil Hudson	48	Conservative

Department for Transport			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Alex Mayer	120	Labour
2	Grahame Morris	50	Labour
3	John Hayes	48	Conservative
4	Jerome Mayhew	47	Conservative
5	Andrew Rosindell	44	Conservative

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Wendy Morton	208	Conservative
2	Andrew Rosindell	91	Conservative
3	Priti Patel	74	Conservative
4	Jim Shannon	66	DUP
5	Abtisam Mohamed	57	Labour

HM Treasury			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	John Glen	75	Conservative
2	Damian Hinds	50	Conservative
3	Richard Holden	41	Conservative
4	Kevin Hollinrake	39	Conservative
5	Blake Stephenson	38	Conservative

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Department for Work and Pensions			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Rupert Lowe	66	Reform
2	Steve Darling	56	Liberal Democrats
3	Neil Duncan-Jordan	49	Labour
4	Helen Whately	42	Conservative
5	James McMurdock	40	Reform

Ministry of Defence			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	James Cartlidge	523	Conservative
2	Mark Francois	124	Conservative
3	David Reed	68	Conservative
4	Ben Obese-Jecty	42	Conservative
5	Andrew Rosindell	39	Conservative

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Andrew Bowie	146	Conservative
2	Nick Timothy	63	Conservative
3	Tom Hayes	56	Labour
4	John Hayes	32	Conservative
5	Mark Garnier	28	Conservative

Cabinet Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	John Glen	377	Conservative
2	Richard Holden	212	Conservative
3	Charlie Dewhurst	96	Conservative
4	Mike Wood	80	Conservative
5	Alex Burghart	45	Conservative

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Department for Business and Trade			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Andrew Griffith	87	Conservative
2	Harriett Baldwin	62	Conservative
3	Alison Griffiths	37	Conservative
4	Clive Jones	35	Liberal Democrats
5-	Kevin Hollinrake	30	Conservative
5-	Adam Jogee	30	Labour

Ministry of Justice			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Rupert Lowe	95	Reform
2	Ben Goldsborough	49	Labour
3	James McMurdock	42	Reform
4	Liz Saville Roberts	42	Plaid Cymru
5	John Hayes	38	Conservative

Department for Science, Innovation and Technology			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Peter Fortune	114	Conservative
2	Andrew Griffith	87	Conservative
3	Ben Obese-Jecty	82	Conservative
4	Ben Spencer	65	Conservative
5	Chi Onwurah	53	Labour

Department for Culture, Media and Sport			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Louie French	29	Conservative
2	John Hayes	27	Conservative
3	Stuart Andrew	20	Conservative
4	Caroline Dinenage	18	Conservative
5-	Luke Evans	17	Conservative
5-	James McMurdock	17	Reform

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Prime Minister's Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	John Glen	139	Conservative
2	Richard Holden	33	Conservative
3	Mike Wood	16	Conservative
4	Paul Holmes	6	Conservative
5-	Priti Patel	4	Conservative
5-	Liam Byrne	4	Labour

Northern Ireland Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Alex Burghart	33	Conservative
2	Jim Allister	20	TUV
3	Jim Shannon	16	DUP
4	Alex Easton	13	Independent
5-	Gregory Campbell	12	DUP
5-	Carla Lockhart	12	DUP

Scotland Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Andrew Bowie	96	Conservative
2	Chris Kane	9	Labour
3	John Lamont	7	Conservative
4	Graeme Downie	6	Labour
5-	John Cooper	4	Conservative
5-	Harriet Cross	4	Conservative

Attorney General's Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	John Hayes	6	Conservative
2	Charlie Dewhirst	5	Conservative
3	Ashley Fox	5	Conservative
4	John Glen	4	Conservative
5	Joe Robertson	4	Conservative

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Wales Office			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Ashley Fox	5	Conservative
2	Charlie Dewhirst	3	Conservative
3	John Glen	2	Conservative
4	Rupert Lowe	2	Reform
5-	Nick Timothy	2	Conservative
5-	John Cooper	2	Conservative
5-	Kit Malthouse	2	Conservative
5-	Ruth Jones	2	Labour
5-	Ann Davies	2	Plaid Cymru

House of Commons Commission			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Sarah Olney	5	Liberal Democrats
2	Laurence Turner	2	Labour
3	Alex Mayer	2	Labour
4	Chi Onwurah	2	Labour
5	Mary Foy	2	Labour

Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Kevin Hollinrake	14	Conservative
2	David Simmonds	6	Conservative
3	Adam Jogee	1	Labour
4	Melanie Ward	1	Labour

Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Peter Bedford	10	Conservative
2	Jim Shannon	1	DUP
3	Josh Newbury	1	Labour

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Church Commissioners			
#	Name	No. Pqs	Party
1	Jim Shannon	3	DUP
2-	Richard Holden	2	Conservative
2-	Stuart Anderson	2	Conservative
2-	Danny Kruger	2	Conservative
5-	Kevin Hollinrake	1	Conservative
5-	Adam Jogee	1	Labour
5-	Mark Pritchard	1	Conservative
5-	John Hayes	1	Conservative
5-	Blake Stephenson	1	Conservative
5-	Lee Anderson	1	Reform
5-	Neil O'Brien	1	Conservative
5-	Alan Strickland	1	Labour

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#	MP name	Total	Party
1	Rupert Lowe	862	Reform
2	John Glen	679	Conservative
3	Kevin Hollinrake	670	Conservative
4	John Hayes	628	Conservative
5	James Cartlidge	613	Conservative
6	Jim Shannon	539	DUP
7	Richard Holden	515	Conservative
8	Andrew Rosindell	483	Conservative
9	James McMurdock	479	Reform
10	Andrew Bowie	331	Conservative
11	Ben Obese-Jecty	329	Conservative
12	Mike Amesbury	328	Independent
13	Nick Timothy	320	Conservative
14	Alex Mayer	301	Labour
15	Rachael Maskell	300	Labour
16	Charlie Dewhurst	282	Conservative
17	Tom Hayes	272	Labour
18	Wendy Morton	263	Conservative
19	David Simmonds	262	Conservative
20-	Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi	259	Labour
20-	Martin Wrigley	259	Liberal Democrats
20-	Neil Duncan-Jordan	259	Labour
23	Adam Jogee	253	Labour
24	Edward Morello	238	Liberal Democrats
25-	Damian Hinds	232	Conservative
25-	Kemi Badenoch	232	Conservative

Please contact the PoliMonitor team at info@polimonitor.com for more information.

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