



**S4C Policy on Party Political Broadcasts (PPB), Party Election Broadcasts (PEB) and
Referendum Campaign Broadcasts (RCB)**

March 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The S4C Unitary Board¹ has a duty under Schedule 12 paragraph 18 of the Communications Act 2003 to include party political broadcasts and referendum campaign broadcasts on S4C and any other designated public service provided by it.
- 1.2 The S4C Unitary Board must prepare a policy in respect of such broadcasts which sets out the manner in which the Unitary Board proposes to perform that duty.
- 1.3 This document sets out the S4C Unitary Board's policy prepared in accordance with Schedule 12 paragraph 18 of the Communications Act 2003. In formulating this policy the S4C Unitary Board has taken note of the decisions taken in the Broadcasters Liaison Group (a representative forum for U.K. public service broadcasters including BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and S4C), the views expressed by the Electoral Commission and the rules made by Ofcom under s333 of the Communications Act 2003.
- 1.3 S4C may amend or supplement the criteria contained within this policy in relation to any particular election or referendum. S4C will publish any such amended or supplemented criteria on its website (www.s4c.cymru).

2. Political Parties and Designated Referendum Organisations

Party Political Broadcasts (PPBs) and Party Election Broadcasts (PEBs) may only be allocated to political parties registered by the Electoral Commission. Referendum Campaign Broadcasts (RCBs) may only be allocated to organisations as designated by the Electoral Commission.

3. Allocation of Broadcasts

PPBs

- 3.1 Parties will be offered one or more PPBs over a 12-month period on S4C if:
 - a party holds one seat or more in Wales in any relevant parliament or assembly (i.e. in the House of Commons and the Welsh Parliament); and
 - evidence of their past electoral support and/or current support at a particular election or in Wales means it would be appropriate to do so.

¹ Referred to in statute as the S4C Authority but operating under the name S4C Unitary Board.

- 3.2 Subject to paragraph 3.1 above, registered parties will be offered one PPB in each of the following three periods: autumn, winter and spring. No PPBs will be broadcast during an election period or referendum period.

RCBs

- 3.3 Each designated referendum organisation will be allocated a series, (two or more broadcasts), before each referendum. This allocation will be equal for each referendum organisation.

PEBs

- 3.4 Before a General Election, and in the case of other elections where appropriate, registered parties will be offered (subject to paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 below) one or more PEBs, the length of a series offered to a particular party being determined by S4C. In determining the number of PEBs, S4C will have regard to the circumstances of a particular election, including the location of the election, and the individual party's past electoral support and/or current support in Wales (see 3.6).
- 3.5 Registered parties will qualify for a PEB if they are contesting one sixth or more of the seats up for election in Wales in the case of first-past-the-post, multi-constituency elections such as a General Election. For proportional representation systems of election, the minimum qualifying requirement for the allocation of one PEB will be set, reasonably and fairly for each election, according to criteria which have regard to the particular system of voting, the number of seats available for election, the number of constituencies/regions, and the number of candidates nominated by the party.
- 3.6 S4C will consider making additional allocations of PEBs to registered parties which satisfy the criteria at 3.5 if evidence of their past electoral support and/or current support at a particular election or in Wales/a relevant electoral area means it would be appropriate to do so.
- 3.7 The purpose of a PEB must not be to promote any particular outcome of a referendum.

4. Welsh Language Broadcasts

- 4.1 PPBs, PEBs and RCBs will be broadcast in the Welsh language only on S4C.
- 4.2 A Welsh language broadcast shall mean a broadcast which has been produced mainly in the Welsh language and is suitable for broadcast during S4C's peak broadcast hours. If the broadcast contains extensive use of dubbing and/or subtitling, or does not conform to S4C's language guidelines (as available on the S4C production website), S4C reserves the right not to broadcast but will discuss with the party in advance.

5. Scheduling of Broadcasts

- 5.1 PPBs, PEBs and RCBs will be carried between 5.30pm and 11.30pm. The order of transmission will be at S4C's discretion.
- 5.2 Parties and designated organisations may choose a length of 2'40", 3'40" or 4'40" for their broadcasts.

6. Compliance

All PPBs, PEBs and RCBs must comply with S4C's language, delivery and production guidelines available on the S4C production website at: www.s4c.cymru/en/production/page/1154/guidelines/ and any other relevant guidelines as stipulated by S4C.

7. Complaints about the allocation of broadcasts

- 7.1 Complaints against S4C's allocation of PPBs, PEBs and RCBs will only be considered from registered political parties and designated referendum organisations. Complaints can be made in accordance with S4C's Complaints Procedure which can be found on our website: www.s4c.cymru/en/contact-us/page/17088/how-to-complain-to-s4c/
- 7.2 The S4C Unitary Board will keep this policy under review.