



Upper Chambers: Roles, Functions, Powers, and Structures

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RESEARCH PAPER

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1. Introduction

This paper contains a breakdown of the roles, functions, powers and structures of upper chambers from various jurisdictions with a bicameral parliament. In order to facilitate the comparison of the different jurisdictions, the same categories of information have been collected for each and displayed in the same order. A table comparing all upper chambers is also provided at Annex 1.

The Legislative Council

The Council consists of 11 Members (MLCs), eight of whom are indirectly elected by Members of the House of Keys.

The minimum age for a Member is 21. Members must be resident on the Island and the length of term they serve is five years. Members may concurrently hold posts within the Government and have other employment provided it is not with a local authority.

Members of the Council may introduce and amend bills. They may not, however, prevent bills that have passed in the Keys from going through – they are empowered only to delay a bill. No abstentions from voting are allowed and, in the event of equal votes, the President shall have the casting vote.

The main role of the Legislative Council is to scrutinise proposed legislation and the actions of the Government. The Council does not usually have its own dedicated committees; instead, its Members are eligible to sit on Committees of Tynwald with Members of the House of Keys.

2. UK - House of Lords

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to the [official website](#) for the House of Lords, its main role is:

- to play a vital role in making laws;
- to investigate public policy; and
- to check Government action.

Additional Functions

Until 2009, the House of Lords also played a judicial role as the highest national appellate court. This role ended with the formation of the Supreme Court. The Lords who have retained their judicial roles are temporarily disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Lords and may return upon retirement from the Supreme Court.¹

Powers

Legislation and Committees

Bills can start in the House of Lords, and it has the power to introduce its own proposed legislation. The House of Lords no longer possesses the power to veto bills from the Commons, but can delay them for at least one year from the date of the second reading. Exceptions to this rule apply to bills which commence in the House of Lords, bills prolonging the length of Parliament beyond five years, private

¹ <https://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/about-lords/lords-types/law-lords/>

bills, and bills sent up to the House of Lords less than a month before the end of a session. Although the House of Lords does have the power to interfere with such bills, the Salisbury Convention ensures that the House doesn't stop any government bills that appeared in election manifestos from going through.²

The House of Lords has six standing, investigative committees. Select committees can be formed when needed to look at specific topics that require more detailed investigation or that do not fall within the remit of one of the standing committees. The committees have the power to request any relevant persons, particularly Government officials to come in and give evidence concerning whichever matter is being investigated. An important element of committee work is scrutinising proposed legislation and producing reports on draft bills which can then inform future debates and readings. Any bills which involve changes to the Constitution or to the powers of the Government are always checked by a Lords Committee.³

Other

In order to keep checks on Government action, the House of Lords spends 30 minutes at the beginning of sessions questioning whichever Government Ministers it chooses. Four questions on any topic are posed orally per session, with other Members entitled to ask supplementary questions where appropriate. In addition, Members may ask up to six written questions per day, for which the Government then has two weeks to respond.⁴

Members and Structure

There is no limit to the number of Members for the House of Lords and, at present, there are approximately 800 Members who are eligible to participate in the business of the House. Members are appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister and there is no fixed term – membership lasts for life unless otherwise dismissed or disqualified. Active participation in external careers is permitted and often valued by the House for the professional perspective this permits.⁵

The Lord Speaker, unlike other Members, is a salaried office-holder and may therefore not be involved in any other forms of employment. He is not granted a vote in the chamber and must refrain from any political activity.

Members can be dismissed or suspended if found to have breached the Code of Conduct and automatically ceases to be a member if convicted of a criminal offence. A Member can be disqualified from attending proceedings if they have not attended sessions for a period of six months or more, are guilty of treason, or become bankrupt. In order to be eligible for a seat in the House, you must be a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen and at least 21 years of age.⁶

Members are allowed to abstain from voting if they so please. A quorum of 30 is required for divisions on bills and on any motion to approve or disapprove delegated legislation. There is no single Member with a casting vote, meaning that in the event of a tie, the decision will be deemed to be in the negative.⁷

² <http://www.lordspublications.parliament.uk/product/2003/H-228>

³ <http://www.lordspublications.parliament.uk/product/8500/H-058-M>

⁴ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/lords/work-of-the-house-of-lords/checking-and-challenging-government/>

⁵ <http://www.lordspublications.parliament.uk/section/2003>

⁶ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld/ldcomp/compso2017/compso03.htm#a11>

⁷ <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/publications-records/House-of-Lords-Publications/Rules-guides-for-business/Companion-to-standing-orders/Companion-to-Standing-Orders-2017.pdf>

3. Ireland - Seanad Éireann

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to the [official website](#) for the Oireachtas, the main role of the Seanad is to debate legislation proposed by the Government.

Additional Functions

Although debating legislation is the by far the primary function of the Seanad, it does have other functions, such as undertaking investigative work on joint committees with the Dáil and debating on important matters and current events, acting as form of advisory board for the Dáil.⁸

Powers

Legislation and Committees

The Seanad does not share equal legislative power with the Dáil. Although bills must officially pass through both Houses to become enacted, the Dáil, being the democratically elected House, takes on the primary legislative role and has the power to pass a resolution declaring that a bill has been passed by both Houses, even if the Seanad does not vote in favour. The Seanad does not have any veto powers and can only amend or delay bills that have been passed by the Dáil. The Seanad has the power to initiate bills, with the exception of any that propose amendments to the Constitution or Money Bills. It can make recommendations for such bills, but cannot amend them. Private Bills must be initiated in the Seanad. Senators may also introduce their own bills; however, where Deputies can introduce a bill individually, three Senators are needed to introduce a single bill.⁹

Much like the Legislative Council on the Isle of Man, the majority of standing and select committees for the Oireachtas are formed with a combination of members from both the Dáil and the Seanad. The Seanad does nonetheless have the ability to form its own committees, such as the 'Committee on Procedures and Privileges' and the 'Seanad Special Select Committee on the Withdrawal of the UK from the EU'.¹⁰

Other

The Government is constitutionally responsible to the Dáil and has no obligations to the Seanad or to attend any sittings. However, when Government bills or any Government policies are up for debate, it is commonplace for the relevant Minister or Minister of State to attend.¹¹

Additionally, the Seanad has the joint power with the Dáil to remove from office the President or a judge of the Supreme Court, as well as the joint power to declare a state of emergency.¹²

⁸ https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/national_government/houses_of_the_oireachtas/functions_of_the_seanad.html

⁹ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/visit-and-learn/how-parliament-works/how-laws-are-made/>

¹⁰ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/committees/>

¹¹ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/visit-and-learn/how-parliament-works/seanad-eireann/>

¹² https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/national_government/houses_of_the_oireachtas/functions_of_the_seanad.html

Members

The Seanad Éireann has a total of 60 members who are elected or nominated in various ways. 43 Senators are elected by votes from five vocational panels representing prominent industries, 11 are nominated by the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and the remaining 6 members are elected by graduates from select Irish universities.

The term of a Senator can be a maximum of five years, dependent on the term of the Dáil. If the Dáil is dissolved before the end of this five-year term, so too is the Seanad and elections for Senators must take place no more than 90 days after the official dissolution of the Dáil.

In order to be eligible to become a Senator, you must be at least 21 years old, a citizen of Ireland and not disqualified by the Constitution.¹³

Disqualification can occur if a Senator becomes a member of another political entity, such the Dáil or the European Parliament. Additionally, being imprisoned, becoming bankrupt, or failure to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) can all potentially result in dismissal from the Seanad. A maximum of two members at any one time may hold governmental posts.

The Senate operates with two quorums. Six members are required to be present in order for a meeting to be held, whilst twelve must be present in order to vote and conduct actual business. There is no single member with a casting vote and the decision is to be deemed negative in the event of a tie.¹⁴

4. France - Le Sénat

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to its own [official website](#), the role of the French Senate is:

- to vote proposed laws and budgets introduced by either the government or the parliament;
- to monitor and control the government; and
- to modify the Constitution

Additional Functions

In addition to the main functions stated above, the Senate is the representative of the local bodies (the municipalities, departments and regions) of both metropolitan France and the overseas territories. Senators are responsible for representing French citizens who live overseas and who do not have the ability to vote and elect members of the National Assembly.

The Senate acts as the guarantor of French institutions and, as such, cannot be dissolved.

Powers

Legislation and Committees

The Senate does not have any veto powers as far as ordinary legislation is concerned. Should the Senate not agree with the text of a Bill and an agreement not be reached with the National Assembly, the

¹³ https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/how_seanad_elected-english.pdf

¹⁴ https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/parliamentaryBusiness/standingOrders/seanad/2017/2017-09-29_seanad-eireann-standing-orders-relative-to-public-business-2017_en.pdf

Government has the ability to bypass the Senate and request that only the National Assembly vote on the bill.

However, should the tabled Bill involve amendments to the Constitution, the Senate cannot be bypassed and the two Houses must continue the process of further readings and amendments until both are in complete agreement.

The Senate has the power to initiate legislative procedure and to table bills themselves.

Every Senator is a member of one of the seven standing committees and any bill tabled before the Senate is assigned to one of these committees for in-depth examination and scrutiny. Select committees can be formed when deemed necessary to tackle more complex issues. Committees hold hearings and produce written reports containing any proposed amendments to the Bill. Committees often interact with one another and can give input on any matter – business is only strictly restricted to committee Members when it comes to voting.

In addition to work on bills, the committees are able to designate 'missions of enquiry' every year to look more closely at any sensitive political or social issues of their choosing. Individual committees are able to call upon Government officials to provide evidence when need for an inquiry.

Other

The Senate, unlike the National Assembly, isn't empowered to make the Government resign or to call for a vote of no confidence.

In order to fulfil its duty to monitor and scrutinise the actions of the Government, the Senate holds oral hearing every two weeks during which questions can be posed to any relevant minister. Written questions are also frequently posed and Ministers are given one month to respond in full.¹⁵

Members and Structure

The French Senate consists of 348 members who are indirectly elected. Each Senator holds a term of six years, with elections for half of the members taking place every three years to ensure there are always experienced members in service. The number of Senators elected from each region is dependent on population.

The minimum age requirement for a French Senator is 24. Senators are not permitted to take on governmental posts whilst in office, nor roles that involve any form of public service, as this would be considered a conflict of interest when monitoring and scrutinising the actions of the Government. Senators are, however, entitled to continue with their original professions provided this work doesn't interfere with their duties in the Senate.¹⁶

Senators are entitled to abstain from voting when they please and voting may progress provided that the designated quorum has been reached. In the case of a tie, there is no single member with a casting vote and the decision shall be deemed to be in the negative.¹⁷

¹⁵ http://www.senat.fr/role/fiche/statut_senateur.html#c629449

¹⁶ <https://www.senat.fr/role/senate.html>

¹⁷ https://www.senat.fr/role/fiche/seance_pleniere.html#c623610

5. Canada - Senate

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to the [official website](#) of the Canadian Senate its main role is:

- to scrutinise legislation;
- to suggest improvements and fix mistakes; and
- to give a voice to underrepresented groups, such as the indigenous peoples, visible minorities, and women.

Additional Functions

Despite heavy focus being placed on the Senate's role regarding legislation, it is, similarly to most other upper chambers, still partially responsible for monitoring and scrutinising the actions of the Government.¹⁸

Powers

Legislation and Committees

The Senate has the power to propose and initiate bills. It cannot, however, initiate Money Bills, nor can it make amendments to them. The Senate still has the power of veto and can use this power as often as it likes. No bill can become law without its consent. Despite these powers, the Senate now very rarely makes amendments, let alone uses its power of veto.¹⁹

The Senate has the power to initiate procedures for amendment to the Constitution; however, under certain circumstances, changes can be made to the Canadian Constitution without Senate resolution.²⁰

The Senate has many standing and select committees which allow for more in-depth scrutiny of legislation, as well as an informed platform from which to discuss matters of public interest that are not necessarily covered in the House of Commons.²¹

Other

The Senate has, over the years, lost much of its power and now plays a rather inconsequential role in the day-to-day business of the Canadian Government. It has no influence over the forming of Governments and has no impact in confidence votes.²²

Senators have the power to ask questions of the Leader of the Government or Government representatives without notice. If questions can't be answered, they will be taken on notice and is to be answered in writing.²³

¹⁸ <https://www.thoughtco.com/role-of-canadian-senators-508451>

¹⁹ <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/senate>

²⁰ <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-16.html#h-56>

²¹ <http://www.thecanadaguide.com/government/the-senate/>

²² <http://www.thecanadaguide.com/government/parliament/>

²³ <https://sencanada.ca/en/about/procedural-references/rules/4/#C4R101>

Members and Structure

The Canadian Senate consists of 105 members who have been appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. Senators are not distributed evenly based on the population of the provinces, rather they are spread according to regions. Senators are required by law to be property owners in the province they represent.

There is no fixed term for a Senator. Senators used to serve for life; however, in 1965, a rule was introduced that their terms may last until their 75th birthday. Senators cannot be fired by the Prime Minister. They can only be voted out by the Senate if found guilty of committing 'an infamous crime'.²⁴

The minimum age for eligibility to the Senate is 30. Although Senators cannot be fired, they can become disqualified if they miss two consecutive sessions of the Parliament or if they take on a conflicting role.²⁵

Members of the Senate may continue with their previous professions and take on external employment. They may not, however, take on any position within the Government. There are certain exceptions to this rule, and representatives of the Government are always present during debates.²⁶

Senators are allowed to abstain from voting when they please.²⁷ A quorum of 15 members must, however, be reached in order for sittings to take place and for business to be conducted.²⁸ The Speaker of the Senate receives an ordinary vote and there is no single member that possesses a casting vote, meaning that any decision is to be deemed negative in the event of a tie.²⁹

6. Australia - Senate

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to its [official website](#), the role of the Australian Senate is:

- to act as a house of review;
- to scrutinise and pass legislation; and
- to monitor and check the actions of the Government.

Additional Functions

Senators take on many other roles, such as being the vital link between the community and parliament on a communications level and debating ideas and policies that are of particular public interest. The Senate was envisioned to be a true representative of the country and a voice to protect the interests of the less populous states.³⁰

²⁴ <http://www.thecanadaguide.com/government/the-senate/>

²⁵ <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/FullText.html#h-5>

²⁶ <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/se0-cse/PDF/CodeJune2014.pdf>

²⁷ <https://sencanada.ca/media/93509/spip-psep-full-complet-e.pdf>

²⁸ <https://sencanada.ca/en/about/procedural-references/rules/3/>

²⁹ <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/FullText.html#h-5>

³⁰ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/Senate_Briefs/Brief10

Powers

Legislation and Committees

The Senate has equal law-making powers to the House of Representatives, except in respect to the introduction of Money Bills. The Senate is only permitted to request that the House of Representatives make amendments to such bills. Senators may introduce their own bills. All bills must be passed through both Houses and the Senate has the power to refuse the passage of any bill.

The Senate has both standing and select committees set up to deal with different issues. These committees have the power to call into question the actions of any relevant Ministers or public officials and can request they give formal evidence.³¹

Other

In order to hold the Government accountable for its actions, the Senate has a regularly scheduled question time and may ask Ministers any questions it likes without prior notice; the Ministers, however, are under no obligation to respond to the questions. Only questions on notice must be responded to and Ministers are given 30 days to do so.³²

Members and Structure

The Australian Senate is formed of 76 Senators who are elected concurrently with the Members of the House of Representatives. Unlike the Members of the Legislative Council on the Isle of Man, and upper house members in most other jurisdictions, Senators are elected directly by the people of Australia using a system of proportional representation. Each of the six States is represented by 12 Senators, regardless of population, whilst the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have two Members each.

Senators representing one of the six States are all elected for a term of six years. A rotation system is used to split the election of Members in half every three years. Senators representing the two territories are elected concurrently with the House of Representatives and their term length will be a maximum of three years, or until the House of Representatives is dissolved.³³

The quorum of the Senate is 19; however, debates often take place with fewer members present. If the vote on a question is tied, the decision is to be deemed in the negative. The Speaker may not vote on a division in the Senate unless the numbers are equal. In this case, the Speaker is empowered with the casting vote.³⁴

Senators may also hold governmental posts. Many Ministers are members of the Senate and part of their role involves acting on behalf of the Ministers from the House of Representatives, answering questions for them and initiating topics for debate.³⁵

Senators can be dismissed if they fail to attend sitting for two consecutive months, if convicted of a criminal offence, or if they become bankrupt. In order to be eligible to become a Senator, you must be at least 18 years of age and an Australian citizen. It is not permitted to hold an office of profit under the

³¹ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/About_the_Senate

³² https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/Senate_Briefs/Brief14

³³ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/About_the_Senate

³⁴ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/Senate_Briefs/Brief06

³⁵ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/Senate_Briefs/Brief14

Crown, to be a citizen of any other foreign power, or to have a pecuniary interest in public service of the Commonwealth.³⁶

7. New South Wales - Legislative Council

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to its [official website](#), the role of the Legislative Council of New South Wales is:

- to represent the people;
- to legislate; and
- to scrutinise executive Government as a 'House of Review'

Additional Functions

As an extension to its role as a representative of the people, it is noted that the Council is, in particular, to represent the minority groups and those who don't have strong representation in the lower house, the Legislative Assembly. Additionally, the Council plays a role in monitoring budgets with its annual Budget Estimates inquiry.³⁷

Powers

Legislation and Committees

The Legislative Council has fairly equal powers to the Legislative Assembly as far as legislation is concerned. A bill must pass through both Houses to become an act. The Legislative Council has the power to introduce its own bills, with the exception of Money Bills. It has the ability to amend, reject and fail to pass any bill submitted to it by the Assembly.

The Council has an extensive committees system with both standing and select committees. The committees are formed in order to further scrutinise legislation; however, they are also predominantly used for monitoring and reviewing the actions of the Government and for debating matters of public interest. The Council also partakes in numerous joint committees with Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Other

In its role as a 'House of Review', the Legislative Council can order the production of state papers and call in Ministers and public officials for oral evidence sittings during the allocated Question Time.³⁸

Members

The Legislative Council of New South Wales consist of 42 Members who represent the State as a whole. Elections take place every four years for 21 of the members to ensure that there are always experienced

³⁶ [https://www.aph.gov.au/About Parliament/Senate/Powers practice n procedures/ Brief Guides to Senate Procedure/No 21](https://www.aph.gov.au/About%20Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/Brief%20Guides%20to%20Senate%20Procedure/No%2021)

³⁷ [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/roleandhistory/Documents/03%20NSW%20LC%20Prac%20Ch02%20\(press\).pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/roleandhistory/Documents/03%20NSW%20LC%20Prac%20Ch02%20(press).pdf)

³⁸ [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/roleandhistory/Documents/03%20NSW%20LC%20Prac%20Ch02%20\(press\).pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/roleandhistory/Documents/03%20NSW%20LC%20Prac%20Ch02%20(press).pdf)

Members in office. The length of term for a Member is eight years. Much like the system for the Australian Senate, Members of the Legislative Council in New South Wales are directly elected by the public. The method of voting is known as optional preferential proportional representation. The House cannot be dissolved, so Members' terms cannot be cut short unless otherwise dismissed.

Members can be dismissed if found to be in breach of the [Code of Conduct](#) or if disqualified. This can occur if a Member is convicted of a criminal offence, found to be bankrupt, has an allegiance to a foreign power, or if a Member takes on a role in the Assembly or with the Commonwealth Parliament, as well as if they hold a contract with a public service or fail to attend one whole session of the Council. Members can concurrently hold governmental posts, with a number of Members also acting as Ministers.

In order to qualify to become a Member of the Legislative Council, candidates must be at least 18 years of age and either an Australian citizen or British subject enrolled to vote in Australia before 26th January 1984.³⁹

The quorum of the Council is eight in addition to the Presiding Officer or President. Generally, Members are obligated to vote; however, they may abstain from voting by not being present at sittings or by declaring pecuniary interest. The Presiding Officer of the Council does not ordinarily have a vote. However, in the event of a tie, he or she may have the casting vote.⁴⁰

8. Victoria - Legislative Council

Role and Functions

Main Role

According to its [official website](#), the Legislative Council of Victoria's main role is to act as a House of Review, monitoring and checking Government actions and scrutinising legislation.

Additional Functions

Additional functions of the Legislative Council include acting as a forum for debate and communication link to the wider community and to investigate matter of general public interest or concern, often by forming select committees.⁴¹

Powers

Legislation and Committees

The Council has very similar powers to the Legislative Assembly when it comes to legislation. The Legislative Council has the power to introduce and initiate bills. All bills must pass through both Houses to be enacted. The Council may debate and give opinion on Money Bills and other Appropriation Bills; however, they are no longer able to initiate or reject such bills.⁴²

The Council has the power to form both standing and select committees to enable in-depth scrutiny of legislation and public policy. The referral of a bill to a committee forms part of the process of passing a

³⁹ [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/proceduralpublications/DBAssets/wppbook/06%20NSW%20LC%20Prac%20Ch05%20\(press\).pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/proceduralpublications/DBAssets/wppbook/06%20NSW%20LC%20Prac%20Ch05%20(press).pdf)

⁴⁰ <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/about/Pages/Procedures-and-Processes-of-the-Houses.aspx>

⁴¹ <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/council/publications-a-research/information-sheets?id=712>

⁴² <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/council/publications-a-research/information-sheets?id=724>

bill though the house. Council Members are also authorised to form joint committees with Members of the Assembly when the need arises.⁴³

Other

The Legislative Council has the power to conduct Question Time during sittings. Members may pose Ministers any questions relevant to their duties or the duties of their respective Ministers in the Assembly without notice; however, the Ministers are under no legal obligation to answer these questions. Questions can also be submitted on notice in written form. Ministers are required to respond to such questions within 30 days.⁴⁴

Members

The Legislative Council of Victoria consists of 40 Members who are elected by the public using a proportional representation system. Each of the eight regions is represented by five Members. Unlike New South Wales and the Legislative Council of the Isle of Man, all Members are elected at the same time and finish their terms at the same time. The term for a Member of the Legislative Council is four years. A maximum of six members may also be Government Ministers at any one time.⁴⁵

The quorum of the Council constitutes at least one third of the members, which currently equates to 14. The President no longer holds a casting vote, meaning that a decision is to be deemed in the negative if there is an equality of votes.⁴⁶

⁴³ <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/council/publications-a-research/information-sheets?id=720>

⁴⁴ <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/council/publications-a-research/information-sheets?id=717>

⁴⁵ <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/council/publications-a-research/information-sheets?id=712>

⁴⁶ [http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_notes/LDMS/LTObject_Store/LTObjSt1.nsf/d1a8d8a9bed958efca25761600042ef5/e9af39b1a5312645ca257761001c82e7/\\$FILE/75-8750a195.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_notes/LDMS/LTObject_Store/LTObjSt1.nsf/d1a8d8a9bed958efca25761600042ef5/e9af39b1a5312645ca257761001c82e7/$FILE/75-8750a195.pdf)

Annex 1: Table of Comparison

JURISDICTION	NAME OF HOUSE	MEMBERS	QUORUM	AGE	TERM	METHOD OF APPOINTMENT	DISMISSAL	RELIGIOUS MEMBER	MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT	OTHER EMPLOYMENT	VOTING	REJECT BILLS	INTRODUCE BILLS	COMMITTEES	ROLES AND FUNCTIONS	LEGISLATIVE POWERS	ELIGIBILITY
<i>Isle of Man</i>	Legislative Council	11	5	21+	5 years	Indirect election (by MHKs) or ex officio	Automatic if Member fails to attend sittings for a protracted period of time	Yes - Bishop	Yes	Yes Not local authority	AG - no Bishop - yes President - casting vote only No abstentions	No	Yes	Standing Select	Scrutinising Government Promote, explain and scrutinise legislation Support MHKs	Can only delay a Bill if they disagree.	Must be a resident of the Island.
<i>France</i>	Senate	348	?	24+	6 years	Indirect election		No	No	Yes Not public service	No casting vote - tie equals negative Abstentions permitted	No	Yes	Standing Select	Vote proposed laws and budgets Monitor and control the Government Modify the Constitution Represent local bodies of France and OTs	Can only delay a Bill if they disagree. Approval of Senate required for changes to the Constitution.	Can't make Government resign or call for vote of no confidence. The Senate cannot be dissolved.
<i>Canada</i>	Senate	105	15	30-75	75th birthday	Appointment by Governor General on advice of PM	Cannot be fired by PM Can be voted out by Senate if guilty of an "infamous crime"	No	No (some exceptions for limited time periods)	Yes	No casting vote - tie equals negative Abstentions permitted	Yes	Yes	Standing Select	Scrutinise legislation, improve and fix. Give a voice to the underrepresented. Approve bills before they become law.	Amendments to Constitution can be made without Senate under certain circumstances. Senate can initiate the procedures for amendment.	Natural-born or naturalised subject of the Queen. Must be property owners in their province. The Senate can be dissolved along with the House of Commons.
<i>UK</i>	House of Lords	~800 eligible no cap	30	21+	Lifetime	Appointment by Queen on advice of PM	Can be expelled if found to have breached the Code of Conduct Absence of more than 6 months	Yes - 26 Bishops and Archbishops	Yes	Yes Lord Speaker - no	Lord Speaker - no No casting vote - tie equals negative Abstentions permitted	No	Yes	Standing Select	Play a vital role in making laws. Investigating public policy. Checking Government action.	Can no longer veto other Commons bills, can only delay for at least one year. Exceptions made for bills commencing in the Lords, bills prolonging Parliament beyond 5 years, private bills and bills sent to the Lords less than 1 month before the end of a session.	Must be a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen.
<i>Ireland</i>	Seanad Eireann/ Senate of Ireland	60	12	21+	That of Dail - maximum 5 years	43 voted by vocational boards 11 nominated by Taoiseach 6 elected by certain University graduates	Must adhere to Code of Conduct. If found to be of unsound mind, imprisoned or bankrupt	No	Yes - 2 Senators may be members of Government	Yes	No casting vote - tie equals negative	No	Yes	Standing Select	Introduce and debate Bills. Debate issues of public concern. (As part of Oireachtas: Examine and oversee Government policy and administration. Approve the funding of	Senators cannot introduce or amend financial Bills. They can shorten the time within which a President may sign a Bill into law.	Must be an Irish citizen. The Houses have the power to remove from office the President, Comptroller and Auditor General or a judge of the High or Supreme Courts. They can declare or end a state of emergency.

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															Government departments)		
Australia	Senate	76	19	18+	6 years For States, max. 3 years for territories	Elected by the public	Absent for 2 consecutive months, bankruptcy, criminal conviction	No	Yes	Yes Not public service	Speaker has casting vote	Yes	Yes	Standing Select	Pass legislation, Monitor and check the actions of the Government, Represent the public and less populous states	Virtually equal powers to House of Representatives. Cannot initiate Money Bills Can only request amendments to financial legislation	Must be an Australian citizen.
New South Wales	Legislative Council	42	8	18	8 years	Elected by the public	Failure to attend one whole session without approval	No	No	Yes	Presiding Officer has casting vote	Yes	Yes	Standing Select	To represent the people. To legislate. To scrutinise executive government.	Virtually equal to those of the Legislative Assembly. Cannot initiate or stop Money Bills. Can amend, reject or fail to pass any other bills	Australian citizen or British Subject enrolled to vote in Australia before 26/01/1984
Victoria	Legislative Council	40	One third (14)	18	4 years	Elected by the public		No	Yes - maximum of 6 Ministers at any one time	Yes	No casting vote - tie equals negative		Yes	Standing Select	To represent the people. To legislate. To scrutinise executive Government.		