



Who regulates charities?

Charity registration, status and advice

England and Wales

The [Charity Commission](#) is the regulator for charities in England and Wales. It is responsible for registering charities, collecting Annual Accounts and Reports and for identifying and resolving problems with individual charities by investigation. The Charity Commission's role has been expanded under the Charities Act 2006.

The Commission also aims to give the public confidence in the integrity of charity and seeks to ensure that charities operate within a framework that enables them to work effectively for the purposes for which they were set up.

The Commission is not a grant-making organisation, but does provide a great deal of information, operational guidelines, and publications on their website or via the helpline - 0845 300 0218.

Scotland

Charities operating in Scotland are regulated by [Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator \(OSCR\)](#), the independent regulator and registrar of Scottish charities. All charities operating in Scotland must register with OSCR.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, charities are registered with HM Revenue and Customs. HMRC acts as registrar and has oversight of published accounts. It does not have the same responsibility as the Charity Commission in supporting the role of charities. A regulator for Northern Ireland is due to be established. For information about this, contact the [Department for Social Development Northern Ireland](#).

If you need information about setting up a charity, contact the [Charity Commission](#), [OSCR](#) or [HMRC](#) for help and advice.

The advantages of gaining registered charitable status are to aid your fundraising (the public feels reassured donating to charities that are registered) and to benefit from preferred tax status.

Registered charities benefit from rate relief of at least 50% on a charity's main premises, although local authorities do have discretion to grant relief up to 100%.

In the [Charity section of the HMRC web site](#) the tax advantages for charities are highlighted in more detail.

Related Links:

- [Charity Commission](#)
- [Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator](#)
- [HM Revenue & Customs](#)
- [Department for Social Development Northern Ireland](#)
- [Contact the Policy Team](#)