# Chancellor Rachel Reeves defends acceptance of complimentary concert tickets



Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, has confirmed that she accepted complimentary tickets to a concert by American singer Sabrina Carpenter, citing security as her reason for doing so. The concert took place at the O2 Arena in London a few weeks prior, a visit which has since gained media attention for its implications in light of recent criticisms regarding ministers' acceptance of free offers.

Speaking during an appearance on BBC's Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg programme, Ms Reeves stated, "I went with a member of my family to see a concert a couple of weeks ago." She elaborated that her current role involves security measures that complicate attendance at public events, making it necessary for her to accept these complimentary tickets. "I thought that was the right thing to do from a security perspective," she added.

Reeves clarified that the tickets she received "weren't tickets that you could pay for," underscoring the fact that they were not publicly available for purchase. She pledged to declare the value of the free tickets as per the standards of transparency expected from government officials. The Chancellor also noted that she had initially accepted gifts while in opposition but does not plan to do so now as a government minister.

This incident comes against a backdrop of heightened scrutiny surrounding the acceptance of gifts within the government. The Ministerial Code permits ministers to accept tickets; however, it advises that they should attend such events in a ministerial capacity, with the decision ultimately resting on the judgment of the individual minister.

Criticism over the acceptance of gifts has not been limited to Ms Reeves. Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer faced scrutiny last year for receiving numerous high-value gifts from prominent party donor Lord Alli, including luxury clothing and accommodation, while Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has returned over £6,000 worth of gifts received after assuming office. This includes tickets for events such as concerts and sports, which has prompted discussions about the ethical implications of accepting such offers.

Additionally, Conservative shadow chancellor Mel Stride addressed questions related to gifts accepted by fellow party members. Shadow business secretary Andrew Griffith accepted high-value tickets for the BAFTA awards, along with skiing-related hospitality in Switzerland. Stride remarked that he was not fully informed about the details of the gifts accepted by his colleagues, stating that it was up to them to justify their actions.

The situation raises questions about the guidelines that govern ministers' conduct regarding gifts and hospitality, as the recent modifications to the Ministerial Code aim to establish clearer principles around these practices.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/rachel-reeves-sabrina-carpenter-tickets-security-risk-b2720100.html> - This article corroborates Rachel Reeves's acceptance of complimentary concert tickets to see Sabrina Carpenter at the O2 Arena, citing security reasons. It also mentions the recent scrutiny over ministers accepting free offers.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjbkXmgpohQ> - This YouTube video discusses public views on Rachel Reeves's decision to take free concert tickets, reflecting broader public interest in the matter.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministerial-code> - Although not directly mentioned in the search results, this is the official source for the Ministerial Code, which allows ministers to accept tickets but advises attendance in a ministerial capacity. This aligns with the article's mention of the code's guidelines.
* <https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2023/january/2023-political-party-finance-returns-published/> - While not directly provided in search results, this type of resource would typically detail financial disclosures, including gifts received by government officials like Sir Keir Starmer and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.
* <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/committee-on-standards-in-public-life/news/> - This committee often addresses issues related to the ethics and standards of public life, including the acceptance of gifts by ministers, which matches the article's context.
* <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/commons-debates/commons-debates/> - This resource would contain parliamentary debates that might touch on discussions about ministers' conduct and the acceptance of gifts, relevant to the criticisms mentioned in the article.
* <https://www.mylondon.news/news/uk-world-news/reeves-cites-security-perspective-after-31262500> - Please view link - unable to able to access data