

The Electoral Commission

Priority	High
Event specific	Yes – UK Parliamentary general election and 6 May 2010 local government elections in England
Action required	Yes
Area	Great Britain
Retain	Until July 2010

Circular EC04/2010

Reporting on the administration of the 6 May 2010 English local government elections and 2010 UK general election – data collection and feedback

4 March 2010

For the attention of:

The Acting Returning Officer

Parliamentary constituencies in England and Wales

The Returning Officer

Parliamentary constituencies in Scotland

The Returning Officer

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England

The Electoral Registration Officer

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England

Unitary authorities in England and Wales

Unitary authorities and joint boards in Scotland

For the information of:

The Returning Officer

Unitary authorities in England, Scotland and Wales
County councils and unitary authorities in England

The Chief Electoral Officer

Northern Ireland

Purpose

1. The purpose of this circular is to provide further information about the return of election data and feedback from the scheduled local government elections in England on 6 May 2010 and the next UK Parliamentary general election (UKPGE) across Great Britain, and to request feedback on the Commission's guidance and support products.

Background

2. The UKPGE must be held by 3 June 2010. For the purposes of this circular, we have given dates for return of data based on a UKPGE taking place on 6 May 2010. We have also indicated how quickly data should be returned if the election is held on a different date.
3. We recognise that this is a very busy time for electoral staff, but it is important that our analysis of election issues, including our report on these elections, is based on robust information. We are always grateful for the assistance given to us by Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and their staff.

Electoral data collection

4. As in previous years, we will use a contractor to collect Form K – statement as to postal ballots, declaration of result of poll and additional electoral data for these elections on our behalf. You should send the data to them direct. We will give contact details for our contractor in due course.
5. We will issue electronic copies of the forms to be used at these elections in due course. Please do not use old copies of the forms.

6. The contractor contact details and electronic forms will be accessible at the following web addresses.

For the UK Parliamentary election

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-electoral-administrators/uk-parliamentary-elections>

For local elections in England

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-electoral-administrators/local-elections/local-government-elections-in-england>

7. In areas in England where both UK Parliamentary and local government elections are being held please complete and return data for each election.
8. We have contacted electoral software suppliers to inform them of this data request. We have asked them to notify us if there are any anticipated problems.
9. Please note that a comprehensive and accurate return of this data is essential for analysing election issues and identifying trends over time.

UK Parliamentary election

10. **Declaration of results and statement of rejected ballot papers** – Please return a copy of the declaration of result for each constituency for which you are the (Acting) Returning Officer to the contractor. This should include:
 - the name of each candidate
 - their party/description
 - the total number of votes cast for each candidate
 - the size of the total electorate
 - and the total number of ballot papers rejected at the count broken down by reasons for rejection, e.g. want of official mark, etc.
11. **Form K: statement as to postal ballot papers** – Form K should be completed for each constituency for which you are the (Acting) Returning Officer. You should use the guidance on completing Form K which will be included with the form.
12. **Additional data** – We expect to ask for the following data to be collated and submitted to us. One additional data form should be completed for each constituency for which you are the (Acting) Returning Officer.
 - 1) How many electors were added to the register of parliamentary electors between the 'old' and 'new' deadlines for registration (e.g. 10 March and 20 April if the election date is 6 May)?

- 2) How many people tried to register after the close of registration, up to and including polling day?
- 3) How many people tried to vote on polling day and were found not to be registered?
- 4) How many postal voting statements were rejected for:
 - a) Want of a signature
 - b) Want of a date of birth
 - c) Want of both
 - d) Mismatched signature
 - e) Mismatched DoB
 - f) Both mismatched
 - g) Either ballot paper or postal voting statement not returned
- 5) How many postal vote statements issued required only the date of birth of the elector to be stated (due to waivers being granted) for this election?
- 6) How many candidates opted not to show their home address on the ballot paper?
- 7) How many proxies were appointed for this election?
- 8) How many emergency proxies were appointed for this election?
- 9) How many postal votes were returned on polling day before 10pm?
- 10) What was the total number of polling stations used?
- 11) a) At what time did the count begin?
b) At what time did the count end?

13. In the event that a UK Parliamentary general election is held on Thursday 6 May 2010, please return these forms as soon as possible after polling day, and no later than **Friday 28 May 2010**. In the event that it is held on a different date from this, please return these forms as soon as possible after polling day, and no later than **three weeks after polling day**.

14. Please return these forms to the contractor.

Local government elections in England

15. **Declaration of result of poll: local government elections** – Please return a copy of the *Declaration of Result of Poll* to the contractor for each ward in which elections take place. This should include:

- the full name of each candidate;
- their party/description;
- the number of votes polled for each candidate;
- the total electorate for the ward/division;
- and a breakdown of ballot papers rejected at the count by reasons for rejection, e.g. want of official mark, etc.

A copy of the notice of persons elected at an uncontested election should also be returned in the case of any wards/divisions which are uncontested.

16. **Form K: statement as to postal ballot papers** – There are no new categories on Form K this year. Form K should be completed *for each*

ward in which elections take place. You should use the guidance on completing Form K which will be included with the form.

17. **Additional data** – We expect to ask for the following data to be collated and submitted to us. One additional data form should be completed for each local authority area:
- 1) How many electors were added to the register of local government electors between 10 March and 20 April?
 - 2) How many postal voting statements were rejected for:
 - a) Want of a signature
 - b) Want of a date of birth
 - c) Want of both
 - d) Mismatched signature
 - e) Mismatched DoB
 - f) Both mismatched
 - g) Either ballot paper or postal voting statement not returned
 - 3) How many postal vote statements issued required only the date of birth of the elector to be stated (due to waivers being granted) for this election?
 - 4) How many proxies were appointed for this election?
 - 5) How many emergency proxies were appointed for this election?
 - 6) What was the total number of polling stations used?
18. Please return these forms as soon as possible after polling day, and no later than Friday 28 May 2010, to the contractor.

Post-election feedback form

19. In addition to collecting the key electoral data outlined above, we would also welcome feedback from Local Government Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers for those areas in England where there are local government elections. We would also welcome feedback from (Acting) Returning Officers and all other Electoral Registration Officers on their experience of administering the UK Parliamentary general election.
20. We will issue feedback forms designed to give you the opportunity to give us feedback on administering these elections. If the elections are combined in England, then feedback on both can be given on a single copy of the form.
21. Please return completed forms as soon as possible after polling day, and no later than **Friday 28 May 2010** to the relevant Commission office. If the UKPGE is not held on 6 May, please return the form no later than three weeks after polling day.

Evaluation of Commission guidance and support products

22. As you will be aware, the Commission has developed a range of guidance and support products to support administrators in delivering the UK Parliamentary general election and English local government elections.
23. The Commission will be carrying out an evaluation of these products following the 2010 elections. As part of this process, we have developed a form for feedback on these products, which we will issue closer to the election.
24. Please return completed forms to Phil Thompson, Senior Evaluation Officer: pthompson@electoralcommission.org.uk by **Friday 28 May 2010**.

Performance standards

25. In addition to supplying the information outlined in this circular, Returning Officers will also be required to submit the self assessment return against the performance standards within a month of the UK general election. Further information on this will be contained in a separate circular in March.

Contacts

26. If you have any queries about this circular please contact the relevant member of Commission staff for your area.

North of England

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This circular was approved by Kay Jenkins, Head of Performance.