

electoral administration bulletin



Issue 264 (Scotland) – 17 August 2020

Franchise changes: update to guidance for Electoral Registration Officers

Further to [Bulletin 263](#), we can confirm that we have updated our [running electoral registration](#) guidance to reflect the extension of the franchise to foreign nationals for Scottish Parliament and local council elections. Please note that we have **not** made any amendments to the PDF format of the guidance so you should refer only to the guidance in its new format when considering eligibility to register.

2020 canvass: managing the personal canvass

As set out in the guidance contained in our [key considerations for the 2020 canvass resource](#), and as highlighted in the Cabinet Office canvass chronicle issued on Friday 31 July, EROs are still required to meet their statutory duties regarding the canvass, including conducting household visits where it is safe to do so, and should take the most recent public health guidelines into account in doing so.

If, despite your best efforts, you are unable to meet the legislative requirements for household visits as part of the canvass as a direct result of the pandemic, you should document your process and the reasons for your decision-making.

Restrictions relating to coronavirus continue to evolve and vary locally so you will need to take all local circumstances into account when planning for and managing the personal canvass in your area.

To support you with managing this in practice, we have expanded the guidance in our [2020 canvass considerations resource](#) to include additional specific considerations for the management of door to door canvassing in your area, including steps you should take to help manage interactions to minimise the risk to both canvassers and residents. This additional guidance has been reviewed by Public Health Scotland to ensure that it reflects their latest advice.

The
Electoral
Commission

Contents

Franchise changes: update to guidance for Electoral Registration Officers

Information on and a link to our updated guidance for Electoral Registration Officers to reflect the extension of the franchise.

2020 canvass: managing the personal canvass

Guidance for EROs on managing the personal canvass in the current public health context.

Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers

Information about the publication of tools and resources to support EROs with using the performance standards.

May 2021 polls: update

Update on our plans to support administrators with preparing for and delivering the May 2021 polls.

Transparency in digital campaigning: consultation on digital imprints

Information about and a link to the UK Government consultation on digital imprints.

Job vacancy at the Electoral Commission

Information about a vacancy and how to apply.

Public Health Scotland have produced generic [guidance](#) which supports those working in non-healthcare settings to give advice to their staff and users of their services about COVID-19. You may also find this [advice](#) on working safely in other people's homes during COVID-19 useful.

If you would like to discuss your personal canvassing plans further, please contact infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers

Further to [Bulletin 261](#) which highlighted the publication of new performance standards for EROs, we have now published additional resources to support EROs with using the standards to help them to understand and improve their performance.

The new resources, which are available through the [performance standards page on our website](#), include:

- [Guidance on setting key performance indicators \(KPIs\)](#), which aims to help EROs and their teams to develop KPIs to measure the impact of their activities and to support them in setting targets and helping them to baseline their performance.
- A resource on [accessing data on population and housing](#), which outlines what data is available and provides links to where it can be accessed.

We are continuing to develop further resources, including a reporting template and a resource on using data, and we will confirm in a future Bulletin when they have been published.

May 2021 polls: update

Further to our last update in [Bulletin 255](#), we wanted to provide you with more information on our plans to support you with the delivery of the May 2021 polls.

We are continuing to work with colleagues across the electoral community, including the EMB, SAA and the Scottish Government, to consider the potential impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the delivery of the polls in May 2021. Areas of discussion have included the various public health scenarios we could be facing, the potential for legislative change and the deadlines for any such decisions, the funding implications arising from any policy or legislative changes, and what information voters will need to help them participate in the polls.

We are ourselves taking forward work to prepare for and deliver our functions in relation to guidance and public awareness to ensure that electoral administrators, campaigners and voters have what they need to help ensure the polls are delivered safely and effectively.

To help inform our plans, we will continue to work closely with the Convener of the EMB and the Board itself to ensure that we are focussing on the areas that are of most concern to the electoral community and can prioritise our guidance and support accordingly. We are also working with Public Health Scotland to ensure our guidance reflects the latest public health advice.

EA Bulletins are issued on a regular basis. They are one of our key channels for communicating with Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and their staff. Past issues of Bulletins for England, Scotland and Wales are available [here](#). You can also [subscribe to the EA Bulletins](#).

Please [keep us informed](#) of any staff changes within your team. This will help us to keep our mailing lists up-to-date.

We are sending you this newsletter as it contains important information about the Electoral Commission's work which is relevant to you. The newsletter forms part of the Electoral Commission's public task which has its basis in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. We will manage your personal information and contact details in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and UK data protection legislation as outlined in our privacy notice (<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-notice>)

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you may [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

We will provide you with a further update in the autumn, and expect to be able at that stage to give you more information on what we will be providing to you and when.

In the interim, we are currently updating our core guidance for the May 2021 polls. This work will continue over the summer and we aim to publish the full suite by the end of September. We will update you in a future Bulletin once this work has been completed.

We appreciate that this remains a challenging time for everyone; if you have any questions, or if we can provide any further support, please contact infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk.

UK Government consultation on digital imprints

Last week the UK Government launched a [consultation](#) on digital imprints in relation to reserved elections. We understand that the Scottish Government are also looking at this matter in relation to devolved elections, building on the legislative changes provided for by the Referendums (Scotland) Act 2020.

The consultation is a welcome opportunity to deliver real change for voters at UK parliamentary elections in Scotland and provide them with a better understanding of who is trying to reach them online.

The use of digital tools for election and referendum campaigning is extensive, and we know that many voters are increasingly concerned about truth, transparency and the targeting of political advertisements.

We have recommended extending imprint requirements to digital election and referendum material so we look forward to considering the UK Government's proposals and the opportunity to deliver real benefits for voters, parties and campaigners.

The Cabinet Office is seeking views on the technical scope of the new digital imprints regime that will apply to elections in reserved competence (see page 18 of the document for details).

The consultation closes at 11:45pm on 4 November 2020.

We will publish a copy of our full written response to the consultation in due course.

Job vacancy at the Electoral Commission

We are currently recruiting for a Regional Manager – Eastern Region to join our Support and Improvement team. The closing date for applications is 23 August 2020.

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact Mel Davidson, Head of Support and Improvement on 020 7271 0552.

For further information or to apply for this post, please visit the [recruitment page](#) of our website.

The Electoral Commission
City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh,
EH1 1YJ

Tel: 0333 103 1928

Textphone: 18001 020 7271 0500

infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

© The Electoral Commission 2020