

# electoral administration bulletin

The  
Electoral  
Commission



Issue 282 (Scotland) – 4 March 2021

## May 2021 election: guidance update

Further to [Bulletin 277](#) we have now published our [supplementary guidance for candidates, agents and political parties](#) to help them with understanding what they will need to do to navigate the election processes in the context of the pandemic and set out what they should expect during all stages of the electoral processes. We would encourage you to share this with the candidates and agents in your local area to give them the information they need to be able to participate in the election safely and with confidence.

As with our guidance for Returning Officers, this document has been developed with the expert advice of Public Health Scotland and other national public health bodies, and in consultation with the Electoral Management Board for Scotland, Scottish Government, the Elections, Referendums and Registration Working Group (ERRWG), Solace and AEA, as well as with input from the Parliamentary Parties Panel.

The guidance has been added to our [dedicated supplementary guidance page](#) where you can easily access all the supplementary guidance on the Covid-specific aspects of preparations for the May 2021 polls. We will continue to keep these documents under review and will highlight any amendments or additions to these in the change log at the front of each document.

The final version of the polling station handbook for the [Scottish Parliamentary election](#) was published last month and can be found on our website. Hard copies will be delivered to those who have ordered them in March, as usual.

As always, if you have any questions or require any further assistance, please do contact [infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk).

## May 2021 election: public awareness update

With our voter information and registration campaigns underway, you can download digital and print resources to help raise

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Update on progress with publishing and updating our guidance and supporting resources.

### May 2021 election: public awareness update

Information on the launch of our campaign and links to resources to help raise awareness of the upcoming elections.

### Welcome to Your Vote virtual classroom sessions

Update on our plans to offer virtual classroom sessions for schools and youth groups in Scotland.

### Electoral registration: Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas)

Information on and a link to our guidance on how to process an application from a citizen from Hong Kong.

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.

awareness of the upcoming elections, registration deadline and different ways to vote.

### **Voter registration campaign**

Running a bath? Doing your laundry? Or waiting for the kettle to boil? To encourage as many people as possible to register to vote, we'll once again be running our 'Got 5?' voter registration campaign. It asks people to use five spare minutes they might have in their day to register – it only takes 5 minutes.

The campaign will go live next Tuesday (9 March) and will run up until 19 April. We will be advertising on TV, radio, out-of-home billboards, video on demand (catch-up TV), digital audio, digital display and social media. This will also be supported by unpaid press, partnership and social media activity. We are also delivering a voter information booklet to all households in Scotland in the week of 22 March which will provide information on how to register and vote, including the safety measures they can expect at polling places.

We have produced a [full suite of resources](#) to help you get involved in the campaign, including posters, digital graphics and banners, as well as template press releases and social media messages which you can adapt as you wish.

We will also continue to use the phrase "If you've never registered, or have recently moved house..." in many of our adverts to help ease the burden of duplicate applications on electoral administrators.

### **Welcome to Your Vote**

Our 'Welcome to Your Vote' campaign was first launched in summer 2020 to raise awareness of the franchise extension and we're running it again ahead of the upcoming Scottish Parliament election to encourage new voters to register to vote.

The campaign will be live from 9 March to 19 April, and we're aiming to reach qualifying foreign citizens and 16- and 17-year-olds. We will be advertising on social media and digital display with support from unpaid partnership and press activity.

Although 16 and 17 year olds are not 'newly enfranchised' in Scotland we have extended our campaign to include them as they will themselves be voting for the first time.

We've created a range of [Welcome to Your Vote resources](#) to help you support our campaign and raise awareness about registering to vote amongst these groups, and they will give you a flavour of what our campaign looks like too.

### **New animated videos – voter information**

To help reach as many people as possible, we recently launched a range of voter information digital and print resources that you can use right up until polling day on Thursday 6 May. They are designed to communicate the essential information voters need in order to cast their vote with confidence in the upcoming election.

We've created two animated videos that can be used in the lead up to polling day on your website or social media channels to prepare voters for the election.

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.

The first covers 'How to vote in the Scottish Parliament election' explaining when the election is taking place and showing some example ballot papers and how to complete them.

The second video tells voters 'What to expect at the polling place'. It covers the public health measures that will be in place, including wearing a face covering, physical distancing and bringing their own pen or pencil.

You can find the videos on our [YouTube channel](#) or [download the video files](#) to share on your platforms.

### **Updated frequently asked questions**

We have also updated the [frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#) document with new information to help you answer some of the common questions you may be asked by voters as we approach the election in May.

The document can be edited to fit the needs of your local authority. You will see yellow prompts where local amendments might be needed, but please do feel free to tailor the document as you see fit.

The document is primarily designed for you to share on your website, but you may also want to include this information in newsletters or in any other channels you use to reach your residents. The information contained in the document is accurate as of Monday 1 March.

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### **Welcome to Your Vote virtual classroom sessions**

We are offering to deliver a limited number of Welcome to Your Vote virtual sessions to schools and youth groups in Scotland to help young people learn more about their vote, ahead of May's election.

Sessions are based around our independent and impartial [Welcome to Your Vote political literacy resources](#) and focus on helping young people to feel confident to vote.

We can deliver sessions to 14-18 year olds of any ability, up to a class size of 30, and can be flexible to meet lesson requirements.

We have a limited number of sessions available before Monday 19 April, the deadline to register to vote. We will prioritise groups by the order they contact us.

If you know a teacher or educator who would be interested, please ask them to [get in touch to find out more](#) and book a session.

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### **Electoral registration: Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas)**

The UK Government recently announced a new immigration route for Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders, which opened from 31 January 2021. Under the Hong Kong BN(O) route, BN(O) status holders and their dependants will be able to apply to stay in the UK for up to five years, with the right to work and study. Anyone who is successful on the Hong Kong BN(O) route will have permission to enter or remain in the UK.

As a result, it is possible that there may be an increase in registration applications from new residents who hold a British Nationals (Overseas) passport and who will meet the nationality criteria and be eligible to register on that basis.

You can find more information in our guidance for Electoral Registration Officers [here](#).

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