

# electoral administration bulletin

The  
Electoral  
Commission



Issue 294 (Scotland) – 5 November 2021

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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>)

## Update on support to the electoral community in Scotland

### Guidance for May 2022

We have been working on updating our [core guidance and supporting resources for ROs](#) and [candidates and agents](#) in preparation for the May 2022 council elections. The updates reflect the provisions introduced in the Scottish statutory instruments laid by Scottish Government in September - including revisions to proxy arrangements and changes to the deadline for replacement of spoilt ballot papers - and which we understand will be made shortly.

The updates to the guidance have been developed in close consultation with colleagues from across the electoral community, including the Electoral Management Board for Scotland (EMB), Scottish Assessors Association (SAA), Scottish Government, Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), SOLAR Scotland, and the Elections Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG). The updated guidance is now available on our website.

Additionally, as part of our usual post poll work, we have been considering feedback from administrators and other stakeholders on our core guidance and supporting resources following the May 2021 polls to ensure we continuously improve the support available wherever we can.

One area where we received feedback was in relation to our suite of nomination forms in England and Wales, particularly around the experience of candidates completing the home address form and consent to nomination form. We have considered the points raised and have been exploring what improvements we can make to our nomination forms more generally, which includes the forms for Scottish elections, while remaining within the current legislative framework. We have now updated the nomination form for Scottish council elections accordingly, and it is available on our website.

We have also started work to address the challenges highlighted again at the May 2021 elections relating to the resilience and capacity of the electoral community. Working closely with representatives of the Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board (ECAB) – which brings together Regional Returning Officers from

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across the UK, as well as representatives from the UK, Scottish and Welsh Governments, the AEA and Solace – we have established sub-groups to look at suppliers, staffing resilience and capacity, and venues. The first two groups have already met to consider the scope of the challenges faced by administrators in these areas and start to identify potential short and longer term mitigations that could be taken forward. We will keep you updated on this work as it progresses through future editions of the EA Bulletin.

The Electoral Management Board (EMB) has also started planning to mitigate supplier capacity risks in advance of the 2022 council elections. Additionally, we will be working with the EMB, to strengthen and highlight the importance of ensuring that election staff are trained to deal with accessibility issues in advance of the May polls, which will include the provision of guidance and resources.

Our report on the May 2021 Scottish Parliament election also recommended that the Electoral Management Board for Scotland should consider how to develop its capacity to further support the electoral community in Scotland. The Commission will work with the EMB and Scottish Government to support this.

### **Future guidance**

We are also continuing to develop our plans to continue the transition of our guidance from PDF format to web-based html content. Our ERO guidance is already available in this way, and we are now progressing our plans to do the same for our core guidance for ROs and candidates and agents. As always, we will consult with the electoral community across Scotland during this process.

The first RO guidance to be produced in the new format will be for the scheduled May 2023 elections in England, with versions for other elections, including those planned for Scotland, to follow on a rolling basis.

As was the case with transforming the ERO guidance, the substantive content of the guidance will not change except as needed to reflect changes to legislation, such as to support the implementation of new measures introduced through the Elections Bill. The guidance will otherwise continue to reflect the guidance provided in the previous PDF documents, but with stylistic amendments to improve accessibility, navigation and presentation, whilst retaining features that we know are important to you, such as the ability to print hard copies of sections of the guidance.

As always, we will keep you updated on our progress with this work through future Bulletins.

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### **Job vacancies at the Electoral Commission**

We are currently recruiting for two Senior Advisers (Electoral Guidance) for our Electoral Guidance Team.

The closing date for applications for both posts is 21 November 2021.

If you would like an informal discussion about the roles, please contact Mark Pascoe, Electoral Registration Guidance Manager, on 020 7271 0690.

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

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