

A quick guide for polling station staff

This guide should be used alongside the Commission's **Handbook for polling station staff**. Page references given in this guide show where more detailed information can be found in the handbook.



Who can vote at the polling station?

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Letters next to an elector's entry on the register determine whether or not they are entitled to vote in the election. Only the following electors **can** be given ballot papers in the polling station:

Letters	Who
No letters	Ordinary electors
No letters + N	Anonymously registered electors
Date on or before polling day	Electors who will turn 18 years of age on or before polling day (unless they also have an A, G, L, or M next to their name)
F or F+N	Overseas Electors



Who cannot vote at the polling station?

p 18

The following electors **must not** be given a ballot paper in the polling station:

Letters	Who
Date after polling day	Electors who will not be 18 years of age until after polling day
A or A+N	Postal voters
G or G+N	Certain citizens of EU member states
L or L+N	Peers
M or M+N	In Wales: qualifying foreign citizens In Scotland: qualifying foreign nationals or prisoners serving a sentence of 12 months or less



Stage 1 – checking the voter

Greet the elector, ask them to state their name and address.

Confirm that they are eligible to vote at the election by checking their register entry.

Stage 2 – checking the elector’s photographic ID

Ask the elector for their photographic ID.

Check that the ID provided is included on the list of accepted photographic ID, that the photo is a good likeness to the elector, that the name on it matches the entry on the register and that it appears to be a genuine form of ID.

Hand the ID back to the elector.

Stage 3 – marking the register and completing the voter ID paperwork

Draw a straight line against (but not through) the voter’s entry in the register.

Update the voter ID paperwork if the elector uses a Voter Authority Certificate or Elector’s Document.*

Check the voter ID paperwork to see if the voter’s details have been recorded already and if so, update it to show that they are now being issued with a ballot paper.

Stage 4 – issuing the ballot paper

Write the elector number on the corresponding number list alongside the relevant ballot paper number.

Ensure that the ballot paper to be issued bears the official mark.

Fold the ballot paper and then hand it to the elector **unfolded**. Ask the voter to re-fold it once they’ve marked their ballot paper in the polling booth.

Stage 5 – voting

The voter marks the ballot paper in the privacy of the polling booth.

Ask the voter to show you the ballot paper number and unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper before they place it in the ballot box.

* This only a requirement at a UK Parliamentary General election- however the (Acting) Returning Officer may instruct you to do so at a UK Parliamentary by-election



What if...

The key-holder has not arrived?

p 7

Try to make contact with the key-holder. If necessary, make alternative arrangements, e.g. set up a temporary polling station. Inform the elections office. Polling must begin at 7am.

An elector spoils their ballot paper?

pp 22-23

Cancel the spoiled ballot paper. Place it in the appropriate envelope, write 'cancelled' on the corresponding number list and issue the elector with another ballot paper.

You are not sure a voter's photographic ID is an accepted form of photographic ID?

p 19

The full list of accepted photographic ID can be found on page 19. There are also some examples of accepted photographic ID in Appendix 12.

An elector doesn't have an accepted form of photographic ID?

p 21

You should explain to the elector that photographic ID is required in order to vote and ask them to return with an accepted form of photographic ID so that they can be issued with a ballot paper.

You should also check and update the VIDEF notes sheet (where used) to show that the elector (or proxy) has been turned away because they did not provide an accepted form of photographic ID.

A disabled elector needs assistance?

pp 29-33

Offer assistance. Explain what support is available.

The person asking for a ballot paper appears on the register as having already voted?

pp 45-50

Check whether they had appointed a proxy. If not, follow the tendered ballot process. Ask the prescribed questions and check the elector's photographic ID before issuing a tendered ballot paper. Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the questions are not answered satisfactorily or if no accepted photographic ID is provided. Inform the elections office.

An elector with an 'A' marker on the register says they did not apply to vote by post?

pp 45-50

Do not issue an ordinary ballot paper. **If they have received their postal vote:** encourage them to return it to the polling station or elections office by 10pm. If they don't want to return it, follow the tendered ballot procedure. **If they have not received their postal vote:** if it is before 5pm, direct them to the elections office for a

replacement; if it is after 5pm, or if they don't want a replacement, follow the tendered ballot procedure. Ask the prescribed questions and check the elector's photographic ID before issuing a tendered ballot paper. Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the questions are not answered satisfactorily or if no accepted photographic ID is provided.

An elector claims to have lost or not received their postal vote? p 40

Do not issue an ordinary ballot paper. **Before 5pm:** direct them to the elections office for a replacement. **After 5pm:** follow the tendered ballot procedure. Ask the prescribed questions and check the elector's photographic ID before issuing a tendered ballot paper. Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the questions are not answered satisfactorily or if no accepted photographic ID is provided.

A voter asks how to complete their ballot papers? pp 23-24

Explain that voters should mark their ballot paper by placing a single 'X' in the box next to the candidate of their choice.

A person is not on the register or any of the notices? p 34

Do not issue a ballot paper. Direct the voter to the electoral registration office.

An elector has a poll card without a name or address? p 43

Poll cards like this are sent to anonymously registered electors. Do not ask for the elector's name and address. Follow the procedure for issuing a ballot paper to an anonymous elector.

An elector wants to return their postal vote to the polling station? p 39

Check the postal vote can be returned to the polling station. If it can, place it in the packet provided. If it cannot, or if you are unsure, direct the voter to the elections office.

A person asks to vote on behalf of someone who has had a medical emergency? pp 42

You can only issue a ballot paper if they have been officially appointed as an emergency proxy. If not, explain that emergency proxies may be appointed until 5pm, and refer them to the electoral registration office for more information on this process.

There is a serious disturbance (e.g. fire, flood, etc.)? pp 51-52

Do not put the safety of anyone at risk. If safe to do so, set up a new polling station nearby. Inform the elections office.
