

# electoral administration bulletin

The  
Electoral  
Commission



Issue 337 (Scotland) – 13 December 2023

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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>)

## Elections Act: changes to overseas elector registration

### Publication of updates to overseas elector guidance for EROs

Further to [Bulletin 326](#), we have now published [updated core guidance for EROs](#) to support the Elections Act 2022 changes to the overseas elector registration process.

These changes, which we expect to come into force on 16 January 2024, will mean that:

- There will no longer be a 15-year limit on voting rights
- The registration period will change from every year to every three years

This means that British citizens will now be able to vote in UK parliamentary elections, no matter how long they have been away from the UK. They will need to have previously lived, or been registered to vote, in the UK.

The guidance has been developed in consultation with colleagues from the electoral community, including:

- The Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA)
- The Scottish Assessors Association (SAA)
- The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (Solace)
- The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
- The Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG)

Until the 16 January, the current rules continue to apply so we have published the updated guidance alongside the existing overseas elector guidance. The titles of the updated guidance pages indicate that they apply 'post-commencement' of the new legislation, to help you distinguish between the two different sets of guidance.

Once the new legislation comes into force, the existing guidance will be removed from the website.

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## Guidance update: preparations for a UK Parliamentary general election

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

As a UK Parliamentary general election must be held before 28 January 2025 we have developed a [supporting resource for Returning Officers](#) to assist with early planning decisions and preparations.

The aim of this resource is to support ROs with their discussions with their elections team to understand key risks and preparedness, and think about what they can do in their role as RO and as a senior member of their Council to help mitigate risks further.

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