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? pp 15-16

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 16 years of age on or before polling day
G or **G+N**	Certain citizens of EU member states
K or **K+N**	Certain citizens of EU member states
L or **L+N**	Peers
M or **M+N**	Qualifying foreign citizens

Who cannot vote at the polling station? p 16

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

Letters	Who
Date after polling day	Electors who will not be 16 years of age until after polling day
A or **A+N**	Postal voters
F or **F+N**	Overseas electors

What is the usual voting process? pp 14-17

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.
	Draw a straight line against (but not through) the voter's entry in the register.
	Read out their name and elector number (which includes the polling district reference) from the register.
Stage 2 – issuing the ballot paper(s)	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, then hand it to the voter **unfolded**. Ask the voter to re-fold it once they've marked their ballot paper in the polling booth.
Stage 3 – 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.

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? p 17

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

An elector cannot gain access to the polling station? p 23

Take the ballot paper outside to the elector after informing any agents present. Ensure ballot secrecy at all times.

A disabled elector needs assistance? pp 23-26

Offer assistance. Explain what support is available.

The person asking for a ballot paper appears on the register as having already voted? pp 34-37

Check whether they had appointed a proxy. If not, follow the tendered ballot process. Ask the prescribed questions before issuing a tendered ballot paper. Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the questions are not answered satisfactorily. Inform the elections office.

An elector with an 'A' marker on the register says they did not apply to vote by post? p 29

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 before issuing a tendered ballot paper. Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the questions are not answered satisfactorily.

An elector claims to have lost or not received their postal vote? p 30

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 before issuing a tendered ballot paper. Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the questions are not answered satisfactorily.

A voter asks how to complete their ballot papers? pp 17-18

Read out the instructions on the ballot paper and the names of the candidates or parties in the order that they appear on the ballot paper.

A person is not on the register or any of the notices? p 27

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 33**

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 29**

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 31-32**

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.

You, or someone else, suspects that the person applying for a ballot paper is not who they say they are? **p 42**

Before – and only before – issuing a ballot paper, the Presiding Officer may ask the prescribed questions. Agents have a right to require Presiding Officers to ask these questions. If they are answered satisfactorily, an ordinary ballot paper must be issued. No further enquiries may be made as to someone's right to a ballot paper. Inform the elections office.

There is a serious disturbance (e.g. fire, flood, etc.)? **p 40**

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.