

Electoral Services Casual Elections Staff

Presiding Officer Job Description

The Polling Station team

Polling stations are open from 7.00am until 10.00pm on Election Day. Staff are required to arrive at the polling station no later than 6.15am to set up the station and equipment. Staff are not permitted to leave the premises during the day (other than in an absolute emergency). The role of the polling station staff is to ensure that voters are able to cast their vote in secret, free from influence and in a calm atmosphere.

The Presiding Officer

Presiding Officers are responsible for the conduct of the ballot in the polling stations and they must have a good knowledge of the voting procedures.

The Role:

- comply with any instructions from the Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer or visiting officers;
- take charge of the polling station and be responsible for the entirety of the voting process;
- ensure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect;
- maintain the secrecy of the ballot;
- supervise the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station.

Duties:

Before Election Day

- attend any training sessions or briefings provided by the Electoral Services team;
- liaise with the key-holder/caretaker for the polling station to confirm arrangements for key collection/opening and the closing the building;
- make contact with the Poll Clerk(s) to confirm arrangements;
- collect the Ballot Box, check its contents and keep secure.

Election Day

- transport the Ballot Box to assigned Polling Station;
- organise and set-up the layout of the allocated room (this includes some lifting of polling booths);
- be aware of any access issues at the polling station;
- be responsible for health and safety at the polling station for all staff and visitors;
- ensure the polling station is opened on time;
- ensure that all statutory notices, signs and instructions are clearly visible and remain in place during the day;
- ensure the polling station is kept tidy;
- keep order at the polling station and maintain security;
- instruct and supervise the work of the Poll Clerk(s);
- account for and take responsibility for all ballot papers, issued and un-issued;

- check and confirm voters' photo ID to determine whether they are entitled to vote (*new requirement for May 2023*);
- supervise the process for checking and marking electors' electoral numbers on the polling station Register of Electors;
- complete and maintain the Corresponding Numbers List(s);
- issue ballot papers to eligible voters;
- ensure that voters cast their vote in secret and place them into the Ballot Box(es),
- provide assistance to voters, having particular regard to voters with disabilities;
- deal with any problems where appropriate and ensure that the statutory procedures for dealing with specific issues (spoilt papers, 'personation', etc.) are followed correctly;
- receive any completed Postal Votes delivered by hand;
- manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station e.g. candidates, election agents, polling agents, Electoral Commission representatives and/or observers, and ensure they do not interfere with the voting process;
- be polite and professional when dealing with all visitors to the polling station and remain impartial at all times;
- monitor the activities of tellers outside polling places.

Close of Poll

- ensure the polling station is closed on time;
- supervise the dismantling of the polling station and ensure the room is returned to good order;
- complete the Ballot Paper Account, associated Packets and all documentation in accordance with the instructions provided by the Returning Officer;
- deliver the Ballot Box, Packets and all completed documentation to the location specified by the Returning Officer.

Rates of Pay (subject to annual review)

Presiding Officer fee	£255.00
Polling station pre-assessment visit (if required)	£30.00
Attending online training session	£25.00
Attending in-person training session	£35.00
Travel expenses (per mile)	£0.45

You will be working a 16-hour day, so you must provide your own refreshments. Polling station staff are not permitted to leave the premises during the hours of poll (other than in an absolute emergency). The Presiding Officer must ensure that all staff take appropriate breaks throughout the day during quieter periods to avoid tiredness

The Returning Officer is not permitted to employ anyone who is/or has carried out duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election.

All staff will be issued with an agreement to maintain the secrecy of the poll.

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Presiding Officer Person Specification

EXPERIENCE	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> good understanding of the election process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experience in a range of elections (local government or parliamentary) have worked as a Poll Clerk on at least two previous occasions.

SKILLS/PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> excellent communication skills and the ability to explain procedures to a variety of people. high level of personal presentation and professional manner. commitment to customer care. good administration skills and attention to detail. team player and a flexible attitude. calm under pressure. punctual and reliable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> able to lift polling booths/ballot boxes etc.

OTHER	
Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not have worked in support of a political party/candidate at the election, whether paid or unpaid. be able to undertake any training and/or briefings provided by the Returning Officer. not have been convicted of an offence under electoral legislation. Have use of a car to carry ballot box(es) and sundry items. 	