

An elector hands you a poll card without a name or address?

p 31

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 ballot papers to anonymous electors.

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

p 25

Check the postal vote is for the electoral division/ward. If it is not, or if you are unsure, direct the voter to the elections office. If it is, place it in the receptacle provided.

A person asks to vote for someone who has suffered a medical emergency?

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Only issue a ballot paper if they have been officially appointed as an emergency proxy. If not, explain that emergency proxies can be appointed until 5pm, and refer them to the Electoral Registration Officer for more details on this process.

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

pp 29–30

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.

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

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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.



Contact details

If you are unsure about any of the procedures described in the handbook, or need to contact the elections office for any other reason, please contact:

Supporting local government elections in England and Wales

The Electoral Commission

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 13–14

Letters next to an elector's entry on the register determine whether or not they are entitled to vote at the election. Only the following electors **should** be given a ballot paper 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
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



Who cannot vote at the polling station?

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The following electors **should 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
E or E+N	overseas peers
F or F+N	overseas electors



What is the usual voting process?

pp 12–15

- Stage 1 – checking the voter**
- Greet the elector and ask them to confirm their name and address.
 - Confirm they are eligible to vote by checking their register entry.
 - Draw a line against (but not through) the voter's entry in the register.
 - Read out their name, elector number and polling district reference from the register of electors.
- Stage 2 – issuing the ballot paper**
- Write the elector number on the corresponding number list (CNL) alongside the relevant ballot paper number.
 - Ensure the ballot paper to be issued bears the official mark.
 - Fold the ballot paper then hand it to the voter **unfolded** so that they can see all of the candidates on the paper.
- Stage 3 – voting**
- The voter marks the ballot paper in the privacy of the polling booth.
 - Prior to the voter placing the ballot paper in the ballot box, they should fold the ballot paper and show the ballot paper number and unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper to the Presiding Officer.



What if...

- It is 7am and the key-holder has not arrived?** p 6
Try to make contact with the key-holder. If necessary, make alternative arrangements, e.g. set up a temporary polling station in the back of a car. Inform the elections office.
- An elector spoils their ballot paper?** p 15
Cancel the spoilt ballot paper. Place it in the appropriate envelope, write 'cancelled' on the CNL and issue the elector with another ballot paper.

An elector cannot gain access to the polling station? p 20

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 20–22

Offer assistance. Explain what support is available.

The person asking for a ballot paper appears on the register as having already voted? pp 30, 35

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.

An elector with an 'A' marker on the register says they did not apply to vote by post? pp 29, 35

Do not issue an ordinary ballot paper. **If they have received their postal vote:** encourage them to return it to the polling station or Returning Officer 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 Returning Officer for a replacement; if it is after 5pm, or if they do not want a replacement, follow the tendered ballot paper procedure.

Ask the prescribed questions before issuing tendered ballot papers. 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? pp 29, 35

Before 5pm: direct them to the Returning Officer 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 councillors are elected? p 2

Councillors are elected under the first-past-the-post system. Voters have one or more vote, depending on how many seats are contested in a ward. The candidate(s) with most votes in the electoral area are elected as councillors.

A person is not on the register or any of the notices? pp 23–24; pp 28–29

Do not issue a ballot paper. Direct the elector to the Electoral Registration Officer if they insist they have registered.