

PRESIDING OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

The polling station team

Polling stations are open from 7.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. On election day staff are required to arrive at the polling station by 6.15 a.m. to set up the 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.
- To take charge of a polling station and be responsible for the entirety of the voting process.
- To ensure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect.
- To maintain the secrecy of the ballot
- To supervise the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station.

Duties:

Before Election Day:

- Undertake any training and attend briefings provided by the Returning Officer
- Liaise with contact person for designated polling station before election day to confirm arrangements for key collection/opening and closing the building.
- In a multiple polling station, make contact with other Presiding Officer(s).
- Make contact with Poll Clerk(s) to check travel arrangements to and from polling station.
- Collect the ballot box and contents(usually the Tuesday before the day of the election), check the contents the same day, and keep secure.

Election Day

- Transport ballot box and contents to polling station.
- Erect polling booths. This involves some lifting.
- Organise the layout of the polling station taking all voter needs into account.
- Be aware of 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 and closed on time.
- Ensure that all signs and instructions are clear, visible and remain in place.
- Keep the polling station neat and tidy.

- Instruct and supervise the work of the Poll Clerk(s)
- Account for, and be responsible for, all ballot papers, both issued and un-issued.
- Check and mark electors' electoral numbers in the register of electors and on the corresponding numbers lists.
- Issue ballot papers to voters
- Ensure that voters cast their votes in secret and put them into the correct ballot box (where appropriate).
- Provide assistance to voters as required.
- Receive postal votes delivered by hand.
- Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station, eg candidates, agents, representatives of the Electoral Commission and 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 building is returned to good order.
- Complete the ballot paper account and associated paperwork; pack in accordance with instructions given by Returning Officer
- Deliver the ballot box and associated paperwork to the count location as designated by the Returning Officer

You will be working a 16 hour day, so you must provide your own refreshments and take appropriate breaks throughout the day to avoid tiredness. Polling station staff are not permitted to leave the premises during the day (other than in an absolute emergency).

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 required to read and agree to the terms of the Statement of Secrecy.

The rate of pay for these duties varies slightly depending on the type of election but as an example the current rate of pay for a Presiding Officer for a local election is £225 plus a further fee for undertaking training.

In addition to the main elections (such as Parliamentary and the 4-yearly council elections) which are usually held in the May of any given year, there are from time to time by-elections which can be held at any time throughout the year.

**ELECTORAL SERVICES
CASUAL ELECTION STAFF**

**PRESIDING OFFICER
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

EXPERIENCE	
Essential	Desirable
A good understanding of the election process.	Experience in a range of elections eg local, Parliamentary or European. To have worked previously as a Poll Clerk on at least three occasions.

SKILLS/PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	
Essential	Desirable
Excellent communication skills and the ability to explain procedures to a variety of people High level of personal presentation and professional manner A commitment to customer care Good administration skills and attention to detail A team player and flexible attitude. Calm under pressure. Punctual and reliable.	Able to lift polling booths/ballot boxes etc.

OTHER	
Essential	Desirable
Must not have worked in support of a political party/candidate at the election, whether paid or unpaid. Must be able to undertake any training and attend briefings provided by the Returning Officer Must not have been convicted of an offence under Electoral Legislation Acceptance of Waiving of Working Time Regulations for period of employment Use of car able to carry two ballot boxes plus sundry items	