

PRESIDING OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

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.

Polling Stations are open from 7.00am until 10.00pm. On Election Day staff are required to arrive at the Polling Station at 6.15am to set up the equipment. Staff are not permitted to leave the premises during Polling Hours in order to maintain the secrecy of the vote.

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.
- To take charge of a polling station and ensure that it is opened and closed on time.
- To ensure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect free from influence.
- To maintain the secrecy of the ballot.
- To take decisions on a persons photographic ID
- To supervise the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station.
- Comply and follow any instructions given on infection prevention and control guidance if applicable.

Duties:

Before Election Day:

- Where applicable, attend training sessions and briefings provided by the Electoral Services office.
- 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.

Election Day

- Erect polling booths and help organize the layout of the polling station inside and out - this involves some lifting. Organise the layout of the polling station, taking all voter needs into account, ensuring it meets the needs of electors with disabilities.
- 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 on time and take the appropriate action if required.
- 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, 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 ensuring that all papers have the official mark.
- Ensure that voters cast their votes in secret and put them into the (correct) ballot box.
- Provide assistance to voters where appropriate and record as directed.
- 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.
- Take necessary action if a queue forms at the close of poll to ensure all eligible electors are able to vote.
- 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.

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.

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 hours of poll.

All staff will be required to maintain the secrecy of the poll and comply with the Data Protection and GDPR legislation.

Payment

Payment will made to a designated bank account as soon as is practicable after the election.

Person Specification - Presiding Officer

Experience	
Essential	Desirable
A basic 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 two 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	Use of car able to accommodate two ballot boxes
Be willing to attend training/briefing sessions as required	
Must not have been convicted of an offence under Electoral Legislation	
Acceptance of Waiving of Working Time Directive for period of employment	
Physically able to lift and carry heavy equipment in accordance with manual handling advice	