

ES12 Issue, receive and open postal ballot packs

Unit Summary

What is the unit about?

The correct and proper handling of postal ballot packs is an essential aspect of the work of Electoral Services. This unit describes the competences required to issue, receive and open postal ballot packs securely, effectively and efficiently in accordance with statutory and organisational requirements.

Who is the unit for?

This unit is appropriate to the work of staff with a responsibility for issuing, receiving and opening postal ballot packs.

Links with other units

This unit links with the following units:

- ES4 – Maintain and update electoral registration information
- ES9 – Produce election/referendum documents
- ES13 – Manage polling day arrangements
- ES14 – Facilitate voting at polling stations
- ES15 – Plan and prepare for the counting and adjudication of votes and declaration of results of elections/referendums
- ES16 – Supervise the verification and counting of votes, and declare the results of elections/referendums
- ES17 – Store, manage access to, and dispose of election/referendum documents
- E1 – Manage a budget
- 304 – Procure products and services
- 404 – Manage contracts
- F1 – Manage a project

Scope of the unit

This unit covers the issue and receipt of the following types of [postal ballot packs](#):

- Postal
- Postal Proxy

This unit covers ensuring that the following [resources](#) are in place:

- Human (including internal staff and external suppliers)
- Physical
- Financial

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Outcomes of Effective Performance

Issuing postal ballot packs

You must be able to:

1. ensure that sufficient **resources** are in place for the efficient and effective issue of **ballot packs**
2. ensure that outgoing **ballot packs** are prepared correctly
3. identify the best options for producing and despatching **ballot packs**, and liaise with internal and/or external services regarding arrangements
4. make appropriate arrangements for relevant observers to oversee the preparation and despatch of **ballot packs**
5. oversee the production and despatch of **ballot packs**, ensuring that the correct information is issued to the correct individuals in accordance with statutory timescales
6. issue replacement **ballot packs** when required

Receiving postal ballot packs

You must be able to:

7. ensure that incoming **ballot packs** are received, checked and recorded correctly
8. ensure that incoming **ballot packs** are sorted correctly
9. store **ballot packs** securely until they are passed on for processing
10. pass on **ballot packs** for processing in accordance with organisational requirements

Opening postal ballot packs

You must be able to:

11. make appropriate arrangements for agents to view the opening of **ballot packs**
12. follow the correct procedures for:
 - adjudication of postal voting statement
 - acceptance, provisional rejection or rejection of ballot papers
 - maintenance of the security of ballot papers
 - management of any contingencies that arise
 - transfer of ballot paper receptacles to counting venue
13. respond appropriately to enquiries about:
 - the receipt of postal ballots
 - the provisional rejection of individual ballots
14. confirm that all postal **ballot packs** have been opened and prepare an accurate final statement of outcomes

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand the following:

Legislation, policy and practice

- K1. relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance relating to issuing, receiving and opening postal ballot packs
- K2. your organisational policies and procedures relating to issuing, receiving and opening postal ballot packs
- K3. your role, responsibilities and authority relating to issuing, receiving and opening postal ballot packs
- K4. the role, responsibility and authority of others relating to issuing, receiving and opening postal ballot packs
- K5. the security procedures that apply to issuing, receiving and opening postal ballot packs

Issuing postal ballot packs

- K6. the resources required to ensure the efficient and effective issue of postal ballot packs
- K7. the importance of ensuring that outgoing ballot packs are prepared correctly
- K8. the range of internal and external services available and how to choose the most appropriate service
- K9. the importance of liaising with services regarding production and/or despatch arrangements
- K10. the importance of making appropriate arrangements for relevant observers to oversee the preparation and despatch of postal ballot packs
- K11. the importance of ensuring that the correct information is issued to the correct individuals in accordance with statutory timescales
- K12. how to identify and confirm instances when replacement ballot packs need to be issued

Receiving postal ballot packs

- K13. the importance of ensuring that incoming ballot packs are received, checked and recorded correctly
- K14. the importance of ensuring that incoming ballot packs are sorted correctly
- K15. the importance of storing ballot packs securely until they are passed on for processing
- K16. the individuals to whom ballot packs should be passed for processing; the procedures for processing ballot packs

Opening postal ballot packs

- K18. the importance of making appropriate arrangements for agents to view the opening of ballot packs
- K19. the correct procedures to follow regarding the opening of ballot packs
- K20. how to respond to enquiries about whether postal ballots have been received and whether individual ballots have been provisionally rejected
- K21. the importance of confirming that all ballot packs have been opened; how to prepare an accurate final statement of outcomes