

ES13 Manage polling day arrangements

Unit Summary

What is the unit about?

Ensuring that polling day runs smoothly and that voting can take place in an effective and efficient manner is a key responsibility of the Returning Officer/Electoral Administrator. This unit describes the competences required to prepare for, and oversee arrangements on polling day, and focuses in particular on the important task of briefing and supervising polling station staff.

Who is the unit for?

This unit is appropriate to the work of Returning Officers, Electoral Administrators and Counting Officers (for Referendums) who have responsibility for preparing for, and overseeing arrangements on, polling day.

Links with other units

This unit links with the following units:

- ES7 – Develop a polling scheme
- ES18 – Recruit, brief and deploy casual staff for electoral services
- ES19 – Establish, maintain and develop effective working relationships with stakeholders in electoral services
- 3/18 – Support the efficient use of resources
- 4/23 – Manage the use of physical resources
- E5 – Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety
- E6 – Ensure health and safety requirements are met in your area of responsibility
- B10 – Manage risk

Scope of the unit

This unit covers facilitating the following **procedures**:

- Standard voting procedures
- Special voting procedures

This unit covers overseeing the deploying the following **resources**:

- Human (permanent and casual staff)
- Physical (e.g. materials, equipment, utilities)

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Outcomes of Effective Performance

Preparing for polling day

You must be able to:

1. ensure that your staff are familiar with the plans, policies and **procedures** for the event, and that they fully understand your role, their role and the role of others
2. oversee the timely, effective and efficient deployment of **resources**
3. assess the risks associated with the event, taking the appropriate actions to minimise and/or manage the risks
4. liaise with the venue manager, police and other relevant stakeholders to exchange information and prepare for the event
5. ensure that polling staff receive appropriate and timely briefing and/or training in preparation for the event

Overseeing arrangements on polling day

You must be able to:

6. ensure that the work of polling staff is supervised and inspected at suitable stages throughout polling day, taking appropriate action where there are any issues or concerns
7. manage any contingencies that arise during polling day, ensuring that safety and security are not compromised
8. respond promptly to any queries made by polling staff, referring them to other sources of information or guidance if necessary
9. take responsibility for the security of all ballot boxes and postal ballot packs until they are passed onto an appropriate, authorised person
10. ensure that staff have completed all necessary paperwork relating to the poll and have stored it securely until it can be passed to the appropriate, authorised person

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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 managing polling day arrangements
- K2. any relevant organisational plans, policies and procedures relating to managing polling day arrangements
- K3. your role, responsibilities and authority relating to managing polling day arrangements
- K4. the role, responsibility and authority of others relating to managing polling day arrangements
- K5. the polling day arrangements that apply to different types of election/referendum

Preparing for polling day

- K6. the resources that are required for the election/referendum; how to deploy them effectively and efficiently
- K7. the range of risks associated with elections/referendums; how to assess them; the actions to take to minimise and/or manage such risks
- K8. the purpose and value of liaising with the venue manager, police and other relevant stakeholders
- K9. the range of briefing and/or training that may be required by polling staff; how to ensure that this is delivered in an appropriate and timely manner

Overseeing arrangements on polling day

- K10. the importance of ensuring that the work of polling staff is supervised and inspected at suitable stages throughout polling day; the action to take where there are any issues or concerns
- K11. the detailed polling day procedures that must be followed e.g. regarding the collection of postal votes handed in, checking identification
- K12. the range of contingencies that may arise during the election/referendum; how to manage these to ensure that safety and security are not compromised
- K13. how to maintain the security of all ballot boxes and postal ballot packs; the appropriate, authorised person to whom they must be passed
- K14. the paperwork that must be completed by the Presiding Officer in relation to the poll; the importance of storing this securely until it is passed to the appropriate person