

ES14 Facilitate voting at polling stations

Unit Summary

What is the unit about?

Polling staff fulfil an important role in ensuring that, on polling day, voters are able to cast their vote in secret, free from influence and in a calm atmosphere. This unit covers the skills and knowledge necessary to facilitate voting including preparing for the poll, opening and conducting the poll, and closing the poll. It emphasises the importance of maintaining order, security and access throughout.

Who is the unit for?

This unit is appropriate to the work of Polling Station staff with a responsibility for facilitating voting on polling day.

Links with other units

This unit links with the following units:

- ES19 – Establish, maintain and develop effective working relationships with stakeholders in electoral services
- 3/18 – Support the efficient use of resources
- E5 – Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety
- B10 – Manage risk

Scope of the unit

This unit covers facilitating the following [voting procedures](#):

- Standard voting procedures
- Special voting procedures

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Outcomes of Effective Performance

Preparing for the poll

You must be able to:

1. ensure that you are familiar with the plans, policies and procedures for the event, and that you fully understand your role and the role of others
2. receive and check ballot boxes, polling station supplies and materials
3. set up the polling station in accordance with instructions with due consideration for access, safety, and the maintenance of security and secrecy
4. erect appropriate signs and notices with due regard for voter's needs
5. undertake all necessary checks and confirm that the station is correctly prepared for the poll

Opening and conducting the poll

You must be able to:

6. ensure that the polling station is open on time, taking the appropriate contingency action where required
7. follow all stages of **voting procedures** correctly and carefully:
 - checking the voter is registered and entitled to vote
 - issuing ballot papers
 - voting
 - voters leaving the polling station
8. receive and transfer postal votes handed in at polling station
9. assist with maintaining order, safety and security within the polling station throughout the poll
10. respond promptly to any queries made by voters, candidates, agents and authorised observers referring them to other sources of information or guidance if necessary
11. maintain the polling station throughout the poll, undertaking regular checks to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose

Closing the poll

You must be able to:

12. close the poll on time
13. return the polling station premises to its original condition, disposing of waste as required
14. complete all necessary paperwork relating to the poll
15. pack election materials appropriately and assist with their safe and secure transportation to the count centre

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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 facilitating voting at polling stations
- K2. your organisational plans, policies and procedures relating to facilitating voting at polling stations
- K3. your role, responsibilities and authority relating to facilitating voting at polling stations
- K4. the role, responsibility and authority of others relating to facilitating voting at polling stations
- K5. the polling day arrangements that apply to different types of event

Preparing for the poll

- K6. how to ensure that you are familiar with the plans, policies and procedures for the event, and that you fully understand your role and the role of others
- K7. procedures for receiving and checking ballot boxes, polling station supplies and materials
- K8. how to set up the polling station in accordance with instructions; the importance of considering access, safety, security and secrecy
- K9. the importance of erecting appropriate signs and notices
- K10. the importance of undertaking all necessary checks and confirming that the station is correctly prepared for the poll

Opening and conducting the poll

- K11. the importance of ensuring that the polling station opens on time; the appropriate action to take in case of contingencies
- K12. the correct stages of voting procedures; the importance of following them correctly and carefully for both standard and special voting procedures
- K13. the procedures for receiving and transferring postal votes handed in at the polling station
- K14. how to assist with maintaining order, safety and security within the polling station throughout the poll
- K15. how respond promptly to any queries made by voters, candidates, agents and authorised observers; other sources of information or guidance to whom they can be referred
- K16. how to maintain the polling station throughout the poll; the importance of undertaking regular checks to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose

Closing the poll

- K17. the importance of ensuring that the poll closes on time
- K18. the importance of returning the polling station premises to its original condition; how to dispose of waste correctly
- K19. the paperwork relating to the poll that must be completed; how to complete it correctly
- K20. the importance of packing election materials appropriately; how to assist with their safe and secure transportation to the count centre