

The Association of Electoral Administrators



AEA Qualifications

Certificate in Electoral Administration

Candidate's Information Pack

June 2019

Introduction

In 1998, when launching the Qualification, the AEA had the twin overall aims of:

- improving standards and professionalism within the service; and
- providing a sound career platform for individual members with the associated benefits to their authorities.

A supplementary objective was to aid the professional development and recognition of the AEA by persuading local authorities of the worth and value of their electoral staff being recognised by the fact that they had achieved the only professional qualification in electoral administration in the UK. That objective has clearly been achieved as evidenced by the vast majority of job adverts for electoral administrators requiring potential candidates to hold or being studying for the AEA Qualification.

The Association continues to be committed to raising the profile and enhancing the status of electoral administrators who perform such a vital role in the democratic process. It is also dedicated to encouraging and maintaining the highest possible standards of work provided by its members.

The Qualification is offered on a progressive route from a Foundation Course to a Certificate and then to a Diploma.

Qualification Format

General requirements

Candidates must be members of the AEA at the time of registration and remain so at all times throughout the qualification process.

A candidate applying to register for the Certificate must either:

- a) be able to demonstrate three year's relevant experience in both modules of the Certificate; or
- b) have attended all five modules of the AEA Foundation Course; or
- c) have attended at least two modules of the AEA Foundation Course and are booked to complete all modules within a year of the date of their application.

A candidate may not apply to register for the Diploma unless they have been awarded the Certificate.

Registration and Fee

For the Certificate, registration must be made by **1st September** in each year. The application to register is available on the AEA's website:

England and Wales – <https://www.aea-elections.co.uk/training-qualifications/qualifications/certificate-eng-wales/>

Scotland – <https://www.aea-elections.co.uk/training-qualifications/qualifications/certificate-scotland/>

The total fee is **£1,585**, which includes initial registration, the submission of four assignments and the sitting of two examination papers. The fee is subject to VAT. The full scale of fees is set out at Appendix B.

Certificate in Electoral Administration

Background

In **England and Wales**, the Certificate syllabus comprises of two modules:

Module C1 To provide an understanding and appreciation of the processes involved in electoral registration.

Candidates will be required to demonstrate clear understanding of the legal and administrative frameworks governing the registration of electors and an ability to translate that knowledge into the workplace in terms of the necessary administrative processes for the proper conduct of electoral registration.

Module C2 To provide an understanding and appreciation of the processes involved in the administration of all types of elections.

Candidates will be required to demonstrate clear understanding of the legal and administrative frameworks governing the conduct of elections and an ability to translate that knowledge into the workplace in terms of undertaking the necessary administrative processes for elections leading up to, including and beyond the election itself.

In **Scotland**, candidates will be required to cover the relevant part of the syllabus above that relates to their substantive role (either as module SC1 or SC2) and also a separate module on Scottish Public and Electoral Administration that provides an understanding and appreciation of the role and nature of the devolved powers within Scotland, the processes involved in the administration of specialist types of elections and the overview of both branches of electoral administration in Scotland.

Scottish candidates will be required to demonstrate clear understanding of the legal and administrative frameworks governing the Scottish Parliament, the powers available to it, the conduct for Community Councils and National Park Boards and an understanding and knowledge of the processes for both electoral registration and the conduct of elections within Scotland.

The syllabus guidelines are set out in full at Appendix A.

Timetable

The Certificate must be completed within two years of the appropriate annual registration date, except that this requirement may be extended to allow a re-sit at the first assessment day following the second anniversary of the above annual registration date.

Assignments

A programme of four work-based assignments will be issued to the candidate following the annual registration date. The assignments must be submitted in strict numerical order by 31st December, 31st March, 30th June and 30th September respectively in the year after first registration.

All four assignments must be passed.

The assignment topics for the last five years are provided at Appendix C.

Assignment pass mark

The assignments are marked using a previously agreed marking scheme for the contents.

The pass mark for each assignment is 45 marks.

Any assignments which are deemed to be failures may be resubmitted once and must be resubmitted within two months of the notification of failure.

Assessment days (England and Wales)

Assessment days will be held on the same day at two regional centres in both January and July in each year for each registration cohort. The candidate may choose which assessment day (summer or winter) and which centre to attend.

The assessments will comprise of:

- (a) a written examination of two hours consisting of five questions from module C1, of which three must be answered. This session will start at 10:30am;
- (b) a written examination of two hours consisting of five questions from module C2, of which three must be answered. This session will start at 1:30pm.

Assessment days (Scotland)

Assessment days will be held at one venue in January and July in each year for each registration cohort. The candidate may choose which assessment day (summer or winter) to attend.

The assessments will comprise of:

- (a) a written examination of two hours consisting of five questions from either module SC1 or module SC2, as appropriate, of which three must be answered. This session will start at 10:30am.

- (b) a written examination of two hours consisting of five questions from module SC3, of which three must be answered. This session will start at 1:30pm.

Assessment pass mark

The assessments are marked using a previously agreed marking scheme for the contents.

The pass mark for each part of the assessment (i.e. the morning assessment and the afternoon assessment) is 34 marks (45%).

If either part of the assessment is failed, the candidate may re-sit the appropriate part(s) once at the next following assessment day (i.e. for July fails at the January session or for January fails at the July session).

Award of Certificate

Once the candidate has achieved four passes for assignments and passes for both parts of the assessment day, the Certificate in Electoral Administration will be awarded.

The successful candidate will be entitled to use the designatory letters AEA (Cert) or AEA (Cert-Scotland) provided that the candidate remains in membership of the Association.

Qualification – Rules

Format

1. The AEA Qualification will be conducted strictly in accordance with the Qualification Format document. Candidates are deemed to accept the terms of the Format document and these Rules as a condition of applying for registration.

Qualifications and Examining Boards

2. The Qualification will be administered by the Qualifications and Examining Boards in accordance with their terms of reference approved from time to time by the Association.

Applications

3. Applications to register for either part of the Qualification must be made on the appropriate application form and accompanied by the appropriate registration fee. The application form and fee must be received by the Association by the appropriate date.

In exceptional circumstances, late applications will be considered provided that:

- (a) the application is received by no later than 28 days from the registration date;
 - (b) a letter outlining the exceptional circumstances is included with the application; and
 - (c) the prescribed late application fee is enclosed with the application.
4. Within 28 days of notification of registration, the candidate must submit the assessment day application form indicating their choice of date and venue.

Assignment and assessment fees

5. By submission of the first assignment, the candidate shall have paid the registration fee and assignment fees for all four assignments or provided a purchase order number. Marking of the first or subsequent assignments will not commence until such payment has been received or purchase order number provided.

6. Invoices for assessment fees will be issued in accordance with the following timetable:

- Certificate assessment day in July By 1st May
- Certificate assessment day in January By 1st November

Candidates for whom an assessment fee has not been received will not be permitted to take part in an assessment day.

Resubmission and re-sit fees

7. If a candidate wishes to resubmit an assignment or re-sit any part of the assessment day, they shall notify the Chair of the Qualifications Board in writing within 21 days of the date of the letter advising of the original failure. The notification must be accompanied by the appropriate resubmission or re-sit fee or purchase order number.
8. If a candidate wishes to withdraw a submitted assignment before receiving the mark for the document, the appropriate fee shall be payable. The mark for the resubmitted assignment will not be released until the fee has been received or purchase order number provided.

Withdrawals/failure to submit or attend

9. If a candidate chooses to withdraw from the Qualification or fails to submit an assignment by the due date or fails to attend an assessment day, all fees paid shall be forfeited except that, in exceptional circumstances and at the absolute discretion of the Association, an appropriate part of the fees may be refunded.
10. Applications to be treated as exceptional circumstances shall be made in writing to the Chair of the Qualifications Board together with any supporting documentary evidence, and shall be made within 28 days of the relevant date. For this purpose, the relevant date will be deemed to be the date on which the Association is notified of the withdrawal or the date by which the assignment should have been submitted or the date of the assessment day.
11. A candidate failing to submit an assignment or to attend an assessment day or to make application for a resubmission or re-sit in accordance with Rule 7 will be deemed to have failed that part of the Qualification.

Extension of dates for submission of assignments

12. Assignments not submitted by the due dates shall be deemed to be failures except that a candidate may apply for an extension of time for submission. Such an application shall be made in writing and must be received by the Chair of the Qualifications Board by no later than 21 days before the original date for submission of the document. The

application must state the full reasons for the request and shall be accompanied by the prescribed extension fee or purchase order number.

13. The application shall be considered as soon as practicable by at least two members of the Qualifications Board in consultation. Any extension granted shall be for a period not longer than 21 days after the original date for submission of the document. If the application is not granted, 50% of the prescribed extension fee shall be refunded.

Notification of results

14. Results for assignments will be notified to candidates within two months of the date on which the work was received by the Association. Results of assessments or examinations will be notified to candidates within two months of the date of the relevant assessment day.
15. Candidates will be advised whether their work has achieved a pass or a fail by reference to the following grades:
 - Distinction – 75% and above
 - Credit – 60% to below 75%
 - Pass – 45% to below 60%
 - Marginal fail – 40% to below 45%
 - Fail – below 40%

The actual mark awarded will also be advised.

16. In cases of marginal fails or fails for assignments, the candidate will be advised of deficiencies, errors or technical faults. In cases of resubmitted assignments, the highest grade that will be awarded is that of a pass.

Appeals

17. Appeals against fails will only be allowed in extenuating circumstances which meet one of the following criteria:
 - (a) in respect of an examination, the candidate was suffering from a medical condition which affected his/her performance on the day;
 - (b) the candidate was prevented by a medical condition or other emergency situation from attending or completing an assessment day;

- (c) in respect of an assignment, the candidate was unduly affected by some external circumstance during the period available for resubmission.
18. No appeal against a fail for an assignment will be allowed where the candidate has failed to avail themselves of the resubmission opportunity.
 19. Candidates wishing to appeal must do so in writing to the Chair of the Qualifications Board within 21 days of the date of the letter notifying the fail. The application must state the full grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documentary evidence. In the case of an appeal on medical grounds, the documentary evidence must include a written statement from a qualified medical practitioner who has been involved in the treatment of the candidate. The appeal will be dealt with by the Qualifications Board by way of written representations only except that the Board at its sole discretion shall have the right to require the appellant to appear in person before the Board.
 20. The application must be accompanied by the appeal fee or purchase order number. This fee will be returned if the appeal is upheld.
 21. In cases where the appeal is upheld, the following will apply:
 - (a) for an examination, the candidate will be permitted to re-sit the examination at the next assessment day without payment of the re-sit fee;
 - (b) for an assignment, the candidate will be permitted to resubmit the work within two months of the date of the letter notifying the outcome of the appeal without payment of the resubmission fee.
 22. The decision of the Association on all matters relating to appeals is final and will be notified in writing to the appellant. No further correspondence on an appeal will be entered into after the Association's notification letter has been sent.

Responsibility for preparation

23. Candidates are responsible for their own arrangements for registration and compliance with these Rules. The Association can take no responsibility for any failure to comply.
24. Candidates are responsible for preparing for the Qualification under their own arrangements and for undertaking such preparation and study which is required. Candidates should ensure that any courses which they attend in preparation for the Qualification are suitable for their personal requirements. In this connection, it should be noted that no

courses other than those directly provided by the Association and in its own name are accredited in any way.

Assignment requirements

25. Guidance notes for the preparation of assignments will be provided to all candidates. Failure to comply with the requirements specified in the guidance notes will be treated as grounds for awarding a fail.

Administrative procedures/timetable

26. For each cycle of the Qualification, a detailed administrative framework and timetable will be supplied to each candidate by no later than one month after the closing date for registration. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that they receive and comply with the procedures and timetable set out in the framework.

Marking procedures

27. Each assignment will be marked individually by two examiners using the marking schemes currently in use and approved by the Examining Board.
- (a) If the two marks awarded are within 10 marks of each other, the average of the two marks will be used to determine whether the script is awarded a pass or a fail.
- (b) If the difference in the two marks is greater than 10, the script will be referred to a third examiner. Once the third mark has been obtained, the average of the closest two marks will be used to determine whether the script is awarded a pass or a fail.

To obtain a pass, the average mark in either of the above two circumstances must not be less than 45.

28. Each examination question will be marked by one examiner using the marking schemes currently in use and approved by the Examining Board in relation to each individual question.
- (a) Any papers which fall in the band from 38% to 48% of the total marks for the paper will be referred to a second examiner.
- (b) Once the second mark has been obtained, the average of the two marks will be used to determine whether the script is awarded a pass or a fail.

To obtain a pass, the average mark must not be less than 45%.

Relationships and Interests

29. Any candidate who works or has worked with or has any personal relationship with an examiner must declare that fact in writing to the Chair of the Qualifications Board as soon as they become aware of the fact. No candidate should attempt to use their working or other relationship with an examiner, officer or employee of the Association to advance their prospects in the Qualification or to seek an unfair advantage over other candidates.
30. The current list of examiners (as at 21st June 2019) is:
- Sue Daniels
 - Andy Hunter
 - Steve Lake
 - Laura Lock
 - Glynne Morgan
 - Billy Pollock
 - Peter Stanyon
 - James Stevens
 - Pete Wildman

Cheating and plagiarism

31. Allegations of cheating or plagiarism by a candidate will be dealt with by the Qualifications Board in accordance with procedures approved by the Board. A candidate found guilty of a charge of cheating or plagiarism may be subject to such penalty as the Board may determine on the evidence, including expulsion from the Qualification with or without a recommendation that the candidate be not permitted to register again for the Qualification within a stated time or sine die.
32. A candidate expelled from the Qualification shall forfeit all fees paid. In addition, the matter shall be reported to the AEA Board for consideration as to whether the Association's disciplinary procedures shall be invoked.

Failure to comply

33. A candidate who fails to comply with these Rules may be charged with misconduct and in such cases shall be dealt with by the Qualifications Board in accordance with procedures approved by the Board. A candidate found guilty of a charge of misconduct may be subject to such penalty as the Board may determine on the evidence. In the case of expulsion from the Qualification, the same provisions as in the previous Rule shall apply.

Electoral Registration

Module C1 (England and Wales)

Module SC1 (Scotland)

1. Electoral Registration Officer

- 1.1. How appointed
- 1.2. Responsibilities and role
- 1.3. Staff and resources
- 1.4. Relationship to local authority
- 1.5. Appointment of Deputy ERO

2. Registration

- 2.1. Relevant date
- 2.2. Dies non
- 2.3. Other key dates
- 2.4. Eligibility/non-eligibility
- 2.5. Residence
- 2.6. Registration by way of declaration
- 2.7. Homeless
- 2.8. Patients in Mental Hospitals
- 2.9. Persons remanded in custody
- 2.10. Service voters
- 2.11. HM Forces
- 2.12. Crown Servants/British Council employees
- 2.13. Overseas electors
- 2.14. Anonymous registration
- 2.15. European Union citizens
- 2.16. Peers
- 2.17. Students
- 2.18. Second homes
- 2.19. Attainers
- 2.20. Mentally disordered persons or learning disabled
- 2.21. Ethnic minority communities
- 2.22. Property and elector information from other sources
- 2.23. Form design
- 2.24. Pre-printing of details
- 2.25. Use of IT
- 2.26. Storage of forms and data
- 2.27. Appointment and use of staff
- 2.28. Payment of staff
- 2.29. Staff training
- 2.30. Publicity

3. Maintenance of the register

- 3.1. Alteration of registers (general)
- 3.2. Opt out
- 3.3. Alteration of registers (elections)
- 3.4. Alteration of registers (elections during canvass period)
- 3.5. Alteration of registers (clerical errors, court decisions and corrections)
- 3.6. Applications for registration
- 3.7. Solicited and unsolicited applications
- 3.8. Listing of applications
- 3.9. Verification process
- 3.10. Exceptions process
- 3.11. Attestations process
- 3.12. Determination of applications
- 3.13. Objections to registration
- 3.14. Listing of objections
- 3.15. Determination of objections
- 3.16. Hearings of applications and objections
- 3.17. Amendments/Change of name
- 3.18. Deletions
- 3.19. Review of entitlement of registration
- 3.20. Hearings of reviews
- 3.21. Appeals
- 3.22. Exchange of information between EROs
- 3.23. Nature and timing of annual canvass
- 3.24. Canvass Form/Household Enquiry Form (HEF)
- 3.25. Invitation (ITR) and Application to Register
- 3.26. Requirement to Register
- 3.27. Notice of Civil Penalty
- 3.28. Review and Appeal
- 3.29. Methods of conducting canvass
- 3.30. Failure to respond/retaining entries
- 3.31. Maximising registration

4. Publication

- 4.1. Layout of registers
- 4.2. Revised registers (electoral, open and overseas – 1st December)
- 4.3. Other revised electoral registers
- 4.4. Notice of intention to revise register
- 4.5. Other requirements to publish
- 4.6. Public deposit of registers
- 4.7. Inspection of registers under the control of the ERO
- 4.8. Archive copies
- 4.9. Publicity

5. Supply and sale

- 5.1. Statutory supply of electoral registers
- 5.2. Archive copies
- 5.3. Sale of registers
- 5.4. Statutory fees

6. Absent voting applications

- 6.1. Types of absent votes
- 6.2. Time periods
- 6.3. Dies non
- 6.4. Deadlines for applications
- 6.5. Applications (generally)
- 6.6. Refresh of signatures
- 6.7. Notification of rejected postal voting statements
- 6.8. Certificate of employment
- 6.9. Grant or refusal of applications (Reg 57 RPR 2001)
- 6.10. Appeals against decision of ERO
- 6.11. Advertising

7. Proxy voting

- 7.1. Appointment of proxy
- 7.2. Qualification to be a proxy
- 7.3. Restrictions on voting by proxies
- 7.4. Inquiries by the ERO
- 7.5. Application to vote by post

8. Absent voting records and lists

- 8.1. Records of absent voters
- 8.2. Lists of absent voters
- 8.3. Supply of lists
- 8.4. Inspection of lists

9. Polling station registers

- 9.1. Mark in register/Absent voter indicators

10. Other considerations

- 10.1. Supply of registers for jury purposes (**England and Wales only**)
- 10.2. Data Protection considerations
- 10.3. Evidence of Registration (S.180A, RPA 1983)
- 10.4. Retention of paper copies
- 10.5. List of schools and rooms for election meetings kept by the ERO

Elections Administration

Module C2 (England and Wales)

Module SC2 (Scotland)

1. Returning Officer

- 1.1. How appointed
- 1.2. Responsibilities and role
- 1.3. Staff and resources
- 1.4. Returning Officer at local government elections
- 1.5. Returning Officer and Acting Returning Officer at UK Parliamentary elections
- 1.6. Regional Returning Officer and Local Returning Officer at European Parliamentary elections
- 1.7. Police Area Returning Officer and Local Returning Officer at Police and Crime Commissioner elections **(England and Wales only)**
- 1.7. Regional Returning Officer and Constituency Returning Officer at Scottish Parliamentary elections **(Scotland only)**

2. Timetable

- 2.1. UK Parliamentary elections
- 2.2. Local government elections
- 2.3. European Parliamentary election
- 2.4. Police and Crime Commissioner elections **(England and Wales only)**
- 2.4. Scottish Parliamentary elections **(Scotland only)**
- 2.5. Computation of time (dies non)
- 2.6. Computation of time – matters other than the timetable
- 2.7. Casual vacancies

3. Nomination of Candidates

- 3.1. Qualifications and disqualifications
- 3.2. Consent to nomination
- 3.3. Candidate's description and use of emblem
- 3.4. Subscribers
- 3.5. Number of nomination papers
- 3.6. Alterations to nomination paper
- 3.7. Delivery of nomination papers
- 3.8. Inspection of and objections to nomination papers
- 3.9. Deposits
- 3.10. Decisions as to validity
- 3.11. Effect of registration of political parties on candidates' descriptions
- 3.12. The register of electors to be used for nominations
- 3.13. Withdrawal of candidate
- 3.14. Death of candidate

3.15. Uncontested elections

4. Election Documents

- 4.1. Notice of election
- 4.2. Statement as to persons nominated
- 4.3. Notice of Poll
- 4.4. Notice of situation of polling stations
- 4.5. Notice of details of election agents
- 4.6. Definition of "publish"
- 4.7. Imprint on election material
- 4.8. Poll cards
- 4.9. Ballot papers
- 4.10. Use of registered party emblems on ballot papers

5. Agents and Observers

- 5.1. Notice of appointment of election agent
- 5.2. Agent's office
- 5.3. Death of agent
- 5.4. Revocation of appointment
- 5.5. Candidate acting as own agent
- 5.6. Appointment of sub-agent
- 5.7. Prohibition from acting as agent
- 5.8. Election expenses – duties and responsibilities
- 5.9. Requirement of secrecy
- 5.10. Polling agent
- 5.11. Counting agent
- 5.12. Guidance for tellers
- 5.13. Observers

6. Issue of Postal Ballot Papers

- 6.1. Time of issue
- 6.2. Persons entitled to be present
- 6.3. Requirement of secrecy
- 6.4. Written procedures
- 6.5. Official mark
- 6.6. Postal voting statement
- 6.7. Envelopes
- 6.8. Statements
- 6.9. Sealing up of documents
- 6.10. Delivery
- 6.11. Spoilt ballot papers
- 6.12. Lost ballot papers
- 6.13. Procedure for combined polls
- 6.14. Postal votes ballot boxes

7. Receipt of Postal Ballot Papers

- 7.1. Notice of time(s) and place(s) of opening
- 7.2. Persons entitled to be present
- 7.3. Number of agents
- 7.4. Requirement of secrecy
- 7.5. Means of returning postal ballot papers
- 7.6. Written procedures
- 7.7. Postal voting statement
- 7.8. Procedure for missing/incomplete documents
- 7.9. Sealing of receptacles
- 7.10. Opening of ballot paper envelopes
- 7.11. Compilation of statutory statement

8. Polling Districts/Polling Places/Polling Stations

- 8.1. Polling districts
- 8.2. Polling places
- 8.3. Polling stations
- 8.4. Statutory reviews

9. Polling Station Procedures

- 9.1. Requirement of secrecy
- 9.2. Official mark
- 9.3. Furniture and equipment including ballot box
- 9.4. Statutory notices
- 9.5. Hours of poll
- 9.6. Sealing of ballot box
- 9.7. Persons entitled to be present
- 9.8. Attendance by police
- 9.9. Polling procedures
- 9.10. Register to be conclusive
- 9.11. Statutory questions
- 9.12. Under age voters
- 9.13. Voters with disabilities
- 9.14. Tendered votes
- 9.15. Spoilt ballot papers
- 9.16. Access for people with disabilities
- 9.17. Adjournment of poll
- 9.18. Close of poll including provisions for those waiting
- 9.19. Ballot paper account

10. Staffing arrangements

- 10.1. Postal votes staff
- 10.2. Poll cards – sorting and delivery
- 10.3. Presiding Officers

APPENDIX A Certificate Syllabus

- 10.4. Poll Clerks
- 10.5. Counting staff
- 10.6. Clerical and other staff assistance
- 10.7. Appointment of Deputy Returning Officers (**England and Wales only**)
- 10.7. Appointment of Depute Returning Officers (**Scotland only**)
- 10.8. Requirement as to secrecy
- 10.9. Prohibition on assisting candidates
- 10.10. Voting arrangements for staff
- 10.11. Payments to staff
- 10.12. Travelling and other expenses
- 10.13. Income tax, national insurance and superannuation
- 10.14. Staff instructions, training and briefing
- 10.15. Other staff considerations

11. The Count

- 11.1. Notice of time and place
- 11.2. Security implications
- 11.3. The media
- 11.4. Persons entitled to be present
- 11.5. Opening and verification of ballot boxes including postal vote ballot boxes
- 11.6. Statement as to verification
- 11.7. Count of ballot papers – single member vacancy
- 11.8. Count of ballot papers – multi-member vacancy
- 11.9. Doubtful and rejected ballot papers
- 11.10. Duty to confer before declaring
- 11.11. Re-counts
- 11.12. Equality of votes
- 11.13. Declaration of result
- 11.14. Public notice of result
- 11.15. Sealing up and retention of documents

12. Post Count Procedures

- 12.1. Inspection of documents
- 12.2. Disposal of documents
- 12.3. Forwarding, retention and public inspection of documents
- 12.4. Candidates' deposits
- 12.5. Return of election expenses

Scottish Public and Electoral Administration
Module SC3 (Scotland)

1. Scottish Parliamentary Elections

- 1.1. Combined polls with other polls
- 1.2. Voting systems – constituency and d’Hondt method
- 1.3. Legislative process

2. Community Councils

- 2.1. Non-statutory elections
- 2.2. Scottish Government advice on conduct of elections
- 2.3. Non-election of community council
- 2.4. Functions and powers of community councils
- 2.5. Model scheme for community councils

3. National Park Board Elections

- 3.1. Method of election
- 3.2. Franchise
- 3.3. Candidates
- 3.4. Electoral area
- 3.5. Consultative processes

4. Devolved and Reserved Powers

- 4.1. Scotland Act 1988
- 4.2. Elections
- 4.3. Registration
- 4.4. Electoral Commission
- 4.5. UK and Scottish legislation
- 4.6. Local government elections
- 4.7. Role of Scotland Office
- 4.8. Role of Scottish Government
- 4.9. Role of Electoral Management Board

5. Scottish Local Government

- 5.1. Functions and funding of local government
- 5.2. Political arrangements and representation
- 5.3. Role of officers
- 5.4. Relationship of local government to other public bodies
- 5.5. Role and responsibilities of Assessors

6. General Overview

- 6.1. Electoral registration in Scotland (this will expect knowledge of sections 1 to 4 inclusive and section 6 to 8 inclusive of module SC1).
- 6.2. Elections Administration in Scotland (this will expect knowledge of sections 1 to 5 inclusive and 8 to 11 inclusive of module SC2).

Indicative Reading List

Title	Author(s) / Publisher	Part
AEA Foundation Course Manual	The AEA	Certificate and Diploma
AEA website	The AEA	Certificate and Diploma
Cabinet Office website	The Cabinet Office	Certificate and Diploma
Electoral Commission Guidance to Candidates	The Electoral Commission	Certificate and Diploma
Electoral Commission website	The Electoral Commission	Certificate and Diploma
Guidance to Returning Officers and materials	The Electoral Commission	Certificate and Diploma
Parker's Law and Conduct of Elections	Price / Lexis Nexis	Certificate and Diploma
Past examination papers and Examiners' Reports	The AEA	Certificate and Diploma
Running Electoral Registration	The Electoral Commission	Certificate and Diploma
Schofield's Election Law	Posner and Footner / Sweet and Maxwell	Certificate and Diploma
Data Protection Act Guidelines	The Information Commissioner	C1 and C2
AEA Diploma Manual	The AEA	Diploma
Parliament Website (House of Commons / House of Lords)	UK Parliament	D1 and D2
Electoral Reviews – Guidance and Procedural Advice	Local Government Boundary Commission	D2
Good Commonwealth Electoral Practice	Commonwealth Secretariat	D2
Guide to the Local Government Ombudsman Service	Ombudsman website	D2
International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design	Reynolds and Reilly / IDEA	D2

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Title	Author(s) / Publisher	Part
International IDEA website	International IDEA	D2
Review of UK Parliamentary Constituencies	Parliamentary Boundary Commissions	D2
National Occupational Standards	The AEA website	D3
Parliamentary Election Accounts Guidance	Electoral Claims Unit	D3

APPENDIX B Qualification Scale Fees

Certificate

Basic fee	£1,585
• <i>Registration</i>	<i>£661</i>
• <i>Assignments (each)</i>	<i>£139</i>
• <i>Examinations (each paper)</i>	<i>£184</i>
Assignment re-submission(s)	£139
Examination re-sits (each paper)	£184
Assignment extension	£62
Late application for registration	£62
Appeal against failure	£104
Basic feedback on assignment	£35
Fuller feedback on assignment	£87

Note: all fees are subject to VAT.

Assignments

Candidates are required to complete four work-based assignments, which must be submitted on a quarterly basis by no later than 31 December, 31 March, 30 June and 30 September

Set out below for information are the topics for the last five years.

2018 Programme

1. What documentation does a candidate need to submit to be validly nominated to stand for election at a principal area election? What are the differences between candidates standing for a political party and individual candidates? Make suggestions as to how the documentation could be simplified to improve the nomination process. What differences will GDPR make to nomination processes?
2. Outline the statutory procedures that a person must follow in order to successfully be accepted by the ERO as an "anonymous elector". What practical approaches could be adopted to raise awareness and encourage those persons "at risk" to register to vote. Suggest any further changes to the legislation that might improve the process.
3. Detail the ways in which assistance can be provided to electors to aid them in being able to cast their votes in a polling station and consider what improvements could be made to processes to improve accessibility.
4. For an "ordinary elector", describe the various channels available currently, to register, amend their entry on the register and adjust any other options around registration under the responsibility of the Electoral Registration Officer? Include any suggested improvements either in practice or by legislation.

2017 Programme

1. Electoral Registration Officers are required to notify a person that their postal ballot paper has been rejected. Describe the process and highlight the advantages and disadvantages of this notification from the administrators' and electors' perspective. How could this process be improved?
2. Discuss the requirements to maintain the integrity of the ballot papers of UK Parliamentary General Election from production to after the statutory date for destruction. Include ways in which this process could be improved.

APPENDIX C

Assignment Topics

3. What matters should an Electoral Registration Officer consider in determining applications to register at a second address? How could the current situation be improved?
4. What is the purpose of tendered ballot papers? Under what circumstances are they used? Would you recommend retaining them or abolishing them? Suggest an alternative system.

2016 Programme

1. Who is eligible to be registered as an overseas elector? What are the requirements to be registered as an overseas elector and what restrictions apply to those so registered? How could the process be improved, both from an administrator's and elector's perspective?
2. With the requirement for local authorities to conduct a review of polling places and polling districts every five years, outline the process that must be adopted and identify the key elements that must be taken into account in conducting such a review. Suggest changes which would improve the transparency and impartiality of the process.
3. The verification and counting of ballot papers at combined polls is a complex and lengthy process, which has often created difficulties for many returning officers. Consider the whole process from the receipt of ballot boxes up to the point of declaration of results. Identify the potential challenges and suggest how the process could be conducted in order to achieve timely and accurate results.
4. It is generally recognised as good practice to offer prospective candidates an informal check of their nomination papers before they formally submit them. Identify what a valid nomination should contain. Outline the potential issues and solutions that an informal check might throw up, and identify the risks that might be introduced to the process by offering such informal checks.

2015 Programme

1. Electors who cannot be successfully verified through the digital service must provide further evidence to enable them to be registered. Identify the legal processes to continue the elector's request to be registered. What improvements or changes could be made to the current process to benefit both administrators and applicants?
2. Outline the process by which an elector may apply to appoint an emergency proxy at a UK Parliamentary General election. Explain the impact of this process on administrators and electors. Suggest ways in which the current system could be improved.

APPENDIX C

Assignment Topics

3. Provide a brief overview of the following registration activities required for the Electoral Registration Officer to discharge his/her legal responsibilities:

- applications to register
- declarations
- reviews

Comment on the challenges associated with these activities and recommend the changes you would make to improve the process from the perspective of administrators and electors.

4. Postal voting is now a major part of the election process and, as a consequence, many Returning Officers outsource not just the printing but also the despatch of postal ballot packs. Identify the risks this can present and identify what measures can be put in place to ensure that the process is carried out both efficiently and as required by law.

2014 Programme

1. Outline the nomination requirements that apply to the following types of election:

- UK Parliamentary
- Principal Area
- Parish/Community Council
- European Parliamentary

Consider the merits of and issues with each different set of requirements for each respective election type.

2. Declarations of local connection were introduced to allow persons without a permanent residence to apply to be registered to vote. Describe the current system, consider how effective the system has been and suggest ways in which the system could be improved and expanded.
3. "The democratic electoral process might be considered by some to be overly bureaucratic and outdated in regard to its administration." Comment on the above statement with regard to the appointment, roles and requirements surrounding polling, postal vote and counting agents and observers. Consider the statutory requirements and comment on their present day suitability or otherwise, suggesting any changes which might improve the process without detrimental effect on the security and secrecy of the poll.

APPENDIX C

Assignment Topics

4. Under the Representation of the People Regulations 2001, Electoral Registration Officers must, by 31 January each year, send notification to every person who has an absent vote and whose signature is more than five years old to provide a fresh signature. Examine the process from both an administrator and elector perspective and highlight the advantages and disadvantages of carrying out this review. How could this process be made simpler and more secure?