



Running an unscheduled UK Parliamentary General election (UKPGE)

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The Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022 - the law

- Repeals the Fixed Term Parliament Act 2011 (s1)
- UK Parliament now dissolved by Sovereign at request of the PM (s2)
- Will automatically dissolve after 5 years if not already dissolved (s4)
- The dissolution and the election date are not reviewable by the courts (s3)
- The writ is received on the day after the dissolution regardless of whether of actual receipt (Sch,s5)

The Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022 - what it means for you

- Running unscheduled UKPGEs will become the norm
- More likely to run them with short notice



Preparation in advance of an unscheduled UKPGE

Designation of polling places - emergency delegation to RO

Template project plan and risk register

Template FAQs for UKPGE

Update handout provided for timing context

Template count plan and instructions

List of public rooms that candidates can use

Training needs of the team

Boundary review implementation

Cross boundary plan

Contract plan

Consider changes brought in by the Elections Act 2022

Template postal vote plan and instructions

Unscheduled v scheduled UKPGE

The key difference is in the first few days. Instead of gradually getting things in place over the preceding months, you have to do everything all at once to get the core plan in place.

LEAVE ME ALONE..

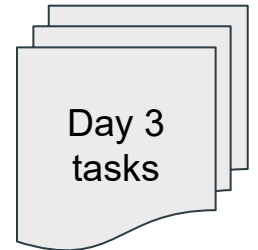
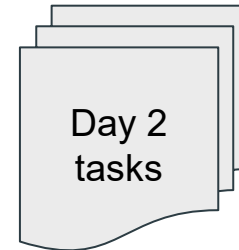
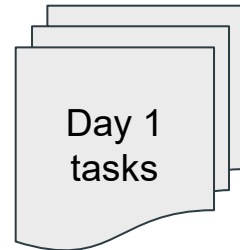
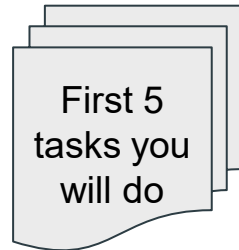


A GENERAL ELECTION'S BEEN CALLED!!!!

Prioritisation exercise - the first few days



- There is a LOT to do in the first few days
- Cards on your table detail these tasks (plus some spare that you can write anything specific to your area on)
- Create four piles of tasks:



Contingency arrangements for an unscheduled UKPGE

Scenario 1.

One of your usual polling stations is unavailable on polling day. There is no other suitable venue in the polling district. What could you do?

Scenario 2.

After exhausting your staff database you still have vacancies for both POs and PCs. What can you do?

Scenario 3.

You have a large backlog of registration applications, AV applications and applications for VACs. What can you do?

Scenario 4.

Your usual count venue is unavailable. You only have 2 other options:

- 1) A venue in the corner of the authority area, which is the right size but with poor accessibility and parking
- 2) A venue in the centre of the authority area, that is very small but with good facilities.

Which do you choose?

Scenario 1

- Move it to nearest accessible PS in adjoining PD – mobility of electorate
- Is there another PS in the PD – make that a dual station?
- Use a temporary unit on the existing site – generator? lighting? toilets? costs?
- Use a non standard building as the PS
- Make sure you have delegations in place to cover this – you will need quick and clear decision-making, ideally not full Council – what does your council constitution say – emergency powers?

Scenario 2

- Think creatively - can you use your existing staff more flexibly?
- Floating PCs/ Senior POs appointed to polling places with multiple stations – evening PCs to work at peak times only
- Reluctant POs paired at multi-station venues with experienced ‘mentor’ POs
- ROs have personal responsibility – in their interest to ‘encourage’ staff to take part
- Does a neighbouring authority have a staff surplus?
- Social media campaign – “be part of democracy”...
- PSIs– a last resort?
- You may have to be prepared to run the election understaffed - more queues?
2am count start time?

Scenario 3

- Discuss with printer and tell your RO – don't leave it too late!
- Secure resource from other areas of the council. Process notes ready on how to process applications so 'drafted' staff know what to do quickly
- Postal vote delays – courier service; hand delivery?
- What comms is needed to electors, candidates and agents etc?
- Local messaging: 'if you receive a poll card no need to apply to register again' to reduce duplicates
- Plan for a backlog – you will have one. What can you put in place?
- Prioritise applications in the run up to deadlines, move tasks around to free up this period

Scenario 4

- 1st venue – can POs get there; time delays getting boxes in; drop-off points?; clear instructions to POs; impact on 2am start time; extra logistics due to poor facilities...
- 2nd venue – impact reduction of staff has on timings; layout plan to maximise use; process changes for smaller venue/teams?; maintain transparency; use separate room - split resource...
- What is more important to your RO and candidates - finish time, or comfortable venue?
- The profile of the count may impact your decision - what if you have a high profile candidates and media interest
- Hire a large marquee instead - check ECU will pay first!
- Clear communication to staff, candidates and agents will be vital

Combined polls

1992	April
1997	May
2001	June
2005	May
2010	May
2015	May
2017	June
2019	Dec

- Poll cards – sent data? Can you/do you want to combined?
- Postal votes – sent data? Can you/do you want to combined?
- Printer capacity – double the printing
- Capacity and space for opening of postal votes
- Nominations – capacity for additional C&As
- Staff capacity for increased turnout
- Cross boundary implications for UKPGE
- Different franchises / processes? Extra considerations – may want to keep completely separately



And finally...

- Good luck when it happens
- Support yourself and support each other
- Help is available – look at the AEA member support pages
- Remember the AEA provides support and a counselling service for you