



Presiding Officer Job Description

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| Section/Department: | Electoral Services |
| Responsible to: | Returning Officer / Counting Officer |

The Polling Station Team

Polling stations are open from 7.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. On election day staff are required to arrive at the polling station at 6.30 a.m. to set up the equipment. Staff are not permitted to leave the premises during polling hours in order to maintain the secrecy of the vote.

The Presiding Officer

Presiding Officers are responsible for the conduct of the ballot in the polling stations and they must have a good knowledge of voting procedures.

The role:

- To comply with any instructions from the Returning Officer
- To take charge of a polling station
- To ensure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect
- To maintain the secrecy of the ballot
- To supervise the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station

Duties:

Before Election Day

- Attend a training session provided by Electoral Services
- Liaise with the keyholder/caretaker for the polling station before election day to confirm arrangements for key collection/opening and closing the building
- Make contact with Poll Clerk(s) before election day to confirm arrangements
- Collect the Ballot Box and check contents before election day and keep secure Election Day
- Transport Ballot Box to assigned Polling Station
- Set up and organise the layout of allocated room (this includes some lifting of polling booths)
- Be aware of any access issues at the polling station
- Be responsible for health and safety at the polling station for all staff and visitors
- Ensure the polling station is opened on time
- Ensure that all signs and instructions are clear, visible and remain in place
- Keep the polling station neat and tidy
- Instruct and supervise the work of the Poll Clerk(s)
- Account for, and be responsible for, all ballot papers, issued and un-issued
- Check and mark electors' electoral numbers in the register of electors and on the corresponding numbers lists
- Issue ballot papers to voters
- Ensure that voters cast their votes in secret and put them into the ballot box

- Provide assistance to voters where appropriate
- Receive postal votes delivered by hand
- Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station e.g. candidates, agents, Electoral Commission representatives and observers, and ensure they do not interfere with the voting process
- Be polite and professional when dealing with all visitors to the polling station and remain impartial at all times
- Monitor the activities of tellers outside polling places

Close of Poll

- Ensure the polling station is closed on time
- Supervise the dismantling of the polling station and ensure the room is returned to good order
- Complete the ballot paper account and associated paperwork, pack in accordance with instructions given by Returning Officer
- Deliver the ballot box and associated paperwork to the count location

You will be working a 16 hour day, so you must provide your own refreshments and take appropriate breaks throughout the day to avoid tiredness. Polling station staff are not permitted to leave the premises during the hours of poll.

The Returning Officer is not permitted to employ anyone who is/or has carried out duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election.

All staff will be issued with an agreement to maintain the secrecy of the poll.

Presiding Officer Person Specification

| Experience | |
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| Essential | Desirable |
| A basic understanding of the election process To have worked previously as a Poll Clerk | Experience in a range of elections e.g. local, Parliamentary or European |

| Skills/Personal Attributes | |
|---|--|
| Essential | Desirable |
| Excellent communication skills and the ability to explain procedures to a variety of people High level of personal presentation and professional manner A commitment to customer care Good administration skills and attention to detail A team player and flexible attitude Calm under pressure Punctual and reliable | Able to lift polling booths/ballot boxes etc |

| Other | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Essential | Desirable |
| Must not have worked in support of a political party/candidate at the election, whether paid or unpaid Be willing to attend a training session Must not have been convicted of an offence under Electoral Legislation Acceptance of Waiving of Working Time Directive for period of employment | Use of car to transport ballot box |