

Presiding Officer

Job Description and Person Specification

The polling station team

The role of the polling station staff is to ensure that voters are able to cast their vote in secret, free from influence and in a calm atmosphere.

Polling Stations are open from 7.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. On polling day, staff are required to arrive at the polling station sufficiently early (6:15am) to set up the equipment in time for opening. In order to maintain the secrecy of the vote and safeguard the integrity of the process, staff should not leave the premises during polling hours.

The current fee for presiding officers is £362, which includes a £30 fee for the completion of training. Please note this is subject to change – amounts would be stipulated on an appointment letter if you were offered a role working at an election.

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 the voting procedure.

The Role of the Presiding Officer:

- Comply with any instructions from the Returning Officer;
- Management of the polling station;
- To ensure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect;
- Account for all ballot papers;
- To maintain the secrecy of the ballot and comply with secrecy requirements; and
- To supervise the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station.

Duties:

Before Polling Day:

- Provide Electoral Services with your payment details and proof of identity and eligibility to work in the UK, if requested;
- Where applicable, attend training sessions and briefings provided by the electoral services office;
- Liaise with the contact person for your designated polling station well before polling day to confirm arrangements for key collection and opening and closing the building;
- Visit the polling station to ensure polling day arrangements are in place;
- In a multiple polling station, make contact with other presiding officer(s);
- Make contact with poll clerk(s) to check travel arrangements to and from polling station and to brief poll clerks on the necessary procedures; and
- Collect the ballot box and contents before the poll and keep secure.

Polling Day:

- Transport ballot box and contents to the polling station;
- Erect polling booths. This involves some lifting;

- Organise the layout of the polling station using the instructions provided and taking all voters' needs into account
- Be aware of 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 clean, 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 only eligible electors vote;
- Ensure that voters cast their votes in secret and without influence and put them into the ballot box;
- Provide assistance to voters where appropriate;
- Know the procedure for dealing with clerical errors;
- Receive postal votes delivered by hand and record as per the procedure;
- Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station, e.g. candidates, agents, representatives of the Electoral Commission 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
- You will be visited by a Polling Station Inspector to ensure that the polling station is open and being operated efficiently.

Close of Poll:

- Ensure the polling station is closed on time, having allowed all those in a queue at 10.00pm to cast their vote;
- Supervise the dismantling of the polling station and ensure the building is returned to good order;
- Complete the ballot paper account and associated paperwork; pack up documents in accordance with instructions given by Returning Officer;
- Only allow the poll clerks to leave when you do;
- Deliver the Ballot Box and associated paperwork to the Count location as designated by the Returning Officer.

Extra Information

You will be working a 16 hour day, 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 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 required to sign an agreement to this effect. You must not wear any colours relating to any Political Party.

All staff will be required to sign their agreement to maintain the secrecy of the poll.

This information is provided for guidance only and may be subject to change without notice.

Person Specification – Presiding Officer

Desirable	Essential
Previous customer service experience	Experience of working at a Polling Station on at least 2 other occasions
Previous line management or supervisory experience	Ability to work independently under pressure
Working knowledge of the electoral process	Literate and numerate
	Good timekeeping
	Ability to remain politically neutral
	Diplomacy and tact when working with members of the public.
	Physically able to undertake the duties of the task.