
Overview

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA 2006) introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places at least once every four years.

The Electoral Administrator has a significant role to play in the designation of polling districts and polling places. Although the ultimate decision about polling arrangements lies with the council, the EA is likely to have an input into the review of such arrangements. This unit describes the competences involved in drawing up proposals, consulting with key interested parties (e.g. colleagues, political parties, access groups, the public), and communicating changes regarding polling arrangements. Note that, for the purposes of this unit, a 'polling district' is defined as a geographical area and the building block on which parliamentary constituencies are based. A 'polling place' is also a geographical area, which might be defined as a particular building, a street or even a whole polling district. If no polling place is designated, then the polling district is the polling place. This unit does not cover polling stations (the physical location at which polling takes place).

Target Group

This unit is appropriate to the work of Electoral Administrators with responsibility for contributing to the review of polling arrangements.

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Contribute to the review of polling arrangements

Performance criteria

Developing proposals

You must be able to:

- P1 identify the need for a review of polling arrangements, where relevant and within the statutory requirements, and confirm your role in the review process
- P2 draw up proposals relating to revised polling arrangements where it is your responsibility to do so
- P3 ensure that the revised polling arrangements are fully accessible for disabled voters

Consulting on proposals

You must be able to:

- P4 identify all interested parties, including those specified in the legislation, and in particular those who will be affected by changes to polling arrangements, and communicate the proposals to them in an effective, efficient and timely manner
- P5 ensure that consultation materials include an appropriate level of detail about the proposals and includes illustrative maps of proposed new boundaries where possible
- P6 invite and receive comments on the proposals within a reasonable period of time, and analyse responses in order to identify areas of agreement and disagreement
- P7 take appropriate action to try to resolve any differences of opinion between key interested parties
- P8 prepare a report that provides full details of the proposals and the results of consultations for consideration and final decision by the council

Communicating decisions

You must be able to:

- P9 publicise decisions relating to changes in polling arrangements, ensuring that those likely to be directly affected by the changes and other interested parties are given opportunity to comment
- P10 communicate decisions with those responsible for maintaining and updating the electoral register in an effective, efficient and timely manner

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Legislation, policy and practice

- K1 relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance relating to the designation and review of polling districts and places
- K2 any relevant organisational policies and procedures relating to the designation and review of polling districts and places
- K3 your role, responsibilities and authority relating to the designation and review of polling districts and places
- K4 the role, responsibility and authority of others relating to the designation and review of polling districts and places
- K5 the definitions of 'polling districts', 'polling places' and 'polling stations'
- K6 accessibility issues and their impact on the review of polling arrangements

Developing proposals

You need to know and understand:

- K7 the range of factors that may trigger the need for a review of polling arrangements, and the importance of confirming your role in the review process
- K8 how to draw up proposals relating to revised polling arrangements
- K9 the importance of ensuring that polling arrangements are accessible for disabled voters

Consulting on proposals

You need to know and understand:

- K10 the range of individuals and organisations who have an interest in polling arrangements
- K11 how to consult with interested parties in an effective, efficient and timely manner
- K12 the importance of ensuring that consultation materials contain appropriate levels of detail about the proposals and include illustrative maps of boundaries where possible
- K13 how to analyse the consultation responses received and identify areas of agreement and disagreement
- K14 the action to take to try to resolve any differences of opinion between key interested parties e.g. telephone contact, informal meetings
- K15 how to prepare a report providing full details of the proposals and consultation results; the form the report must take to enable council to make a final decision

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Communicating decisions

You need to know and understand:

- K16 the importance of publicising decisions relating to changes in polling arrangements and the range of ways in which decisions can be communicated effectively
- K17 the importance of ensuring that any changes to polling arrangements are reflected in the electoral register

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Additional Information

**Scope/range
related to
performance
criteria**

This unit covers the review of the following polling arrangements:

- 1 Polling districts
- 2 Polling places

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Links to other NOS

- 1 ES4 – Maintain and update electoral registration information
- 2 ES7 – Develop a polling scheme
- 3 ES19 – Establish, maintain and develop effective working relationships with stakeholders in electoral services
- 4 A52 – Manage internal communication and consultation processes

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