**Presiding Officer role description**

**Job purpose**

To manage and oversee all aspects of the poll in the polling station that you are responsible for. This includes training and making sure your poll clerks keeps to all instructions issued by the Returning Officer.

**Duties and responsibilities**

Before polling day

You will:

* keep to all instructions from the Returning Officer, Elections Team and Polling Station Inspector
* attend training sessions as required
* for double stations, be in contact with the other Presiding Officer(s)
* make contact with Poll Clerk(s) to confirm arrangements for the day
* liaise with the key holder for the polling station to confirm arrangements for opening up and closing the building
* collect and check the ballot box and contents and keep registers and ballot papers secure before polling day
* make sure that you plan your transport to and from the polling station and have all food and drink needed for the day

Election day

On election day you will:

* arrive at your polling station by 6am (or agreed time) to meet the key holder or open up as necessary, making sure all staff have access to the site
* take the ballot box and contents to the polling station
* organise the layout of the polling station, so that access needs are met
* make sure that polling station signage is clear and visible at all times
* be aware of access issues at the polling station
* be responsible for health and safety for all staff and visitors at the polling station
* instruct, train and supervise Poll Clerk(s)
* open the polling station on time at 7am
* train polling staff in the use of the tactile device and the procedure for anonymous electors if applicable
* make sure that all electors are treated impartially and with respect
* be polite and professional when dealing with all visitors to the polling station and be impartial at all times
* make sure that voters can cast their ballot in secret
* manage the attendance of those entitled to be present at the polling station - candidates, agents, police officers, representatives of the Electoral Commission and observers; make sure they do not interfere with the voting process
* for double stations, support new Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks
* make sure that anyone with a disability is able to cast their ballot in secrecy
* receive postal votes delivered by hand and record appropriately
* follow the procedure to mark the electoral register, fill in the corresponding numbers list and issue ballot papers to voters
* account for, and be responsible for, all ballot papers issued and not issued
* keep the secrecy of the ballot at all times, including no commentary on social media about how busy or quiet the polling station may be
* provide cover for any other Presiding Officer and poll clerks when required; all breaks should be taken during quiet periods
* contact the Elections team in the office to resolve any queries that arise during the day

Close of poll

At close of poll you will:

* make sure that any voters in the queue at 10pm are able to receive their ballot papers and cast their vote
* fill in all close of poll paperwork, including the ballot paper account correctly and accurately
* make sure the polling station is closed on time
* supervise the dismantling of the polling station and make sure the building is returned to good order
* make sure the building is secure and handed over to the key holder where applicable
* return the ballot box and packets to the drop off location

**Person specification**

Essential skills

You must:

* have good communication skills and the ability to follow instructions
* have good personal presentation and commitment to care
* have good administration skills and attention to detail
* be a team player and have a flexible attitude
* be punctual and reliable
* be a car driver - able to transport ballot box equipment safely to and from the polling station and to the drop off location
* ability to work independently under pressure
* willing to share contact phone number with other members of staff working at the same polling station

Desirable skills

Previous polling station working experiences is desirable.