

# The Electoral Commission

## Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers - self-assessment form

### Contact details

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**Deadline: 16th January 2009**

**Please email completed submissions to your relevant devolved or English office, details of which can be found on the attached circular.**

**Please refer to the guidance manual before completing the form**

**PLEASE SELECT ONE LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT AGAINST EACH OF THE 10 STANDARDS**

**Please note at this stage EROs are not required to send any evidence to support the assessment.**

**Subject area: Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records**

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<b>Performance standard 1:</b> Using information sources to verify entries on the register of electors and identify potential new electors <b>Subject:</b> Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>  <b>Integrity</b> – a secure process for registration and voting	
This standard aims to ensure EROs use appropriate sources of information to verify records on the register of electors and identify potential new electors.			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO relies solely on annual canvass returns and rolling registration applications to maintain the register of electors and uses no other sources of information to verify records.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO uses the records they have the power to inspect to verify entries on the register of electors during the annual canvass period only. The ERO ensures that electors who are reported as having moved or died are removed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Details of what records are checked
<b>Performance standard</b>	3. The ERO proactively identifies and uses the records they are entitled to inspect, throughout the year, including during the annual canvass period, to verify and validate data held on the electoral register.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• Details of what records are checked and when
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	4. The ERO takes a proactive approach throughout the year to identify and contact potential electors who may have moved into, or within, the local authority area, such as by using council tax records to identify residents of newly occupied properties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Details of what records are checked and when • Details of what contact is made and what action is taken

**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**Information received from other authorities on home movers is used to update the register and the Superintendent Registrar provides a monthly list of deaths which is used to remove names. Council Tax records, which are available on-line to all Electoral Services staff, are used to verify entries on the register both during the annual canvass and regularly at other times**

<b>Performance standard 2:</b> Maintaining the property database		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b> Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records		<b>Integrity</b> – a secure process for registration and voting	
This standard aims to ensure EROs use all appropriate sources of information available to them to ensure all relevant properties are included in the property database.			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO takes no steps to maintain an accurate property database.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO updates the property database on an annual basis only, following the annual canvass.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Details of when the system has been updated
<b>Performance standard</b>	3. The ERO maintains a property database on a continuous basis throughout the year, using available records including council tax, planning and building control and the authority's Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)/Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• Details of what records have been checked and how often
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	4. The ERO also uses relevant external sources, such as Royal Mail and/or Land Registry/Registers of Scotland, and undertakes other activities to update the property database.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Details of what records have been checked and how often, or attempt to check records • Details of contacts made with external sources

**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**Regular updates regarding new properties, etc. are received from the Street Naming and Numbering Section and amendments made to the Register as required. Attempts are made as part of the annual canvass to identify new/refurbished/demolished properties and canvass staff are paid a small bonus where found. Such properties identified**

<b>Performance standard 3:</b> House-to-house enquiries		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b> Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records		<b>Integrity</b> – a secure process for registration and voting	
This standard aims to ensure that EROs make the necessary house-to-house enquiries to ensure that all eligible residents are registered (section 9A and 10(5) of RPA 1983).			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO has no plan setting out when to carry out house-to-house enquiries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO has a written plan setting out when to carry out house-to-house enquiries but has not met the objectives identified in their plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Plan and timescales
<b>Performance standard</b>	3. The ERO has a comprehensive written plan ensuring that properties which have not responded to the annual canvass and, where the ERO is not otherwise satisfied that eligible electors are resident, are subject to house-to-house enquiries on at least one or more occasions. Progress against the plan is monitored including actions such as recording contact with residents made by canvassers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• Canvassing plan • Canvass results records

<b>Above the performance standard</b>	<p>4. The ERO has developed and put in place a specific strategy for carrying out house-to-house enquiries. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying when and how house-to-house enquiries should be carried out</li> <li>• Considering any needs or difficulties associated with particular areas and preparing accordingly</li> <li>• The monitoring of canvasser performance</li> <li>• Providing for personal visits to be carried out throughout the year in connection with the identification of eligible residents in conjunction with plans for identifying potential newly eligible residents</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canvassing strategy</li> </ul>
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**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**The ERO has a comprehensive annual canvass plan and assesses the canvass results and performance of canvass staff. The 2008 canvass involved house to house enquiries both at stage 1 and stage 2, with a postal canvass at stage 3 and a stage 4 supplementary door to door canvass in areas with a relatively poor response . Records of contact with residents**

Subjet area: Integrity

<p><b>Performance standard 4:</b> Maintaining the integrity of registration and absent vote applications</p> <p><b>Subject:</b> Integrity</p>	<p><b>Supports vision themes:</b></p> <p><b>Integrity</b> – a secure process for registration and voting</p>
<p>This standard aims to ensure that EROs have a process in place to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate electoral malpractice.</p>	
<p><b>Performance against the standard</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment</b>      <b>Evidence to support assessment</b></p>

<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO does not carry out any checks to ensure the integrity of registration and absent vote applications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO has an informal system in place to check the integrity of registration and absent vote applications but does not document these.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Performance standard</b>	<p>3. The ERO has a comprehensive written plan outlining what steps are to be taken to deal with concerns about specific registration or absent vote applications. Suspicious registration and absent vote applications that meet the criteria identified in the plan are referred to local police/Single Point of Contact (SPOC), with whom the ERO has appropriate links. The ERO also has in place a threshold number of absent vote applications being directed to any one address. The ERO retains registration forms for the life of the register and original absent vote applications are kept until the application is cancelled, or replaced by a new form.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written plan</li> <li>• Details of what the threshold is for the number of absent vote applications being directed to any one address.</li> </ul>
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	4. The ERO has carried out a risk assessment for identifying and dealing with registration and absent vote applications which may be of concern, in particular applications from multi-resident properties, those requesting signature waivers for absent votes, and multiple applications for redirection of absent votes to a single address. The ERO acknowledges all applications for registration on receipt of the application, and not only on grant or refusal of the application.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written plan</li> <li>• Details of what the threshold is for the number of absent vote applications being directed to any one address.</li> <li>• Risk assessment documentation</li> </ul>

<p>5. The ERO continuously evaluates the risk assessment for identifying and dealing with registration and absent vote applications which may be of concern. The ERO engages with staff in other council services to carry out checks and offers advice to staff of multi-electoral establishments such as landlords, wardens, care staff and other accommodation administrators on the registration and absent voting process. The ERO carries out checks on the signatures and dates of birth provided on a sample of absent vote applications against any other signature or date of birth that they hold or that they are entitled to inspect such as rolling registration application forms.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk assessment documentation</li> <li>• Written plan</li> <li>• Details of what the threshold is for the number of absent vote applications being directed to any one address</li> <li>• Details of who the ERO engages with and how often and what is done</li> <li>• Details of how the sample of absent vote applications has been devised</li> <li>• Details of findings of checks</li> </ul>
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**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**The ERO has a written plan which is among other things, used in cases where there are concerns about possible fraudulent registration and postal vote fraud. This includes criteria for referring cases of potential fraud to the local SPOC. All registration forms are retained for one year and absent vote applications are retained until superceded. All registration and**

<p><b>Performance standard 5:</b> Supply and security of the register and absent voter lists</p> <p><b>Subject:</b> Integrity</p>	<p><b>Supports vision themes:</b></p> <p><b>Integrity</b> – a secure process for registration and voting</p>
<p>This standard aims to ensure that once published, EROs ensure the full register is made available for public inspection and supplies copies of the register and absent voter lists to those prescribed in legislation.</p>	
<p><b>Performance against the standard</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment</b>      <b>Evidence to support assessment</b></p>

<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO has not supplied electoral registration information to those entitled to receive it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Performance standard</b>	2. The ERO publishes and supplies the electoral register and absent voter lists to those entitled to receive them. The ERO provides training or guidance to those staff who will be supervising access to the register as well as guidance for recipients of the register as to the correct usage of their copy of the register.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of publication of the register date</li> <li>• Training plan or copy of guidance given to staff</li> <li>• Copy of guidance given to recipients</li> </ul>
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	3. The ERO has a recorded complaints procedure in respect of the supply and publication of the electoral register. The ERO maintains a written record of any complaints received and action taken. The ERO records all transactions of sales and supply of the full and edited register and maintains an up to date record of the details of those organisations entitled to receive it.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Log of complaints or enquiries, and action taken due to them</li> <li>• Record of transactions and sales</li> </ul>

**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**An 'Electoral Services Practice Note' has been developed and issued to staff covering all aspects of supply and sale of the electoral registers. This includes statutory requirements and local arrangements/procedures, including logging enquiries and complaints and recording transactions and sales.**

Subject area: Participation

**Performance standard 6:** Public awareness strategy

**Supports vision themes:**



<b>Subject:</b> Participation		<b>User focus</b> – an easy and accessible process for candidates and electors	
This standard aims to ensure that EROs develop and maintain an effective and appropriate public awareness strategy.			
Performance against the standard		Assessment	Evidence to support assessment
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO has no specific public awareness strategy in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO does not maintain a written public awareness strategy, and relies on unstructured management controls such as oral or written updates. Objectives, risks and resources are not formally documented.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Performance standard</b>	3. The public awareness strategy is documented including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying target audiences</li> <li>• Clearly defined objectives and success measures</li> <li>• Risks – identification and mitigation</li> <li>• Resources (financial and staffing)</li> <li>• Evaluation plan which records the results of the activities undertaken</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written strategy</li> <li>• Evaluation plan</li> <li>• Risk register</li> </ul>
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	4. In addition to the above, the public awareness strategy also includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a specific participation budget with a breakdown of how this will be used</li> <li>• assessment of the needs of those different audiences and the most effective methods of reaching them</li> <li>• plans for different activities at different parts of the year</li> <li>• evaluation that leads to proactive analysis of lessons learned in order to inform recommendations for new or improved participation activity for the future</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written strategy</li> <li>• Evaluation plan</li> <li>• Risk register</li> <li>• Participation budget</li> <li>• Evidence of proactive evaluation such as lessons learned reports and/or recommendations to improve future activity</li> </ul>

Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:

Currently, no written public awareness strategy exists and this activity relies upon unstructured management controls. A draft strategy is in the course of development and will be complete by April, 2009.

<b>Performance standard 7: Working with partners</b>		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b> Participation		<b>User focus</b> – an easy and accessible process for candidates and electors	
This standard aims to ensure that EROs have researched the merits in working with appropriate partners, and work with them where appropriate to promote electoral participation.			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO has given no consideration to working with any possible partners to promote electoral participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO has identified the possibility and benefits of working with partners but has not acted upon the findings of this work.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Performance standard</b>	3. The ERO has consulted other departments of the local authority to promote electoral participation and has evaluated the costs/benefits of a joint working arrangement, and has ensured that duplication of effort and unnecessary expenditure is avoided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records of meetings/discussions/ correspondence with other departments</li> <li>• Record of work undertaken (such as evaluation plan showing results of joint working)</li> </ul>

<b>Above the performance standard</b>	4. The ERO actively engages with other departments of the local authority and has identified and consulted with external bodies (such as other authorities, other EROs, local media and community groups) to determine whether working with partners can help achieve the objectives of the public awareness strategy. Joint work has been undertaken where appropriate. The ERO has also developed an evaluation methodology for all activities undertaken with external partners and uses this to plan future work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records of meetings/discussions/ correspondence with other departments and external bodies</li> <li>• Record of work undertaken and evaluation of the specific value added by joint working</li> <li>• Plans for future joint working building on the relationships developed</li> </ul>
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**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**The ERO is currently working on and developing an all-Council approach to electoral registration. Some consultation has been undertaken with other departments of the local authority and the cost/benefits of joint working are currently being evaluated. A report proposing specific initiatives is due to be considered by the Council's Executive Management Team in**

<b>Performance standard 8:</b> Accessibility and communication of information  <b>Subject:</b> Participation		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>  <b>User focus</b> – an easy and accessible process for candidates and electors	
This standard aims to ensure that EROs effectively communicate electoral registration information and provide a simple and user friendly way to access the information to encourage registration applications.			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO provides information in one format and has not taken account of the needs of different audiences (for example translation or alternative formats). There are no response mechanisms in place (such as phone, website or email) to ensure that information is correctly and appropriately communicated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Performance standard</b>	2. The ERO takes note of relevant legislation and specific research that has been carried out and/or consultation with appropriate organisations to determine the appropriate languages and formats to communicate with the relevant audiences. The ERO then communicates information in the most accessible way (website/hard-copy/telephony services) in the appropriate languages and formats. The ERO ensures that all outgoing communication provides the contact details of the local office to allow interested parties to respond and find out further information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record of research undertaken</li> <li>• Examples of how the appropriate languages and formats have been decided</li> <li>• Details of how the most accessible method of communicating information has been decided</li> <li>• Details of the appropriate number of communication mediums have been decided</li> </ul>
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	3. The ERO is responsive to changes in the demographics of the local authority area and actively researches whether further formats or languages are necessary. The ERO's staff identify and provide support for those who have difficulty filling out the necessary forms both at their offices and at the electors' homes (when requested) throughout the year. The ERO measures and records the success of different dissemination methods and bases future work on this evaluation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>In addition to the evidence outline above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of the appropriate number of communication mediums have been decided</li> <li>• Details of what monitoring takes place</li> <li>• Details outlining method for providing support</li> <li>• Evaluation plan</li> </ul>

**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**Communication methodology is the subject of ongoing discussion with the Council's Communications Team and is geared to a range of accessible formats. Translation, interpretation and disability services are made available as required. A substantial amount of registration information and downloadable forms are available on the Council's website. For example**

Subject area: Planning and organisation

<b>Performance standard 9:</b> Planning for rolling registration and the annual canvass		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b> Planning and organisation		<b>Professionalism</b> - a clear and consistent approach to delivery	
This standard aims to ensure that EROs have developed robust planning processes for rolling registration and the annual canvass.			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO does not have a comprehensive written plan, and relies on unstructured management controls such as oral or written updates, and past experience only. Objectives, risks and resources are not documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Performance standard</b>	2. The ERO has put in place formal, written plans for rolling registration and the annual canvass. These should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly defined objectives and success measures</li> <li>• Risks – identification and mitigation</li> <li>• Recruitment of temporary/permanent staff where needed</li> <li>• Financial resources</li> <li>• Evaluation plan recording the results of the activities undertaken</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan(s)</li> <li>• Risk register</li> <li>• Identification of required resources</li> <li>• Business continuity arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	3. In addition to the above, the ERO has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned for a specific budget for rolling registration and for the annual canvass, with a breakdown of how this will be used</li> <li>• Identified and assessed the needs of the most hard to reach audiences</li> <li>• A business continuity plan/succession plan to mitigate unforeseen circumstances such as staff absences</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan as described above</li> <li>• Business continuity plan</li> </ul>

**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**The ERO has formal written plans for both the canvass and rolling registration processes, which take account of resource needs, risks and business continuity.**

<b>Performance standard 10: Training</b>		<b>Supports vision themes:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b> Planning and organisation		<b>Professionalism</b> - a clear and consistent approach to delivery	
This standard aims to ensure that EROs have provided appropriate training for staff to deliver the rolling registration and annual canvass processes.			
<b>Performance against the standard</b>		<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Evidence to support assessment</b>
<b>Not currently meeting the performance standard</b>	1. The ERO provides no training to either permanent or temporary staff other than a basic induction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. The ERO provides basic relevant training for permanent members of staff only, to ensure awareness and understanding of legislative requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Schedule of training activities
<b>Performance standard</b>	3. The ERO provides the relevant training to both permanent and temporary staff to ensure awareness and understanding of legislative requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Schedule of training activities
<b>Above the performance standard</b>	4. The ERO has put in place a comprehensive written training plan for both permanent and temporary staff, and evaluates the effectiveness of the plan (by using a system of feedback and review) on an annual basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• Schedule of training activities • Training plan • Evaluation plan and reports

**Please use the free text box below to provide any additional information in support of your self-assessment:**

**The ERO has developed a formal Training and Development Strategy covering both permanent and temporary staff which includes review/evaluation .**

