Elections Staff - Job description

Verification / Count Assistant	
Responsible to (this will be confirmed in your appointment letter)	Returning Officer
Rate of pay (this will be confirmed in your appointment letter)	Hourly rate to be advised in appointment letter. A time sheet must be completed and handed in to your supervisor at the end of your shift. Internal staff will not be required to take annualised hours or annual leave under the councils Leave Policy (v5 May 2015, reviewed 2022).
Duration of role (this will be confirmed in your appointment letter)	To be advised in appointment letter
Hours (these will be confirmed in your appointment letter)	Count venue – White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre
Employer	Either: Returning Officer (District and Parish Elections) Deputy Returning Officer (County Council Elections) Local Returning Officer (UK Parliamentary Elections) Counting Officer (Referendums)
DBS check required	No
Date job description updated	June 2026

Purpose of the post

Work under the direction of your Verification/Count Supervisor and follow all instructions given.

At Verification
To assist with verifying the ballot box contents by counting the ballot papers in each ballot box.

At Count
To assist with sorting of the ballot papers into different candidates, identifying any doubtful ballot papers then counting each sorted pile. In the case of multi-member wards (where

the voter can vote for more than one candidate on a single ballot paper) to use the counting method as required (sorting/block voting/kangaroo boards etc).

To ensure accuracy at all times and support the delivery of a professional, accurate and transparent count.

Summary of responsibilities and personal duties

At Verification

- Count the number of ballot papers in each ballot box following the instructions provided.
- Check the counting undertaken by other Verification Assistants (typically counting is done in pairs, swapping each bundle so everything is double-checked).
- Inform your Count Supervisor of the result of the counting.
- Recount any ballot papers as instructed by the Count Supervisor.

At Count

- Sort the ballot papers into votes for individual candidates and count them using the method designated by the count supervisor.
- Set aside doubtful ballot papers and draw them to the attention of your Count Supervisor.
- Check the counting undertaken by other Count Assistants (typically counting is done in pairs, swapping each bundle so everything is double-checked).
- Recount any ballot papers as instructed by the Count Supervisor.

The post holder must:

- Attend training if required.
- Act impartially at all times, respect the confidentiality of material handled and read and adhere to the secrecy requirements.
- Refrain from engaging in conversations with candidates or agents other than to refer their queries to a Verification/Count Supervisor or Deputy Returning Officer.
- Verify and count ballot papers as directed by the count supervisor.
- Sign the attendance sheet and record hours worked.
- Follow any other instructions commensurate to the nature of the post as directed by the Count Supervisor.

Special Conditions

The length of time of a count will depend on the size and nature of the election and whether recounts are required. If the Count takes place immediately after the close of poll, you will start working late into the evening and potentially into the early hours of the morning. You must be prepared to stay as long as it takes, breaks and refreshments will be allowed.

You must read and adhere to the attached Requirement of Secrecy provisions.

Person specification

Experience

- None required as full training is provided, although previous Verification or Count experience is desirable.

Skills/personal attributes

- Numerate
- Keep calm under pressure
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Punctual and reliable
- Confidentiality
- Good team player

Essential requirements

The post holder must not have helped or been employed in any way, either for or against, any candidate, election agent or political party involved with the election.

The post holder must not have been convicted of an offence under electoral legislation.

In accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, the post holder must demonstrate that they are permitted to work in the UK (evidence will be required such as a passport showing that the post holder is a British citizen or a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies having the right of abode in the United Kingdom).

Notification of secrecy requirements – the count

Section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended)

[...]

(2) Every person attending at the counting of the votes shall maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of voting and shall not –

(a) ascertain or attempt to ascertain at the counting of the votes the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of any ballot paper;

(b) communicate any information obtained at the counting of the votes as to the candidate for whom any vote is given on any particular ballot paper.

[...]

(6) If a person acts in contravention of this section he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.