

Keeping your vote when living abroad

Notes for application to register/renew registration as an overseas elector

Introduction

Many British citizens living abroad have the right to vote at Parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections held in the UK. (This does not include Local Government elections). This following information explains who can vote and how to register as an overseas elector.

Who can vote?

If you do not live in the UK you can vote at Parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections if you register as an overseas elector. However, you must be a British citizen. You must also satisfy either of the following two sets of conditions:

Set 1

- Your name was previously on the electoral register for an address in the UK.
- You were living in the UK on the relevant date for that register.
- There are no more than 15 years between the dates for that register and the register you want to be on.

Set 2

- You last lived in the UK less than 15 years before the date for the register you now want to be on.
- You were too young to be on the electoral register which was based on the last relevant date before you left.
- A parent or guardian was on that electoral register, for the address where you were living on that date.
- You are at least 18 years old, or will become 18 when the register you now want to be on is in force.

Only British citizens can register as overseas electors. Other commonwealth citizens or citizens of the Republic of Ireland can register and vote at UK elections only when resident in the UK.

When to register

You have to register every year as an overseas elector. This means you can vote at Parliamentary Elections held in the 12 months following your registration. You may continue to register for 15 years from the date your name was last shown in the register prior to you leaving the UK.

How to register as an overseas elector

You will need to give your full name and overseas address as well as the UK address where you or your parent/guardian were registered and the date you left the UK.

If this is the first time you have made an overseas elector's declaration (or if you have been registered as an elector living in the UK since making a previous

declaration) you will have to give additional information to show you are a British citizen. If you left the UK before you were old enough to register, you will have to provide a copy of your full birth certificate and information about the parent or guardian whose registration you are relying on.

If this is the first time you have made an overseas elector's declaration (or if you have been registered as an elector living in the UK since making a previous declaration) you will have to find someone to support what you say in your declaration. He or she can be anyone who:

- Is aged 18 or over;
- Has a British passport which describes his or her status as a "British citizen";
- Is not living in the UK; and
- Knows you but is not a close relative (husband, wife parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild).

The two versions of the register

The full register has the names and addresses of everyone registered to vote and is updated every month. Anyone can look at it, but copies can only be supplied for certain purposes, such as elections and law enforcement. Credit reference agencies are also allowed to use the full register, but only to check your name and address if you are applying for credit, and to help stop 'money laundering'. Anyone who has a copy of the register will be committing a criminal offence if they unlawfully pass on information from it. You do not have a choice about your name being on this register.

The edited register will be available for general sale and can be used for any purpose. You can choose not to be on it. It will be kept separate from the full register and updated every month. The edited register can be bought by any person, company or organisation and could be used for different purposes such as checking your identity and commercial activities such as marketing.

If you do tick the box on the voter registration form, your name will only appear on the full register,

which will only be used for certain lawful purposes, such as elections, law enforcement and checking applications for credit.

If you do not tick the box on the voter registration form, your name will also appear on the edited version of the register, which anyone can buy. This means anyone can use your details for any purpose.

How to vote

Your vote will be cast in the constituency which includes the address where you were last registered as a UK elector (or where your parent or guardian was registered).

You can vote by post or proxy and the application to vote in either of these two ways is enclosed with the 'application to register/renew registration as an overseas elector'.

Voting by proxy

If you wish to vote by proxy please complete the side of the form "Application form to vote by proxy".

For the security of your proxy vote and **by law** all proxy vote applicants are required to give their signature and date of birth. If you do not provide this information your proxy vote application will not be accepted.

If you advise us that your proxy wishes your ballot paper to be posted to them they will also have to provide their date of birth and signature and, we will write to them separately to request this information.

Your proxy must be:

- able and willing to vote on your behalf;
- living in the UK;
- a British citizen or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the Republic of Ireland;
- old enough to vote; and
- legally allowed to vote

A proxy may not vote at the same election for more than two people unless they are a close relative (husband, wife, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild) of the people they are voting for.

Voting by post

Please note that ballot papers are sent approximately one week before an election by first class post or via airmail. This leaves very little time for you to complete and return your ballot paper in order for it to be included in the count on election day. Therefore you are **strongly advised to appoint a proxy** to ensure your vote is counted.

If you wish to vote by post please complete the side of the form "Application form to vote by post".

For the security of your postal vote and **by law** all postal vote applicants are required to give their

signature and date of birth. If you do not provide this information your postal vote application will not be accepted.

When you receive your ballot paper, a postal voting statement will also be enclosed. This statement will need to be signed by you and you will also be required to give your date of birth, this will then be checked against the signature and date of birth that you provide on your postal vote application form.

For further information

If you require further information or assistance in registering as an overseas elector you can contact the members of staff responsible for dealing with overseas registration;

David Howard – Deputy Electoral Registration Manager – (020) 8871 6061 – dhoward@wandsworth.gov.uk

Barbara McCarthy – Electoral Registration Support Officer – (020) 8871 7674 – bmccarthy@wandsworth.gov.uk

If you would like more information about the Electoral Registration Service you can visit the website at www.wandsworth.gov.uk

How to return this form

Once completed please send your form to the Electoral Registration Service, Room 81, Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London, SW18 2PU.

You cannot return this form by fax, any received in this way will not be accepted.

Making sure you are registered

Once you have completed and returned your form we will write to tell you whether you qualify as an overseas elector and will include you on the register. If we have doubts about your age or citizenship, we may ask for further evidence or documentation. If we reject your application, we will return the declaration and explain the reasons for doing so.

Once you are registered as an overseas elector you will be sent a reminder approximately 3 months before your current registration expires (so long as you remain qualified); remember you need to apply every year. Another application form will come with the reminder.

The electoral registration officer makes a list of overseas electors and their addresses abroad. This is available to parliamentary candidates so that they may send literature to overseas electors if they wish.

Registration/voting as an overseas elector will not be taken into account in determining whether you have United Kingdom domicile for tax purposes.

Application to register/renew registration as an overseas elector

Fill in one form per person please. Forms may be photocopied or you may request further forms. Alternatively you can visit our website and download forms at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/vote

Part 1. About yourself

Your name

Surname (family name)

Forename(s) (in full)

If you have changed your name since you were last registered as an elector, please give your former name here:

Former name if applicable

Surname (family name)

Forename(s) (in full)

Reason for change of name

Present postal address (outside the UK)

Postcode

Edited Register

Tick this box if you **do not** wish your name to appear on the edited register, which can be sold to anyone and used for any purpose:

It is important to read the notes carefully before completing this part of the form.

In case there is something in this form which is not clear, it would be helpful to have your daytime telephone number and/or email address. You do not have to give this information if you do not wish to.

Daytime telephone number

Email address

If this is your first application and not a renewal, please give your last address in the UK

Last address in the UK

Postcode

Part 2. Your last UK registration

Please complete section A, B or C only

a. Was as an overseas elector

Date of Register

(now please complete section 5)

b. Was as a UK resident/service voter

Date you ceased to be registered

(now please complete sections 4, 5 & 6)

c. Was too young to have been registered

Date of Birth

(now please complete sections 3, 4, 5 & 6)

Part 3. Your Parent or Guardian

Please fill in this section only if you completed Section C in Part 2, tick boxes as appropriate

Your Parent
or Guardian's Name

Surname (family name)

Forename(s) (in full)

The above person is my

Parent

Guardian

A photocopy of my birth certificate is enclosed

If the name given above is not the name of your parent or guardian as shown on the electoral register, or is not the name of either parent shown on your birth certificate, please explain why. If you do not know the reason please tick the box.

Reason or reason
not known

Reason

Reason not known

Part 4. Citizenship

You MUST complete this part if you completed section B or C in Part 2. If you completed section A, Please ignore this part. Complete only the section which applies to you.

A

My British Passport number

Issued at (place)

Issued on (date)

States that I am
a 'British citizen'

B

I do not hold a British Passport describing
me as a 'British citizen' but I was born at

place

In the UK before 1983

C

I was born on (date)

at (place)

In (country)

Please describe how you
became a British citizen:

Part 5. Declaration

YOU MUST COMPLETE THE SECTION THAT IS RELEVANT TO YOU

A

I am a British citizen, not resident in the UK
and I ceased to be resident in the UK on

Date

I HEREBY DECLARE that the statements made on this form are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature

Date

OR

B

I am a British citizen, not resident in the UK
and I ceased to have a service qualification on

Date

I HEREBY DECLARE that the statements made on this form are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature

Date

Part 6. Declaration in support

This section must be completed by another person who is resident overseas if you complete section B or C in Part 2. If you filled in section A please ignore this section.

I am aged 18 years or over. I am the bearer of a British Passport which describes my national status as a 'British citizen'.

I am not the husband, wife, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild or the person making the above declaration.

To the best of my knowledge and belief he/she is a British citizen and not resident in the UK on the date of making the declaration.

Name	Surname (family name)	Forename(s) (in full)	
Address	Postcode		
Passport details	Passport number	Date of issue	Place of issue
	Signature	Date	

Part 7. What to do with this form

Fill in the form and send it and all the relevant documentation to the:

**Electoral Registration Service
Room 81
Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PU**

If you would like to take the form in person to the office it is located on the ground floor of the Town Hall. The entrance to the reception is in Fairfield Street. The reception is fully accessible to people with disabilities. An inductive loop and a textphone facility are also available for people with hearing impairments.

You cannot return this form by fax, any received in this way will not be accepted.

If you require further information or assistance in registering as an overseas elector you can contact the members of staff responsible for dealing with overseas registration;

**David Howard
Deputy Electoral Registration Manager
(020) 8871 6061
dhoward@wandsworth.gov.uk**

**Barbara McCarthy
Electoral Registration Support Officer
(020) 8871 7674
bmccarthy@wandsworth.gov.uk**

If you would like more information about the Electoral Registration Service you can visit the website at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/vote





Polling District	_____
Elector No.	_____
Barcode No.	_____

APPLICATION FORM TO VOTE BY POST

If you need help filling in this form please phone (020) 8871 6023.
Please write in **BLACK INK** and **CAPITAL LETTERS**.

1 Address where you are registered to vote

3 Address for postal ballot paper(s)

2 About you

First name (and first initial of second name)

Surname

Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss, Dr, Other)

Daytime or mobile phone or email
(in case of query)

4 Your declaration (Please ensure you use BLACK ink)

As far as I know, the details on this form are true and accurate. (You can be fined for making a false statement on this form).

Date of birth (e.g. 01 03 1966)

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Day Month Year

Please **SIGN** within the border below using **BLACK ink**

Important – keep signature within the border
If you fail to do this, the application will not be valid.

Date of signing

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Day Month Year



Polling District	_____
Elector No.	_____
Barcode No.	_____

APPLICATION FORM TO VOTE BY PROXY

Please write in **BLACK INK** and **CAPITAL LETTERS**.

1 About you

First name (and first initial of second name)

Surname

Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss, Dr, Other)

Present Address

Postcode

Address where you are registered to vote
(If different from your present address)

Postcode

In case there is something in this form which is not clear, please give your daytime telephone number and/or email address.

Daytime telephone number

Email address

2 About your proxy

First name (and first initial of second name)

Surname

Relationship to you (if any)

Address

Postcode

2 About your proxy (continued)

Daytime telephone number

Email address

Tick this box if your proxy is not able to vote on your behalf at your polling station and wishes to have your ballot paper sent to them at the above address for them to complete and return by post.

If they wish to vote for you in this way they will need to provide their date of birth and signature. **They will be written to separately.**

3 Your declaration (Please ensure you use BLACK ink)

As far as I know, the details on this form are true and accurate. (You can be fined for making a false statement on this form).

Date of birth (e.g. 01 03 1966)

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Day Month Year

Please SIGN within the border below using BLACK ink

Important – keep signature within the border
If you fail to do this, the application will not be valid.

Date of signing

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Day Month Year