



A guide for supporting people with learning difficulties to vote.

Introduction

This fact sheet accompanies the **guide to voting in the Scottish Parliament Election and Local Council Election for people with learning difficulties**. It provides additional information for anyone supporting a person with learning difficulties to vote at the Scottish Parliament and Local Council elections.

Right to vote

Nearly everybody over the age of 18 has a right to vote at elections. This includes people with learning difficulties.

Voter registration

A person must be on the electoral register to be able to vote. The easiest way to check if a person is on the electoral register in Scotland is to phone 0800 0141 012

You will need to ask for details of your local electoral registration officer.

You can also find the contact details of person on charge of elections in your area by visiting www.aboutmyvote.org.uk.

For the election on the 3rd of May the last date for registering is the **18th of April**.

Electoral registration forms

Electoral Registration Forms are difficult to fill in and many people with learning difficulties might need help with them. You can complete the form for someone else provided you have the correct information but they must be signed by the person registering to vote.

A person can use a “mark” instead of a signature. Where a person is unable to mark or sign the form you should contact their local electoral administrator directly.

Supporting people with learning difficulties to vote at a polling place

If a person cannot read or mark a ballot paper the person in charge of the polling place can do this for them. You can also provide this support if you a close relative of the voter or are also able to vote at this general election. To prove you are able to vote at this general election it would be a good idea to bring your poll card so you can demonstrate you can vote.

Postal and proxy voting

People with learning difficulties are also able to vote by post or via a proxy. Postal voting is voting by post. Proxy voting is asking someone to vote on your behalf. To find out more about voting in these ways it is best to contact the person in charge of elections directly.

Coercion

It is a serious criminal offence to make someone vote for a particular person or party. Where you are marking a ballot paper for a somebody with a learning difficulty you must follow their instructions exactly. You should only complete a ballot paper where they are able to give a clear indication of who they wish to vote for.

outside
the box

This pack was produced for use in Scotland by Outside the Box and uses pictures from the Change Picture Bank.



It is entirely based on an original design by The Disability Rights Commission, Valuing People and The Pollenshop.

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Disability Rights Commission

the pollenshop

Outside the Box, Unit 19, Six Harmony Row, Glasgow, G51 3BA | Tel: 0141 445 3062 | email:

rhoda@otbds.org | web: www.otbds.org/vote | Registered office: The Old Toll, Harestanes, West Linton, EH46 7AH | Scottish Charity: 035317 | Company limited by guarantee: 265077

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