

Polling station handbook insert: Scottish local government elections

How to use this document

The Scottish Elections (Franchise and Representation) Act 2020 extends the franchise for voting at local government elections in Scotland.

The legislation enfranchises qualifying foreign nationals and prisoners serving a sentence of 12 months or less, to vote at local government elections.

The procedures in the 'Handbook for polling station staff: Supporting Scottish council elections' and 'A quick guide for polling station staff' should therefore be read alongside this document.

Any references to 'electors' in the polling station handbook and the quick guide should be taken to include qualifying foreign nationals and eligible prisoners, unless otherwise stated in this document.

We have included the changes / additions in this document, so that they can be printed off and inserted into the relevant parts of the handbook for ease of reference.

Summary of changes

Section headings affected	Replacement or addition	Pages in local government election handbook
Stage one – checking the voter	Addition	12

Who can vote at Scottish council elections? (Addition page 12)

Electors with an 'M' before their name – these are:

- qualifying foreign nationals
- convicted prisoners serving a combined sentence of 12 months or less

A qualifying foreign national is a person of any nationality who is not a British, a Commonwealth or a Republic of Ireland citizen; and who is legally entitled to reside in the United Kingdom.

Convicted prisoners serving a sentence of 12 months or less are eligible to vote at Scottish local government elections. Whilst such electors may only vote by an absent vote, they will be included in the register of electors.