ELECTORAL SERVICES
CASUAL ELECTION STAFF

POSTAL VOTE OPENING CLERK JOB DESCRIPTION

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Postal Vote Opening team

The purpose of the Postal Vote Opening Team is to ensure that all returned postal vote packs are opened, checked and verified in a secure method as designated by the Returning Officer. Votes for individual candidates will not be visible and are not counted as part of this process. We usually hold several postal vote opening sessions and teams of postal vote openers are employed to work during the two weeks leading up to election day, on dates and times as designated by the Returning Officer, therefore a flexible approach to work is required.

The Postal Vote Opening Clerk Role

The role of the Postal Vote Opening Clerk requires concentration, and the greatest of care must be taken to ensure the process is carried out securely and accurately, so that mistakes are not made. They will work as a team to count, open, and check ballot paper envelopes and count ballot papers received as designated by a Postal Vote Supervisor.

They must:

- Arrive at the postal vote opening session promptly and sign-in on arrival.
- Have read and agree to the terms of the Statement of Secrecy.
- Ensure that team tables are kept clear and tidy during the opening process.
- Always act impartially and respect confidentiality of material handled.
- Work whilst being observed by candidates and agents.
- Refrain from engaging in conversations with candidates and agents.
- Remain at the venue until the end of the session and sign-out at the end of shift.

Duties:

Postal Vote Opening Clerks will work in teams as directed by a Postal Vote Supervisor. They will:

- Count postal ballot paper envelopes received.
- Open envelopes.
- Check ballot paper and postal voting statement details.
- Identify any mismatches or anomalies that may appear.
- Count the number of ballot papers received.
- Ensure ballot papers are opened face down so individual votes for candidates will not be visible and cannot be counted.

The length of time a postal vote session takes will depend on the number of postal vote packs received that day. You must be prepared to stay as long as it takes. You will be given adequate breaks and refreshments. You should bring your own lunch if scheduled to work a full day.

Eligibility:

The Returning Officer is not permitted to employ anyone who is/or has performed duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election, or who has been convicted of an offence under electoral legislation.

Post holders must be entitled to work in the UK (in accordance with the provisions of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996). They must provide evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK (known as a 'right to work' check).

The right to work check must be completed prior to taking up the job role, so we ask successful applicants to provide this evidence as soon as possible

If the postal vote opening session is due to be held during the day, post holders must be 16 or over. If the session is due to be held overnight, post holders must be 18 or over.

Rate of pay (daytime) and working time:

- Hourly fee: £16.19 per hour (including holiday pay)*
- Date of employment: TBC – Postal Vote opening sessions will take place throughout the two weeks prior to the Election due to be held on 6th May 2027.
- Start time: TBC
- Total working time: Postal Vote Opening Clerks must remain until the end of session.
- Place of work: Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN or Loddon Valley Leisure Centre, Rushey Way, Lower Earley, RG6 4GD

*Elections staff do not pay Class 1 National Insurance contributions for fees received at parliamentary or local elections.

ELECTORAL SERVICES
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POSTAL VOTE OPENING CLERK
PERSON SPECIFICATION

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXPERIENCE	
Essential	**Desirable**
None.	Previous postal vote opening and/or count experience.

SKILLS/PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	
Essential	**Desirable**
Numerate. Accuracy and attention to detail. Ability to follow instructions. Punctual and reliable. Calm under pressure. Team player. Ability to remain politically neutral. Flexible approach to work.	

OTHER	
Essential	**Desirable**
Must not have worked in support of a political party/candidate at the election, whether paid or unpaid. Must not have been convicted of an offence under Electoral Legislation. Be willing to attend training/briefing sessions as required. Acceptance and adherence to the terms of Statement of Secrecy.	