

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS RULES

PART III

CONTESTED ELECTIONS

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Poll to be taken by ballot

- 18 The votes at the poll shall be given by ballot, the result shall be ascertained by counting the votes given to each candidate and the candidate to whom the majority of votes have been given shall be declared to have been elected.

The ballot papers

- 19 (1) The ballot of every voter shall consist of a ballot paper, and the persons shown in the statement of persons nominated as standing nominated, and no others, shall be entitled to have their names inserted in the ballot paper.
- (2) Every ballot paper shall be in the form in the Appendix, and shall be printed in accordance with the directions in that Appendix, and—
- (a) shall contain the names and other particulars of the candidates as shown in the statement of persons nominated;
 - (b) shall be capable of being folded up ;
 - (c) shall have a number printed on the back ;
 - (d) shall have attached a counterfoil with the same number printed on the face.
- (3) The order of the names in the ballot paper shall be the same as in the statement of persons nominated.

The official mark

- 20 (1) Every ballot paper shall be marked with an official mark, which shall perforate the ballot paper.
- (2) The official mark shall be kept secret, and an interval of not less than seven years shall intervene between the use of the same official mark at elections for the same constituency.
- (3) The official mark used for ballot papers issued for the purpose of voting by post shall not be used at the same election for ballot papers issued for the purpose of voting in person.

Prohibition of disclosure of vote

- 21 No person who has voted at the election shall, in any legal proceeding to question the election or return, be required to state for whom he voted.

Use of schools and public rooms

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- 22 (1) The returning officer may use, free of charge, for the purpose of taking the poll—
- (a) a room in a school to which this rule applies ;
 - (b) a room the expense of maintaining which is payable out of any rate.

This rule applies—

- (i) in England and Wales, to a school maintained or assisted by a local education authority or a school in respect of which grants are made out of moneys provided by Parliament to the person or body of persons responsible for the management of the school;
 - (ii) in Scotland, to a school other than an independent school within the meaning of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980;
 - (iii) in Northern Ireland, to a school in receipt of a grant out of moneys appropriated by Measure of the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- (2) The returning officer shall make good any damage done to, and defray any expense incurred by the persons having control over, any such room as mentioned above by reason of its being used for the purpose of taking the poll.
- (3) The use of a room in an unoccupied house for that purpose does not render a person liable to be rated or to pay any rate for the house.
- (4) In Northern Ireland this rule does not apply to any school adjoining or adjacent to any church or other place of worship nor to any school connected with a nunnery or other religious establishment.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE POLL

Notice of poll

- 23 (1) The returning officer shall in the statement of persons-nominated include a notice of the poll, stating the day on which and hours during which the poll will be taken.
- (2) The returning officer shall also give public notice (which may be combined with the statement of persons nominated) of—
- (a) the situation of each polling station ;
 - (b) the description of voters entitled to vote there; and
 - (c) the mode in which voters are to vote.
- (3) The returning officer shall as soon as practicable after publication of a notice of poll give to each of the election agents a description in writing of the polling districts.

Postal ballot papers

- 24 The returning officer shall as soon as practicable send to those entitled to vote by post, at the addresses provided by them for the purpose, a ballot paper and a declaration of identity in the prescribed form, together with an envelope for their return.

Provision of polling stations

- 25 (1) The returning officer shall provide a sufficient number of polling stations and, subject to the following provisions of this rule, shall allot the electors to the polling stations in such manner as he thinks most convenient.
- (2) One or more polling stations may be provided in the same room.
- (3) The polling station allotted to electors from any polling district shall be in the polling place for that district.

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- (4) In a constituency in Scotland comprising the whole or any part of more districts than one, there shall be at least one polling station in each of those districts.
- (5) The returning officer shall provide each polling station with such number of compartments as may be necessary in which the voters can mark their votes screened from observation.

Appointment of presiding officers and clerks

- 26
- (1) The returning officer shall appoint and pay a presiding officer to attend at each polling station and such clerks as may be necessary for the purposes of the election, but he shall not appoint any person who has been employed by or on behalf of a candidate in or about the election.
 - (2) The returning officer may, if he thinks fit, preside at a polling station and the provisions of these rules relating to a presiding officer shall apply to a returning officer so presiding with the necessary modifications as to things to be done by the returning officer to the presiding officer or by the presiding officer to the returning officer.
 - (3) A presiding officer may do, by the clerks appointed to assist him, any act (including the asking of questions) which he is required or authorised by these rules to do at a polling station except order the arrest, exclusion or removal of any person from the polling station.

Special lists

- 27
- The registration officer shall as soon as practicable prepare the following special lists-
- (a) a list (in these rules referred to as "the absent voters list") giving the name and number on the register of every person entitled to vote at the election as an absent voter;
 - (b) a list (in these rules referred to as " the list of proxies ") giving—
 - (i) the names and numbers on the register of the electors for whom proxies have been appointed (omitting any of those electors who are registered as service voters and entitled to vote by post); and
 - (ii) the names and addresses of the persons appointed;
 - (c) a list of any persons entitled to vote by post as proxy at the election.

Issue of official poll cards

- 28
- (1) The returning officer shall as soon as practicable send to electors and their proxies an official poll card, but a card need not be sent to any person—
 - (a) as an elector if he is placed on the absent voters list for the election; or
 - (b) as a proxy if his application to vote as such by post is allowed for the election.
 - (2) An elector's official poll card shall be sent or delivered to his qualifying address, and a proxy's to his address as shown in the list of proxies.
 - (3) The official poll card shall be in the prescribed form and shall set out—
 - (a) the name of the constituency ;
 - (b) the elector's name, qualifying address and number on the register;
 - (c) the date and hours of the poll and the situation of the elector's polling station.
 - (4) Paragraph (6) of rule 7 above applies for the interpretation of this rule.

Equipment of polling stations

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- 29 (1) The returning officer shall provide each presiding officer with such number of ballot boxes and ballot papers as in the returning officer's opinion may be necessary.
- (2) Every ballot box shall be so constructed that the ballot papers can be put in it, but cannot be withdrawn from it, without the box being unlocked.
- (3) The returning officer shall provide each polling station with—
- (a) materials to enable voters to mark the ballot papers;
 - (b) instruments for stamping on them the official mark;
 - (c) copies of the register of electors or such part of it as contains the names of the electors allotted to the station
 - (d) the parts of any special lists prepared for the election corresponding to the register of electors or the part of it provided under sub-paragraph (c) above.
- (4) A notice in the form in the Appendix, giving directions for the guidance of the voters in voting, shall be printed in conspicuous characters and exhibited inside and outside every polling station.
- (5) In every compartment of every polling station there shall be exhibited a notice as follows—
- (a) " The voter may vote for only one candidate " ; or
 - (b) " The voter may vote for not more than one candidate " .

Appointment of polling and counting agents

- 30 (1) Each candidate may, before the commencement of the poll, appoint—
- (a) polling agents to attend at polling stations for the purpose of detecting personation ; and
 - (b) counting agents to attend at the counting of the votes.
- (2) The returning officer may limit the number of counting agents, so however that—
- (a) the number shall be the same in the case of each candidate; and
 - (b) the number allowed to a candidate shall not (except in special circumstances) be less than the number obtained by dividing the number of clerks employed on the counting by the number of candidates.
- (3) Notice in writing of the appointment, stating the names and addresses of the persons appointed, shall be given by the candidate to the returning officer and shall be so given not later than the second day (computed like any period of time in the Timetable) before the day of the poll.
- (4) If an agent dies, or becomes incapable of acting, the candidate may appoint another agent in his place, and shall forthwith give to the returning officer notice in writing of the name and address of the agent appointed.
- (5) The foregoing provisions of this rule shall be without prejudice to the requirements of section 72(1) of this Act as to the appointment of paid polling agents, and any appointment authorised by this rule may be made and the notice of appointment given to the returning officer by the candidate's election agent, instead of by the candidate.
- (6) In the following provisions of these rules references to polling and counting agents shall be taken as references to agents—
- (a) whose appointments have been duly made and notified; and (6) where the number of agents is restricted, who are within the permitted number.

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- (7) Any notice required to be given to a counting agent by the returning officer may be delivered at or sent by post to the address stated in the notice of appointment.
- (8) A candidate may himself do any act or thing which any polling or counting agent of his, if appointed, would have been authorised to do, or may assist his agent in doing any such act or thing.
- (9) A candidate's election agent may do or assist in doing anything which a polling or counting agent of his is authorised to do ; and anything required or authorised by these rules to be done in the presence of the polling or counting agents may be done in the presence of a candidate's election agent instead of his polling agent or counting agents.
- (10) Where by these rules any act or thing is required or authorised to be done in the presence of the polling or counting agents, the non-attendance of any agents or agent at the time and place appointed for the purpose shall not, if the act or thing is otherwise duly done, invalidate the act or thing done.

Declaration of secrecy

- 31 (1) Before the opening of the poll a declaration of secrecy in the form in paragraph (4) of this rule, or in a form as near to it as circumstances admit, shall be made by—
- (a) the returning officer and the presiding officers ;
 - (b) every clerk authorised to attend at a polling station or the counting of the votes;
 - (c) every candidate attending at a polling station or at the counting of the votes and every election agent so attending;
 - (d) every candidate's wife or husband attending at the counting of the votes;
 - (e) every polling agent and counting agent;
 - (f) every person permitted by the returning officer to attend at the counting of the votes, though not entitled to do so,
- but the constables on duty at polling stations or at the counting of the votes shall not be required to make the declaration of secrecy.
- (2) Notwithstanding anything in paragraph (1) above, the following persons attending at the counting of the votes—
- (a) any candidate,
 - (b) any election agent, or any candidate's wife or husband attending by virtue of the rule authorising election agents and candidates' wives or husbands to attend as such,
 - (c) any person permitted by the returning officer to attend, though not entitled to do so,
 - (d) any clerk making the declaration in order to attend at the counting of the votes,
- need not make the declaration before the opening of the poll but shall make it before he or she is permitted to attend the counting, and a polling or counting agent appointed after the opening of the poll shall make the declaration before acting as such an agent
- (3) The returning officer shall make the declaration in the presence of a justice of the peace, and any other person shall make the declaration in the presence either of a justice of the peace or of the returning officer, and subsections (1), (2), (3) and

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(6) of section 66 of this Act shall be read to the declarant by the person taking the declaration or shall be read by the declarant in the presence of that person; but—

- (a) in England and Wales the declaration may be made by the returning officer or any other person before a person who is chairman of the Greater London Council, a county council or a district council or mayor of a London borough, and may be made by a person other than the returning officer before a person who is the proper officer of any such council; and
- (b) in Scotland the declaration may be made by a person other than the returning officer before the proper officer of an islands or regional council; and
- (c) in Northern Ireland the declaration may be made by a person other than the returning officer before the clerk of a district council.

(4) The declaration shall be as follows—

“I solemnly promise and declare that I will not do anything forbidden by subsections (1), (2), (3) and (6) of section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, which have been read to [by] me.”

THE POLL

Admission to polling station

- 32 (1) The presiding officer shall regulate the number of voters to be admitted to the polling station at the same time, and shall exclude all other persons except—
- (a) the candidates and their election agents ;
 - (b) the polling agents appointed to attend at the polling station ;
 - (c) the clerks appointed to attend at the polling station ;
 - (d) the constables on duty; and
 - (e) the companions of blind voters.
- (2) Not more than one polling agent shall be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same candidate.
- (3) A constable or person employed by a returning officer shall not be admitted to vote in person elsewhere than at his own polling station under the relevant provision of this Act, except on production and surrender of a certificate as to his employment, which shall be in the prescribed form and signed by the prescribed officer of police or by the returning officer, as the case may be.
- (4) Any certificate surrendered under this rule shall forthwith be cancelled.

Keeping of order in station

- 33 (1) it is the presiding officer's duty to keep order at his polling station,
- (2) If a person misconducts himself in a polling station, or fails to obey the presiding officer's lawful orders, he may immediately, by the presiding officer's order, be removed from the polling station—
- (a) by a constable in or near that station, or
 - (b) by any other person authorised in writing by the returning officer to remove him,
- and the person so removed shall not, without the presiding officer's permission, again enter the polling station during the day.

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- (3) Any person so removed may, if charged with the commission in the polling station of an offence, be dealt with as a person taken into custody by a constable for an offence without a warrant.
- (4) The powers conferred by this rule shall not be exercised so as to prevent a voter who is otherwise entitled to vote at a polling station from having an opportunity of voting at that station.

Sealing of ballot boxes

- 34 Immediately before the commencement of the poll, the presiding officer shall show the ballot box empty to such persons, if any, as are present in the polling station, so that they may see that it is empty, and shall then lock it up and place his seal on it in such a manner as to prevent its being opened without breaking the seal, and shall place it in his view for the receipt of ballot papers, and keep it so locked and sealed.

Questions to be put to voters

- 35 (1) The presiding officer may, and if required by a candidate or his election or polling agent shall, put to any person applying for a ballot paper at the time of his application, but not afterwards, the following questions, or either of them—
- (a) in the case of a person applying as an elector—
 - (i) " Are you the person registered in the register of parliamentary electors for this election as follows? " (read the whole entry from the register)
 - (ii) "Have you already voted, here or elsewhere, at this by-election [general election], otherwise than as proxy for some other person? "
 - (b) in the case of a person applying as proxy—
 - (i) " Are you the person whose name appears as A.B. in the list of proxies for this election as entitled to vote as proxy on behalf of C.D.? "
 - (ii) " Have you already voted here or elsewhere at this by-election [general election] as proxy on behalf of C.D.? "
- (2) In the case of a person applying as proxy, the presiding officer may, and if required as mentioned above shall, put the following additional question—
- “Are you the husband [wife], parent, grandparent, brother [sister], child or grandchild of C.D.?”
- and if that question is not answered in the affirmative the following question—
- “Have you at this election already voted in this constituency on behalf of two persons of whom you are not the husband [wife], parent, grandparent, brother [sister], child or grandchild?”
- (3) A ballot paper shall not be delivered to any person required to answer the above questions or any of them unless he has answered the questions or question satisfactorily.
 - (4) Save as by this rule authorised, no inquiry shall be permitted as to the right of any person to vote.

Challenge of voter

- 36 (1) If at the time a person applies for a ballot paper for the purpose of voting in person, or after he has applied for a ballot paper for that purpose and before he has left the polling station, a candidate or his election or polling agent—

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- (a) declares to the presiding officer that he has reasonable cause to believe that the applicant has committed an offence of personation, and
 - (b) undertakes to substantiate the charge in a court of law,
- the presiding officer may order a constable to arrest the applicant, and the order of the presiding officer shall be sufficient authority for the constable so to do.
- (2) A person against whom a declaration is made under this rule shall not by reason of it be prevented from voting.
 - (3) A person arrested under the provisions of this rule shall be dealt with as a person taken into custody by a constable for an offence without a warrant.

Voting procedure

- 37 (1) A ballot paper shall be delivered to a voter who applies for one, and immediately before delivery—
- (a) the ballot paper shall be stamped with the official mark ;
 - (b) the number, name and description of the elector as stated in the copy of the register of electors shall be called out;
 - (c) the number of the elector shall be marked on the counterfoil;
 - (d) a mark shall be placed in the register of electors against the number of the elector to denote that a ballot paper has been received but without showing the particular ballot paper which has been received ; and
 - (e) in the case of a person applying for a ballot paper as proxy, a mark shall also be placed against his name in the list of proxies.
- (2) The voter, on receiving the ballot paper, shall forthwith proceed into one of the compartments in the polling station and there secretly mark his paper and fold it up so as to conceal his vote, and shall then show to the presiding officer the back of the paper, so as to disclose the official mark, and put the ballot paper so folded up into the ballot box in the presiding officer's presence.
- (3) The voter shall vote without undue delay, and shall leave the polling station as soon as he has put his ballot paper into the ballot box.

Votes marked by presiding officer

- 38 (1) The presiding officer, on the application of a voter—
- (a) who is incapacitated by blindness or other physical cause from voting in manner directed by these rules, or
 - (b) who declares orally that he is unable to read,
- shall, in the presence of the polling agents, cause the voter's vote to be marked on a ballot paper in manner directed by the voter, and the ballot paper to be placed in the ballot box.
- (2) The name and number on the register of electors of every voter whose vote is marked in pursuance of this rule, and the reason why it is so marked, shall be entered on a list (in these rules called " the list of votes marked by the presiding officer ").

In the case of a person voting as proxy for an elector, the number to be entered together with the voter's name shall be the elector's number.

Voting by blind persons

- 39 (1) If a voter makes an application to the presiding officer to be allowed on the ground of blindness to vote with the assistance of another person by whom he is accompanied (in these rules referred to as " the companion"), the presiding officer shall require

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the voter to declare orally whether he is so incapacitated by his blindness as to be unable to vote without assistance.

- (2) If the presiding officer—
- (a) is satisfied that the voter is so incapacitated, and
 - (b) is also satisfied by a written declaration made by the companion (in these rules referred to as " the declaration made by the companion of a blind voter ") that the companion—
 - (i) is a qualified person within the meaning of this rule, and
 - (ii) has not previously assisted more than one blind person to vote at the election,

the presiding officer shall grant the application, and then anything which is by these rules required to be done to or by that voter in connection with the giving of his vote may be done to, or with the assistance of, the companion.

- (3) For the purposes of this rule, a person shall be qualified to assist a blind voter to vote, if that person is either—
- (a) a person who is entitled to vote as an elector at the election; or
 - (b) the father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son or daughter of the blind voter and has attained the age of 18 years.

- (4) The name and number in the register of electors of every voter whose vote is given in accordance with this rule and the name and address of the companion shall be entered on a list (in these rules referred to as " the list of blind voters assisted by companions ").

In the case of a person voting as proxy for an elector, the number to be entered together with the voter's name shall be the elector's number.

- (5) The declaration made by the companion—
- (a) shall be in the form in the Appendix ;
 - (b) shall be made before the presiding officer at the time when the voter applies to vote with the assistance of a companion and shall forthwith be given to the presiding officer who shall attest and retain it.

(6) No fee or other payment shall be charged in respect of the declaration
Tendered ballot papers

- 40 (1) If a person, representing himself to be—
- (a) a particular elector named on the register and not named in the absent voters list, or
 - (b) a particular person named in the list of proxies as proxy for an elector and not named in the list of persons entitled to vote by post as proxy,
- applies for a ballot paper after another person has voted in person either as the elector or his proxy, the applicant shall, on satisfactorily answering the questions permitted by law to be asked at the poll, be entitled, subject to the following provisions of this rule, to mark a ballot paper (in these rules referred to as " a tendered ballot paper in the same manner as any other voter.
- (2) A tendered ballot paper shall—
- (a) be of a colour differing from the other ballot papers ;

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- (b) instead of being put into the ballot box, be given to the presiding officer and endorsed by him with the name of the voter and his number in the register of electors, and set aside in a separate packet.
- (3) The name of the voter and his number on the register of electors shall be entered on a list (in these rules referred to as the "tendered votes list").
- (4) In the case of a person voting as proxy for an elector, the number to be endorsed or entered together with the voter's name shall be the number of that elector.

Spoilt ballot papers

- 41 A voter who has inadvertently dealt with his ballot paper in such manner that it cannot be conveniently used as a ballot paper may, on delivering it to the presiding officer and proving to his satisfaction the fact of the inadvertence, obtain another ballot paper in the place of the ballot paper so delivered (in these rules referred to as "a spoilt ballot paper"), and the spoilt ballot paper shall be immediately cancelled.

Adjournment of poll in case of riot

- 42 (1) Where the proceedings at any polling station are interrupted or obstructed by riot or open violence, the presiding officer shall adjourn the proceedings till the following day and shall forthwith give notice to the returning officer.
- (2) Where the poll is adjourned at any polling station—
- (a) the hours of polling on the day to which it is adjourned shall be the same as for the original day; and
 - (b) references in this Act to the close of the poll shall be construed accordingly.

Procedure on close of poll

- 43 (1) As soon as practicable after the close of the poll, the presiding officer shall, in the presence of the polling agents, make up into separate packets, sealed with his own seal and the seals of such polling agents as desire to affix their seals—
- (a) each ballot box in use at the station, sealed so as to prevent the introduction of additional ballot papers and unopened, but with the key attached,
 - (b) the unused and spoilt ballot papers placed together,
 - (c) the tendered ballot papers,
 - (d) the marked copies of the register of electors and of the list of proxies,
 - (e) the counterfoils of the used ballot papers and the certificates as to employment on duty on the day of the poll,
 - (f) the tendered votes list, the list of blind voters assisted by companions, the list of votes marked by the presiding officer, a statement of the number of voters whose votes are so marked by the presiding officer under the heads "physical incapacity" and "unable to read", and the declarations made by the companions of blind voters,

and shall deliver the packets or cause them to be delivered to the returning officer to be taken charge of by him ; but if the packets are not delivered by the presiding officer personally to the returning officer, the arrangements for their delivery shall require the returning officer's approval.

- (2) The marked copies of the register of electors and of the list of proxies shall be in one packet but shall not be in the same packet as the counterfoils of the used ballot papers and the certificates as to employment on duty on the day of the poll,
- (3) The packets shall be accompanied by a statement (in these rules referred to as "the ballot paper account") made by the presiding officer showing the number of ballot

papers entrusted to him, and accounting for them under the heads of ballot papers issued and not otherwise accounted for, unused, spoilt and tendered ballot papers.

COUNTING OF VOTES

Attendance at counting of votes

- 44 (1) The returning officer shall make arrangements for counting the votes in the presence of the counting agents as soon as practicable after the close of the poll, and shall give to the counting agents notice in writing of the time and place at which he will begin to count the votes.
- (2) No person other than—
- (a) the returning officer and his clerks,
 - (b) the candidates and their wives or husbands,
 - (c) the election agents,
 - (d) the counting agents,
- may be present at the counting of the votes, unless permitted by the returning officer to attend.
- (3) A person not entitled to attend at the counting of the votes shall not be permitted to do so by the returning officer unless he—
- (a) is satisfied that the efficient counting of the votes will not be impeded ; and
 - (b) has either consulted the election agents or thought it impracticable to do so.
- (4) The returning officer shall give the counting agents all such reasonable facilities for overseeing the proceedings, and all such information with respect to them, as he can give them consistently with the orderly conduct of the proceedings and the discharge of his duties in connection with them.
- (5) In particular, where the votes are counted by sorting the ballot papers according to the candidate for whom the vote is given and then counting the number of ballot papers for each candidate, the counting agents shall be entitled to satisfy themselves that the ballot papers are correctly sorted.

The count

- 45 (1) Before the returning officer proceeds to count the votes, he shall—
- (a) in the presence of the counting agents open each ballot box and, taking out the ballot papers in it, count and record the number of them and in the presence of the election agents verify each ballot paper account;
 - (b) count such of the postal ballot papers as have been duly returned and record the number counted ; and
 - (c) then mix together the whole of the ballot papers mentioned in the foregoing sub-paragraphs.
- (2) A postal ballot paper shall not be deemed to be duly returned unless it is returned in the proper envelope so as to reach the returning officer before the close of the poll and is accompanied by the declaration of identity duly signed and authenticated.
- (3) The returning officer shall not count any tendered ballot paper.
- (4) The returning officer, while counting and recording the number of ballot papers and counting the votes, shall keep the ballot papers with their faces upwards and take all proper precautions for preventing any person from seeing the numbers printed on the back of the papers.

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- (5) The returning officer shall verify each ballot paper account by comparing it with the number of ballot papers recorded by him, and the unused and spoilt ballot papers in his possession and the tendered votes list (opening and resealing the packets containing the unused and spoilt ballot papers and the tendered votes list) and shall draw up a statement as to the result of the verification, which any election agent may copy.
- (6) The returning officer shall so far as practicable proceed continuously with counting the votes, allowing only time for refreshment, except that he may, in so far as he and the agents agree, exclude the hours between 7 in the evening and 9 on the following morning.

For the purposes of this exception the agreement of a candidate or his election agent shall be as effective as the agreement of his counting agents.

- (7) During the time so excluded the returning officer shall—
- (a) place the ballot papers and other documents relating to the election under his own seal and the seals of such of the counting agents as desire to affix their seals ; and
 - (b) otherwise take proper precautions for the security of the papers and documents.

Re-count

- 46 (1) A candidate or his election agent may, if present when the counting or any re-count of the votes is completed, require the returning officer to have the votes re-counted or again re-counted but the returning officer may refuse to do so if in his opinion the request is unreasonable.
- (2) No step shall be taken on the completion of the counting or any re-count of votes until the candidates and election agents present at its completion have been given a reasonable opportunity to exercise the right conferred by this rule.

Rejected ballot papers

- 47 (1) Any ballot paper—
- (a) which does not bear the official mark, or
 - (b) on which votes are given for more than one candidate, or
 - (c) on which anything is written or marked by which the voter can be identified except the printed number on the back, or
 - (d) which is unmarked or void for uncertainty,
- shall, subject to the provisions of the next following paragraph, be void and not counted.
- (2) A ballot paper on which the vote is marked—
- (a) elsewhere than in the proper place, or
 - (b) otherwise than by means of a cross, or
 - (c) by more than one mark,
- shall not for such reason be deemed to be void if an intention that the vote shall be for one or other of the candidates clearly appears, and the way the paper is marked does not itself identify the voter and it is not shown that he can be identified by it.
- (3) The returning officer shall endorse the word " rejected " on any ballot paper which under this rule is not to be counted, and shall add to the endorsement the words " rejection objected to " if an objection is made by a counting agent to his decision .

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(4) The returning officer shall draw up a statement showing the number of ballot papers rejected under the several heads of—

- (a) want of official mark ;
- (b) voting for more than one candidate;
- (c) writing or mark by which voter could be identified ;
- (d) unmarked or void for uncertainty.

Decisions on ballot papers

48 The decision of the returning officer on any question arising in respect of a ballot paper shall be final, but shall be subject to review on an election petition.

Equality of votes

49 Where, after the counting of the votes (including any re-count) is completed, an equality of votes is found to exist between any candidates and the addition of a vote would entitle any of those candidates to be declared elected, the returning officer shall forthwith decide between those candidates by lot, and proceed as if the candidate on whom the lot falls had received an additional vote.