
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order amends the National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007 ([S.I 2007/236](#)) (“the 2007 Order”).

The 2007 Order and subsequent amendment Orders were made by the Secretary of State, but the enabling powers were transferred to the Welsh Ministers by the Wales Act 2017. Consequently, this is the first Order made by the Welsh Ministers in relation to the conduct of Senedd Cymru elections.

The title of this Order contains the term Senedd Cymru due to the change made to the name of the National Assembly for Wales by Part 2 of the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 (“the 2020 Act”).

Part 2 of this Order also makes provision in relation to the 2007 Order to reflect the changes made by Part 2 of the 2020 Act. For example, articles 4 to 35 substitute references within these forms to the National Assembly of Wales with references to the new name in consequence of Part 2 of the 2020 Act.

Part 3 of this Order makes various provision to give effect to and in consequence of Part 3 (elections) of the 2020 Act. Part 3 of that Act makes provision to lower the voting age for and extend the franchise to qualifying foreign citizens at Senedd Cymru elections.

Article 36 amends article 14 of the 2007 Order to ensure that offences committed under the Order in relation to providing false information are applicable only to those who have attained voting age.

Articles 37 and 38 make various amendments to Schedule 1 (absent voting) and Schedule 5 (Senedd Cymru election rules) to the 2007 Order, respectively. These amendments all reflect the fact that Part 3 of the 2020 Act provides that at elections for membership of the Senedd at which the poll is held on or after 5 April 2021, a person who has attained the age of 16 and would otherwise be entitled to, may vote at that election and make provision in consequence of this.

In particular article 37(2) amends paragraph 1(9) of Schedule 1 and inserts a new paragraph (e). When making an application for absent voting at Senedd Cymru elections, a person is required to provide their address to which they are, or will be registered. Paragraph 1(9) of Schedule 1 enables service voters, patients in mental hospitals who are not detained offenders, persons remanded in custody and homeless persons to provide certain addresses for the purpose of an application. The 2020 Act makes provision for persons who are, or have been, looked after children to make a declaration of local connection to (i) an address in Wales at which the person has previously been resident; or (ii) the address of a council of a county or county borough in Wales in which that person has previously been resident. New paragraph 1(9)(e) allows an applicant to use any such address for the purpose of applying to be an absent voter.

Article 37(7) inserts paragraph 14A in Schedule 1 which ensures that information contained within an absent voter record or list which relates to a person under the age of 16 is not disclosed unless it is necessary for the purpose of, or in connection with, an election at which that young person will be entitled to vote.

Article 38 lowers the age of those who are entitled to accompany voters to the polling station by virtue of rule 41(1)(b) of Schedule 5 to 16. Paragraph (b) lowers the age of those who the Presiding Officer may limit admission to a polling station to 16. Paragraph (c) amends rule 48(3)(b) of Schedule 5 to similarly lower the age of those who are entitled to accompany a person who is a voter with disabilities to 16.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

Part 4 of this Order amends the 2007 Order in consequence of Part 4 (disqualification) of the 2020 Act.

Article 43 amends article 34 (false statements in nomination papers etc.) of the 2007 Order so as to provide that a statement as to a candidate's qualification for a Senedd Cymru election includes a statement that the candidate is not disqualified under section 16(A1) of the 2006 Act (disqualification from being a Member of the Senedd).

Article 44 makes amendments to various provisions within Schedule 5 to the 2007 Order (Senedd Cymru election rules). The purpose of these amendments is to give effect to the change made in Part 4 of the 2020 Act which introduces a distinction between disqualification from membership of the Senedd and disqualification from candidacy for and membership of the Senedd.

Article 44(5) omits rule 19 of Schedule 5 given that disqualification under the Representation of the People Act 1981 is no longer applicable to Senedd Cymru elections as a result of Part 4 of the 2020 Act.

Part 5 of this Order makes provision for candidates at Senedd Cymru elections to request that their home address not be made public. This provision also applies to those who act as their own agents. Where such persons request that their home address not be made public, their home address will not appear on a statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper. However they are nevertheless required to provide, where they are residents in the United Kingdom, the constituency in which they live, or, where they reside outside the United Kingdom, the name of the country in which they live.

Articles 47 to 52 introduce the Schedule to this Order which contains a home address form in which candidates can request that their home address not be made public and make consequential amendments to other prescribed forms in Schedule 10 to the 2007 Order.

Article 53 amends article 23 of the 2007 Order. The amendments made to article 23 will mean that constituency and regional returning officers will recover charges in respect of services rendered in connection with a Senedd Cymru election on behalf of electoral administrators (returning officers, deputy returning officers and officers of a council) and distribute such charges as necessary.

Part 7 of this Order makes provision enabling the Electoral Commission to prepare a code of practice in relation to election expenses for candidates at Senedd Cymru elections. Article 54 revokes article 63(8) of the 2007 Order. This is replaced by the new provision in article 55 to be included within Schedule 7 (election expenses) to the 2007 Order.

In accordance with this, the Welsh Ministers may approve a draft Code prepared by the Commission with or without modifications. They must then lay the Code, in draft form, before Senedd Cymru. Within 40 days, the Senedd may make a resolution not to approve the draft Code. In that event, the Welsh Ministers must take no further steps in relation to it. But if no resolution is made, the Welsh Ministers must issue the Code in the form of the draft laid and the Commission must publish it.

Part 8 of this Order provides for constituency and regional candidates to use the suffix "Cymru" and prefix "Welsh" in the nomination of candidate form and ballot paper where the registered party name does not include "Cymru" or "Welsh".

Part 9 of this Order makes a number of other amendments to the 2007 Order. Articles 64 and 65 revoke out of date references to the Government of Wales Act 1998 ("the 1998 Act"). These references were transitional in nature and are now unnecessary.

The Welsh Ministers' Code of Practice on the carrying out of Regulatory Impact Assessments was considered in relation to this Order. As a result, it was not considered necessary to carry out a regulatory impact assessment as to the likely costs and benefits of complying with this Order.