

Preventing candidate intimidation | Electoral Commission [Search](#)

These are the views we set out to parliamentarians before the Elections Act became law. We last updated these views in early 2022. [Close alert](#) [Preventing candidate intimidation](#) [You are in the Elections Act section Home](#) [Elections Act](#) On this page [Changes proposed by the government](#) [Our view](#) [Further reading](#) First published: 5 July 2021 Last updated: 5 July 2021 Last updated These are the views we set out to parliamentarians before the Elections Act became law. We last updated these views in early 2022. [Changes proposed by the government](#) The UK Government's Elections Act introduces a new penalty for anyone found guilty of intimidating candidates, campaigners or elected representatives. Anyone found guilty of this behaviour could be banned from standing for elected office for five years. This is in addition to punishments already in place for those guilty of existing intimidation offences, such as common assault, harassment, and the use of threatening language. [Our view](#) There has been increasing concern at recent elections about intimidating and threatening behaviour towards candidates and campaigners. Following the 2019 UK general election, more than half of the candidates we spoke to said they were concerned about standing for election because of the risk of intimidation, threats and abuse. Three quarters of respondents said that they had experienced this behaviour. It is vital that action is taken against those who abuse, threaten or intimidate candidates and campaigners. This behaviour cannot be allowed to discourage people from standing for election or campaigning. Banning someone from standing for elected office, as well as imposing criminal sanctions, such as a prison sentence or fine, will strengthen the deterrent against this intimidating behaviour. [Further reading](#) [Further reading](#) [The Government's Written Ministerial Statement: Strengthening transparency and fairness in elections, 2021](#) [Our response to the UK Government policy consultation: Protecting the Debate](#) [Our survey of candidates following the 2019 UK Parliamentary general election](#) [Related content](#) [Elections Act](#) [about the UK Government's Elections Act and what it means for voting and campaigning](#) [About the Elections Act](#) [about the Elections Bill, including the measures it contains and which elections it applies to.](#) [Introducing digital imprints](#) [about the proposed changes to digital imprints on election material.](#) [Changes to notional spending](#) [Read about the proposals to clarify the rules that relate to notional spending for candidates and agents.](#)