

Guidance on the design of voter forms and notices

The Commission's [Making your mark](#) guidance is focused on the design of usable and accessible forms and notices that put voters' needs first and enable them to vote confidently, according to their intentions. It provides guidance based on accepted industry good practice and findings from research with the public.

Note: The Making your mark guidance was originally published in 2009. It continues to provide relevant advice for the production of voter information and many of the general principles in the guidance can still be applied to voter materials.

For an overview of good design practice, see Section 1: Introduction and Section 2: about this guidance.

Design criteria

A helpful summary to the content within the Making your mark guidance is set out below.

A: Content and structure

See Section 3B: Content and structure **and** Section 5: Bilingual materials

1. **Font** style and size that is easy to read.

- a) Poll cards and postal voting materials: Arial 12 point (or equivalent), unless unavoidable. Ensure all **key** information is minimum 12 point.
- b) Notices (poster size): Arial 26 point (or equivalent).

See Section 3A, p. 9: font and Section 6B: choosing a font

2. **Language:**

- a) plain language that is easy to read and understand¹
- b) consistent language and terminology used throughout all forms and notices

See Section 3: general design considerations **and** Section 6: detailed guidance

3. Clear **instructions** in a logical order, following the steps of the process.

¹ Plain language should be used where the relevant legislation allows the form or notice in question to be produced in a form 'to like effect' as the prescribed form. Guidance and instructions notices for use in polling stations are often required to be produced in the prescribed form, and not a form to like effect, so you should ensure you check the specific requirements.

4. Clear information/signposting about how to **get help**.

5. **Illustrations** used where appropriate to complement written instructions. They should be clear, stand out well, and match the written instructions.

See Section 3A, p.15: pictures

B: Style

See Section 3A – style and general design considerations **and** Section 5: bilingual materials

6. **Emphasis:**

a) text broken up into sections by use of headings, different text sizes, and spacing

b) bold and block capitals used sparingly

See Section 6: adding emphasis

7. **Uncluttered** layout with sufficient **space** to ensure the text is easily readable.

See Section 3A

p.10 & 11: Alignment and spacing;

p.12 & 13: layout of text _