

What we do in referendums | Electoral Commission      Search      What we do in referendums      You are in the section Home      On this page Before the referendum During the referendum After the referendum First published: 31 May 2019 Last updated: 15 September 2019 Overview of what we do in referendums For a referendum to take place in the UK, the UK Parliament has to pass legislation about it. We start work on a referendum when the UK Parliament has passed this legislation, and we know what our role in the referendum is. Our role in referendums is different to our role in elections . Although we don't run elections, we do run national referendums held under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) , or have other responsibilities, depending on the legislation. Our Chair or someone our Chair appoints, is the Chief Counting Officer for PPERA referendums. The Chief Counting Officer is responsible for the conduct of the poll, can issue directions to Counting Officers, and also certifies and announces the results of the referendum. Before the referendum Before the referendum, we: look at the wording of the proposed referendum question to make sure it is easy for voters to understand and as part of our assessment we carry out research with the public produce guidance and resources for the Counting Officers responsible for administering the referendum and issuing directions as necessary (in the case of PPERA referendums) give guidance to people campaigning in the referendum, so they know what the rules are run campaigns so people know when the deadlines are for registering to vote, and applying for postal and proxy votes appoint a lead campaigner for each side of the referendum debate publish information about the donations political parties, campaigners and other groups receive, and how much money they are spending design the ballot paper During the referendum During the referendum, we: work with Counting Officers to make sure the referendum is run well look at how well the Counting Officers are doing, and whether they are working to our performance standards make sure people have all the information they need to vote, including how to find their polling station answer the questions people ask us on polling day visit polling stations on polling day, and observe how well run they are When the polls close on the referendum polling day, we certify and announce the results of the referendum (in the case of PPERA referendums). After the referendum After the referendum, we: publish reports on how well-run the referendum was, and recommend what would improve future referendums publish information about the donations political parties, campaigners and other groups receive, and how much money they spent publish electoral data including the size of the electorate, turnout, the number of rejected ballot papers and information on postal voting