

Rock Enrol! supporting guidance



Cabinet Office

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The voice of
learning disability



This supporting guidance is for use with the adapted version of Rock Enrol! aimed at inspiring young people with a learning disability. It has been developed in partnership with Mencap.

Supporting guidance for the delivery of Rock Enrol!®

This guidance will help you to use the Rock Enrol!® resource, giving hints and tips to make the experience as smooth as possible. Encouraging democratic engagement and improving the numbers of young people on the electoral register is really important. Remember, if you are not on the register, you cannot vote.

So, take a look, host your own session and let us know how it went by emailing the Cabinet Office (DemocraticEngagement@cabinetoffice.gov.uk) or tweet us @signup2vote using #rockenrol. Hopefully, you will have many young people more informed and signed up to the Electoral Register in no time.

Getting started

Before the session you can get in touch with your local Electoral Registration Office by looking up its details on the About My Vote website. If you are in Northern Ireland you can contact the Electoral Office of Northern Ireland. A member of the Electoral Services Team for your local area may be able to come along to the event and provide you with the necessary forms if you do not have online access during the session (remember - members of your group might be from different areas and their completed registration forms will need to be sent back to the correct Electoral Registration office). You can also print off blank registration forms from the About My Vote website.

Remember:

1. To tell people participating in the event in advance that they will need to bring their National Insurance numbers so that that they can register to vote.
2. That any completed forms you receive from young people will need to be stored securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Once you have completed the session, nominate a participant to email the Cabinet Office (DemocraticEngagement@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

to confirm that the session has been delivered or tweet us @signup2vote using #rockenrol. We want to hear about how the session went and what the participants thought.

The Rock Enrol!® learning resource can be used in a variety of contexts including youth organisations and other extra-curricular activities. It can also fit into many curriculum contexts for schools and colleges across the country:

England and Wales

- In England the resource can be used as part of the Citizenship curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 and with students of GCSE Citizenship Studies. It can help to meet the revised Citizenship curriculum's statutory requirements to ensure pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of how citizens actively participate in the UK's democratic system and equip students with the skills to think critically and debate political questions.
- The activities included are versatile and can be adapted for use at a variety of levels and in different contexts for post-16 learners – for example within tutorial programmes in colleges and school sixth forms and as part of units of work on Personal and Social Development for Foundation learners.
- The session links well with important issues within both Citizenship Studies and Government and Politics at AS and A Level, together with a range of BTEC qualifications in Public Services.
- Also, the sessions could be extended for AS and A Level Mathematics students through analysis of the statistics around voter registration and youth engagement in politics (see the Electoral Commission Great Britain's Electoral Registers 2011 and the Hansard Society Audit of Political Engagement 10, 2013).
- The activities are also well suited to Functional Skills in English, particularly the requirements to develop speaking and listening skills through participation in formal and informal discussions.

- In Wales the resource can be used within Personal and Social Education (PSE) at Key Stage 3, 4 and Post-16. The theme of Active Citizenship encourages learners to become active in both their local communities and on a more global level. They can develop a practical understanding of their rights and of links between political decisions and their own lives.

- Also for post-16 learners, the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, available through the core module of Wales, Europe and the World provides opportunities for candidates to engage in debate about political issues and to recognise how political decisions can affect people.

- For Essential Skills Wales, activities can be used to introduce discussion of roles and levels of Government and about electoral processes.

Northern Ireland

- In Northern Ireland, it can be used as part of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Curriculum at primary level and the Local and Global Citizenship element of Learning for Life and Work at secondary level.

Scotland

- It can contribute to experiences and outcomes within the broad general education of Curriculum for Excellence in the area of 'People in society, economy and business'.

- It may be useful for work in Political Literacy and the role of the responsible citizen.

- It may be suitable at National Qualifications level in Modern Studies. Specifically, the resource could be used within the Democracy in Scotland unit, available at National 3, National 4 and National 5 respectively. There may be additional elements of the resource which could be used within the context of a Higher or Advanced Higher class.

- It may also be suitable for rights based education, which could be considered in Social Education programmes.

Hints and tips

Make the session as real and relevant to your local area by looking up local statistics relating

to your Member of Parliament (MP) (or Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP)/Member of the National Assembly for Wales (AM)/Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA))

Is it a marginal seat? Do you know if he/she is a new MP or a long standing MP?

What is happening in your area especially if you live in a devolved legislature? Some of the activities are designed to make pupils think of issues and relate them to specific policy areas for which elected bodies are responsible. These will differ from area to area and according to devolved legislature. Adapt the facts and examples used in any of the activities to take into account the devolved or local area.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is it important that young people register now?

Only 55% of 16 and 17 year olds (and 56% of those aged 18-24)³ who are currently eligible are registered to vote. Young people are also much less likely to vote in elections - only around half (51.8%)⁴ of those 18-24 year olds actually vote.

Once registered you have the choice whether to vote or not; if you are not on the register, you will not be able to vote.

Not being on the register can also affect a person's credit rating and access to financial services.

Who can register to vote?

- Anyone aged 16 or over⁵ can apply to be added to the electoral register. 16 and 17 year olds will not be able to vote until they are 18 but by registering before then they can ensure that they can vote as soon as they turn 18.

- Citizens from the following areas can register to vote:

- The UK
- Republic of Ireland
- Qualifying Commonwealth citizens
- Other European Union countries living in the UK
- The Channel Islands
- The Isle of Man
- British Overseas Territory living in the UK.

How do people get onto the electoral register?

1. You can register online at www.mencap.org.uk/allaboutvoting
2. You can print blank forms from the About My Vote website and send them to your local Electoral Registration office⁶
3. Blank forms can also be requested from your local Electoral Registration Office and returned to them.

Is there a deadline for filling out an electoral registration forms?

You can apply to be added to the electoral register at any time but you must submit your registration form 12 working days before an election is held in order to be able to vote in that particular election or referendum.

How can I vote if I am going on holiday during the elections?

Postal voting is an alternative method of voting for electors who, for whatever reason, are unable to cast their vote in person on polling day and thus enables voters to participate who might not otherwise have been able to do so. Appointing a proxy, another person to vote on an elector's behalf, provides a further method of voting, with the proxy being able to cast the elector's vote either in person at the polling station or by post.

Some of the young people are not UK citizens. Can they register to vote?

- Qualifying Commonwealth citizens can register to vote. More on this, including a list of the countries is available on the About My Vote website.
 - Irish Citizens or citizens of other European Union (EU) member states can also register.
- If you have any questions about this please contact your local electoral services.

How does being on the electoral register relate to credit rating?

The electoral register can be used for credit referencing purposes to counteract fraud. If you are not on it you might find it more difficult to get a mobile phone contract or be approved for

a mortgage, for example.

Will the young people's details be used for anything other than registration?

Registration officers keep two registers - the electoral register and the open-access register (also known as the edited register).

The electoral register lists the names and addresses of everyone who is registered to vote in elections. The register is used for electoral purposes, such as making sure only eligible people can vote. It is also used for other limited purposes specified in law⁷.

The open-access register is an extract of the electoral register, but is not used for elections. It can be bought by any person, company or organisation. It is mainly used by businesses and charities to confirm name and address details.

Names and addresses will be included in the open-access register unless you ask for them to be removed at the time of registering. Removing your details from the open-access register does not affect your right to vote and opting out of the open-access register will not affect your credit rating.

Flyers that you can use with your students to answer questions such as: 'What happens to my personal details?' are available here on the Electoral Commission's website. In Scotland, 16 and 17 year olds are eligible to vote in the referendum taking place on 18 September 2014. There will not be two versions of the register of these young voters, access to the register will be heavily restricted and no information on 14 year olds will be collected.

I would like to invite the local MP/ Councillor/MSPs/AM to a registration event. How can I do this?

You can find out who your local MP, Councillor, MSP or AM is by typing your postcode into the Write to Them website. A pre-populated email will then be created for you to invite your MP, Councillor, MSP or AM. Explain that you intend to run a registration event to encourage young people at your school or youth organisation to register to vote.

How else can young people get involved?

Young people can run their own Rock Enrol!® session with other classes in your college, in the lunch hour or with their local youth group. They can also meet elected representatives such as finding out who their local MP is and inviting them to visit or write to them about an issue they care about. Find out how MPs have voted on specific issues at the They Work for You website.

What other organisations are there to support young people to get engaged in democratic participation?

There are a number of organisations which are interested in encouraging young people to engage in democratic participation, some examples are listed below.

- The British Youth Council is a youth-led charity which encourages young people aged 25 and under to get involved in local, national and international democracy. In Scotland a similar organisation is the Scottish Youth Parliament.
- The Hansard Society's Citizenship Education Programme activities include big debates online and mock elections.
- Involver is a social enterprise that works to improve student councils and student voice - take their student voice audit on their website to test democracy in your college.
- Parliament's Education Service includes tailored sessions and visits for post 16.
- The Youth Services Team at your local authority may have an interest in youth engagement
- The Northern Ireland Assembly education service provides a range of activities for young people in Northern Ireland, as well as resources for teachers.
- Staff from the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland also carry out visits to secondary schools in Northern Ireland to assist pupils who are registering to vote for the first time and offer an electoral identity card which can be used as a proof of age document.
- The Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT) is the subject association for Citizenship representing teachers and others involved in Citizenship education. ACT's mission is to support the teaching of high quality Citizenship and to promote wider public understanding of the subject.
- Active Citizens FE is a Community Interest

Company and network for those interested in providing excellent citizenship education, social action and learner voice in post-16 education and training. The network offers a wide range of teaching resources for post-16 citizenship at www.activecitizensfe.org.uk

What if I have lost my National Insurance number (NINO)?

- You can find your National Insurance number on your payslip, P60 or tax return.
- If you still can't find it, you can either:
- Visit GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/lost-national-insurance-number> and fill in form CA5403 and send it to the address on the form.
- Phone the National Insurance numbers helpline and answer some questions (you'll need to fill in form CA5403 if you can't answer the questions).
- HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) won't tell you your National Insurance number over the phone - they'll post it to you.
- You don't need a National Insurance plastic card. HMRC no longer sends these cards out. You turned 16 and didn't get a number.
- You should automatically get a National Insurance number just before your 16th birthday. If you didn't get one and you're under 20, phone the National Insurance numbers helpline on 0300 200 3502.
- If you're over 20 you need to apply for a National Insurance number.

What if people can't find their NINO?

- To make an online application to register to vote you will need your National Insurance number (NINO).
- Applicants to register to vote who cannot provide a National Insurance number must state the reason for not providing this information on their application. Applicants who state that they do not know their National Insurance number will be advised by EROs of locations, such as a payslip, where they can find this information.
- Applicants who do not have a National Insurance number must provide documentary evidence of their identity, such as a UK passport, before their application can be verified.

What about people who have never had a NINO?

- There is a small cohort of people entitled to vote but with no entitlement to get a NINO (e.g. because they are not working/claiming benefit or are working but are not liable to pay UK National Insurance contributions).
- DWP/HMRC policy and regulations will not allow NINOs to be allocated to such persons for the purposes of IER. In these circumstances, EROs will ask for additional documentary evidence to be provided, such as a passport or driving license.

I still have questions, who can I ask?

To find out who is eligible and how to complete the form contact your local council's Electoral Registration office by calling your local authority. You can find these details you can find on the About My Vote website. In Northern Ireland, call the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (0800 4320712).

If you have any other questions about registration or the Rock Enrol!® resource, please contact DemocraticEngagement@cabinetoffice.gov.uk or tweet us @signup2vote using #rockenrol

If you want to find out more information about registering to vote go to: www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

1 http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/145366/Great-Britainselectoral-registers-2011.pdf

2 <http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2013/05/Audit-of-Political-Engagement-10-2013.pdf>

3 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226739/Electoral-Registration-Analysis-CO.pdf

4 www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN01467.pdf

5 More details can be found here: <http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/who-can-register-to-vote.aspx>

6 You can find contact details on the About My Vote website. Enter the school's postcode in the 'Your Local Area' panel to obtain the correct address for your local office

<https://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register-to-vote/electoral-registration-application.aspx>

In Northern Ireland please use <http://www.eoni.org.uk/Home> to obtain the correct address for your local office.

7 These include detecting crime (e.g. fraud), calling people for jury service and checking credit applications.

