

# HOW TO FILL IN FORM RPF37 - Application to register as an overseas elector

## ABOUT THIS FORM

If you are a British citizen living outside the United Kingdom, and you satisfy the conditions set out below, you may register as an overseas elector. This will enable you to vote at parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections in the UK (if you are a peer you will be able to vote only at European Parliamentary elections).

**Do not use this form if you are a Crown Servant or British Council employee or the husband or wife of one. Use Form E79 or E80. Members of the Armed Forces serving abroad, and their spouses, should use Forms F/Vote/33 and 34.**

You must be a *British citizen*. You must also satisfy one of the following two sets of conditions:

*either*

- Set 1** | your name was previously on the electoral register for an address in the UK  
| you were living in the UK on the \*qualifying date for that register  
| there are no more than 15 years between the qualifying dates for that register and the date of your application

*or*

- Set 2** | you last lived in the UK less than 15 years before the date of your application  
| you were too young to be on the electoral register before you left  
| a parent or guardian was on that electoral register, for the address at which you were living on that date  
| you are at least 18 years old, or will become 18 while the register you now want to be on is in force

**You must complete this form and return it to me within three months of the date of your application for it to be effective.**

\* In England, Wales and Scotland, the **qualifying date prior to 16 February 2001** was 10 October and in Northern Ireland 15 September. This was for the electoral register which came into force on the following 16 February and remained in force for all elections for one year.

## ABOUT PART 1

Fill in your name and present (non-UK) address in the space provided. Your **UK registration address** is the address in the UK where you know or believe you were last registered as an elector. Tick the appropriate box if you were registered either as a service voter or as a voluntary mental patient.

If you left the UK when you were **too young to register as an elector**, your registration address is the address where you were living before you left the UK.

Now fill in one of the Boxes A, B or C. If you have registered before as an **overseas elector** (and, since then, you have not been registered as an elector living in the UK), enter the \*date of the register you were on in Box A.

\* The **date of the register** refers to the year when it was in force. Prior to 16 February 2001 this ran from 16 February to the following 15 February. So, for example, if you were on the register which was in force between 16 February 1987 and 15 February 1988, write '1987/88' in Box A.

If you were last registered as an **ordinary UK elector**, enter the date you left the UK in Box B.

If you left the UK when you were **too young to register as an elector**, and you have not registered before as an overseas elector, enter your date of birth in Box C.

If your name has changed since you were last registered (or, if you filled in Box C, since you were born), remember to state your former name in full and the reason for the change (eg 'Marriage') in the space provided.

Then, if you filled in:-  
Box A, complete Parts 4 and 6  
Box B, complete Parts 3, 4, 5 and 6  
Box C, complete Parts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

## ABOUT PART 2

If you filled in Box C in Part 1, you must state in Part 2 the full name of the parent or guardian whose registration as an elector in the UK you are relying on. He or she must have been on the electoral register for the address you have given as 'UK registration address' in Part 1.

**If you filled in Box C you must send with this application a photocopy of your full birth certificate (showing the full names of either or both of your parents). Tick the box to show that you have enclosed it with your application.**

If the name you have given in Part 2 is not the name of a parent or guardian as was entered in the electoral register, or it is not the name of either parent as shown in your birth certificate, explain why (eg 'my mother has married/re-married since she was registered' or 'the person named above adopted me and became my guardian in (year)'). If you do not know the reason for the change of name, tick the relevant box.

## ABOUT PART 3

If you filled in either Box B or C in Part 1, you must fill in Part 3, giving information to show that you are a British citizen.

If you hold a British passport which describes your national status as 'British citizen', enter the number, date and place of issue of the passport in the boxes provided.

If you do not hold such a passport, but you were born in the UK before 1 January 1983 (the date on which relevant parts of the British Nationality Act 1981 came into force), enter the place where you were born.

If you do not hold such a passport, and you were **not** born in the UK before 1 January 1983, enter your date, place and country of birth. Say when and how you became a British citizen (eg 'naturalisation', 'registration', 'descent', 'marriage to a British citizen before 1949').

## ABOUT PART 4

All applicants must complete, sign and date the declaration in Part 4.

## **ABOUT PART 5**

If you filled in Box B or C, you must find someone to support what you say in your application. He/she can be anyone who:

- I is aged 18 or over
- I is the bearer of a British passport which describes his/her status as 'British citizen'
- I is not living in the UK
- I knows you but is NOT a close relative (husband, wife, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild)

Your supporter must state his/her full name and the number, date and place of issue of his/her passport before signing the declaration.

## **ABOUT PART 6**

In order to vote you should either apply to vote by post or appoint someone in the UK to vote on your behalf as your proxy (unless you are able to return to the area in the United Kingdom where you are registered on polling day). Your vote will be cast in the constituency which covers the address where you were last registered as an elector in the UK (or where a parent or guardian was registered).

**If you are currently registered as an overseas elector, and have not cancelled your existing proxy appointment, you need not complete Part 6 unless you wish to appoint a different person.**

A proxy must be :-

- I willing and allowed to vote on your behalf
- I living in the UK
- I eligible to vote in the type of election concerned
- I old enough to vote
- I not subject to any legal incapacity to vote

A proxy may not vote at the same election in any constituency for more than two people unless they are a close relative (husband, wife, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild) of the people they are voting for.

If you have consulted your proxy and can confirm that he or she is willing and is allowed to act for you, then only you need sign in the space provided: complete and sign Part 6 yourself, and send the whole form now to the electoral registration officer (see notes on 'How to return the form' below).

If you are not yet sure whom you wish to appoint as proxy, or if you are not sure if your chosen proxy is willing to act for you, retain the sheet with Part 6 on it. Sign it and send it to your proxy later. Ask him or her to sign it as well, and to send it on the electoral registration officer. You will need to tell your proxy where to send Part 6, so make a note of the address in the box provided in Part 6.

**If you intend to return Part 6 separately, ensure that you enter your own details in the space provided. You must sign Part 6 yourself, whether you are sending it with the rest of the form or separately.**

**You are strongly advised to appoint a proxy as soon as possible. DO NOT** leave it until shortly before an election, since it may be difficult to confirm the proxy's appointment in time for your vote to be cast.

Your proxy need not live in the constituency in which your vote will be cast. If he/she lives in a different area, he/she can apply to vote on your behalf by post (from an address in the UK). Equally, your proxy can vote on your behalf by post if he/she normally votes by post (eg because of physical disability).

If you think your proxy is unlikely to be able to vote in person on your behalf, tick the box in Part 6 to ask the electoral registration officer to send him or her an application form to vote by post.

## **HOW TO RETURN THIS FORM**

You should send the form (together with a photocopy of your birth certificate, if required) to the electoral registration officer for the area in which you were last registered as an elector (or in which a parent or guardian was registered) - ie for the address you have filled in as 'UK registration address' in Part 1. If you do not know the registration officer's address, send your application in an envelope addressed to:

The Electoral Registration Officer, Council Offices, *Town or City, County*, United Kingdom

If you send your application to an electoral registration officer in London, please include the name of the Borough in the address. If you (or your parent or guardian) were previously registered in Northern Ireland, send your application to:

The Chief Electoral Officer, 3rd Floor, 65/67 Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 4JD, Northern Ireland

You are advised to send the form by air mail if you live outside Europe.

## **AFTER YOU HAVE RETURNED THE FORM**

The electoral registration officer will write to tell you if he is satisfied that you qualify as an overseas elector and will be included in the register. If he has doubts about your age or citizenship, he may ask for further evidence or documentation. If he rejects your application he will return the form and explain why.

Once you are registered as an overseas elector, you will be able to vote by proxy or by post at all parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections while the register is in force. Alternatively, you may vote in person if you are able to return to the area in the United Kingdom where you are registered on polling day, or if you happen to be there on that day (providing your proxy has not already voted on your behalf). The registration officer will send you a reminder 9 to 10 months after your registration (as long as you remain qualified) for you to make a new application for the next register. He will enclose another form.

**WARNING: It is an offence to make an overseas elector's declaration if you know that you are subject to a legal incapacity to vote at parliamentary elections, or to make a false statement in this application.**

**It is also an offence for your supporter to sign the declaration if he or she is not authorised to do so, or if he or she makes a false statement.**

**EFFECT OF THIS APPLICATION ON DOMICILE: Registration/voting as an overseas elector will not be taken into account in determining whether an individual has United Kingdom domicile for tax purposes.**

# **DON'T LOSE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE**