West Suffolk Council

Count Assistant

Band 3, Spinal Column Point 6

> ### The count team
>
> Each count team consists of four count assistants with a Supervisor managing two count teams.
>
> There are two stages to the count:
>
> - Verification – the ballot papers in each ballot box are counted to determine the total number in the box. This is compared to the ballot paper account.
> - Count – the verified ballot papers are sorted by candidate and the total number of votes for each candidate are counted. The total number of votes cast plus any rejected ballot papers should match the total number of verified ballot papers.
>
> The verification and the count may be held at different sessions.

This role will be required to work at the count venue assigned by the Returning Officer.

This role reports to the Count Supervisor.

Key responsibilities and activities

Verification stage

To count the number of ballot papers in each ballot box accurately and methodically. Ballot papers should be counted into 20s with a paperclip and five bundles of 20 secured with a rubber band to make 100. Any 'odds' should have a post-it note with the number of ballot papers written on.

Count stage

To sort the verified ballot papers by candidate – place piles in the same order as the ballot paper. Once sorted, ballot papers should be counted (as for verification). You should count the papers on the same side as the 'X' so this is visible for candidates and agents to view and acts as a double check to ensure they are all for the same candidate.

Flag up any doubtful ballot papers to the Supervisor who will either confirm it is good or take the ballot paper to put in a doubtful tray.

You should carry out a double check when required of all bundles.

Undertake a recount if instructed to do so.

The process for counting ballot papers where there is more than one vote is slightly different. You will be required to use a 'counting sheet' which has 20 ballot papers stuck to it and the totals for each candidate are added across. The totals are then entered into a spreadsheet.

You may be asked to conduct a recount – this should be a 'visible' process for candidates and agents.

General requirements

Working as part of a team.

You should follow instructions from the Count Supervisor at all times.

No food or drink is allowed on the count tables (you make keep a bottle of water on the floor underneath your chair).

Mobile phones should be turned onto silent and should not be used at all in the count hall.

At the end of the count, you should help the Supervisor to pack down all paperwork and equipment as instructed.

Ensuring the secrecy and security of the ballot at all times.

Refrain from entering into conversations with candidates or agents who may be present.

The Returning Officer is not permitted to employ anyone who is carrying out or has carried out duties on behalf of any political party or candidate at the election.

Payment

You will be paid into your bank account on the tenth of the month following polling day.

The hourly rates of pay for a Count Assistant is as follows.

	Hourly rate - day	**Hourly rate - night**
Count Assistant	£12.38	£18.57

The minimum payments are as follows (the hourly rate is paid if the session times are exceeded).

	Rate	**Rate**
Day verification or count – four hours minimum	£49.52	
Night verification and/or count – four hours minimum		£74.25

Person Specification

Count Assistant

Criteria	Attributes
Experience	**Desirable** Previous experience as a Count Assistant.
Skills and abilities	**Essential** Accuracy and being methodical. Good timekeeping. Ability to work as part of a team. Ability to work under pressure (candidates and agents will be scrutinising the process you undertake).
Other	**Essential** Able to travel to either of the count venues as required.