

The Preferential Elimination System of Voting
(applicable to the election of the 4 Special Functional Constituencies) -
How Votes Are Counted
(with Annex showing Working Examples)

1. All valid ballot papers will be sorted with reference to the candidate for whom the first preference vote has been recorded.

2. The result of an election will be ascertained by a count of the first preference votes received by each of the candidates. The candidate who receives an absolute majority (ie over 50%) of all the first preference votes received by the candidates will be declared elected (see Example 1 in the Annex). However, where each of the ballot papers contains only a first preference vote without any other valid preference marked on it, the candidate who obtains the highest number of the first preference votes will be elected.

3. Where no candidate has received an absolute majority of all the first preference votes received by the candidates:
 - (a) If each of the candidates has received an equal number of first preference votes, the result of the election will be determined by the drawing of lots (see paras. 3.2 - 3.4 in the Annex).

 - (b) Otherwise, an elimination process accompanied with a transfer of votes will be carried out, ie the candidate(s) with the least number of votes will be eliminated and his/their votes will be transferred to the other (remaining) candidates according to the next available preference recorded on his/their ballot papers (see Example 2 in the Annex).

4. The process in para. 3(b) above will be repeated until:
- (a) a candidate obtains an absolute majority of the aggregate of the total number of votes (both preference votes and transferred votes) - that candidate will then be declared elected;
 - (b) only one candidate is remaining - he shall be elected; or
 - (c) each of the remaining candidates has received an equal number of votes (ie the total number of the first preference votes and the transferred votes), in which case the result of the election will be determined by lot.

The Preferential Elimination System of Voting

WORKING EXAMPLES

Example 1 (where an absolute majority is obtained at the first count)

1.1 At the first count, only first preference votes are counted. The results are as follows :-

First Count	Exhausted Ballot Papers	Valid Ballot Papers	A		B		C		D		E	
			Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Total Number of Votes	-	100	51	51.00	29	29.00	10	10.00	7	7.00	3	3.00
			Elected									

1.2 Candidate A is elected as he has obtained an absolute majority (over 50%) of all the first preference votes.

Example 2 (where an elimination process and a transfer of votes take place)

2.1 In this example, the results of the first count in which only first preference votes are counted are as follows :-

First Count	Exhausted Ballot Papers	Valid Ballot Papers	A		B		C		D		E	
			Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Total Number of Votes	-	100	3	3.00	2	2.00	44	44.00	44	44.00	7	7.00

2.2 No candidate has obtained an absolute majority of all the first preference votes. Candidate B, who has obtained the least number of first preference votes, is eliminated.

2.3 A second count is then conducted. The 2 ballot papers which show Candidate B as the first preference are transferred to the remaining Candidates (A, C, D and E) according to the next available (second) preference shown on them. For any ballot papers which express no available preference for any of the remaining candidates or where the next available preference is not clear (eg where there is no consecutive preference or where the same preference is marked for 2 or more candidates), they are set aside as "exhausted" and are excluded from any subsequent counting of the total number of valid votes for the purpose of calculating an absolute majority of votes of the winning candidate.

2.4 It is assumed that the next available (second) preferences shown on these 2 ballot papers are as follows :-

Candidates of next available preference	Number of votes
A	0
C	1
D	1
E	0
Nil	0 (exhausted)
	2

2.5 The results of the second count are as follows :-

Second Count	Exhausted Ballot Papers	Valid Ballot Papers	A Votes %	C Votes %	D Votes %	E Votes %
Own 1st preference votes	-	98	3	44	44	7
Preference votes transferred from Candidate B	0	2	0	1	1	0
Total Number of Votes	0	100	3 3.00	45 45.00	45 45.00	7 7.00

2.6 Still no candidate has obtained an absolute majority of all the valid votes in circulation. Candidate A, who has obtained the least total number of votes at this stage, is eliminated.

2.7 A third count is then conducted. The 3 ballot papers which show Candidate A as the first preference are transferred to the remaining candidates (C, D and E) according to the next available (second) preference marked on them. If any of these ballot papers shows Candidate B who has already been eliminated at the first count as the 2nd preference, it is transferred to one of the remaining candidates according to the next available (third) preference shown on it. It is assumed that the next available preferences for the remaining candidates shown on the 3 ballot papers under Candidate A are as follows :-

Candidates of next available preference	Number of votes
C	2
D	0
E	0
Nil	1 (exhausted)
	3

2.8 The results of the third count are as follows :-

Third Count	Exhausted Ballot Papers	Valid Ballot Papers	C		D		E	
			Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Own 1st preference votes	-	95	44		44		7	
Preference votes transferred from Candidate B	0	2	1		1		0	
Preference votes transferred from Candidate A	1	2	2		0		0	
Total Number of Votes	1	99	47	47.48	45	45.45	7	7.07

2.9 Still no candidate has obtained an absolute majority of all the valid votes in circulation. Candidate E, who has obtained the least total number of votes at this stage, is eliminated.

2.10 A fourth count is then conducted. The 7 ballot papers which show Candidate E as the first preference are transferred to the remaining Candidates C and D according to the next available (second) preference marked on them. If any of these ballot papers shows Candidate B or Candidate A (both have already been eliminated) as the 2nd preference, it is transferred to one of the remaining candidates according to the next available (third) preference shown on it. If any of these ballot papers shows Candidate A and Candidate B as 2nd and 3rd preferences (or vice versa), it is transferred to the remaining candidates according to the next available (fourth) preferences shown on it. It is assumed that the next available preference shown after Candidate E for the remaining candidates on the 7 ballot papers are as follows :-

Candidates of next available preference	Number of votes
C	4
D	2
Nil	1 (exhausted)
	7

2.11 The results of the fourth count are as follows :-

Fourth Count	Exhausted Ballot Papers	Valid Ballot Papers	C		D	
			Votes	%	Votes	%
Own 1st preference votes	-	88	44		44	
Preference votes transferred from Candidate B	0	2	1		1	
Preference votes transferred from Candidate A	1	2	2		0	
Preference votes transferred from Candidate E	1	6	4		2	
Total Number of Votes	2	98	51	52.04	47	47.96

2.12 Candidate C has now obtained an absolute majority of all the valid votes in circulation and is declared elected.

2.13 The following table shows the entire counting process :-

	Exhausted Ballot Papers	Valid Ballot Papers	A Votes %	B Votes %	C Votes %	D Votes %	E Votes %
First Count	-	100	3 3.00	2 2.00 Eliminated	44 44.00	44 44.00	7 7.00
Second Count	0	2	0		1	1	0
Total Number of votes	0	100	3 3.00 Eliminated		45 45.00	45 45.00	7 7.00
Third Count	1	2			2	0	0
Total Number of votes	1	99			47 47.48	45 45.45	7 7.07 Eliminated
Fourth Count	1	6		4	2		
Total Number of votes	2	98		51 52.04	47 47.96		
					Elected		

The Drawing of Lots

3.1 The result of the election will be determined by the drawing of lots if :-

- (a) in the first count, no candidate has received an absolute majority of all the first preference votes received by the candidates and each of the candidates has received an equal number of first preference votes; or

- (b) after the elimination process and the transfer of votes have been carried out, no candidate has received an absolute majority of the aggregate of the total number of votes and each of the remaining candidates has received an equal number of votes (ie the total number of the first preference votes and the transferred votes).

3.2 10 lots will be used, each being allocated a number ranging from "1" to "10". All lots will be placed in an empty opaque bag.

3.3 The candidates concerned will take turn (in the order in which their names are listed on the ballot paper) to draw a lot, which will be put back into the bag before the next candidate makes his draw. The candidate whose lot carries the higher number will emerge as the winner. Number "10" is the highest number.

3.4 This method as to how lots should be drawn allows each candidate to have an equal opportunity to try his luck. A candidate may even by chance (1 in 10) draw the same lot as his opponent. In such an unlikely event, a second draw will be conducted. [For detailed arrangement, please make reference to para. 3.31 (a) and (b) of Chapter 3.]