

NUS voter registration toolkit



The way we register to vote in England and Wales has changed and will change in Scotland from 19 September 2014.

The way we register to vote in England and Wales has changed and will change in Scotland from 19th September. Under the new system (Individual Electoral Registration), we now have the option to register online. Each person is required to register to vote individually, rather than by household and they must be registered under their current address.

When politicians make decisions, they look at who is on the electoral register and who votes. And what do they see? As it stands, only about half of young people are registered, compared to 96% of older people.

We can change this together. In this toolkit, you will find materials you can use to promote voter registration to students in your Union. There is also guidance and tips for how you might encourage students to register to vote.

If you would like more information on the new voter registration system or to discuss ideas for promoting the change to IER, contact the NUS campaigns team at campaigns@nus.org.uk.

A3 poster



[Click here](#) to download the A3 voter registration poster

Leaflet

But I thought I was already registered?

You will be registered to vote under the new system:

- if you have registered yourself at your current address (since 10 June 2014 in England and Wales, or 19 September in Scotland) and you have not moved home since;
- if you received information at your current address telling you that you are registered under the new system.

If you are unsure whether you are registered under the new system contact your local electoral registration staff.

What if I don't want to register?

If you don't register to vote you won't have a say at future elections and referendums and if you don't respond to requests for information from your local electoral registration staff offices you could be at risk of getting a fine of £80.

Don't delay, register today at:
www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Register to vote

Everything you need to know about voter registration



YOUR VOTE MATTERS
MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN



About voter registration

You need to register in order to be able to vote in elections and referendums. The way to register to vote has changed in 2014.

The new system means:

- You can now register online
- Everyone is responsible for registering themselves. Under the old system the 'head of every household' could register everyone who lived at their address.
- You need to provide a few details to register including your National Insurance number and date of birth. This makes the electoral register more secure.



Why should I register to vote?

You need to register in order to be able to vote. If you aren't registered to vote, you won't have the chance to have a say on who represents you.

Some people also register to vote because they want to apply for credit. This is because credit reference agencies use the register to confirm where someone lives when they apply for credit in order to counteract fraud.

As a student, you can register at both your term time address and at the address you live at outside of term time.



How do I register?

Registering to vote is quick, easy and secure.

1. Go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote
2. Fill in your name, address, date of birth and a few other details. You'll also need your National Insurance number, which can be found on your National Insurance card, or in official paperwork such as payslips, or letters about benefits or tax credits.
3. Look out for confirmation from your local electoral registration staff to say you're registered.

If you don't have access to the internet or can't use it, your local electoral registration staff will be able to help you to register.



Lots of students are missing from the electoral register which means you don't get a say in how things are run. No one else can register for you.

[Click here](#) to download the **voter registration leaflet**. The leaflet is A4 and z fold.

Digital banner



[Click here](#) to download the **voter registration digital banner** for your homepage.

Messaging hierarchy

Certain messages regarding the new voter registration system will resonate more at different times. The following messaging hierarchy suggests what to focus on in the lead up to the General Election.

July – 18 September 2014

Priority message: The way you register to vote has changed in England and Wales and will change in Scotland from 19th September. You need to be registered to vote. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Secondary message: Registering to vote is simple. You can now register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Tertiary message: Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

19 September – December 2014

Priority message: Studying away from home? You need to make sure that you're registered, or you might not be able to vote in future. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Secondary message: Registering to vote is simple. You can now register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Tertiary message: Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

January 2015 – March 2015

Priority message: Lots of students are missing from the electoral register which means they don't get a say in how things are run. Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Secondary message: The voter registration system changed last year. You need to make sure you're on the updated register or you might not be able to vote in the future. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Tertiary message: Registering to vote is simple. You can now register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Quaternary message: If you aren't sure whether you are already registered, contact your Local Authority. You can find out more at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

April 2015 – May 2015

Priority message: The General Election is just around the corner. Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. You can register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Secondary message: You need to be registered in order to vote. You can now register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Tertiary message: If you aren't sure whether you are already registered, contact your Local Authority. You can find out more at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Quaternary message: Whilst you can be registered in two different places, you will only be able to actually vote once so think about whether you would prefer to vote from your home address or your term-time address. You can find out more at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Ideas

Registering students to vote will help make students in your area too powerful to ignore. No matter what issues you are focussing on, you can make voter registration part of your General Election campaign. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Ask students what they care about. People are passionate about issues from tackling poverty to promoting equal rights, creating fair access to education or stopping unpaid internships. Speak to people about what matters to them and get them fired up.
2. Run a registration varsity! Challenge your clubs and societies to compete to see who can get the most students registered. A bit of healthy competition can go a long way. Whether it's kudos for winning or a prize incentive, getting clubs and societies talking about voter registration can really persuade students.
3. Are students moving house soon? Team up with your local authority's Electoral Services to register students whilst they unpack! To get in contact with your local Electoral Services team go on to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk, pop in your postcode and you'll find all of their contact details.
4. Ask your institution. It's not just students' unions that need to be thinking about the change to IER. Put pressure on your institution to help.
5. Promote the change on campus by distributing leaflets, putting up posters or setting up a stand outside your halls of residence or Union buildings.
6. Promote the change online using social media or by putting a digital banner on your Union homepage.
7. Get organised! Find students who are passionate about getting registered and set up an electoral registration society on campus.
8. Get in contact with your local trade union! They will have lots of activists who can come out on campus and their members may be able to promote the change during lectures. Find your local UCU branch here www.ucu.org.uk/yourcontacts
9. Organise a press/stunt photo opportunity such as a giant ballot box, display it on campus or in town and invite your local press.
10. Set up a battle of the bands style music night or a comedy night at your student union with free entry for students who have registered their friends to vote.

Social media suggestions

Social media is a great way of informing students about the changes to the voter registration system. Individual Electoral Registration is already in place in England and Wales and will come into effect in Scotland from 19 September 2014 so make sure your posts are timed dependent on where your union is. Here are a few suggestions on what to post:



The way you register to vote has changed! Lots of young people are missing from the electoral register which means they don't get a say in how things are run. Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. Go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote to register online or contact your local electoral registration staff.



Have you just moved into a new place? The voter registration system has changed and you need to be registered under your current address if you want to vote. Contact your local electoral registration office if you're unsure whether you are already registered or go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote to register online now.



If you aren't registered to vote, you can't have your say in the upcoming General Election. Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. Go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote to register online now.



The way you register to vote has changed! Your vote matters. Make sure you're in. Go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote to register online.



Recently moved house? Make sure you're registered to vote with your current address. Go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote to register online.



Don't miss out on having your say in the General Election. Register to vote online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. Your vote matters.