

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DATA ENTRY RULES

### Formal

- The method of voting in Legislative Assembly elections is optional preferential as prescribed in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution Act 1902.
- To cast a formal vote the elector must place the number 1 in the square next to their first choice candidate.
- The elector has the option to show further preferences by placing the number 2 in the square next to their second choice candidate, the number 3 next to their third choice candidate and so on. They may number as many or as few squares beyond their first choice candidate as they wish.
- A ballot paper on which an elector has recorded his or her vote by placing in one square the number 1 shall not be treated as informal by reason only that:
  - (a) the same preference (other than the first preference) has been recorded on the ballot paper for more than one candidate, or
  - (b) there is a break in the order of preferences recorded on the ballot paper.
- A ballot paper on which an elector has placed a single tick or single cross in one square only, and not placed any mark or writing in any other square shall be treated as if the single tick or single cross were the number 1.
- A ballot paper on which an elector has placed the number 1 or a tick in a single square and placed a cross in (or a line through) **all or some (ie: more than one)** of the other squares on the ballot paper, shall be treated as if the marks in those other squares did not appear on the ballot paper and any such tick were the number 1.
- A ballot paper on which the elector has placed a single number 1, with or without other numbers, and there are also ticks and/or crosses shall be treated as if the ticks and/or crosses did not appear on the ballot paper.
- A ballot paper on which the elector has placed the number 1 more than once is informal.
- A ballot paper on which the elector has placed a tick or cross with numbers, other than the number 1, is informal as the tick or cross is not read as a 1 in this circumstance.

## LA - Examples of Formal

Example	Comment	Distribution of Preferences (DoP)
1	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, 2	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 2nd preference
1, 2, 3, etc.	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 3rd preference, etc.
1, 2, 2	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, 6	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 3rd preference
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 6th preference
1, 2, 3, 3, 3	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 2nd preference
✓	Formal (a single ✓ on its own is read as a 1)	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
X	Formal (a single X on its own is read as a 1)	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, --, --, --	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
✓, ---, ---, ---, ---	Formal	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, ✓	Formal (for the 1, the ✓ is disregarded )	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, ✓, 2, 3, 4, 4	Formal ( for the 1, the ✓ is disregarded )	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 3rd preference
1, ✓, ✓, ✓	Formal (for the 1, the ✓'s are disregarded )	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, X	Formal (for the 1, the X is disregarded )	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
1, X, X, 2, 4	Formal ( for the 1, the X's are disregarded )	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 2nd preference

1, X, X, X	Formal (for the 1, the X's are disregarded )	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference
✓, X, X, X	Formal (✓ is read as a 1 where there is more than one X)	in a DoP the ballot paper exhausts after the 1 <sup>st</sup> preference

### LA - Examples of Informal

Example	Comment	DoP
1, 1	Informal (two number 1's)	*Not applicable
1, 1, 2, 3, 4	Informal (two number 1's)	*Not applicable
✓, ✓, ✓, ✓	Informal	*Not applicable
1, 1, X, X, ✓	Informal (two number 1's)	*Not applicable
✓, X	Informal (✓ is not read as a 1 where there is only one X)	*Not applicable
✓, 2	Informal	*Not applicable
✓, 2, 3	Informal	*Not applicable
X, 2	Informal	*Not applicable
X, 2, 3, 4	Informal	*Not applicable
Blank ballot paper	Informal (will be bulk entered but may still data enter some)	*Not applicable

\*Informal ballot papers are not included in the distribution of preferences.

## General Rules

There are also general rules concerning LA formality which the data entry system will not be able to determine.

This will be the responsibility of the Returning Officer to make a determination on the formality in the following circumstances.

- A ballot paper is not informal by reason only that it is not initialled by an election official if it bears such mark as is prescribed as an official mark.
- A ballot paper not initialled by an election official and not bearing such mark as is prescribed as an official mark is informal.
- Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Act, a ballot paper shall not, by reason of any mark or writing thereon that is not authorised or required by this Act, be rejected as informal if, in the opinion of the Electoral Commissioner, the voter has, by some mark or writing, clearly indicated his or her intention on the ballot paper.
- Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Act, a ballot paper is not informal by reason only that the voter has placed one or more numbers, a tick or one or more crosses adjacent to but outside a square or squares if, in the opinion of the Electoral Commissioner, the voter's intention is clearly indicated on the ballot paper. In such a case, each such number, tick or cross is taken to have been placed within the relevant square.
- Numbers must be in numeric format. Numbers written as words are not acceptable.
- Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Act, nothing in this section authorises any person to encourage an elector to place a tick or cross in a square on a ballot paper or to place a number, tick or cross outside a square on a ballot paper.