

Method of Voting in Elections to the General Synod

In elections to the General Synod, electors vote by numbering the candidates whom they wish to support, 1, 2, 3 and so on, in order of preference.

Each elector has a single transferable vote and candidates are elected on attaining a quota of votes. The method of election ensures that most voters are represented, and equally represented, by candidates of their choice.

How to Vote – Online voting

You vote by “dragging and dropping” the candidates you prefer on the election site into the order of your preferences with your most preferred candidate at the top.

Your vote is valid as soon as you have placed a single candidate in your preferred list. By expressing further preferences, you make sure that your vote will play its full part in the election. Later preferences cannot harm your first choice. You should express preferences only so long as you are able to place in order successive candidates whom you wish to support.

How to Vote – Paper voting

You vote by clearly placing the figure “1” against the name of the candidate whom you most wish to see elected, and, if you wish, the figure “2” against your second preference, “3” against your third preference, and so on. NO CROSSES should be used.

Your vote is valid as soon as you have expressed a first choice. But by expressing further preferences, you make sure that your vote will play its full part in the election. Later preferences cannot harm your first choice. But you should express preferences only so long as you are able to place in order successive candidates whom you wish to support.

The Quota

If four candidates are to be elected, the quota for election is one-fifth of the votes. Similarly, if there are five to elect, the quota is one-sixth of the votes and if there are six to elect, the quota is one-seventh of the votes, and so on.

The Count

The presiding officer begins by counting first preferences. If your first choice has more than the quota of votes, then the surplus is transferred by sharing your vote between that first choice and your next preference. But if your first choice comes bottom of the poll, then that candidate is excluded, and your whole vote is passed on to your next preference. The presiding officer transfers surpluses and excludes candidates until the desired number of candidates is elected. In practice, the count is likely to be conducted using a computer program authorised by the Business Committee of the General Synod.

Further Reading

THE SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE RULES, the rules for counting the votes in General Synod election, are available from the Legal Office, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ.