



Ballot paper formality guide - Local Government (Council) Elections

To assist in understanding the ballot paper formality rules required under a proportional representation (PR) voting system, the following guidelines are provided.

Formal votes

To vote in local government elections, a voter is required to write the number '1' in the box next to the candidate who is their first choice, and the numbers '2', '3' and so on against all the other candidates until all the boxes have been numbered, in order of the voter's preference.

A ballot paper is formal provided the order of preference for each candidate and the voter's intention is clear.

Changes to numbers, numbers written outside the squares, drawings and slogans do not make the ballot paper informal provided the ballot paper is otherwise marked correctly

Under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, a cross (×) or a tick (✓) or the figure one (1) is taken to be the first preference of a voter.

Informal votes

A ballot paper is **informal** if:

- It is totally blank
- There is no number 1 or a cross (×) or a tick (✓)
- The number 1, a cross (×) or a tick (✓) appear against two or more names
- Two or more squares have been left blank
- A number has been repeated
- There is a break in the number sequence e.g. 1, 3, 4
- Writing on the ballot paper identifies the voter.

Directions on the ballot paper remind a voter to **number** all the boxes in order of their choice.

More information






Refer to the [candidate handbook](#) for further information.

INFORMAL

BALLOT PAPER

City of Darwin
LYONS WARD
Election of 3 Aldermen

Number the boxes 1 to 5
in the order of your choice

- 5  Z CANDIDATE
-  A CANDIDATE
- 1  G CANDIDATE
- 2  B CANDIDATE
- 4  R CANDIDATE

*Luke Warme
Wanguri*

Remember ... number EVERY box to
make your vote count




SAMPLE

INFORMAL

BALLOT PAPER

Katherine Town Council
Election of 6 Aldermen

Number the boxes 1 to 4
in the order of your choice

-  Z CANDIDATE
-  A CANDIDATE
-  G CANDIDATE
- 2  B CANDIDATE

Remember ... number EVERY box to
make your vote count

SAMPLE

INFORMAL

BALLOT PAPER

Litchfield Council
Central Ward
Election of 1 Councillor

Number the boxes 1 to 5
in the order of your choice

- 3  C CANDIDATE
- 2  A CANDIDATE
-  G CANDIDATE
- 2  B CANDIDATE
- 4  R CANDIDATE

Remember ... number EVERY box to
make your vote count






SAMPLE

FORMAL

BALLOT PAPER

City of Darwin
LYONS WARD
Election of 3 Aldermen

Number the boxes 1 to 5
in the order of your choice

- 4  Z CANDIDATE
- 3  A CANDIDATE
- 1  G CANDIDATE
- 5  B CANDIDATE
- 2  R CANDIDATE

Duffy Pike

Remember ... number EVERY box to
make your vote count





SAMPLE

FORMAL

BALLOT PAPER

Katherine Town Council
Election of 6 Aldermen

Number the boxes 1 to 4
in the order of your choice

- 4  Z CANDIDATE
- 3  A CANDIDATE
- 1  G CANDIDATE
- 2  B CANDIDATE

Remember ... number EVERY box to
make your vote count






SAMPLE

FORMAL

BALLOT PAPER

Litchfield Council
Central Ward
Election of 1 Councillor

Number the boxes 1 to 5
in the order of your choice

- 3  C CANDIDATE
-  A CANDIDATE
- 1  G CANDIDATE
- 2  B CANDIDATE
- 4  R CANDIDATE

Remember ... number EVERY box to
make your vote count

SAMPLE