

Election Expenses

Candidates (and political parties) are subject to limits on their spending on items and services used during the regulated period of an election. Election expenses returns relate to these permitted spending limits and are required to provide accountability and transparency about the campaigns of candidates. Spending limits are set by legislation and are subject to change.

All candidates, therefore, at an election (and election agents where applicable) are required to submit a Declaration and Return of Expenses to the Returning Officer within a statutory timescale – whether or not they were elected. Even if no spending was incurred, a nil return still has to be submitted along with the declaration.

These documents are then made available for inspection for the following statutory periods:

- UK Parliamentary Election: 2 years from receipt (public notice must be given in two or more local newspapers)
- European Parliamentary election: 1 year (public notice must be given in the region)
- Local Government – Borough elections: 2 years from receipt
- Local Government – Parish elections: 1 year from receipt

The documents relating to elections held within the Ashford Parliamentary Constituency and the Ashford Borough Council Area can be inspected at the Electoral Office at The Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, within the specified timescale during normal working hours and a copy can be provided on receipt of the statutory fee (currently 20p for each side of each page). Please contact the office to make an appointment to inspect or to request a copy.

European Parliamentary election expenses returns for the South East Region are held by the Returning Officer for those elections – please contact the Electoral Office for contact details.