

Background

Three devolved elections – the 11th Scottish Parliament elections, the 8th Senedd election and the 12th Northern Ireland Assembly election – were held in late May, with results for all these released on the 29th May 2022.

Upon release of these results, several significant queries were raised on the Issues with the election megathread, as well as by some on other MHoC Meta threads and privately with the Quad through Discord.

As a result of these concerns, a team of trusted individuals was assembled to examine and analyse the results and identify any errors associated with the elections.

Key concerns

Three main areas of concern were raised:

1. A number of constituencies' results added to more than 100% of votes.
2. A perceived increase in the strength of the “paper penalty” applied to non-campaigning candidates
3. Potential problems with the functioning of the calculator

Analysis

1. A number of constituencies' results added to more than 100% of votes.

Upon analysing the inputs of the calculator, it was discovered that incorrect constituency bases were used for parties. This inadvertently caused problems within the calculator when calculating turnout and vote share. These bases have been corrected in the revised results. The revised results were not run by uin, instead being run by another member of the team.

While correcting this it was discovered that an endorsement had been incorrectly allocated in Wales. This has also been corrected in the revised results.

2. A perceived increase in the strength of the “paper penalty” applied to non-campaigning candidates

The paper penalty in this election was increased only marginally - in some cases it was not increased at all. The only instance where it was judged to have been applied to an excessive standard was in Scotland, where it was modified in the revised results to fall closer in line with Wales and NI.

3. Potential problems with the functioning of the calculator

The entire calculator was analysed and no problems were detected. All major components of the calculator worked correctly and results were generated as normal. However, during the election itself, more minor problems were encountered with the calculator, leading to issues like the base allocation and the percentages issues described above. These have since been fixed.

Additionally, allegations of bias were made during this process, both after the initial results and after the revised results. The team have found no bias on uin's part during the running of the election.

Analysis and moving forward

What went wrong? This can be broken down into 3 main parts:

1. Communication.

This election suffered from difficulties in communication between uin and the community. This was especially apparent in miscommunications involving deadlines, extensions and the paper penalty.

2. Lack of experience

Due to this being uin's first election, and a lack of training in election calculator use, he experienced difficulties during election night, leading to stress and less oversight on his part.

3. Lack of resources

There were certain resources stored in different forms than expected on uin's version of the calculator, this did not become evident until the night itself, and resulted in misallocation of bases.

Moving forward, here is what will be done.:

1. Better organisation of the calculator. Uin's calculator has now been fully updated and the paper penalty has been finalised with these revised results.
2. Full use of the 3 C's within election management. Communication, consultation and clarity. Uin will be communicating more openly with the community when it comes to election management, especially in regards to deadlines.
3. More thorough checks and scrutiny will be applied in future elections, to ensure that results remain consistent and irregularities are avoided.

Conclusion

In conclusion, decisions had been made this election that should have been communicated in a clearer manner to the community, as well as organisational issues that led to a chaotic election, however, lessons have been learned and this will not be repeated.

Thank you for your patience,
u/miraiwae and the team

NB: Delays in the report.

Due to an unforeseen medical emergency on uin's part, the authoring of this report, and therefore its publication, was delayed.