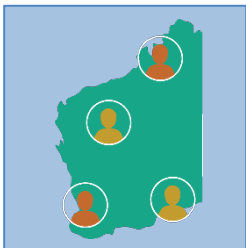




Understanding proportional representation



Proportional representation is a voting system for multi-member electorates or big electorates where more than one person is elected to represent the people who live there.

Proportional representation is used for Western Australia's Legislative Council (upper house).

Proportional representation ensures elected members represent, as closely as possible, the number of valid votes they received in an election. It is used to elect candidates in multi-member electorates.

Parties and independent candidates are elected to Parliament in proportion to the number of votes they receive.

There are three main types of proportional representation electoral systems:

- list systems
- mixed-member proportional systems
- single transferable vote (STV) systems

In Western Australia, the STV system is used. Under this system, each vote can be transferred between candidates in the order of the voter's preferences.

If a party or group receives 40% of the formal votes, they will gain approximately 40% of the seats.

To be elected, a candidate must receive enough votes to equal the quota.

The quota is the number of votes required for a candidate to win one of the available positions. Candidates must win a proportion of votes to be elected.

Example:

For the upcoming 2025 State Election, based on the 2021 enrolled voter figure of 1,716,732 (assuming all were formal votes), and 37 candidates in the whole of state electorate are to be elected, the quota would be calculated by:

If the quota is not reached, the candidate with the least number of votes is excluded and their preferences distributed to the remaining candidates.

The process is repeated until a candidate reaches the quota and is elected, and again until all vacancies are filled.

If a candidate receives more votes than the quota, they are elected immediately, and the surplus votes distributed to the remaining candidates with a lesser 'transfer value'.

$$\frac{1,716,732 + 1}{37 + 1} + 1 = 45,178 \text{ votes}$$

$$\frac{\text{No. of valid votes}}{\text{No. of positions} + 1} + 1$$