

Reporting the elections: turn on, log on, join in – but not until after 10pm

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There's an election on and all over England and Wales people are discussing who to vote for – but not on the [BBC](#).

Their election coverage is going to be a multi-media, mega-platform, interactive experience, as election night editor Craig Oliver [explains](#). But until the polls close at 10pm you are not allowed to discuss the issues or the campaign. As it says on the [BBC website](#):

Please note that in line with the political parties and other UK broadcasters, the BBC will not be reporting the election campaigns in England and Wales, or offering discussion about them, while polls are open. As such, users are asked to refrain from discussing them here during the period that polls are open. Usual BBC House Rules will resume once the polls are closed after 10pm. For more information please see the [elections guide](#).

So a lot of the comments on Craig's post have been 'moderated'. In the Internet age it feels slightly odd to still have this ban. I guess the idea was to stop broadcasters having an influence on voters decisions at the crucial time that citizens actually go to the polls. Of course, like me, many of you voted days ago by post. And there are still plenty of other websites merrily chatting away and 'reporting' on the campaigns. I can see that you might want to pause your political reporting but why stop the public from debating it up to the last minute?

It's a bit like the laws on contempt. Other countries have a free-for-all and I don't think their systems of justice are any worse than ours. Would it really cause political chaos if we let the media rip on election day?

Talking of elections, [Guido](#) is right to point out that the London Mayoral election is also a big test for the pollsters. It's a strange campaign with an unusual set of candidates, a complex voting system, and a lot of psephological variables thanks to the peculiar political culture of the capital city. Only [YouGov](#) is predicting a Boris win but everyone thinks it is going to be close.

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