Posting test items at the Post Office

Thank you for your participation in our studies as a receiving and posting panellist.

The aim of the studies is to measure Royal Mail's 'Quality of Service' - that is, the proportion of mail items Royal Mail deliver on time. The results of the studies allow Royal Mail to improve the service they provide to homes, businesses and communities across the UK.

We measure Royal Mail's Quality of Service using test items - anonymous items of mail posted and received by panellists like you. As a panellist, it's your job to post and receive test items and report to us when you have done so, so that we can calculate the time it takes for Royal Mail to deliver your items.

This guide explains step by step how to post test letters and parcels at a Post Office.

We recommend that you download this PDF to your desktop for easy access.

General information

- Test items can be letters and parcels of different sizes.
  All test items will have a postage stamp or postage label already applied by us.

- You will receive a **sender's pack** once per week. This will contain the test items you need to post, along with a **posting plan** telling you when you need to post them.
  For more information, watch our video ['Receiving your posting pack'](#) or consult our manual.

- You can post test items at any available Post Office **in your postcode area**. You can usually find the postcode of the Post Office printed on the last collection time notice displayed inside the Post Office - the postcode area is the first one or two letters of the postcode, which are highlighted in yellow in the example below:

Final Collection Times

POST OFFICE
MOREDON POST OFFICE 5A
PURTON ROAD
SWINDON
SN2 2LN

POC094548

Final collection times from this Post Office® branch are shown below

Mail presented after these times will be collected the following working day.

Monday	16:45 pm
Tuesday	16:45 pm
Wednesday	16:45 pm
Thursday	16:45 pm
Friday	16:45 pm
Saturday	12:10 pm

A later weekday collection is made from the Postbox outside Swindon Sorting Office, Rowland Hill Close at 19:30

Contact us
Royal Mail Customer Services: **03457 740 740**
Textphone: **03456 000 606**
Website: **www.royalmail.com**

Royal Mail

These letters should match the first one or two letters of your home postcode.

- Large parcels that need to be posted at a Post Office are provided to you in a Royal Mail mail bag that is sealed with a tie and a posting label. Your task is to present the bag at the counter along with the parcel's unique Sales Order Summary.

- Large parcels can also be posted at a Royal Mail parcel postbox. For instructions on how to do this, please consult the manual 'Posting stamped test items at Royal Mail postboxes'.

- Test items can also be posted at a Royal Mail Delivery Office. This is done in the same way as posting test items at a Post Office.

- It is very important that you use the Mailagents app to report posting your test items **at the postbox as you post your test items**. Make sure that the location services (GPS) function is activated on your mobile device at the moment you post your test items - if you are unsure how to do this, please consult our manual on the topic.[add link]

- Please remember to **never** disclose to Royal Mail employees that you are participating in the study.

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Page 2

Royal Mail

- In addition, feel free to watch our video on this topic.

  Simply click on the following link:
  'Posting test items at a Post Office'

The following steps explain the process and your tasks.

Please note: You have already received your sender's pack!
If you want to learn more about this, please have a look at the manual or our video 'Receiving your posting pack'. [add link]

1.
Check the **posting plan** to see which test items need to be posted today:

mailagents
by Spectos

Royal Mail

POSTING PLAN

PARTICIPANT ID 11111   **First name, Last name**

Project   Stamped Mail

Posting Period   03/10/2022 - 07/10/2022

Receipt of posting package	Please confirm receipt of the test package with the delivery date and package number (package ID) on the same day in the **Mailagents App.** **Package ID: 3405** **Receipt date:** ....
Test bundles	Please confirm the posting of the test letters on the day of posting by stating the posting date, time and posting address through the **Mailagents App.** Different posting addresses can also be selected interactively there.
Problems? Comments?	We are at your disposal at any time. Simply send us an e-mail to: **support@mailagents.uk**

PLAN			ACTUAL (YOUR NOTES)		
Bundle ID	Posting date	Number of test items	Posting type (Post Office / Postbox)	Posting date	Posting time
111426	Monday 09/03/2019	4			:
111427	Tuesday 10/03/2019	2			:
111428	Wednesday 11/03/2019	3			:
111429	Thursday 12/03/2019	1			:
111426	Friday 13/03/2019	5			:
111427	Saturday 14/03/2019	2			:

* Please note that this is an example and variations are possible.

2.

For your test items to be sent today, remove the elastic band or paperclip, if there is one, and keep the slip with the QR code until you have posted the items. Alternatively, you can remove the elastic band or paperclip and the slip in the Post Office before you post the items:

If you have parcels to post at the Post Office, the QR code will be printed on the **back of your posting plan**.

Please note: If you have parcels to post at the Post Office, please keep them in the mail bag and ensure the tie and tag are still attached.

> The QR code represents **all** of the test items in the bundle or the bag. A bundle consists of up to **3 items**, and a bag consists of **2 parcels**. You should post all of the items in the bundle or bag together at the same time.

3.

Ensure location services are turned on in the app.

4.

Scan the **QR Code** on the slip from the test bundle or the posting plan using the Mailagents app to confirm your posting:

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Page 4

> *Please remove the band*
>
> ID: 480107
>
> Bundle: 372837
>
> Thursday, 07.07.

5.

Post the items at any Post Office in your postcode area on the date listed in your posting plan.

You can either hand over the items at the counter or use a self-service posting facility if one is available.

> **ℹ** **Please note**: Although some Collect+ branches are now accepting some Royal Mail items, they are not currently set up to accept Stamped mail items or items in a mail bag with a Sales Order Summary, including the test items you post on the survey.
>
> **Please do not send any test items at Collect+ branches**, as they will not be accepted there and you will not be able to enter the branch as the posting location you used on the Mailagents app.
>
> Instead, please post your test items at a postbox, Post Office or Royal Mail Delivery Office.

> **ℹ** **Please note: Strictly follow your posting plan.** Test items need to be posted **before the last collection time** on each day from Monday to Saturday. The last collection time will be displayed inside the Post Office on a poster, as shown in the example on page 2.
>
> If you cannot post an item according to the posting plan for any reason, such as not receiving your sender's pack on time, please post the item on **the next available day** on which you are able to post, as soon as possible after the scheduled date.
> Alternatively, you can post the item on the **evening before** the scheduled date - be sure to do this **well after the last collection time**, so that the item is collected on the scheduled posting date.
> If this is not possible either, it is permissible to post the item on the scheduled date after the last collection time.
> **In all cases, take extra care to accurately record the date and time when you actually posted the item.**

ℹ️ **Please note: Never** forget to remove the elastic band or paperclip and slip with the QR code on before posting!

Please note: The Post Office staff may ask you what is in the parcels when you hand them over. This is done in order to ensure the parcels do not contain any prohibited or restricted goods.
If you are asked this question, you can tell the Post Office staff that the parcels contain books, CDs or DVDs, as they will contain one of these.
Do **not** tell the Post Office staff that the parcels are test parcels or anything about the survey.

6.
In the app, enter the **date** and **time** of posting:
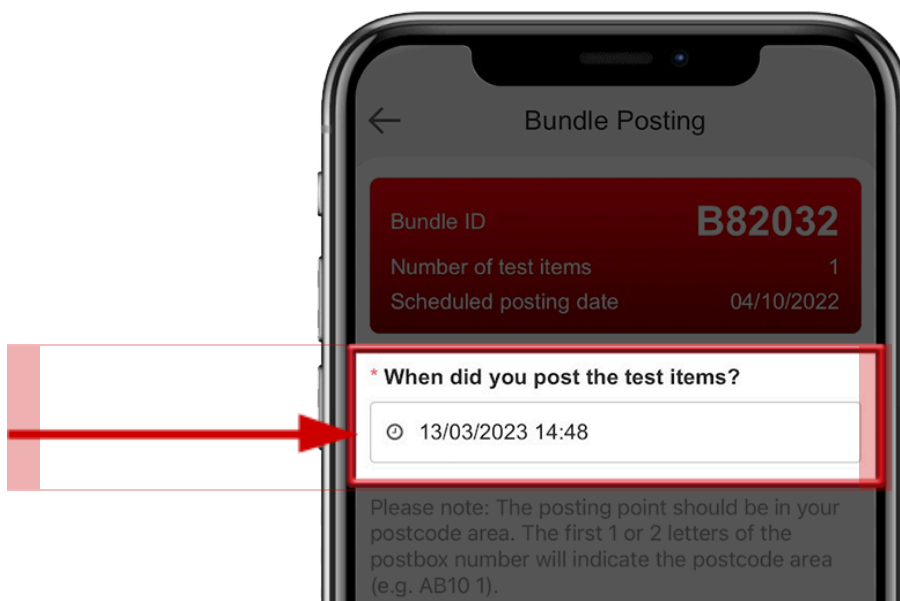
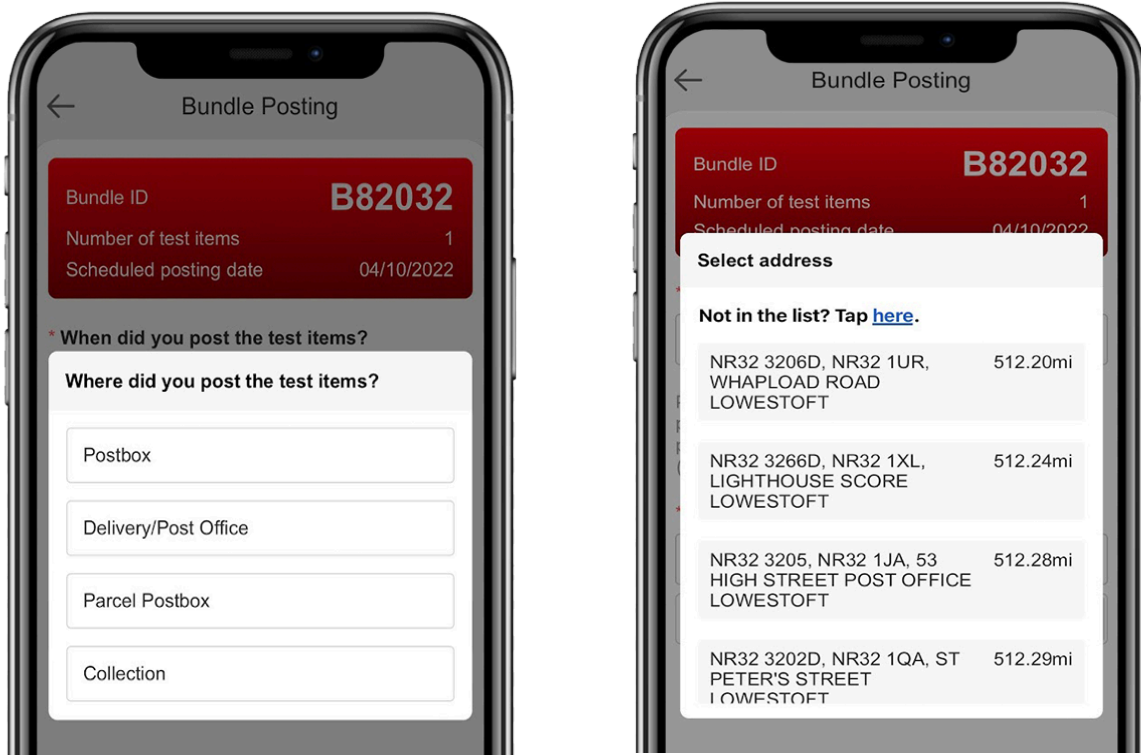* Please note that image variations are possible due to regular app updates.

ℹ️ **Always** complete your data entry as you post your items.

ℹ️ **Please note:** Be sure to record the time of posting accurately **to the nearest minute** - do **not** round it to the nearest 5 or 10 minutes. Rounding the posting time even by just 1 or 2 minutes can be enough to cause the item to be considered to have met the last collection when it did not, or vice versa!

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Page 6

7.

Select the posting method used and the correct posting location you used from the locations shown to you:

* Please note that image variations are possible due to regular app updates.

ℹ **Please note**: Be careful to record the correct Post Office or Delivery Office you used by checking the **name and address** of the Post Office or Delivery Office shown in the app. The name and address can often be found on the last collection time notice, as shown in the example on page 2.

ℹ **Please note:** There are many locations where one or more Royal Mail postboxes are located directly outside, or even inside, a Post Office or a Royal Mail Delivery Office.
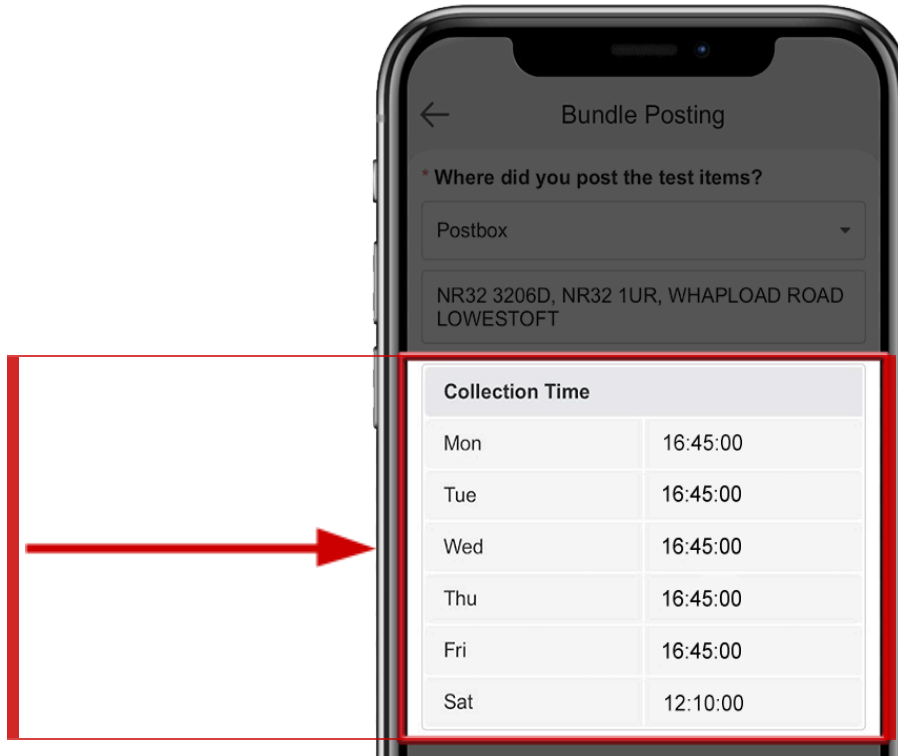
Royal Mail postboxes will have a Royal Mail timeplate displaying a postbox ID number, whilst Post Offices and Delivery Offices will not.

In this scenario, please **take extra care** to record the correct posting location you used. Please be especially careful not to record items as posted at a postbox if you used the Post Office, or vice versa.
Please refer to the **Annex** of this manual for examples of various situations to watch out for. If you are unsure which posting location to record, please get in touch with us.

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Page 7

8.

Confirm the **last collection time** of the posting location:

* Please note that image variations are possible due to regular app updates.

Please note: If the **last collection time** shown in the app is **different** from the time displayed in the Post Office, you are **not sure about the last collection time or no time is available or visible**, take a photo showing the **whole** of the last collection time notice displayed in the Post Office and upload it:
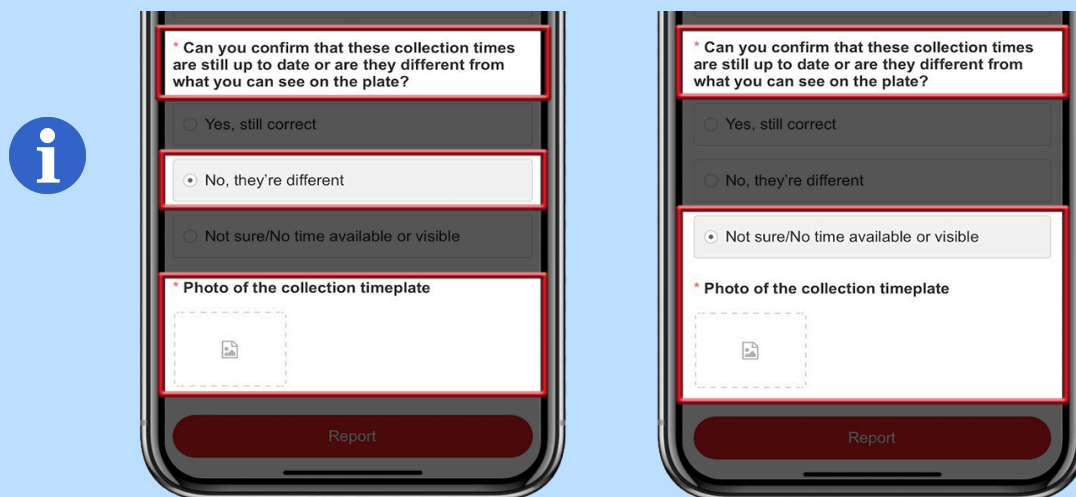
* Please note that image variations are possible due to regular app updates.
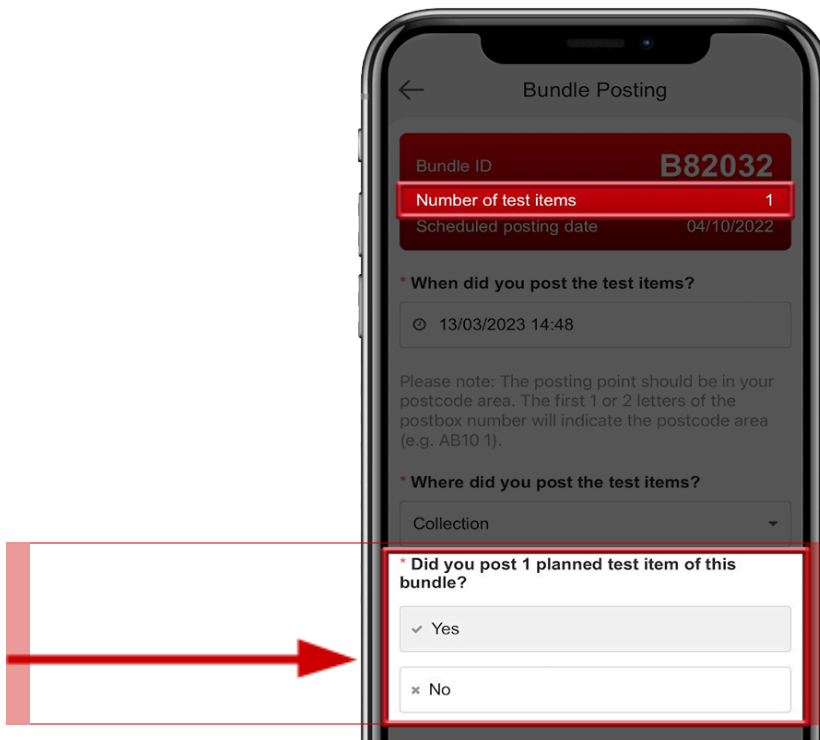
> ℹ️ Also, if you notice any **Post Office defects**, such as missing or damaged last collection time notices, please take a photo and upload it to the app. Please remember to include the **whole** last collection time notice in the photo, including the last collection times for Monday to Saturday and the address of the Post Office.
>
> Only take a photo of a Post Office last collection time notice **if you can do so discreetly**, without attracting the attention of the Post Office staff.

9.

Compare the number of test items due to be posted with the number of test items you have actually posted. If there is a difference, please note it:

* Please note that image variations are possible due to regular app updates.

Thank you for helping to improve the service Royal Mail provides to homes, businesses and communities!

Annex - Postboxes directly outside Post Offices or Delivery Offices

There are many locations where one or more Royal Mail postboxes are situated directly outside a Post Office or a Royal Mail Delivery Office, or even occasionally inside a Post Office. Some Post Offices also have posting facilities which look similar to, but are not, Royal Mail postboxes.

When posting at these locations, **take extra care** to note and accurately record the correct posting location you used, and to not confuse different posting locations. Below are a couple of situations to watch out for:

Postboxes located outside Post Offices or Delivery Offices
It is common for one or more postboxes to be located directly outside a Post Office or Royal Mail Delivery Office, as shown in the example below, or even occasionally inside a Post Office:

Notice that the postbox has a Royal Mail timeplate displayed. There will be no such timeplate displayed in the Post Office. The postbox will have a unique ID number displayed on the timeplate, but there will be no similar unique ID number displayed in the Post Office.

You should only record a bundle as posted at the Post Office if you have gone **inside the building** and **handed the bundle over at the counter or posted it using a self-service machine**. If you used the postbox outside, or a postbox with a Royal

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Page 10

Mail timeplate inside the building, you should record the item as posted at the postbox, making a note of the ID number displayed on the timeplate.

Posting slots within Post Offices
At some Post Offices, there are slots into which you can insert prepaid letters or parcels, which look similar to this:

Notice that these slots do not have a Royal Mail timeplate. These posting facilities are operated by the Post Office, and mail posted into them will be processed by the Post Office staff and collected by Royal Mail as part of the Post Office collection. **If you post a bundle at one of these locations, this is a Post Office posting. Record the bundle as posted at the Post Office.**

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Page 11