



DEFINITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Version 6.0

Document control summary

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Author(s)	Steve Smith Head of Member Administration
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Version Control Summary

Version	Date	Summary
5.1	October 2011	New version to reflect new categories and payments plans implemented from January 2012
5.2	November 2011	Changed document status to 'Live from 1 st January 2011'.
5.3	July 2012	Creation of staff payment plans in Nurse and Health Practitioner categories
5.4	March 2013	Re-wording of Nurse & HP retired definition to bring consistency and clarity approved by RCN Council
5.5	November 2013	Amendment to criteria for HP members to allow nurses with an inactive NMC registration to join as an HP member
5.6	October 2014	Updated admission criteria for HP members as agreed by Council July 2014 Clarification of review period and requirement for amendments to be signed off by MRC or Council
5.7	July 2015	Updated admission criteria for to allow individuals on an approved return to practice course to join on Student payment plan until their course is complete. Updated HP criteria to reference Scottish Social Services Council
5.8	April 2016	No key changes following March 2016 MRC. Updated next review date.
5.9	March 2017	Reviewed by MRC. No changes
6.0	August 2024	Updated to reflect terminology changes. Career Break Payment plan added. Student Nursing Associate payment plan added.

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Introduction

1. This document should be considered the definitive guide to membership of the RCN.
2. It sets out eligibility for RCN membership, the membership categories and the different payment plans.
3. This document draws upon and expands on the statements relating to membership laid out in the current RCN Charter, Standing Orders and Regulations.

Use

4. The document is available on the [RCN Website](#).
5. It should be used by all staff as the key reference tool on all matters relating to membership categories.
6. Queries on or about matters relating to membership identified here should in the first instance be referred to the Membership Manager (Operations).
7. Where clarification cannot be reached, or where a decision is outside the remit of the Membership Manager (Operations) or Head of Member Administration, the matter will be referred to the Governance Committee for a decision or view.

Review

8. This document will be formally reviewed every five years by the Governance Committee, or otherwise amended as required to reflect changes on matters contained within this document.
9. Any changes to this document must be ratified by the RCN Governance Committee.

Summary of Membership

10. There are three “categories” of membership.
 - 10.1. Nurse Member.
 - 10.2. Nursing Support Workers Member
 - 10.3. Student Member
11. A summary of payment rates is provided at Appendix 1.
12. Governance rights are explained in Appendix 2.

Nurse Member

Eligibility	<p>Nurse members are on the register of persons engaged in nursing, and whose names have not been removed from that register for reason of misconduct, thus:</p> <p>Anyone with a nursing, midwifery or health visitor qualification registered with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC).</p> <p>The registration may be current or in the past.</p>
Exclusions	<p>Anyone who has not got a nursing, midwifery or health visiting qualification registered with the NMC.</p> <p>Nursing Associates and Student Nursing Associates (see Nursing Support Worker eligibility)</p> <p>Anyone who has been struck off the NMC register for misconduct.</p>

Payment Plan	Rate as % of Full Nurse Member Rate)	Notes
Nurse 1st year discount	50%	<p>For the first year of Nurse membership a 50% discount against the Full payment plan is offered.</p> <p>This is a one-time only discount.</p> <p>Transfer to the Full payment plan will be automatic after 12 months on this plan.</p> <p>Eligibility will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For those members transferring automatically to this category from student membership on completion of their training. 2) For those joining the RCN for the first time within one year of registering with the NMC for the first time.
Nurse Full	100%	Ordinary Nurse Member

Joint RCM	50%	In joint membership agreement with RCM This plan affects the benefits of membership
Joint Educational	75%	In joint membership agreement with UCU or EIS This plan affects the benefits of membership
Nurse Retired	£10	Nurse members who are retired from all employment or who are unable to work through ill health and who are in receipt of relevant ill health benefit This plan affects the benefits of membership
Nurse Career Break	£10	Nurse members are entitled to take a Career Break from their Full payment plan for a maximum of 12 months. Following the end of a period of Career Break, members will need to return to a Full payment plan for a minimum of 12 months before they will be eligible for another period of Career Break. Transfer back to the Full payment plan will be automatic after a maximum of 12 months on this plan. Should a member on the Career Break payment plan require employment relations or legal support, they must revert to the full payment plan. This plan affects the benefits of membership
Staff member	25%	Individuals employed by the RCN and who are currently a Nurse member of the RCN may, for the duration of their RCN employment, transfer to the RCN Staff Payment Plan. The payment rate is 25% of the Nurse Full payment plan. The following conditions and restrictions apply: The period on the payment plan will not count as continuous membership for the purposes of eligibility to hold office as an RCN member. No indemnity cover will be available other than for “good Samaritan” activities. The individual is prohibited from holding any RCN member office or role.

		<p>The individual is prohibited from acting and/or speaking as a member at any event or meeting save the RCN AGM.</p> <p>There is no right to support, representation or advice.</p>
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Nursing Support Worker Member

Eligibility	<p>Nursing Support Workers membership is available to those who work, providing health or social care in any setting, under the guidance and supervision of a registered nurse, midwife or health visitor and who are not on a professional register (such as NMC or HCPC)".</p> <p>Nursing Support Workers membership is also available to Nursing Associates registered with the NMC and Student Nursing Associates.</p> <p>It is noted that 'Nursing Support Worker' may not be the job title of the individual member. Rather this category title is used to group those members who are eligible for RCN membership, but who are not eligible for Nurse or Student membership.</p> <p>Exceptions to professional register requirements as follows:</p> <p>Northern Ireland Those who work in health or social care in Northern Ireland, under the guidance and supervision of a registered nurse, midwife or health visitor and who are not on a professional register other than that held by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council</p> <p>Scotland Those who work in health or social care in Scotland, under the guidance and supervision of a registered nurse, midwife or health visitor and who are not on a professional register other than that held by the Scottish Social Services Council</p> <p>Special note 1: Anyone with an active Nurse NMC registration should be a Nurse Member. A person with a nursing, health visiting or midwifery qualification working in a role that fits under Nursing Support Workers membership, but whose NMC registration is not current may join as an Nursing Support Workers member.</p> <p>Special note 2: Anyone who was in this category of membership prior to 1st January 2015 (when it was 'Health Practitioner' membership) is eligible to remain in membership provided that they remain in membership and continue to meet the previous agreed eligibility criteria. If such a person leaves</p>
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	membership, and later wishes to re-join, they must comply with the new eligibility criteria (above).
Exclusions	Anyone who does not meet the above criteria

Payment Plan	Rate as % of Full Nurse Member Rate)	Notes
Nursing Support Worker 1st year discount	25%	For the first year of Nursing Support Worker membership a 50% discount against the Full payment plan is offered. This is a onetime only discount. Transfer to the Full payment plan will be automatic after 12 months on this plan
Nursing Support Worker Full	50%	Ordinary Nursing Support Worker Member
Nursing Support Worker Retired	£10	Nursing Support Worker members who are retired from all employment or who are unable to work through ill health and who are in receipt of relevant ill health benefit This plan affects the benefits of membership
Student Nursing Associate	£10	Student Nursing Associate membership is available to those undertaking a recognised apprenticeship or course of study that will, upon qualification, enable them to register with the NMC as a Nursing Associate. Transfer to the Nursing Support Worker 1 st year discount payment plan will be automatic based on training completion date supplied by the member.
Nursing Support Worker Career Break	£10	Nursing Support Worker members are entitled to take a Career Break from their Full payment plan for a maximum of 24 months in every two years.

		<p>Following the end of a period of Career Break, there is no return to a Career Break payment plan for a minimum of 12 months</p> <p>Transfer back to the Full payment plan will be automatic after a maximum of 24 months on this plan.</p> <p>Should a member on the Career Break payment plan require employment relations or legal support, they must revert to the full payment plan.</p> <p>This plan affects the benefits of membership</p>
<p>Staff member</p>	<p>25%</p>	<p>Individuals employed by the RCN and who are currently a Nursing Support Worker member of the RCN may, for the duration of their RCN employment, transfer to the RCN Staff Payment Plan.</p> <p>The payment rate is 25% of the Nurse Full payment plan.</p> <p>The following conditions and restrictions apply:</p> <p>The period on the payment plan will not count as continuous membership for the purposes of eligibility to hold office as an RCN member.</p> <p>No indemnity cover will be available other than for “good Samaritan” activities.</p> <p>The individual is prohibited from holding any RCN member office or role.</p> <p>The individual is prohibited from acting and/or speaking as a member at any event or meeting save the RCN AGM.</p> <p>There is no right to support, representation or advice.</p>

Student Member

Student members are those not eligible for Nurse or Health Practitioner membership, and either studying for a first qualification that allows membership as a Nurse member, or are a Nurse Cadet.

Eligibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student membership is available to those undertaking a recognised course of study that will upon qualification enable them for the first time to register with the NMC, including pre-registration student midwives. 2. Nurse Cadets and those on an Access to Nursing Course are also admitted to Student category with job title "Cadet". 3. Individuals on a return to practice course that will enable them to re-register with the NMC may join on the Student payment plan for the duration of their return to practice course
Exclusions	Anyone who already has a qualification that would enable them to register with the NMC with the exception of point 3 above.

Payment Plan	Rate	Notes
Student	£10	Transfer to the Nurse membership category (at the 1 st year discounted rate) will be automatic based on training completion date or re-registration date supplied by the member.

Summary Payment Plan Rates*

Current Rates as at 1st September 2024 (before Tax relief)

Category	Payment Plan	Annual Rate £	Monthly Rate £
NURSE	Nurse Member (Full)	201.85	16.82
	Nurse Member (1 st year discount)	100.93	8.41
	Nurse Member (Career Break)	100.93	8.41
	Nurse Member (Joint RCM)	100.93	8.41
	Nurse Member (Joint Educational)	151.39	12.62
	Nurse Member (Retired)	10.00	0.84
	Nurse Member (Staff)	50.46	4.21
HP	Nursing Support Worker Member (Full)	100.93	8.41
	Nursing Support Worker Member (1 st year discount)	50.46	4.21
	Nursing Support Worker Member (Career Break)	50.46	4.21
	Nursing Support Worker Member (retired)	10.00	0.84
	Student Nursing Associate	10.00	0.84
	Nursing Support Worker Member (Staff)	50.46	4.21
STUDENT	Student	10.00	0.84

NOTES

- Members on the Retired and Staff payment plans are not eligible for either indemnity cover or employment support but may receive telephone advice from RCN Direct.
- There are conditions and limitations to indemnity cover which are detailed on the [RCN website](#).

Governance Rights

1. To hold any Governance position a member must be paying the full payment plan for their appropriate membership category.
2. Full details on eligibility to stand for Governance roles can be obtained from the RCN Governance department.