

Regulation for when an accredited representative or member elected or appointed to RCN Council, Board or a committee requests to take a temporary period of absence

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There are various reasons why an accredited representative or a member of Council, a board, or a committee may find it helpful to be able to stand down temporarily from an RCN role.
- 1.2 There are also circumstances when members are not able to work but it is both appropriate and important for them to be able to continue to carry out their RCN role(s).
- 1.3 This Regulation sets out:
- when a temporary period of absence would be agreed and how long a period of absence is likely to be agreed in such situations.
 - circumstances when it might be appropriate for a member to continue to carry out their RCN roles(s) when they were not able to work.
- 1.4 The accompanying policy and process document sets out the processes to be followed by a member if they would like to take a temporary period of absence or want to continue to carry out their RCN role while off work for health reasons.

2. Reasons for taking a period of absence

2.1 Ill health

If a member is signed off sick and is absent from their employment, they may not be well-enough to undertake their RCN role

2.2 Maternity/paternity/adoption or shared parental leave

When a member takes maternity/paternity/adoption or shared parental leave from work they may wish a period of absence from their RCN role to

run concurrently with the maternity/paternity/adoption or shared parental leave agreed with their employer.

2.3 Family circumstances

Planned or unforeseen changed family circumstances may mean that a member cannot undertake their RCN role for a temporary period.

2.4 Temporary employment with the RCN itself

If a member is successful in applying for fixed term staff roles in the RCN.

3. Duration of absence

3.1 The role will normally be held open for a maximum of six months.

3.2 In the case of ill health, 12 months will be the longest period a role can be held open for a 4-year term. When a members' term of office is less than four years the period a role will be held open for will be reduced on a pro rata basis. When deciding this period individual circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

3.3 Temporary absence due to maternity/paternity/adoption or shared parental leave should be agreed in advance and ordinarily will not exceed the member's period of leave from their employment.

3.4 A member can only work for the RCN for a maximum of 6 months and return to their member role without taking a 2-year break.

3.5 Separate rules apply to Council members. *The Royal Charter (Rule 1)* requires that, except in the case of illness, a period of absence cannot be more than the duration of four consecutive meetings in a period in which six consecutive meetings are held. If it is greater than this the role is deemed to be vacant.

4. Terms of office

4.1 Standing down for a temporary period will not affect or impact on their term of office. The temporary period of absence counts as part of their term of office including for the purposes of the *Regulation on Terms of Office*.

Approved by Council 22 March 2021
Review due March 2024