

Membership Termination Policy

Regional Studies Association

Updated November 2023

This document contains information about:

- Grounds for termination of RSA membership
- Resignation of RSA membership
- Death of a member or cessation of an organisation
- Arrears
- Harmful conduct
- Reinstatement of membership
- Appeals
- Termination procedure
- Draft wording of letter of termination

Membership Termination Procedure

Membership Termination Procedure

1. Grounds for termination

There are four circumstances in which RSA Membership may be terminated:

1. if the member concerned gives written notice of resignation to the RSA
2. if the member dies or (in the case of an organisation) ceases to exist
3. where the member is in arrears with their subscription payment or
4. where the member's continued membership is harmful to the RSA.

2. Resignation

Termination of membership is effective on the resignation of a member. Resignation must be in writing to any member of the office team or the RSA Board. Writing may be by electronic communication including text and email. A member would not normally be reimbursed for any portion of their annual membership fee.

Membership resignation is to be treated for all purposes as having been received 48 hours after being sent by electronic means or delivered by hand to a relevant office address; two clear days after being sent by first class post to that address; or three clear days after being sent by second class or overseas post to that address.

3. Death or Cessation

Membership of the RSA ceases with the death of the member and from the date of death. The estate of the member would not normally be reimbursed for any portion of their annual membership fee.

Where a member is an organisation, it will cease to be an RSA member from the date of removal from any companies register or charities register or the relevant registration body in the country of the organisation. Where the organisation is a non-charity unincorporated organisation the date of cessation of RSA membership is the date of dissolution of the organisation.

4. Arrears

Any member who is in arrears in paying their annual RSA membership fee is no longer a member of the RSA.

The member may resume membership with the payment of a further annual subscription fee.

5. Harmful conduct

RSA membership may be terminated where continuing membership is considered to be harmful to the Association. This clause applies to both individual and organisational members.

The member can only be removed from membership by a resolution of the RSA Board on the ground that in their reasonable opinion the member's continued membership is harmful to the Charity.

Whether the membership of an organisation or member is harmful to the Association is to be interpreted by the RSA Board, but can include where membership negatively impacts the academic, financial, organisational or reputational interests of the charity. Harm can be actual or perceived harm. Harm to the charity may result from conduct, among other things. Conduct can include verbal or written statements or comments as well as actions. Conduct can also include a failure or refusal to act.

Prior to any decision by the RSA Board, the member must be notified in writing of the intention of the RSA Board to consider termination of membership. The member may make written representations to the RSA Board within 14 clear days after receiving such notice. The Board must take these representations into consideration when coming to a decision regarding termination of membership.

6. Reinstatement of membership

Termination of membership may be temporary or permanent, depending upon the circumstances that lead to the termination and any mitigating circumstances. This is to be decided at the sole discretion of the RSA Board.

Any notice of termination to a person or organisation should state any relevant period of expulsion, such period to be decided on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the RSA Board.

A person or organisation whose RSA membership has been terminated permanently by the RSA Board may ask the RSA Board to consider readmission to the Association. The Board may consider readmission in its sole discretion and take into account, among other things, whether, in the Board's view, the circumstances which led to the termination had changed sufficiently to warrant readmission.

7. Appeals

The decision to terminate membership can only be appealed in writing to the RSA Board at the sole discretion of the RSA Board and where additional information comes

to light, or circumstances change significantly, such that the previously relied upon evidence of potential harm is prima facie invalid or no longer relevant.

8. Procedure

Where termination of RSA membership is under consideration due to possible harm to the Association, the following steps should be taken:

- RSA is made aware that conduct of an RSA member is potentially harmful to the Association
- ↓
- RSA Board Chair is consulted. If the matter is considered insignificant, the decision is reported to the Board and no further action is taken.
- ↓
- Where the matter is considered significant it is taken to the Executive group or preferably the full RSA Board depending on urgency.
- ↓
- Where the Board/Executive Group find there is no evidence of potential harm to the Association no further action is taken.
- ↓
- Where the Board/Executive Group find there is evidence of potential harm to the Association they will implement the termination process.
- ↓
- The member is notified in writing of the intention of the RSA Board to consider termination of membership and given 14 days to make written representations.
- ↓
- After 14 days the Board meets and considers the event(s)/conduct and the member's representations.
- ↓
- Where the Board finds continued membership is not harmful to the Association the Board writes to the member with an explanation of the decision, noting that no further action will be taken but that the Board reserves the right to revisit the matter should additional information come to light, or circumstances change significantly.
- ↓
- Where the Board finds continued membership is harmful to the Association the Board writes to the member with an explanation of the decision, the period of expulsion and noting that the member can appeal the decision should additional information comes to light, or circumstances change significantly.
- ↓
- A diary note is made in the team diary to write to the member on the expiration of the expulsion period to inform the member that they may once again become a member of the RSA.

9. Draft wording of letter of termination

Below is the wording of a draft termination letter:

Dear ...

We are sorry to inform you that your membership with the Regional Studies Association is being terminated from ... as your continuing membership is considered to be harmful to the Association.

The RSA Board took considerable time to examine all the evidence available in relation to this matter, including the representations you submitted. Unfortunately at this time the RSA Board feels that the best interests of the Association are served by terminating your RSA membership.

The RSA prides itself on its reputation and we encourage all our members to act in a way which positively promotes the discipline of regional studies. The RSA has always taken great care to preserve the dignity of its members and colleagues, to provide a fair workplace, to promote a healthy environment and to provide equal access and opportunity to all its members. It is extremely important for the Association to be seen to uphold these high standards and unfortunately your continued membership does not meet this required level. Accordingly, the RSA Board feels that in order to uphold the integrity of the membership body and the mutually respectful relationships with our many colleagues and partners, in this instance it is incumbent upon the Association to withdraw your membership.

Please immediately remove any reference to your membership of the RSA in any publication material, such as your CV, webpages, social media bio pages (eg LinkedIn) etc.

The period of membership withdrawal is Thus you are able to apply for RSA membership again in

This decision is conclusive and can only be appealed in writing to the RSA Board where additional information comes to light, or circumstances change significantly, such that the previously relied upon evidence of potential harm is no longer valid or relevant.

We regret that the outcome of this matter is not more positive. We nevertheless wish you all the best in future endeavours.

Yours ...

This policy will be reviewed annually.
