

## Engagement of Resident Medical Officers

**Policy Number:** B65 (QH-POL-341)

**Publication date:** June 2020

**Purpose:** To support a clear and consistent organisational process in the engagement of Resident Medical Officers (RMOs).

Prevocational and vocational extended engagements shall be managed as part of Queensland Health's annual Intern and RMO Recruitment Campaigns.

**Application:** This policy applies to Resident Medical Officers working for Queensland Health.

This policy does not apply to employees working for the Queensland Ambulance Service.

**Delegation:** The 'delegate' is as listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

### Legislative or other authority:

- Medical Officers (Queensland Health) Award – State 2015
- Medical Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 5) 2018

### Related policy or documents:

- PSC Directive 15/13 – Recruitment and Selection
- Recruitment and Selection HR Policy B1 (QH-POL-212)
- Parental Leave HR Policy C26 (QH-POL-187)
- Recognition of Previous Service for Long Service Leave and Sick Leave Purposes HR Policy C55 (QH-POL-211)
- Discipline HR Policy E10 (QH-POL-124)

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## 1 Policy statement

This policy provides guidance in the application of section 8.2 of the Medical Officers (Queensland Health) Award – State 2015 (the Award) –

- (a) Appointment to the position of resident medical officer will be for 52 continuous calendar weeks, unless otherwise specifically stated, to provide medical services, including the keeping and maintaining of adequate medical records.
- (b) An employer may require the resident medical officer to spend a period of their engagement at a number of hospitals and other health facilities as arranged mutually between the employer and the resident medical officer concerned.

## 2 Appointments

Appointments (hereafter referred to as 'engagements') may be as follows:

- prevocational extended engagement
- vocational extended engagement
- location-specific extended engagement
- 52 week engagement

Details of specific conditions applying to the individual categories of RMO are outlined in Attachment One.

## 3 Employment conditions

### 3.1 Employment with non-Queensland Health facilities

For periods of service with non-Queensland Health facilities, RMO engagements shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the awards and agreements applicable to those organisations, unless provided for below.

#### 3.1.1 Secondments during prevocational extended engagement, location-specific extended engagement or 52 week engagement

A number of facilities may require RMOs (i.e. interns/junior house officers (JHOs)/senior house officers (SHOs)/principal house officers (PHOs)) to undertake a period of service at a non-Queensland Health facility. Secondments with non-Queensland Health facilities do not alter extended prevocational contract arrangements.

Depending on the agreement reached between Queensland Health and the external facility, the RMO may be engaged temporarily with the non-Queensland Health facility (and be on leave without pay from Queensland Health), or the RMO may remain Queensland Health's employee during this period, with Queensland Health continuing to pay the RMO's salary.

### 3.1.2 Vocational Training Agreements during vocational engagements

A registrar who undertakes a portion of their training in an expanded (non-Queensland Health) setting shall be seconded using a Vocational Training Agreement (VTA). The VTA is a tripartite contract between Queensland Health, the specialist Trainee, and the private Training Provider. Every agreement shall:

- detail the blocks of time during which the Trainee shall be released to work in the expanded setting
- clarify the indemnity arrangements that shall apply to the Trainee whilst working on approved release to the Training Provider during the course of their employment
- specify what shall happen to any income the Trainee earns in expanded setting during paid work.

The registrar remains the employee of Queensland Health during this time. Participation in a VTA does not alter extended vocational contract arrangements.

### 3.1.3 The Mater Public

An RMO who undertakes a period of service at the Mater Public is entitled to seek leave without pay from their extended engagement with Queensland Health, as provided for in section 3.2 below.

During this period of non-Queensland Health service, the RMO shall be engaged by Mater Health Services. This does not alter their extended contract arrangement.

### 3.1.4 General Practice

An RMO who undertakes general practice placement as part of the Prevocational General Practice Placement Program (PGPPP) shall be party to the Prevocational GP Placement Agreement. This governing Agreement ensures that the RMO remains the employee of Queensland Health throughout the placement period.

### 3.1.5 Vocational

During hospital-based training, GP registrars are paid in accordance with the award.

During community-based training, GP registrars are employed by practices and the terms and conditions are outlined in the National Minimum Terms and Conditions for GPT 1 & GPT 2 Term registrars.

## 3.2 Leave without pay

RMOs are entitled to seek leave without pay for the purposes of, including but not limited to, participating in interstate and/or overseas service/training. Such arrangements shall maintain continuity of employment however such unpaid leave is not to count as service unless specifically provided for.

For RMOs on prevocational extended engagements, suspensions of up to 12 months may be negotiated and shall not be deemed to terminate the temporary engagement arrangements.

For RMOs on vocational extended engagements, suspensions of up to 24 months may be negotiated to enable completion of nominated training programs and shall not be deemed to terminate the temporary engagement arrangement.

### 3.2.1 Recognition of prior service

For the purposes of long service leave and sick leave entitlements, all medical officers can request recognition of prior service with Queensland Health, in accordance with Recognition of Previous Service for Long Service Leave and Sick Leave Purposes HR Policy C55.

Where a medical officer seeks recognition of prior service for the purposes of long service leave and sick leave, in circumstances where a break in service exceeds 12 months, application shall be made to the delegate in accordance with the recognition of previous service for long service leave and sick leave purposes HR Policy C55.

For the purposes of paid maternity, paid adoption and paid spousal leave ("paid parental leave"), service as a registrar with the Mater Public is recognised from 5 March 2010.

Registrar is as defined under clause 12.1 of the award.

All other eligibility requirements set out in Parental Leave HR Policy C26 continue to apply.

#### Definitions:

Term	Definition
Engagement	Employment for a specified fixed term under the <i>Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011</i> .
Mater Public Health Services	Mater Adult, Mater Children's, and Mater Mothers' public hospitals.
Medical Specialty College	National specialist medical colleges accredited for providing education and training programs that lead to qualifications for practice in recognised medical specialties.
Posting	Assignment/allocation to a specific facility or location for a period within an engagement.
Queensland Health Intern and RMO Recruitment Campaigns	Online recruitment and posting allocation process for all current and prospective RMO's seeking employment with Queensland Health.
Resident Medical Officer	A medical practitioner appointed as an: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intern</li> <li>• Junior house officer (JHO)</li> <li>• Senior house officer (SHO)</li> <li>• Principal house officer (PHO)</li> <li>• Registrar</li> <li>or</li> <li>• Senior registrar.</li> </ul>
Term	Period of duty/training in a specific service (obstetrics, surgery, country relieving, etc) within a posting.

#### History:

June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– formatted as part of the HR Policy review</li> <li>– amended to update references and naming conventions</li> <li>– application amended as a result of changes to the Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy Simplification project.</li> <li>• Policy amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- update references and naming conventions</li> <li>- replace Policy #QH-POL-341:2011 and Implementation Standard #QH-IMP-341-1:2011</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policy reviewed as part of the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) HR Policy Integration project.</li> <li>• Policy not applicable to QAS employees.</li> </ul>
September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy developed under the Queensland Health policy framework</li> </ul>
Previous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circular ER 38/06 New Employment Options for Interns, Resident Medical officers and Registrars</li> </ul>

Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work  
Code of Practice 2022  
applies 1 April 2023

# Attachment One – Appointment and employment conditions

The following information is provided as the minimum mandatory standard practice, procedure or process to enable satisfactory compliance with this Queensland Health HR policy.

Local guidelines/procedures may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. Any local guidelines/procedures must be consistent with this policy and standard practice and ensure employee entitlements continue to be met.

## 1 Employment conditions with Queensland Health

The following points underpin the engagements and should be clearly articulated in any letter of offer:

- the employment engagement will be between the Director-General, Department of Health and the RMO for Department of Health and non-prescribed HHSs; and the Health Service Chief Executive and the RMO for prescribed HHSs
- engagements will be subject to the terms and conditions of the:
  - Medical Officers (Queensland Health) Award – State 2015
  - Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.5) 2018
- the terms of the engagement shall indicate the location of the posting for the first period of the engagement
- the letter of offer shall stipulate the RMO shall be offered postings in a Queensland Health facility during the engagement, in accordance with the annual allocation process in the RMO Recruitment Campaign, and the associated negotiations which normally occur
- the letter of offer shall stipulate that ongoing engagement is conditional on maintenance of registration
- the RMO may refuse an offer of a posting; this shall terminate the remainder of the engagement
- RMOs on extended engagements are still required to make an annual application for posting to an actual position based on preferences
- RMOs shall only hold one engagement with Queensland Health at a single point in time
- extended engagements are subject to normal performance appraisal and management processes, and the usual progress requirements expected of certain RMO classifications (namely, Interns and Registrars/Senior Registrars, as outlined in 2.1 and 2.4 of this Attachment respectively)
- Queensland Health's IRM 2.7-11 Resident Medical Officers on Rotation, IRM 2.2-5 Board and lodgings - Resident Medical Officers and IRM 2.7-5 Terms and Conditions of Employment - Resident Medical Officers– Non Award, as amended or replaced, shall apply
- a letter of offer shall be approved by the appropriate delegate.

## 2 Appointment conditions

Details of specific conditions applying to the individual categories of RMO are as follows:

## 2.1 Prevocational engagement

- RMOs recruited through the annual intern recruitment campaign and who commence in January of the subsequent year may be offered engagements of two years duration for postgraduate years (PGY) 1 and 2.
- Prevocational engagements shall be subject to obtaining general registration as a medical practitioner in Queensland after the first 12 months of PGY1.
- After appropriate preparation is provided, during the second 12 months a term of country relieving may be required.

## 2.2 Vocational engagement

- RMOs selected into a vocational training pathway may be offered engagements for periods up to six years.
- Extended engagements shall be subject to acceptance into accredited vocational training and continuation in the respective medical speciality college training program.
- Consecutive extended vocational engagements may be offered to registrars if supported by their college and endorsed by Queensland Health.
- Vocational engagements shall be subject to continued progression towards specialist registration, as demonstrated by satisfactory performance on stipulated medical speciality training and examination requirements.

## 2.3 Location-specific extended engagement

- JHOs, SHOs, and PHOs may be offered engagements of up to four years at the discretion of a facility or HHS.
- The engagement shall be with Queensland Health for service within a specified facility or HHS.

## 2.4 Fifty-two (52) week engagement

- An engagement period of 52 weeks may be elected by a RMO, or offered by a HHS in accordance with the award.

## 3 Cessation of employment

Cessation of employment could occur as follows:

- at the end date specified, unless otherwise agreed between the parties
- by the employee giving four weeks' notice of resignation, in writing
- as a disciplinary action by the employer in accordance with Discipline HR Policy E10
- failure to maintain registration with Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency as required for the position.