

Volunteer Resources

Region and County Governance Toolkit

Effective Succession Planning Step 2 - Setting Term Limits



About this tool

In 2018 60% of County and Regional committees did not enforce term limits on their committees according to the health checks. A term limit is an agreed time limit that an elected committee member can serve on a committee. After that total time has passed the individual is not able to take a gap and return e.g. if the committee term limit is 5 years they could not step down after five years, take a year out and then come back to the committee.

Why is it important?

Your organisation should be regularly electing new committee members, or at least asking existing members to stand for re-election, as an opportunity to develop or bring in new skills, experiences and perspectives. Sport England advise that committee members serve no more than 9 years in total. If your committee members don't step down they could potentially be stopping new people from joining and bringing skills, new ideas and diversity with them.

Top Tips

- Often it can be hard for volunteers to step down from a role that they enjoy after a long time. As a committee think about ways that you can keep them involved in the organisation as a non-committee member. This could be as a mentor for new committee members (see the [Mentoring and Shadowing tool](#)), an honorary life member without voting rights, as a volunteer within a technical support group or events host.
- When setting new term limits consider the appropriate timescales for each term of office and the maximum number of terms that should be served. A one year term would not give a committee member time to make a difference and this would mean holding elections for each committee position every year.
- When introducing new term limits consideration should be given to staggered terms so that the committee is not refreshed all at once. Try to limit the turnover of committee members to a maximum of a third of the committee in any given year.
- Make sure that once you have agreed the term limit for your committee you update your constitution, role descriptions and other relevant documents and gain approval for this from your members in line with your governing documents.
- When recruiting new committee members use the conducting a [Conducting a Skills Audit tool](#) to determine the skills required for new committee members to enhance the overall skill set of your



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committee. Use the [Increasing the Diversity of your Committee tool](#) to bring different perspectives to your committee and use the [Recruiting Volunteers tool](#) to help attract new volunteers to your committee.

How does this link to the Governance Code?

Setting committee term limits is a key element of Mandatory Requirement 5 of Tier 1 of the [Code for Sports Governance](#).

“Committee members are subject to regular election and ideally should serve no more than nine years”

Once this is in place you will be able to tick the corresponding box on your Annual Governance Health Check.