Paper A1

Moderator GA nominations Rules of Procedure amendment

Business Committee

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Revd Sarah Moore, Clerk **sarah.moore@urc.org.uk**
Action required	**Decision**
Draft resolution(s)	**Resolution 1** **(a) Acting on behalf of the General Assembly, Assembly Executive agrees to update the Rules of Procedure as follows 3.2. The Moderator of the General Assembly may be a Minister of the Word and Sacraments, or a Church Related Community Worker, or an Elder. Elders may be serving or non-serving but in all cases the names of those persons nominated to serve as Moderator must be included on the membership roll of a local church of the United Reformed Church or a Local Ecumenical Partnership where the United Reformed Church is a partner for that person to be eligible for nomination. (Add new subsections) 3.2.1 Members of the Senior Leadership Team shall be ineligible for induction to the role of Moderator of the General Assembly. 3.2.2 Officers of the General Assembly may not hold more than one such role concurrently, nor concurrently serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.** **3.2.3 The Assistant Clerk, Deputy Treasurer and Convenor of the United Reformed Church Trust may not concurrently hold an Officer of the General Assembly role, nor concurrently serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.** **(b) Assembly Executive instructs the Head of Communications to ensure that the Rules of Procedure Section on the URC website is updated to reflect this change.**

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Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	Nominations for Moderator of the General Assembly introduction of prohibited categories for election
Main points	Remove eligibility for members of the Senior Leadership Team to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly Clarification that no Officer of the General Assembly or other specified role serving it may concurrently occupy more than one such role.
Previous relevant documents	None
Consultation has taken place with...	Senior Leadership Team Business Committee Synod Moderators Deputy Treasurer

Summary of impact

Financial	None
External (eg ecumenical)	None

1. A question has arisen from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) asking whether it is appropriate that members of the SLT be eligible for nomination and election to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly. This arose following a nomination of a member of the SLT to serve as Moderator of General Assembly in 2026. The colleague concerned exercised their right not to allow their name to go forward to the election at General Assembly 2026.

2. The Rules of Procedure currently state that any Minister of the Word and Sacraments on the Roll of Ministers, Church Related Community Worker on the Roll of CRCWs or Elder is eligible for nomination by local churches and synods. In respect of Ministers and CRCWs, nominees should be recognised by their Synod and the Ministries Department as Active Ministers or willing to satisfy the requirements to be so recognised. Elders nominated may be serving or non-serving in their local church context. All nominees, whether Ministers of the Word and Sacraments, CRCWs, or Elders, must be on the active membership roll of a local church of the United Reformed Church, or of a local ecumenical partnership that includes the URC, or have wider fold membership.

3. Since 1972 there have been no prohibited categories or roles for nomination as Moderator of General Assembly. The SLT consider that it would represent an unmanageable conflict of interest for one of their number to serve the denomination in this way alongside a ministry role or employed post as General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary (Ministries), Deputy General Secretary (Faith in Action) or as Chief

Operating Officer. Furthermore to have a post holder from one of these roles serving as Moderator of the General Assembly would represent an unhelpful reduction of the number of individuals exercising leadership roles connected to the General Assembly.

4. It is therefore proposed that the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary (Ministries), Deputy General Secretary (Faith in Action), and Chief Operating Officer roles be designated ineligible for election to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly. Once any individual ceases to hold an appointment to any of these roles they become eligible for election provided that they satisfy the requirements outlined in the Rules of Procedure.

5. As is the custom the raising of questions of this nature often raises other questions with a wish to 'tidy up'. It is also suggested that further clarification be made that no individual may concurrently occupy more than one Officer of the General Assembly role, e.g. the Clerk may not concurrently also serve as Moderator, General Secretary, Treasurer or Convenor of the Business Committee, or any other combination thereof. It is also clarified that apart from the General Secretary, no member of the SLT may concurrently hold any Officer of the General Assembly role.

6. In the interests of completeness, the Synod Moderators meeting was consulted whether Synod Moderators should continue to be eligible for election to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly. Recognising that Synod Moderators have served as Moderator of the General Assembly in the recent past, the view of the Moderators' meeting was that they do not consider that there is an unmanageable conflict of interest between their roles and that of Moderator of General Assembly. The Moderators meeting helpfully reflected on the matter observing that reducing the number of roles eligible to serve is a restriction of the action of the Holy Spirit and that it is important that as a denomination we trust the discernment process for this central role. The importance of individual conscience was highlighted with a preference that such nominations be better managed with individuals in SLT and other roles exercising their prerogative to refuse to allow their name to go forward to election rather than through further rules. In respect of any question of potential conflict of interest should a Synod Moderator be nominated and elected to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly it was the view of the Moderators meeting that this can be appropriately managed and mitigated. From an ecumenical perspective, we are reminded that within the Methodist Church of Great Britain, District Chairs are eligible to serve as President of the Conference and do so fully and positively.

7. It is also proposed that the Assistant Clerk, the Deputy Treasurer and the Convenor of the United Reformed Church Trust be ineligible to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly concurrently with those roles.

8. Should it be the case that it is known that a member of SLT will demit from their role at an ordinary meeting of the General Assembly, they shall be eligible for election at that same meeting of the General Assembly.

9. Should it be the case that an Officer of the General Assembly apart from the General Secretary be nominated to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly they shall be eligible for election on the proviso that they resign from their other role should they be elected. Other Officer roles may concurrently serve as Moderator-elect of the General Assembly.

10. The Rules of Procedure to be amended as follows:

3.2. The Moderator of the General Assembly may be a Minister of the Word and Sacraments, or a Church Related Community Worker, or an Elder. Elders may be serving or non-serving but in all cases the names of those persons nominated to serve as Moderator must be included on the membership roll of a local church of the United Reformed Church or a Local Ecumenical Partnership where the United Reformed Church is a partner for that person to be eligible for nomination.

Add new subsections

3.2.1 Members of the Senior Leadership Team shall be ineligible for induction to the role of Moderator of the General Assembly.

3.2.2 Officers of the General Assembly may not hold more than one such role concurrently, nor concurrently serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

3.2.3 The Assistant Clerk, Deputy Treasurer and Convenor of the United Reformed Church Trust may not concurrently hold an Officer of the General Assembly role, nor concurrently serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.