Back to Basics: Annual Leave

1. Managing Annual Leave Requests

Introduction

This document is the first in a series of documents to inform on the basics of Annual Leave, and the best way to understand and manage it. Here we will specify the basics of request management, and will discuss how requests are made, how the requests can be approved or rejected, and the different ways you can view these requests. The aim is to facilitate a clear understanding of Annual Leave in Allocate Optima (or as it is formerly known, HealthRoster), the operational impact of the different options in the system, and assist with utilising Allocate Optima to its full capacity.

1. Making a Request

As an administrator or manager that manages Annual Leave, it is essential to understand the basics of how the requests are made by the staff members. This is done by the end users with EOL (Employee Online), Allocate ME or Loop. For the purposes of this guide, EOL Desktop will be used to demonstrate this.

- The employee first needs to log into EOL and navigate to the Leave section, you will need the feature access *Employee Online: Annual Leave.*

- The Annual Leave Calendar is a useful tool to check who else is on leave at that time. This may be especially useful if there are rules within the unit regarding the number of staff members that can be on leave at once. The staff member will need the feature access *Employee Online: Can View Annual Leave Calendar*.

▾ Annual Leave Calendar		
◀	Oct - Nov - Dec 2022	▶
Oct 2022	**Nov 2022**	**Dec 2022**
26 Sep - 02 Oct 2022	31 Oct - 06 Nov 2022	28 Nov - 04 Dec 2022
03 - 09 Oct 2022	07 - 13 Nov 2022	05 - 11 Dec 2022
10 - 16 Oct 2022	14 - 20 Nov 2022 39%	12 - 18 Dec 2022
17 - 23 Oct 2022	21 - 27 Nov 2022	19 - 25 Dec 2022
24 - 30 Oct 2022		

Here you can view the percentages of staff of your **Grade Type** on leave, by week, and if you click on the percentage, it details the colleagues that are on leave.

Note
When a user has multiple postings, only the posting ticked as primary will display on the Annual Leave Calendar. If no posting is ticked as primary, EOL/ME/Loop defaults to the first active posting created.

▪ Select the Entitlement you would like it to be taken from if there are multiple

- Fill out Request Leave Form at the bottom of the page with the dates and choose 'Set'

Request Leave Form

◉ Full day(s)   ○ Partial day

From
14 Dec 2022   📅

Number of days
1   [Set]

End date
Wed, 14 Dec 2022

Reason:
Annual Leave   ▼

Posting:
- Band 6 RN   ▼

[Submit Leave Request]

- Click 'Submit Leave Request'

- In the Episodes drop down section you will see the new period of leave

⌄ Episodes (2)

Status	Period	Posting	Duration	Times	Notes	Delete
✓ Annual Leave	14-16 Nov 2022	Hollie Test - Band 2 HCA	3 days	07:00 - 23:59		🗑
⊘ Annual Leave	14 Dec 2022	Hollie Test - Band 2 HCA	1 day	07:00 - 23:59		🗑

Note
If the user has *Employee Online: Can Cancel Approved Unavailabilities*, these periods of leave will display in Allocate Optima (HealthRoster) as cancelled. It may be worth carefully considering whether you want end users to be able to do this, as short notice cancellations can make it difficult to plan, and can throw off the considerations that you have been making. It can also make it unfair to users that were not able to book due to the amount of people already off.

- If the notification is configured to, then sending this request will trigger a notification to whoever is set as the 'Recipient' in the Notification Template in Allocate Optima (HealthRoster) (Reference Data> Notifications> Notification & Templates). This notification is called UnavailabilityRequestSubmitted and this is gone into in more detail in document 4.

2. Viewing Requests

Allocate Optima (HealthRoster) allows users with the appropriate access to view these requests in a clear, report format in real time, and can save hours of admin time - amongst many other benefits - when used in place of paper requests. There are a few places to view these requests in Allocate Optima (HealthRoster), and it is generally best practice to focus on future or current requests, as retrospective ones should ideally already be approved; Rosters cannot be approved or finalised if there are outstanding requests. As such, the Leave Requests report, that can also be accessed from the Unit Summary report, may be the best place to consider these, as well as the View Rosters tab, as this area lets you see the impact of other duties and workers, when approving/rejecting the leave. You will require *Person Details: Unavailabilities* to access the request, plus the feature access for the tab in question.

▪ **Leave Requests**

This can be located in Rostering>Unavailability> Leave Requests and will require *Roster Tools: Leave Study Request*. This shows in a report format the periods of leave that are in a requested state. Please note this view only shows current or future requests, and not retrospective ones. This is linked with Unit Summary.

- **Unit Summary**

    This can be located in Rostering> View Rosters> Unit Summary and will require *Roster Tools: Unit Summary*. This shows, in the Awaiting Approval section, the current and future leave requests, and when you select the Leave Requests option, it takes you to the aforementioned Leave Requests tab.

- **View Rosters**

    This can be located in Rostering>View Rosters> View Rosters. This will require *Roster Tools: View Roster*. This shows the requests in a calendar format, in the place of a shift. The yellow question mark indicates it is in a requested status, and a blue heart indicates it was requested in EOL.

    This view is ideal to see the affected and surrounding duties, as well as other staff members on leave at that time. However, it requires you to know the date of the period of leave.

- **Unavailability Diary**

    This can be located in Rostering> Unavailability> Unavailability Diary. This will require *Roster Tools: Unavailability Diary.* This shows periods of leave in a calendar format based on view date.

- **Unavailability List**

  This can be located in Rostering> Unavailability> Unavailability List and will require *Roster Tools: Unavailability List.* This displays all periods of leave in a report format, based on the parameters set when running the report. You can set this to pull all Annual Leave periods, and can view the periods of leave in a requested state by looking for the yellow question mark icon.

- **Person Record**

  This can be located in Personnel> Person Search> Person Search and will require *Person Tools: Person Search, Person Details: Unavailabilities* and *Unavailability Actions: Edit.* In the Unavailabilities Tab you can see these periods in a list. This can be useful to see the other periods of leave this staff member has taken over the period.

In the Person Record> Entitlements tab you can see the leave per entitlement. Select the entitlement you wish to view, then the Episodes tab. This is a useful place to view how the leave affects the staff member's entitlement pot. This will require *Person Details: Entitlements.*

3. Approving and Rejecting Requests

It is important to consider the spread of leave when managing requests. If there is too much leave in a period, duties may need to be put out to bank which will increase spending. If there is not enough leave in the period, this may mean additional duties will need to be created if there are not enough shifts. It is worth considering the organisation's thresholds and KPIs with this to ensure you are in line with any policies.
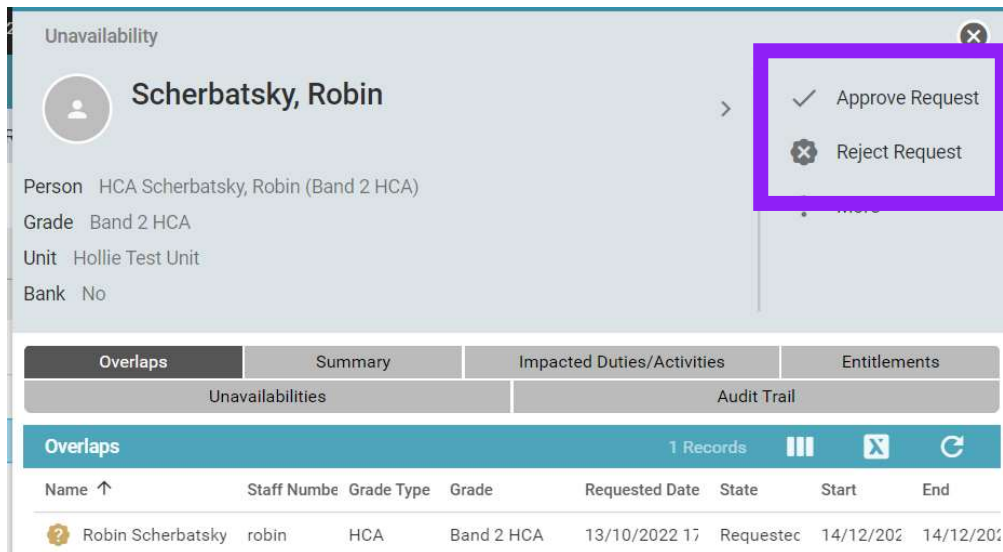
Users with the feature access *Unavailability Actions: Approve and Reject* will be able to approve periods of leave for members of staff in the units to which they have access. This is dictated in the visible units in the user account. This can be a good opportunity to review who has access to approve and how this fits with your internal processes.

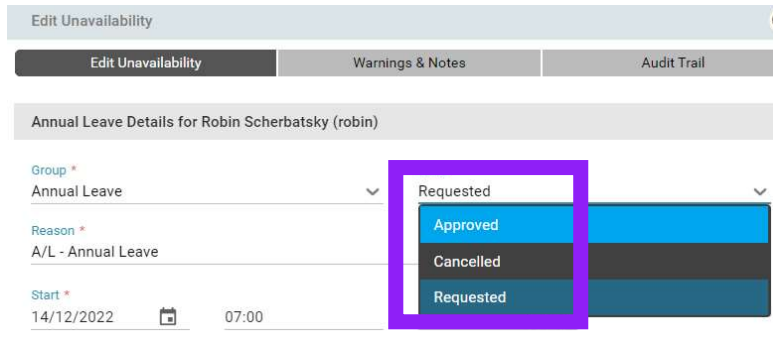To do this navigate to the leave request. You can either:

- Right click the unavailability, and choose Approve Request or Reject Request
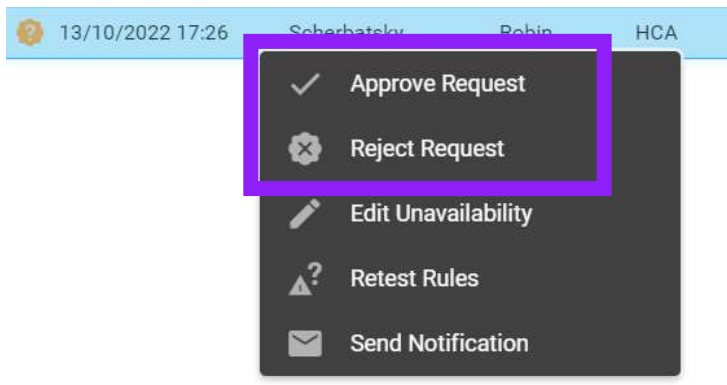
- Open the unavailability and choose Approve Request or Reject Request

- Edit Unavailability (if you have *Unavailability Actions: Edit)* and manually change the state to Approved or Cancelled


Note
If you have the authority to approve your own leave, you will need a separate feature access *Unavailability Actions: Can Approve Own Annual Leave*

| **Note** |
| --- |
| If a staff member has two substantive postings, the manager of either posting can approve their leave. |

4. Adding Leave in Allocate Optima (HealthRoster)

It is possible that you may need to add in the periods of leave manually in Allocate Optima (HealthRoster), for example if you have a new starter that has pre-existing annual leave, or if a staff member requires emergency annual leave. This requires the Feature Access *Unavailability Actions: Add Unavailability*.

- The best place to add periods of leave into Allocate Optima (HealthRoster) is in the **View Rosters** tab. This displays in a calendar view what other duties will be impacted and what other periods there are for that roster period. You can do this by right clicking on the user and selecting Add Unavailability:
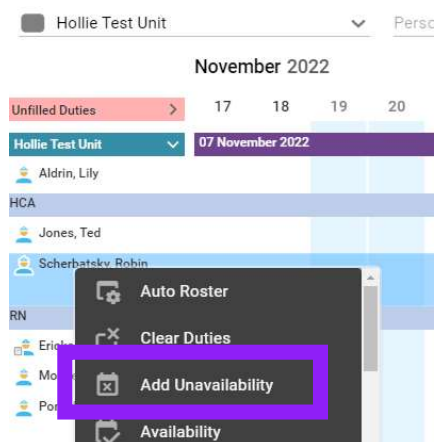
It can also be added in by right clicking on the date block and selecting Add Unavailability, or simply double clicking the date block.
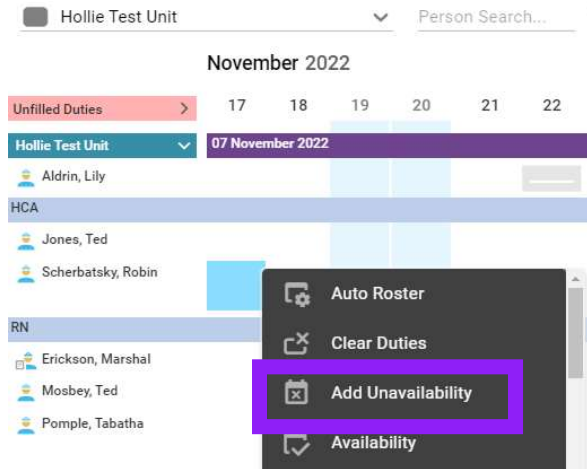
- It will take you to the Add Unavailability window.

- You can choose the Group: **Annual Leave** and the State: **Approved, Requested** or **Cancelled**. Enter the dates and ensure the hours are correct, then choose OK

- The amount of hours can be manually changed by clicking onto the figures and changing them. You can also change the posting from which it is deducted
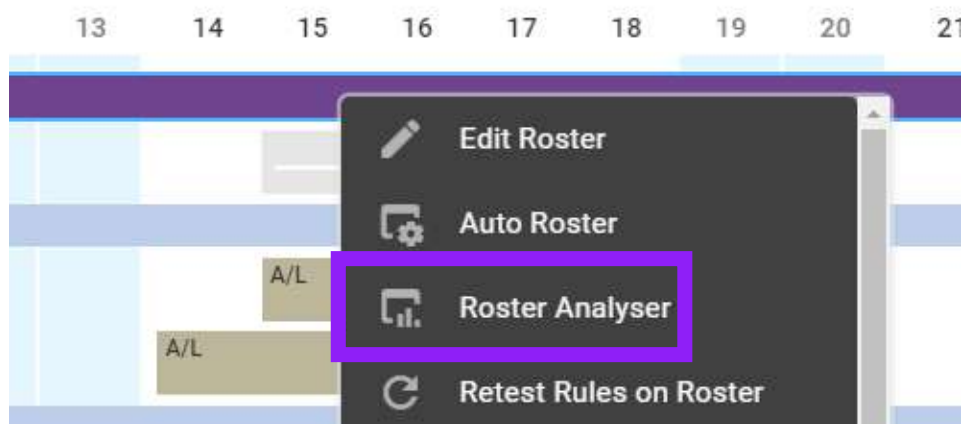

When saved, the new hours will display in bold text:

5. Roster Analyser

A useful tool for reviewing annual leave breakdown is the Roster Analyser. This can be accessed by right clicking the roster bar, and choosing Roster Analyser. You will need the feature access *Roster Actions: Roster Analyser*
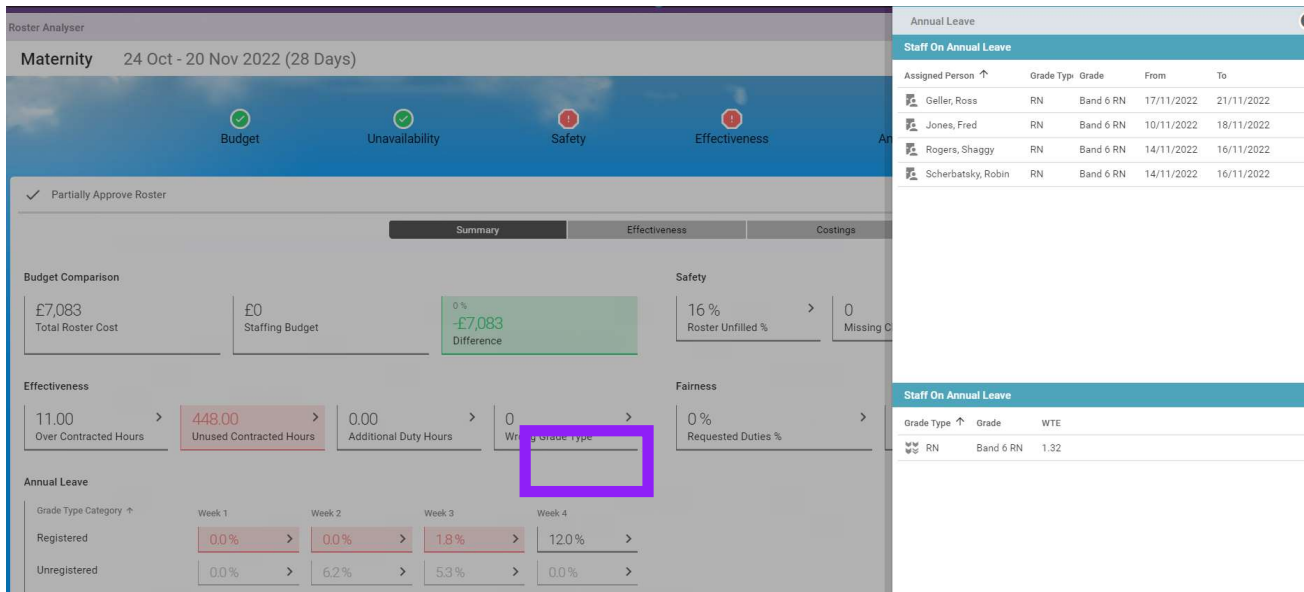

In the summary section you will see the Annual Leave figures split by Grade Type Category.
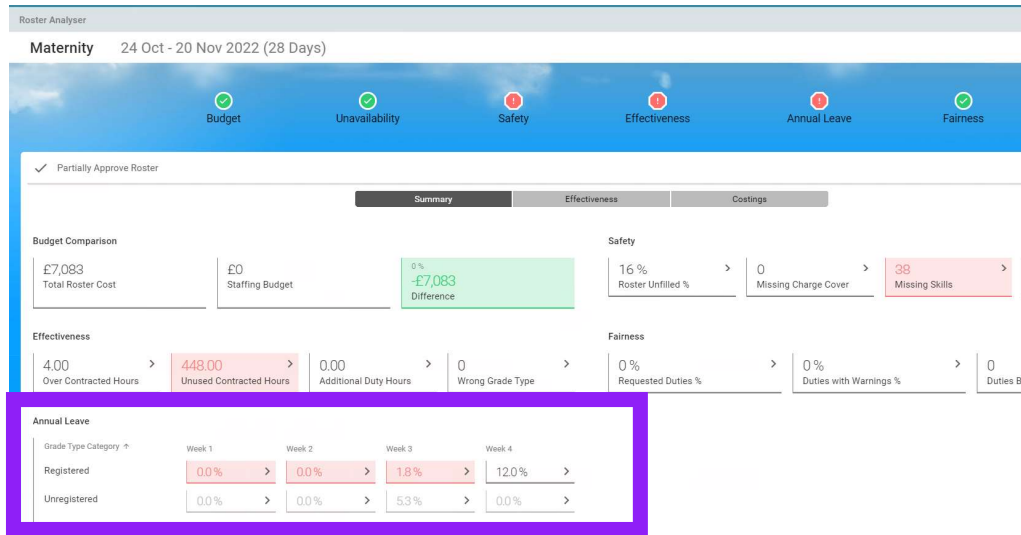
You can expand this further by clicking on the percentage to see the details of who is on leave

This is really useful for judging whether there are too many or too few staff on leave. If too many are on leave at once, you will find your temporary staffing spend could be higher, if too few staff are on Annual Leave you will not have enough shifts to give out and will need to add additional duties. This is a good opportunity to review your headroom percentage too, and to ensure you are hitting your optimal annual leave percentage per grade type category per week.

There are a multitude of settings in Reference Data> Organisation> Settings that can be used to tailor the Roster Analyser.

For example, you can change the thresholds of the colour triggers with rules such as the Roster Analyser AL Lower Limit Percentage Red setting:

You can also determine the minimum number of people required against a Grade Type Category in order for it them to be included in the A/L calculation with the Roster Analyser AL Activation Level setting. This is useful for small amounts of workers in a grade type category that you do not wish to be included in the calculation.

Alternatively, you can hide Grade Type Categories completely from the calculation in Reference Data> Organisation> Grade Type Categories and tick 'Hide in Roster Analysis'.

Note
Figures that show in grey are for a group of staff too small to provide meaningful thresholds.

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