



Candidate Code of Practice for RCP elections

1. This Code of Practice sets out the way candidates in RCP elections to senior officer (including president), officer and elected councillor roles are expected to conduct themselves. It supplements the [RCP Code of Conduct](#) that applies to all RCP members, fellows and other healthcare professionals when working for or representing the RCP. Candidates should also familiarise themselves with the [RCP values](#) and the RCP social media principles.
2. The RCP reserves the right to amend the Code of Conduct, this Code of Practice and its values, subject to agreed governance process and approval of Council. If it does so during the course of an election, it will communicate that to all the candidates at the same time.
3. Candidates must maintain the confidentiality, integrity and good standing of the election and the RCP. They must not bring the election or the RCP into disrepute.
4. Candidates, if already part of an RCP committee, board, or Council, must respect the confidentiality of that committee, board or Council in the context of any canvassing statements.
5. Candidates may conduct campaigning activity which speaks specifically to their qualifications, competencies and vision for the role unless expressly prohibited by this code.
6. The RCP supports and encourages canvassing, but it is essential that it is conducted fairly. Candidates must comply with the terms and spirit of the RCP Code of Conduct and this Code of Practice, and act in line with the RCP values, or they may be disqualified from the election.
 - a. The returning officer (the registrar) reserves the right to determine whether or not a candidate has breached the Code of Conduct or this Code of Practice, or not acted in line with the RCP values, and to take appropriate steps. The role of the returning officer and their jurisdiction is outlined in the Appendix.
 - b. The decision of the returning officer on all matters relating to this Code of Practice shall be final and binding on all candidates.

Personal statements

7. Candidates must produce:
 - a. a personal statement of no more than 500 words
 - b. a summary statement of no more than 50 words.

8. Candidates' personal 500-word statement, photograph, short CV and declaration of interests will be made available on the election website hosted by Civica Election Services (CES). The personal statement and summary 50-word statement will be used for RCP communication channels – such as social media, websites, online and printed bulletins and magazines, conferences and events – as appropriate and as decided by the RCP.
9. Candidates may use their personal statement in their own canvassing via their own communication channels.
10. Candidates must ensure that all statements or claims made by them, or their supporters are accurate, fair, reasonable and not misleading.
11. Candidates or their supporters may not use RCP committee meetings or events to canvass.
12. Candidates or their supporters may not use RCP premises to hold a meeting as part of their canvassing.

Presidential elections

13. Presidential candidates are also required to record a video statement of no more than three minutes. The video will be made available on the election website hosted by Civica Election Services (CES). It may also be used across RCP communication channels.
14. Presidential candidates are required to take part in a hustings event.
 - a. During the hustings event, the nature of which will be defined by RCP Council decision, candidates will be required to make a statement and answer questions.
 - b. The questions will be decided in advance by RCP Council with the president and returning officer (registrar).
 - c. The event will be chaired by an independent person appointed by the RCP.
 - d. In the event of an unplanned contested election, RCP Council reserves the right to decide the nature of the hustings which may differ from hustings in the planned 4-year cycle.

RCP senior officers, officers and post holders

15. The responsibilities of senior officers, officers and post holders:
 - a. Members of the RCP Board of Trustees and senior officers must not nominate any candidate for election other than themselves, with the exception of members of Council acting collectively according to the bye-laws of the RCP.
 - b. Members of the RCP Board of Trustees, senior officers, officers, members of Council and RCP staff must not endorse or campaign for any candidate other than themselves, with the exception of members of Council acting collectively according to the bye-laws of the RCP.
 - c. Members of the RCP Board of Trustees senior officers, officers and other post holders may encourage applicants/nominees whom they believe to be suitably qualified for the role.

- d. When encouraging applications, senior officers and officers and post holders do so in their personal capacity.
- e. Senior officers, officers and post holders must not use RCP committee meetings and events, RCP social media accounts, RCP email accounts or RCP mailing lists to indirectly campaign for any candidate.

Funding

- 16. The RCP does not provide funding for candidates' canvassing campaigns. In the course of their canvassing, candidates must not make any financial outlay that they would not have made if they were not standing as a candidate.

The media

- 17. Candidates must not themselves conduct any canvassing activity via the press.
- 18. Candidates must immediately refer any media enquiries they receive, relating to their candidacy or the RCP elections, to the RCP media team via media@rcp.ac.uk.

Restrictions

- 19. In conducting their canvassing, candidates must not:
 - a. use or attempt to use RCP social media accounts, RCP email accounts or RCP mailing lists
 - b. use RCP branding
 - c. pay anyone to act for them
 - d. enlist anyone who is not a member of the RCP to act for them
 - e. make any adverse personal comments about other candidates in line with the [RCP Code of Conduct](#) and RCP social media principles.
 - f. request support from any member of RCP staff
 - g. request information from RCP staff other than the chief executive and those identified to them as providing information to candidates

Appendix

The returning officer (for presidential, officer and elected councillor elections).

- a. The registrar is understood to be the returning officer under current bye-laws. This is in line with the responsibility for conduct and governance invested in the registrar's position.
- b. To avert any perceived conflict of interest during elections the registrar should remove themselves completely from the process as a safeguard, ie the registrar should recuse themselves from voting and should remain impartial. This is especially important in presidential elections, but this caveat should apply equally to the election of senior officers and elected councillors.
- c. Additional 'election advisers' should be established to help mitigate any unmanageable conflicts. These should be drawn from the senior censor and /or the trustee councillors. Should any of these individuals stand for election then an alternate senior officer/officer would be allocated to the roles, as appropriate.
- d. The election adviser's main role would be to support the scrutiny of canvassing activity even when no conflicts existed for the registrar in the role of returning officer.
- e. Should the registrar themselves stand for election as president, the role of returning officer would be allocated by Council to another individual, most likely the senior censor or a trustee councillor. This would remain at Council's discretion. All the caveats would still apply to the returning officer role.