

Role description

RCP associate college tutor

About the RCP

The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) is a professional membership body with 40,000 members in the UK and around the world working to improve patient care and reduce illness. Our activities focus on educating, improving and influencing for better health and care.

We champion an inclusive culture and welcome applications from all sections of society. We value taking care, learning and being collaborative. These values underpin everything we do.

Join us to help achieve our vision of a world in which everyone has the best possible health and healthcare.

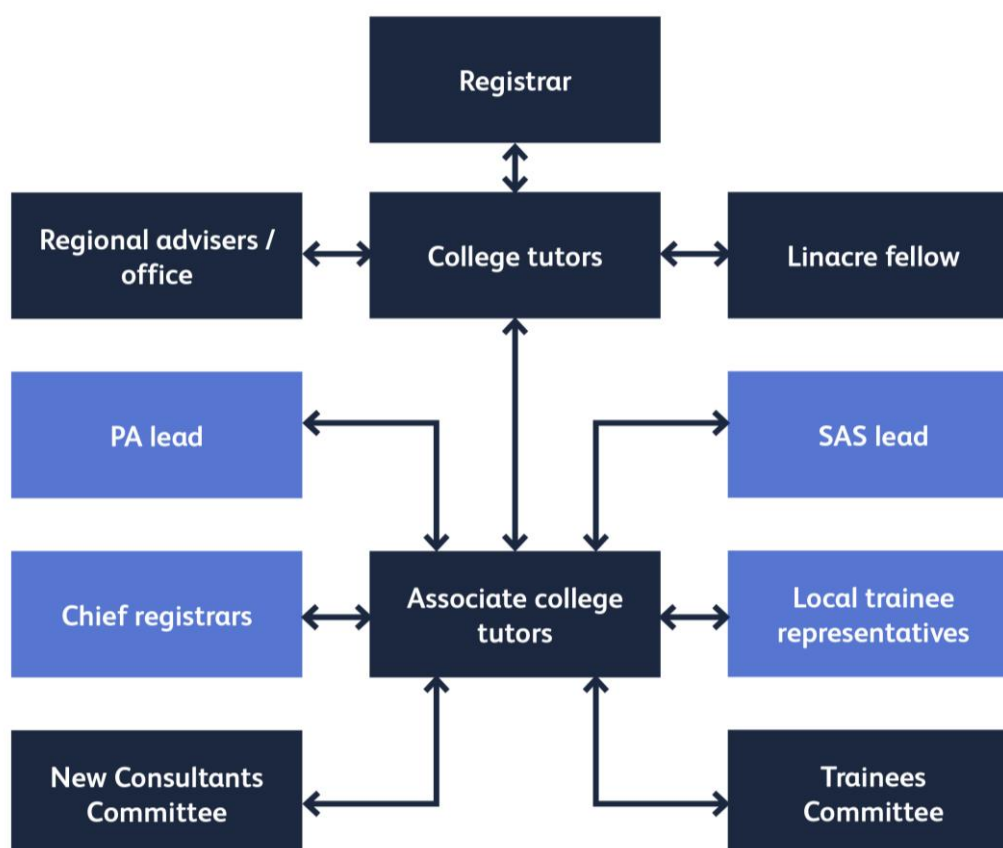
Purpose and scope

RCP associate college tutors (ACTs) have a key role in supporting their local RCP college tutor (CT) by acting as representatives for, and the link between, physician trainees and their CT. In essence, the ACTs represent the interests of trainee doctors who are training for a career as a physician, and they are concerned with issues relating to professional training, postgraduate education and the maintenance of clinical standards. ACTs are a vital part of the RCP's strategic aim to engage with physicians at all career stages providing support for education and professional development. The link between ACT and CT fosters mentorship and learning between the CT and the ACT who acts as the voice of trainees within their hospital.

RCP relationships and local networks

An ACT's direct relationship is with their CT who can provide guidance within regions. The ACT will be linked regionally to the RCP via their CT, regional adviser and regional office. ACTs, along with their CTs, are expected to attend any regional meetings that are set up by their regional adviser. ACTs should be in contact with their local trainee representatives, new consultant representatives and the RCP chief registrar (where there is one) within their hospitals. The ACTs will also be expected to work with physician associate (PA) leads and specialty and associate specialty (SAS) leads within the trust.

Associate college tutor relationships



Role description

1. Trainee representation

- ACTs represent the interests of trainee doctors who are training for a career as a physician. They act as a link between trainees, the CT and the RCP. Because ACTs have direct access to their CT and to the RCP itself, they can give feedback on local educational and professional issues.
- ACTs will be vital in supporting implementation of the internal medicine (IM) curriculum.
- It is recommended that ACTs make contact with physician trainees in their hospital to explain their role, promote education and support professional development and training (including flexible training). Issues that ACTs may be involved in include those related to professional training, postgraduate education and the maintenance of clinical standards.
- ACTs would meet with trainees as part of a forum for physician trainees (a frequency of every 6 weeks is advised, but this may vary to suit local circumstances) in order to gain trainees' feedback and to address any issues that arise. It is important that ACTs maintain confidentiality and do not disclose confidential information.
- ACTs would be available to provide peer support for their physician trainees. Difficult issues that arise, or that ACTs are unable to address, should be discussed immediately with their CTs.

- The RCP is being asked by many organisations, such as the Care Quality Commission, about staffing levels and concerns voiced by trainee doctors in individual trusts. ACTs and other trainees may escalate such concerns to the CT. If the CT then feels that the concerns are not being addressed locally and require escalation, they can communicate with the Linacre fellow or the registrar at the RCP.
- ACTs support their CT in their duties, e.g. ensuring that teaching programmes are organised, representative of need, and well attended, and that careers guidance and practical support is accessible for all trainees. ACTs should also be involved in helping their CT with the organisation of a practical assessment of clinical examination skills (PACES) teaching programme.
- ACTs will provide a valuable contact point for the dissemination of information from the RCP and should ensure timely distribution of news and events to their trainees.
- ACTs will also be expected to maintain regular contact with the regional trainee representatives who sit on the RCP Trainees Committee, to ensure that there is two-way communication of issues relating to training that is of local, regional and national importance.

2. Working with RCP college tutors

- ACTs will be overseen by, and report to, the CTs within their hospitals.
- Once appointed, ACTs should meet with their CTs and discuss the objectives that they hope to achieve in their role. This may be to ensure the continuation of current good practice within the Trust, but it may also be to outline a new project or development that they would like to make during their appointment and the time frame in which this should be completed.
- It is good practice for ACTs to meet with their CT periodically (about every 2 months), for an update and to ensure that objectives outlined upon appointment are being met.
- From 2023 the RCP will be expanding SAS physician support and PA regional connections to further reinforce the local and regional RCP support networks (pilots in place). ACTs should work hand in hand with the PA and SAS leads within the Trust to discuss workforce issues and share education resources and best practice.

3. Participation within the wider RCP

- The RCP runs national meetings for CTs and ACTs. ACTs are encouraged to attend these days to network with colleagues, share problems and their solutions, and to keep up to date.
- ACTs are encouraged to attend regional meetings that are organised and chaired by the regional adviser to discuss RCP and professional matters.
- ‘Update in medicine’ visits are held annually across the country and they provide an excellent opportunity to meet the RCP president and other senior officers. ACTs are encouraged to attend these high-quality updates, when possible.
- Additionally, ACTs should make contact with their regional representative on the Trainees Committee as outlined above (trainees.committee@rcplondon.ac.uk) and with the local regional adviser (via the RCP regional office).

Why become an ACT?

- To ensure that trainees' voices are heard within the trust and within local and national educational structures.
- To work with the CT and be a part of the local RCP regional network with the regional adviser.
- To develop management and leadership skills.
- To get involved in teaching and training.
- To get involved with the work of the RCP, which can be a gateway to future leadership roles, e.g. as a CT.
- To be exposed to opportunities for designing and developing projects to improve trainee experience.
- To be recognised for your involvement with the RCP at the end of it.

RCP associate college tutor appointment process

Qualification and tenure

- In the majority of instances, ACTs would be internal (internal medicine training (IMT)) or higher specialty trainees, although locally employed doctors are welcome to apply.
- It is expected that an ACT is a subscribing member of the RCP.
- The RCP recommends that within one hospital there should be at least one CT and ideally (depending on the trust's size), two ACTs, with one at IM stage 1 level and the other at a higher trainee level.
- In larger hospitals more ACTs may be needed, but the recommendation is that there are no more than two ACTs for each CT.
- The ACT role should be advertised formally by the CT in conjunction with the outgoing ACT.
- Candidates should express their interest in writing to their CT.
- An informal interview process, conducted by the CT and postgraduate medical education department, will determine the successful candidate.
- The duration of the role is likely to be determined by the length of time the successful candidate spends at the hospital concerned. As a general guide, it is envisaged that most ACTs will hold the post for a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 3 years. This time frame allows for continuity within the role, and it provides an opportunity for ACTs to become involved in more substantial work.
- Upon demitting the role, there should be a formal handover to the successor by the outgoing ACT, with a period of shadowing where possible.
- The geographical area for which ACTs are responsible should be the same as that of the local CT. This is the area that is covered by the trust / health board or by a particular hospital within the trust / health board, depending on local circumstances. It should include those hospitals that are separate from the main district general hospital – for example, many trusts have outlying hospitals for palliative care, rehabilitation.
- Any change of ACT should be communicated to the RCP regional teams via the CT and the employing hospital, copying in: RCPTutors@rcplondon.ac.uk.
- ACTs are expected to collect evidence of their engagement and work within the ACT role.

Our values

We are committed to **taking care**, **learning**, and **being collaborative**. These values drive the way we behave, how we interact with each other, and how we work together to achieve our vision and improve patient care.

We value taking care

This means we behave respectfully towards people, whatever their role, position, gender, or background. It means we act as representatives of the RCP and take decisions in the interests of the organisation as a whole.

We value learning

This means we continuously improve through active learning and honest reflection, so that we grow personally and as an organisation, while striving for excellence. We support learning and development opportunities.

We value being collaborative

This means we work together towards the RCP's vision in a collaborative and professional way, understanding that individuals bring different strengths and approaches to our work. We value diversity and each other's contributions.

The RCP positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, transgender status, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.

The RCP is all about our people – our members, staff, volunteers and leaders. We educate, influence and collaborate to improve health and healthcare for everyone and know we can only do this by being inclusive, encouraging and celebrating diverse perspectives. Welcoming into our community people who represent the 21st-century medical workforce and the diverse population of patients we serve is a priority for us.

As a volunteer you are expected to comply with all RCP data protection and security policies and procedures.

(Reviewed July 2023)