



# Requesting RCP representative contact lists for AACs

## A process guide for trusts and health boards

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### Who needs royal college representatives on AACs?

The Department of Health makes a distinction between the different health care providers in the UK based on the statutory need for them to have an RCP fellow as a representative on an Advisory Appointment Committee (AAC).

For NHS Trusts, Wales health boards, and Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts, it is a legal requirement\* to have an external RCP representative in attendance on AAC panels for consultant roles.

For NHS Foundation Trusts and certain other employers, this is not a statutory requirement, merely advisable. However, as having an external RCP rep in attendance serves a safeguarding benefit, the RCP encourages it and facilitates it.

### Who in the RCP can help?

The AACs team within the RCP is dedicated to providing lists of nominated fellows who can be the external RCP rep on AACs and helps trusts to find a suitable rep in good time for future AACs. The AACs team can be contacted on [AAC@rcp.ac.uk](mailto:AAC@rcp.ac.uk).

### What timelines should trusts bear in mind?

- > **Notice period for statutory employers** (for whom an external RCP rep on an AAC is a statutory requirement)
  - **8+ weeks from AAC date** – Ideal lead time to find an RCP rep; contact us to request lists.
  - **Less than 8 weeks** – We will endeavour to send lists wherever possible but trusts and health boards should be aware there is a risk that no reps will be available.
  - For this reason, at extremely short notice (ie **4 weeks or less**), we do not send any lists and will recommend changing the AAC date instead.\*\*

- > **Notice period for non-statutory employers** (for whom an external RCP rep on an AAC is not a statutory requirement but is recommended – eg NHS Foundation Trusts).
  - **8+ weeks** – AAC admin will provide rep lists, for the trust to contact.
  - **Less than 8 weeks** – The RCP team may be able to provide lists at less than 8 weeks' notice, subject to workload. The minimum timeline usually does not fall below 5 weeks.

## Why is it important for employers to adhere to the above timelines?

Please be aware that the nominees on our lists have not pre-agreed for the day in question and may need 6–8 weeks', or more, notice to reschedule clinical commitments. With too short notice, reps are unlikely to be available.

Timelines for requesting rep lists are important to bear in mind because of the human effort involved in finding a suitable rep – for both the RCP and recruitment team in trust HR departments.

We, in the AACs team, must manually check certain aspects of the eligibility criteria every time we put together a list. This is a time-intensive process, so it may take several working days for a response as we work through our queue of requests. For this reason, we cannot provide lists for AACs at extremely short notice, as they are unlikely to result in success and negatively impact the service we can provide for good notice requests.

## What is the process for sourcing an RCP rep?

1. The employer provides the RCP AACs team ([aac@rcp.ac.uk](mailto:aac@rcp.ac.uk)) with the following details:
  - Confirmed AAC date (ideally 8+ weeks' notice)
  - RCP job description reference number(s) (10-digit number issued at the start of the review)
  - Whether or not the college representative attend by videoconference.
2. The AACs team provides the employer with a list of nominees specific to the particular post.
3. The employer makes contact with the names on the list. It is advised that all physicians on the list be contacted simultaneously.
4. If the invitation is successful, the employer contacts the RCP with the name of the agreed rep. If the invitation is not successful, the employer contacts the RCP for a further list of names.

## What should happen when a rep agrees to attend?

The trust **must** inform the RCP when they have found a rep for an AAC. We need their full name and email address, as well as GMC number where possible. We then check that the rep meets all the criteria and inform the trust. This is the process whether the rep was found through RCP lists or the trust's own efforts. It is essential that the rep be someone who meets all the criteria to represent the RCP as an external assessor on the day of the AAC.

## What if an employer provides sufficient notice and is struggling to secure a rep?

Reps are usually secured after one or two lists. If you are struggling to find a rep, please inform the AAC team as soon as possible, especially if the AAC is now less than 4 weeks away. The RCP will send further lists of potential reps to the trust upon request. Please also consider simultaneously trying to secure a rep through your own efforts at the same time (eg colleagues of your employees who are wholly unrelated to the trust, but who meet the RCP criteria). The RCP AACs team can provide the criteria on request, and we **must** be informed of the name of anyone who agrees as soon as possible to verify eligibility.

## What happens if an AAC with a rep has to be cancelled or rescheduled?

The recruiting organisation is advised to contact the rep as well as the AACs team to inform us of the cancellation/date change. In case of a rescheduling, the original rep may be available on the new date and should be approached before requesting new lists. In case of cancellation, the same notice of 8+ weeks should be provided when requesting new lists.

\*As per National Health Service (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations 1996, amended 2004, and the corresponding **Department of Health Guidance** and **Welsh Guidance**.

\*\*At short notice we may also send the criteria for a suitable rep so that the trust has the option to source one through their own channels/ resources. In such cases the RCP AACs team must be informed of the rep's name, email address and GMC number as soon as possible in advance of the AAC so that we may verify eligibility. The same eligibility criteria will be applied to reps sourced through our lists, or by the recruiting trust or health board.