



RCP elected councillors – duties

RCP Council has agreed that candidates being nominated as elected councillors should be informed about their duties. This is so that they can be fully aware of the extent of this important commitment and ensure that they can plan any local arrangements that might be necessary to fulfil the role, if they are elected.

- > RCP Council is the professional decision-making body of the RCP. In recent years, it has been called on to do an increasing amount of work. Routinely, it meets six times each year, normally in January, March, May, July, September and November. Currently three meetings are held in person and three are hosted virtually – although a permanent move to fully hybrid meetings is in process. Meetings start at 10am or 10.30am and aim to finish by 1pm or 1.30pm.
- > Where the later start time is specified, Council meetings are preceded by meetings to elect new fellows (at 9.30am). Additional meetings of Council may also be called where necessary. Councillors should consider attendance at both Council and fellowship meetings to be a very high priority. The same applies to the RCP annual general meeting, which takes place in September every year. Various strategic/management boards and committees of the RCP include individual councillors as members. Although this workload is distributed, the expectation is that elected councillors will join at least one and a maximum of two boards each.
- > As well as the formal meetings, councillors are involved in other supporting work. These commitments are shared and distributed fairly by mutual agreement. For example, small groups of councillors are asked to review appropriate reports or publications and make recommendations about their acceptance to Council as a whole. There are also various ad hoc duties that involve councillors, such as appointment panels for RCP officers. Participation in RCP fellowship and membership ceremonies is also actively encouraged.
- > In addition, there is an expectation that councillors fulfil an external role in promoting the RCP and fellowship within their communities. Councillors are encouraged to nominate colleagues for fellowship on a regular basis.
- > The RCP is a membership and charitable organisation, but it is no longer the case that all councillors are trustees; in 2007, Council and the fellowship approved the establishment of a Board of Trustees to fulfil these responsibilities. The board includes three seats for members of Council (aside from the senior officers), at least two of whom are elected councillors.
- > Elected councillors (and indeed all councillors) are free to contact the president, registrar, other senior officers and committee managers at any time to raise issues, seek clarity and for consideration of material to be shared with the full membership of Council. The president/registrar will host a short pre-Council meeting for all elected councillors.

In accordance with bye-laws 30.8 and 33.1, the proceedings, papers and correspondence of Council and other meetings of the RCP should be assumed to be confidential and not divulged further without permission. New members of Council and RCP officers will be required to give the Faith to this effect, but guests or those attending Council in an observational capacity should also respect this. (Please note that consideration of transparency of Council meetings is in scope for an ongoing governance review, which may result in some future changes).

Candidates should note that the RCP Remuneration Committee has agreed that RCP officers, whether or not they are trustees, shall not receive honoraria or other remuneration for their services to the RCP. Candidates for RCP office should be aware that this post is not remunerated, and it is the duty of a candidate for office to obtain advance agreement from their employing authority that they will be given time to perform RCP duties, in the context of activities recognised by the Department of Health and Social Care as being in the wider interests of the NHS. However, RCP officers can claim reimbursement of all eligible expenses.

Accountability and performance

Members elected to the Royal College of Physicians Council are entrusted with the responsibility of representing the collective voice of the RCP's membership, rather than advancing personal views or agendas. Councillors are expected to engage in conversation and debate meaningfully, recognising and respecting that viewpoints of others may differ. Council members are expected to demonstrate openness to feedback and constructive criticism from their peers and the wider membership. They should actively seek input from the broader college community to ensure that their decisions and contributions reflect the diversity of perspectives within the RCP.

In cases where concerns arise regarding their performance or conduct, Council members will be expected to engage in open dialogue with their colleagues and the membership to ensure that their actions are consistent with the principles of good governance and the core values of the RCP. This accountability is grounded in a commitment to transparency, inclusivity, and ethical leadership. Council members should have a commitment to the vision, mission and values of the RCP and its [Code of Conduct](#).

Council membership – roles and responsibilities

The current membership of Council can be found [here](#).

Please see the *Council – roles and responsibilities* document for more information.

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.

Nomination deadline and tenure

- > Nominations (see separate download form) should be sent to the registrar.
- > Elected councillors will serve for 3 years starting 1 August 2025
- > Please return nominations simon.land@rcp.ac.uk by **Monday 16 December 2024**. The roles will be elected by fellows.

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.

Last reviewed: October 2024 (revision to be considered annually)