



Publishing through the RCN: **a guide for RCN members and staff**

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1 Introduction

This document applies to all members and staff who wish to produce publications – either online or in print – using RCN resources.

It does not apply to Marketing, Events or Communications staff in the RCN English regions or Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland producing materials in relation to their work.

The Communications department is responsible for disseminating RCN messages to our stakeholders – members, activists, politicians, key influencers in nursing and health, the media and to the general public. The department manages the corporate publishing programme and coordinates campaigns on behalf of the organisation, for example, *Keep nurses working, keep patients safe* and the *Say no to 65* campaigns.

The Marketing department leads on the development and promotion of the RCN's services and products, promoting membership to nursing staff throughout the UK and communicating the benefits to each membership group. The department also implements campaigns to attract new members as well as retaining existing ones.

Communications and Marketing share responsibility for the RCN's corporate identity and logos.

If you are unsure about whether you need to contact the Communications team or the Marketing team please speak to either first and you will be put in contact with an appropriate staff member.

2 Publishing policy

By publication we mean “any printed or online document, newsletter, leaflet, or other material which is aimed at targeted groups of RCN members, the RCN membership as a whole, and non-members such as stakeholders, potential members or the general public”. It does not include content developed for a section of the website.

For environmental and cost reasons, RCN Council has set as one of its priorities the need to move to electronic publishing wherever possible. Therefore, it will be assumed that all publications will only be made available electronically except where it is essential to print them.

If you wish to publish a document then you must do the following:

- ensure it is part of an RCN departmental or directorate operational plan for the current financial year*
or
- ensure that it is agreed by UKET as a corporate response to an unanticipated issue occurring within the current year
- notify the Publications team in the Communications department before the start of the financial year by completing the form at the end of this guide
- follow the guidance contained in this document.

These steps enable the Communications department to plan budgets and human resources appropriately. If you do not abide by them your document will not be published by the RCN.

In addition, you are not permitted to publish documents which meet the definition in the first paragraph outside of this procedure – for example, by publishing the work yourself.

*If the work started in a previous financial year you must ensure that it gets rolled over onto your current operational plan.

3 The stages of publishing

The main stages of publishing are: planning; creating the content; editing/sub-editing; design and typesetting; printing; promotion and distribution. They are explained in greater detail below – if you do not understand anything please consult the Publications team (contacts can be found on page 10).

3.1 Planning – setting your objectives

You must have clear objectives when planning a publication. Your objectives should comply with our publishing policy in section 2 and conform to **SMART** criteria, in other words they must be:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-lined.

3.2 Planning – identifying your target audience

Everything you plan for your document should be done with the target audience in mind. You need to consider:

- who they are?
- how many of them there are?
- whether they need this document?
- what they need from this document?
- how will they access the document? For example, via the RCN website, via their RCN representative.

3.3 Planning – setting a budget

The budget is split between development, production and distribution costs. Development costs are normally funded by the department where the document originates and cover things like author's expenses, meeting costs etc. Production costs are normally met from within the Communications department budget and cover things like editing, typesetting, design, and photography.

Distribution costs are normally met by RCN Direct and cover the costs of mailing and posting printed copies from Cardiff. Due to the recent rises in production and distribution costs, RCN Council, in 2006 agreed to charge for printed publication to recoup these costs – see page 7 for further information on pricing.

Before embarking on any developmental work on a publication you must consult with the Publications team in Communications to agree a budget – this should be done at the time you submit the publication proposal form.

3.4 Planning: establish the authors and copyright

For publications where the objective is not to generate profit, and for legal, practical and administrative purposes, authors are requested to transfer (assign) ownership of copyright to the RCN. Where the document is written in whole or in part by an RCN staff member as part of their employment then copyright in their

contribution is automatically owned by the RCN so an assignment is not necessary. Assignment enables the RCN to appear as the author of the publication, for cataloguing purposes, rather than the individual/s who put it together. However, all individuals involved with writing an RCN document will be acknowledged on the publication itself. Once we receive final copy you will be sent a form which you will need to sign, assigning copyright to the RCN (a hard copy will need to be returned to us).

If you wish to use previously published material by other authors you are responsible for obtaining written permission from the publishers of the work in which the material appeared. Any permissions granted and details of acknowledgements should be submitted with your draft copy. Please remember to ensure your permissions include publishing on the web.

However, where we produce something jointly with other organisations there may be different agreements. These agreements must be in place before any work at all begins on the publication.

3.5 Planning: joint publications – contributing organisations/sponsors

It is essential that a written agreement is set up (with the involvement of the RCN Publications team; and if appropriate, RCN Sponsorship Account Manager) **prior** to the start of any work on a publication taking place.

This written agreement will cover:

- budget and any contributing monies from other organisations
- copyright ownership
- key contacts for sign off on proofs
- future reprints
- logo placement and any wording/acknowledgement
- quantity of hard copies to be received by each organisation/sponsor
- print run (i.e. number of copies)
- where the PDF of the publication will be located
- details around pricing, distribution and promotion
- timeframes of agreement.

Please note: any agreement must adhere to the RCN income generation policy. This policy can be found at www.rcn.org.uk/newsevents/sponsorship/partnership_principles

4 Creating the content

4.1 Creating the content: preparing the draft

The draft is put together by experts in the subject of the publication. It is their responsibility to ensure the content is technically and clinically accurate, that it is current and that it is factually correct.

The draft should always be tested and reviewed by other experts in the same field. It should also be reviewed by relevant members of RCN staff. Staff in the Publications team can put you in touch with the right people if you aren't sure.

Putting together the draft is usually the longest stage in the production cycle, particularly if several experts are involved. Be realistic about how long this stage will take, so that you can meet the deadlines you have set yourself for producing the document.

4.2 Creating the content: submitting your draft

Please note it can take up to 12 weeks from receiving your first draft to producing a printed document. The timescale depends on the nature of your publication, the quality of the draft, and the capacity and priorities of the Communications department at the time you submit it. If you stick to agreed timescales and schedules you are more likely to get your document produced quickly.

You must submit your draft by email as a Word document and include your contact details. Do not spend too much time on presentation and formatting, because your document will be professionally typeset and designed – probably in another software package like Quark or Indesign. It is best to provide complicated diagrams, graphics, charts and photographs as separate numbered files with an indication in the Word document of where they should be placed.

Please note: if a publication has been on the production schedule for more than three months beyond the original draft submission date, with no movement on the project and with no update from the staff lead, it will automatically be placed on hold, subject to further discussions between the Publications team and staff lead.

4.3 Creating the content: editing and sub-editing

This will be done by in-house or freelance experts in writing and publishing.

The editor will consider:

- the use of language and the structure of the document
- equality – does the publication fully represent the diversity of the audience it is addressing?
- policy – is the document in line with RCN policy?
- legal issues such as defamation and copyright.

The editor may need to go back to the author to iron out any problems.

Sub-editing is about fine tuning the language itself and is often done by the editor, but may be done by a different person. A sub-editor's job is to eliminate ambiguity and anomalies. They will check for grammatical accuracy, spelling and inconsistencies with the use of language. They will apply RCN house style to the document.

Very often the editors and sub-editors are not nurses and may not be familiar with clinical terms. The edited and sub-edited draft will always be sent to the author/s for approval. They are, however, experts in their field and their views should be respected.

4.4 Creating the content: design and typesetting

Designs of publications can range from the most basic to the highly creative and complex. The Publications team are experienced in judging what will best suit your publication and its target audience, and what can be accommodated within your budget. Some RCN publications may be part of a series and will be given the standard design for that series. They must all fit in with RCN rules on corporate identity.

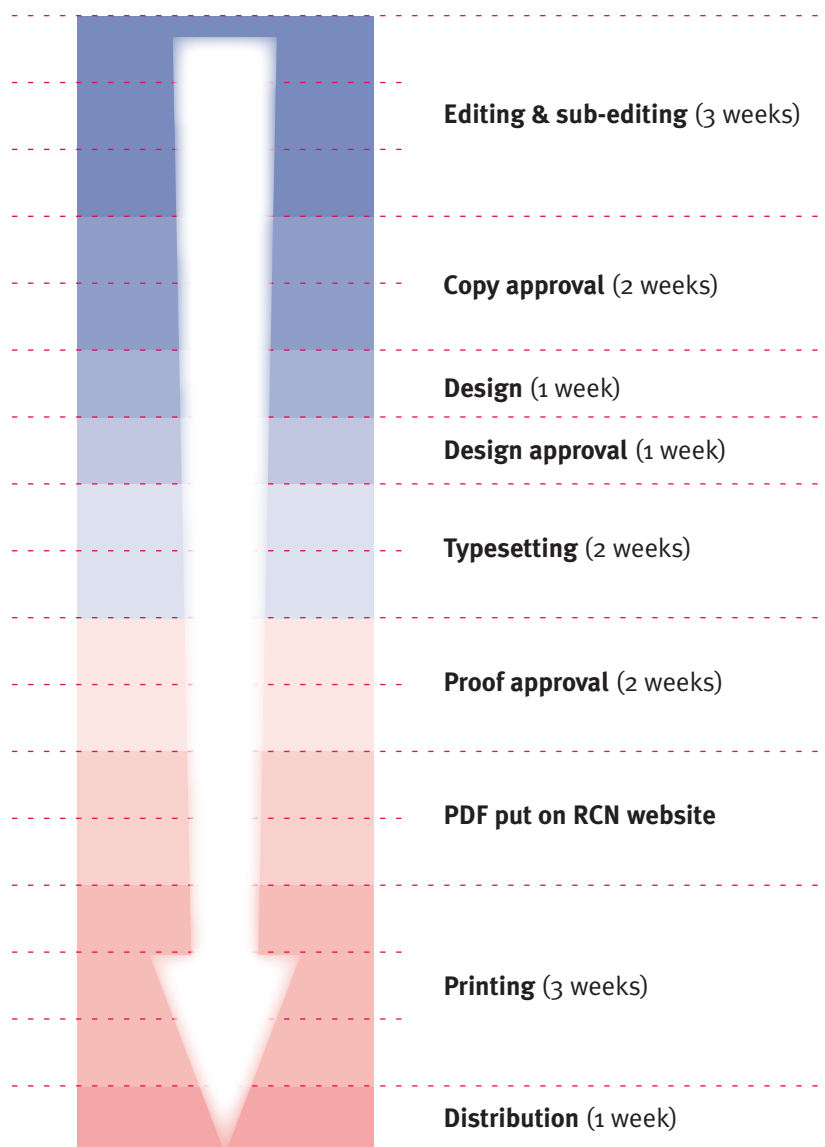
The Communications department has a roster of approved designers and typesetters which it will commission to design and/or typeset your publication.

You will be sent design proofs in the form of PDF files to check for any errors. Any amendments at this stage should be limited to minor corrections. Making major changes at this stage will create additional costs and could mean it misses its publication date.

4.5 Creating the content: publishing – in print and/or online

Once you have signed off the PDF proofs publications staff will sign them off. At this stage the document will be put on to the RCN website and, if appropriate, sent to print. The RCN uses several different printers, based all over the UK. The print buyer in the Publications team will select the company which offers the best price and service suited to your publication.

Approximate timescales for the stages of production – once you have supplied draft copy



5 Pricing, promotion and distribution

5.1 Pricing

RCN Council agreed in July 2006 to introduce charging for printed copies of certain publications. This is due to increasing demand for free copies at an increasing cost to the RCN. Copies are now free to download from the RCN website at www.rcn.org.uk/publications but a charge will be made for printed copies.

Prices are not being set on the basis of generating profit but in an effort to recoup production and distribution costs only. Prices do not take into account development costs nor authors' royalties and we are, therefore, unable to pay authors for their work. However, the RCN may commission titles specifically to generate income in which case author agreements will be drawn up and the overall costs of the publication factored into the final price.

Many publications are still free of charge – specifically those, like leaflets and posters, which have been produced to promote RCN campaigning and marketing objectives.

Prices will be discussed with you at the beginning of the project. A banded pricing structure has been established as follows:

Price banding

Please note that the minimum charge of £3.00 has been set to reflect the minimum cost of production, postage, storage and handling.

£3.00
£5.00
£10.00
£15.00

RCN members (including RCN representatives)

Members will receive 20% discount off all publications.

£2.40
£4.00
£8.00
£12.00

There is no discount for bulk buying.

5.2 Promotion and distribution

Promotion and distribution are worked out when the publication is first agreed. This is where the information about the size and profile of your target audience is crucial.

The promotion and distribution plan will consider two main areas:

- advertising and promotion
- physical distribution

Distribution

- A downloadable file is put onto the website and can be accessed by members and non-members
- Printed copies – if applicable – of the publication can be purchased from RCN Direct or via the RCN website
- Copies are sent to the author(s), RCN lead adviser, designer and editor
- Copies are also distributed to each of the RCN library sites
- Copies will be available for a launch event if applicable.

Advertising and promotion

- The Communications department will promote new publications on the staff intranet, RCN website, forum newsletters, RCN Bulletin and the RCN Members' Magazine
- The Communications department will maximise opportunities to promote new publications through advertising and media coverage when applicable. They will advise on staging a press launch or generating coverage in external media.

5.3 Bulk purchases by RCN entities

RCN Council based its decision to charge for publications on the basis that giving away printed publications was not financially sustainable nor desirable from an environmental perspective.

Therefore the wholesale printing and distribution of priced publications where the cost is being borne directly or indirectly by the RCN is not permitted. So, for example, a membership group or department is not permitted to “buy” copies to distribute to members from its own funds.

5.4 Complimentary copies

The exact number will be discussed and agreed by the Communications Officers once a publication goes into production.

6 Review date

Publications usually have a shelf life of around 12 months or more. You will have been asked to provide a review date on the publication request form. Once this date is reached the Publications team will contact you to ensure that the information contained in the publication is up to date or if any revisions need to be made. A new review date can be set at this point.

7 Key contacts

Emma Duthie	Communications Officer FIRST POINT OF CONTACT Tel: 020 7647 3691 Email: emma.duthie@rcn.org.uk Room 310, RCN HQ	New publications Planning Scheduling Budgeting Permission to reproduce RCN material
Stephanie Wilson	Head of Membership Communications Tel: 020 7647 3621 Email: stephanie.wilson@rcn.org.uk Room 310, RCN HQ	Oversees all membership communications – acts as managing editor for all RCN corporate publications
	Assistant Communications Officer Tel: 020 7647 3620 Email: emma.duthie@rcn.org.uk Room 310, RCN HQ	Members' Handbook RCN Diary Publication reprints Publication stocks Publication distribution
Tamsin Hoare	Sponsorship Manager Tel: 020 7647 3934 Email: tamsin.hoare@rcn.org.uk Room 311, RCN HQ	Publications sponsorship

8 How to access the publication proposal form

The form can be downloaded from www.rcn.org.uk/publication_proposal_form. You should complete this form after you have read this guidance and before you begin writing your publication.

- Complete the form and submit via email to emma.duthie@rcn.org.uk
- You will also need to print off a copy of your completed form, sign it in the relevant box and then get it signed by the RCN staff adviser. Post the completed form to Emma Duthie (address above).