

Council and Executive Team 'Ways of Working' Guidelines

Purpose This guidance outlines the agreed ways of working guidelines between RCN Council and the Executive Team.		
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These 'ways of working' guidelines set out agreed ways of working between the Council and the Executive Team and between all individuals in those groups. These guidelines have been informed by discussions held in a facilitated meeting in January 2025.

There is a separate Roles and responsibilities of the RCN Executive Team and RCN Council Guidance Document, which explains the composition and purpose of the RCN Executive Team and the RCN Council and highlights the differences between the two.

1) How we will work as a team and support each other

- We will build a collaborative culture in which open and transparent communication is encouraged, and every voice is heard.
- We will respect each other's opinions and provide constructive feedback to each other, collectively and individually.
- We will engage in honest discussions, actively giving time for minority voices.

To do this:

Council will:

- ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to speak during discussions.
- prepare for all meetings, reading the papers and seeking clarification as needed from the authors.
- support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct at meetings and outside of meetings.

ET will:

- be available to help Council members in their roles and share expertise by participating in discussions.
- provide expertise.
- provide timely, accurate and up-to-date information to inform discussions.

We will all:

- choose our language carefully so that we are respectful of the feelings of others or the impact of our words on others.
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2) How we will approach decision making

- We will take a consensus driven approach and uphold collective decisions.
- We will acknowledge our shared responsibility for the RCNs successes and failures.
- We will maintain confidentiality when discussions regarding Council business arise outside of a Council meeting.

To do this:

Council will:

- ask fair but challenging questions and seek further information when needed.
- declare interests and take appropriate actions to mitigate against these.
- take votes where required.

ET will:

- listen at all times and answer questions with honesty and integrity.
- contribute to discussions.
- set out the context and risks of decisions and actively articulate these.
- support and enact the consequences of decisions.

We will all:

- take time to reflect on our input and actions.
- identify ethical issues and evaluate options when making decisions.
- involve and empower diverse voices throughout the decision-making process.
- positively support the collective decisions publicly.
- recognise the need for informed expertise in order to make good decisions.

3) How we will delegate effectively to others

- We will delegate fairly, acknowledging the strengths of others.
- We will be clear in our asks of others, and we will trust the decisions of those we delegate to.

To do this:

Council will:

- ensure consistency of messaging to those committees/boards it delegates to.
- do all we can to promote constructive working relationships with our committees and boards.

ET will:

- ensure that the scheme of delegation is kept up to date and relevant.
- ensure that roles are clearly defined and captured in role descriptors and terms of reference.
- keep abreast of emerging issues impacting on our regulatory and legal compliance obligations.

We will all:

- work together to identify and address any barriers to effective delegation.

4) How we will manage our stakeholders

- We will ensure that there are robust reporting and communication mechanisms in place and that the governance operating framework is operating effectively.
- We will ensure that Council decisions are reported to the members honestly and transparently and in a timely manner.
- We will realise our duties as custodians and act responsibly to protect the assets of the RCN for the long-term benefit of its members.

To do this:

Council members will:

- attend Board meetings and act as effective information conduits between Council and the Boards.
- attend events at which members and stakeholders are present in our capacity as Council members.

ET will:

- ensure that information to members and other stakeholders is made available in a timely and accessible manner.

We will all:

- engage frequently with members actively listening while managing expectations.
- promote the RCN, its objectives and the role of nursing more widely to our external stakeholders.
- work together to foster constructive relationships with all our stakeholders.
- be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and positive reputation of the College.