

Terms of Reference: Forums Co-ordinating Committee

1. Name of Committee/Board

Forums Co-ordinating Committee

2. Purpose

- To co-ordinate the work of the UK professional forums;
- To ensure that the work of the UK professional forums reflects the strategic objectives and priorities of the RCN;
- To ensure that good governance, financial processes and practices are adhered to by the UK professional forums;
- To assess and fairly allocate RCN funds to UK professional forum project bids in accordance with set criteria.
- To ensure that projects allocated RCN funds are delivered in accordance with the approved brief and to agreed timescales.
- To agree the allocation of UK professional forum events in conjunction with the RCN events team.
- To agree the allocation of funded voting places at Congress to forum steering committees.
- To advise and make recommendations to the Professional Nursing Committee on matters relating to UK professional forums.

3. Delegated responsibilities

3.1 The Forums Co-ordinating Committee will:

- Report to the Professional Nursing Committee (PNC) twice a year on its activities.

- Ensure any identified risks in relation to the work of the UK professional forums are escalated to the Professional Nursing Committee;
- Recommend to PNC changes to UK professional forums, including the establishment and disestablishment of forums;
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of individual UK professional forums to ensure they are complying with governance and financial best practice guidance and delivering their annual reports and make recommendations to the RCN Professional Nursing Committee on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed;
- Report on the allocation RCN funds to UK professional forum projects, provide feedback to forums on their project bids, and ensure that these projects are managed and delivered in accordance with the agreed brief and timescales.

4. Reporting and accountability

- 4.1 The Forums Co-ordinating Committee is responsible and accountable to the Professional Nursing Committee.
- 4.2 The Forums Co-ordinating Committee will work closely with the Forum Chairs Group to keep each other informed.
- 4.3 Formal minutes of meetings will be kept and approved at subsequent meetings of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee.
- 4.4 Formal minutes of Forums Co-ordinating Committee meetings and associated papers will be made available to the Professional Nursing Committee on request.
- 4.5 At the request of the Professional Nursing Committee, the Chair of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee will attend two Professional Nursing Committee meetings a year to deliver an FCC update.

5. Meetings and quorum

- 5.1 The Forums Co-ordinating Committee will meet at least 4 times during the year.
- 5.2 Special ad hoc meetings may also be called if the business of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee is of such urgency that it cannot wait until the next quarterly meeting.

- 5.3 The quorum for decision-making is 2 Forum Chairs (which can include the Chair of the Forum Chairs Group) and 2 other members.
- 5.4 The rules and procedures in the *RCN Meetings Policy and Process* apply to the Forums Co-ordinating Committee.

6. Membership

- 6.1 There shall be 8 members of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee as follows:
- 1 RCN Fellow (elected by RCN Fellows)
 - The Chair of the Forum Chairs Group (ex-officio member)
 - 3 Forum Chairs (who will abstain from decisions concerning their own forums) (elected by the Forum Chairs as ex-officio members)
 - 1 member of the RCN Professional Nursing Committee (appointed by the Professional Nursing Committee as an ex-officio member)
 - 1 member of the RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee (appointed by the Nursing Support Workers Committee as an ex-officio member)
 - 1 member of the RCN Students Committee (appointed by the Students Committee as an ex-officio member)

7. Observers

- 7.1 Observers may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair and with the agreement of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee. Observers can speak and/or participate in the meeting only with the permission of, or at the request of, the Chair.
- 7.2 Individuals attending in observer status will receive those papers relating to the areas relevant to their observer role.
- 7.3 Observers will not usually attend private or confidential sessions of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee.

8. Election to the Forums Co-ordinating Committee

- 8.1 Elections to the Committee will be conducted in accordance with the *RCN's Elections and Appointments* policies and with the specific procedure for each election.

9. Terms of office

- 9.1 The term of office for the RCN Fellow on the Forums Co-ordinating Committee shall be four years and that member shall be eligible for re-election for one further term of office.
- 9.2 The terms of office of ex-officio members of the Committee will follow the individual member's elected term of office for their substantive Committee.
- 9.3 A member who has served for a total of eight years in any capacity shall be ineligible to stand for re-election to the Committee until after a period of two years has elapsed. The *RCN Regulation on Terms of Office* applies in respect of serving more than one term.
- 9.4 Members of the Forums Co-ordinating Committee are asked to commit to serving their full term once elected and not stand for another RCN role if that meant they would need to stand down from the Forums Governance Group mid-term.

10. Mid-term (casual) vacancies

- 10.1 A casual vacancy on the Forums Co-ordinating Committee shall be filled in accordance with the *RCN's Process for Filling Casual Vacancies*.

11. Chair

- 11.1 In accordance with Rule 2.2 in the Royal Charter the Forums Co-ordinating Committee shall have a Chair.
- 11.2 Meetings will be chaired by the RCN Fellow.
- 11.3 In the absence of the RCN Fellow, the Professional Nursing Committee member will chair the meeting.

12. Staff support, advice and guidance

- 12.1 The lead Executive Director will be the Chief Nursing Officer who will ensure support and advice to the Forums Co-ordinating Committee as appropriate.

- 12.2 Committee members and staff will work together positively and constructively, in line with the RCN's Respect Charter, to deliver the purposes of the Committee and within the Operating Framework.
- 12.3 In the unlikely situation where key professional advice presented by staff is not accepted by the Forums Co-ordinating Committee the advice and reasons for not accepting the professional advice will be fully documented in the minutes of the meeting. Should the responsible Director conclude this position poses a risk to the organisation and its members, the circumstances will be brought to the attention of the General Secretary and Chief Executive who will assess the seriousness of the position and advise the Chair of Council accordingly. Should a resolved position not be reached the matter will be escalated to Council for a determination on the way forward.
- 12.4 The Governance Support team will provide secretariat support to the Forums Co-ordinating Committee.

13. Removal from the Forums Co-ordinating Committee

- 13.1 A Forums Co-ordinating Committee member may be removed before the end of their term of office if they:
- a) have exceeded their powers in a way that is detrimental to the RCN
 - b) have failed to discharge their duties
 - c) have acted in breach of the RCN's Code of Conduct and/or Respect Charter
 - d) have acted in a manner likely to bring the RCN into disrepute
 - e) they have failed to attend three consecutive meetings (excluding special ad hoc meetings)
 - f) have any active cautions from the NMC, or other regulator, against their name, are currently subject to any NMC, or other regulator's, sanction, and/or they are subject to any ongoing disciplinary proceedings with any of their employers or professional disciplinary proceedings before the NMC or another regulator.
 - g) are subject to ongoing disciplinary proceedings in respect of any role they hold at the RCN and/or currently subject to any RCN disciplinary sanction.
- 13.2 The processes for such removal will be in accordance with the Member Disciplinary and Resolution Policy.

Last revised by the Forums Governance Group: January 2025

Approved by Professional Nursing Committee: 3 April 2025 (NB: title was changed from Forums Governance Group to Forums Coordinating Committee)

The template for these terms of reference will be reviewed annually and was approved by the RCN Council on 27 July 2022 and amended in September 2022

These terms of office should be read in conjunction with the RCN Governance Operating Framework, RCN Group Scheme of Delegation and other documents referred to above.