

Terms of Reference: RCN International Committee

1. Name of Committee
 - 1.1. International Committee
2. Purpose
 - 2.1. The RCN Council has established the International Committee in accordance with Schedule Rule 2.1 of the RCN Royal Charter to ensure delivery of the following Royal Charter objects:
 - 3.5 To promote through the medium of international agencies and otherwise the foregoing purposes in other countries as well as in Our United Kingdom.
 - 2.2. The main purpose of the International Committee is to provide expert advice to RCN Council, the Professional Nursing Committee, and the Trade Union Committee and staff, for delivery of the RCN's 5 year strategy in order to meet the aforementioned object in the Royal Charter.
3. Delegated responsibilities
 - 3.1 The main responsibilities of the International Committee are:
 - a) To provide direction and advice on the RCN's international strategy
 - b) To support the RCN to become a more vocal voice in the global nursing community
 - c) To support the RCN's strategic partnerships with nursing associations
 - d) To support the RCN in promoting high standards of care, influencing policy and advocating for better working conditions for nurses and nursing globally
 - e) To provide international policy and practice advice related to global health, and the international workforce (in the UK and globally) including to strengthen understanding of implications and learning for the UK
 - f) To provide and facilitate proactive access to engagement, networked intelligence, insight and collaboration from international policy and practice solutions for applicability to the UK.
 - g) To provide strategic and high-level oversight of workstreams to support the international workforce
 - h) To provide expert contribution to key workstream documents, RCN position statements and consultations
 - i) To evaluate and provide guidance to RCN Council on the implications of Government policy on members of the international workforce globally and in the UK.
 - j) To regularly update and provide advice to the Professional Nursing Committee and the Trade Union Committee on aspects of mutual interest through quarterly reporting

International activity

- k) Provide expert guidance to the RCN Council on the support of nurses in conflict and crisis through technical and virtual support
- l) Advise the International Academy on partnerships as a trusted working partner at global forum and member of the ICN
- m) Monitor and evaluate opportunities, partnerships and relationships available through membership of the ICN
- n) Update and support diaspora groups in their global work and outreach outside in the UK
- o) Monitor activity and advise RCN Council on all the RCN's international affiliations and memberships.
- p) Provide expert guidance to the International Academy in providing education resources to nurses globally

Global nursing workforce in the United Kingdom

- q) Provide expert guidance to the International Academy on the support of RCN members who return to the UK after working internationally.
- r) Consider, and provide feedback on, updates on the RCN's influencing, policy, and advocacy work including matters relating to immigration (this is not exhaustive) that affect internationally educated nurses (IENs), with a particular focus on barrier impacting their career progression, workplace and social wellbeing.
- s) Intelligence gathering and information sharing.

4. Reporting and accountability

- 4.1 The International Committee is responsible and accountable to RCN Council for all aspects of its responsibilities.

- 4.2 Formal minutes of meetings will be kept and approved at subsequent meetings of the International Committee.
- 4.3 In accordance with Rule 2.3 in the RCN Royal Charter the deliberations of the Committee shall be reported to RCN Council and any resolution passed or decision taken shall be reported to RCN Council.
- 4.4 The Committee will advise RCN Council as well as the RCN Professional Nursing and Trade Union Committees on international matters of mutual interest. It will provide a stronger global dimension to the RCN's strategic policy and practice priorities.
- 4.5 Formal minutes of meetings of the Committee will be included in RCN Council papers for information. Associated papers will be made available to RCN Council at their request through the Chair of Council.
- 4.6 At the request of RCN Council, the Chair of the International Committee will attend a designated section of RCN Council meetings to deliver regular International Committee updates.

5. Meetings and quorum

- 5.1 The International Committee will meet at least three times during the year. The dates of the meetings shall be agreed by RCN Council in the year preceding that in which the meetings are to be held.
- 5.2 The quorum for decision-making in a meeting is half the International Committee (7 people).
- 5.4 The quorum for a decision made outside of a meeting via electronic means is at least half of the International Committee who must put their agreement in writing for the decision to be approved.
- 5.3 The rules and procedures in the RCN Policy and Process for Running Meetings apply to this Committee.

6. Membership

- 6.1 There shall be no more than 13 members of the Committee as follows:

- The RCN President
- No more than 12 appointed members to include:
 - 1 x nursing support worker member
 - 1 x student member

In addition a member of the Trade Union Committee and a member of the Professional Nursing Committee shall attend the meetings as observers.

- 6.2 Further eligibility requirements are set out in the RCN Elections and Appointments Policy and Processes and in the specific appointment procedure for each process which is held.

7. Observers

- 7.1 Observers may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair and the agreement of the 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.

8. Election/appointment to the committee

- 8.1 Elections/appointments to the committee will be conducted in accordance with the RCN Elections and Appointments Policy and Processes and with the specific procedure for each election/appointment.
- 8.2 Elections/appointments will be made based on expertise and experience in international matters.

9. Terms of office

- 9.1 Terms of office will be for a period of four years.
- 9.2 The RCN Office Holder Eligibility Regulations shall apply in respect of serving more than one term.

10. Mid-Term (casual) vacancies

- 10.1 A casual vacancy on the International Committee shall be filled in accordance with the RCN's Elections and Appointments Policy and Processes.

11. Chair and Vice-Chair

- 11.1 In accordance with Rule 2.2 in the RCN Royal Charter the International Committee shall have a Chair. A Vice-Chair shall also be elected.

- 11.2 The RCN President will be the Chair for the duration of their term of office.
- 11.3 The Vice-Chair shall be elected by the members of the Committee from amongst the members of the Committee.
- 11.4 The term of office for Vice-Chair will be for two years and elections for that role will take place in alternate years to the President elections.
- 11.5 The RCN Office Holder Eligibility Regulations shall apply in respect of serving more than one term.
- 11.6 The Chair and Vice-Chair must relinquish these roles at the end of the term of office for the role, or if, for whatever reason, they cease to be a member of the International Committee/President including reaching the end of their term of office.

12. Staff support, advice, and guidance

- 12.1 The lead Executive Director will be the Chief Nurse who will ensure support and advice to the Committee as appropriate.

The Associate Director of the International Academy shall be responsible for overseeing the Committee's engagement with the global international workforce outside the UK.

The Associate Director, Member Relations shall be responsible for overseeing the Committee's engagement within the UK international workforce.

- 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 RCN's Governance Operating Framework.
- 12.3 In the unlikely event that key professional advice presented by staff is not accepted by the 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 RCN Council for a determination on the way forward.
- 12.4 The Executive Director of Governance will ensure that Secretariat support is provided by the Governance Directorate.

13. Removal from the Committee

- 13.1 A Committee member may be removed before the end of their term of office on the grounds 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 Resolution and Disciplinary Policy.

These terms of reference will be reviewed every three years at a meeting of the International Committee but may be reviewed sooner if necessary. Any recommended changes will be subsequently approved by RCN Council.

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

Version control:

Reviewed by the International Committee on 5 December 2024.

Approved by RCN Council on 30 January 2024.

Reviewed by the International Committee on 5 February 2026.

Approved by RCN Council on 23 April 2026 (also including amendments made in the light of changes arising from the RCN Office Holder Eligibility Regulations, which came into effect on 1 January 2026 and to ensure the harmonisation of language and policy titles across all Committee and Board terms of reference).

