

Role Descriptor: RCN Professional Nursing Committee Member

Reporting To: Council

Basis: In accordance with the RCN Elections Policy and Processes, Professional Nursing Committee members are elected for four-year terms and half of the members refresh every two years.

Time commitment (including meetings): The estimated time commitment for Professional Nursing Committee members when averaged over the year is around 2 days per month, including some regional activity. This includes formal planned and ad hoc meetings, attending events, reading papers and engaging with members.

The Professional Nursing Committee meets at least 6 times per year, in person, hybrid or online. The majority of these meetings are at RCN HQ Cavendish Square, London. Ad hoc meetings of the Professional Nursing Committee may be required between planned meetings for timely discussion and/or decision making.

Professional Nursing Committee members are also expected, and are funded, to attend RCN Congress which takes place annually. Professional Nursing Committee members may take a lead for specific workstreams arising from Congress. They are also expected to attend the Annual General Meeting (in person or online).

Professional Nursing Committee members sit in an ex-officio capacity on their country or regional Board which meets approximately 3 times per year or, in the case of the Nursing Support Worker and student members of the Committee, on the Nursing Support Workers and Students Committees respectively which meet approximately 5 times per year.

Expenses: Members of the Professional Nursing Committee may reclaim all travelling and similar expenses in accordance with the RCN Expenses Policy.

Eligibility: The eligibility requirements applicable to the Professional Nursing Committee are set out in the RCN Elections Policy and Processes document. Depending on the category of member, different criteria apply.

Purpose of the role

Professional Nursing Committee members hold key roles as governors of the RCN. Under the leadership of the Chair of the Professional Nursing Committee, members have a collective duty to be responsible and accountable to RCN Council to carry out governance functions as aligned to the professional nursing activity of the RCN, as delegated by Council.

The functions defined as professional nursing activity include education, research, standards in nursing practice and oversight of the work of the professional forums, public policy and associated political affairs and lobbying.

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Professional Nursing Committee aims to:

- provide leadership and direction on professional nursing activity and ensure the RCN has a clear vision for its activities as a professional body.
- ensure the RCN is seen as the source of expertise on professional nursing issues and the voice of nursing, locally, across the UK and internationally.
- promote and lead active engagement with members across the UK on professional nursing matters and to ensure their views are fed into the RCN's professional nursing activity.

Professional Nursing Committee members should not involve themselves in the day-to-day operations of the RCN, but may, from time to time, work collaboratively with RCN staff members to achieve results. When representing the RCN in a public space in their capacity as a Professional Nursing Committee member, they should ensure that their actions do not bring the RCN and profession into disrepute, and they should take care not to take public positions contrary to those of the RCN.

Key responsibilities of the role include:

- Developing and influencing local or national policy through engagement with health and social care stakeholders and shaping development across the health and/or social care system.
- Supporting a nursing culture which empowers staff to achieve excellence in the delivery of patient care through education and continuing professional development.
- Being a sounding board for staff on specific professional nursing issues where the member has particular expertise or experience.
- Engaging with members and ensuring that their feedback is taken into consideration during Professional Nursing Committee discussions in the interests of furthering the RCN purpose for the membership as a whole.
- Acting as an advocate and ambassador for the RCN and nursing among members, the wider public and a broad range of stakeholder organisations including formally representing the College at stakeholder and other events and meetings which are held in furtherance of the RCN's strategic aims.

- Attending Professional Nursing Committee meetings as set out in the calendar of meetings, reading meeting papers in advance and participating constructively in debates about matters concerning the nursing profession in the four countries.
- Bringing impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision-making and contributing to the creation and maintenance of an inclusive and open culture.
- Accepting collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the Professional Nursing Committee. Members elected by particular constituencies should not act as if delegated by that group and should not be bound in any way by mandates given to them by others.
- Fostering and maintaining constructive working relationships with fellow members of the committee and key members of staff including the RCN's Chief Nurse and Deputy Chief Nurses, to ensure that roles are understood and responsibilities are met.
- Upholding the values, decisions and policies of the RCN, acting with integrity and committing to the highest standards of behaviour as set out in the RCN Respect Charter and Code of Conduct.
- Attending the RCN's annual Congress, the AGM and other General Meetings as required.
- Demonstrating a strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).
- Committing to induction and learning and development opportunities in order to perform effectively as an individual and as part of the Professional Nursing Committee.
- Depending on the role held, being a member of a constituency board or committee (for example, country or regional board, Student or Nursing Support Worker Committee).
- Maintaining up-to-date declaration of interests for publication on the website.
- Undertaking other specific activities on behalf of the RCN as discussed and agreed with the Chair of Professional Nursing Committee and the Executive Team Lead.

Person specification:

All Professional Nursing Committee members must be able to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and values:

1. expert professional knowledge on nursing and health issues and the development and implementation of quality standards for nursing practice
2. an understanding of, and commitment to, the RCN, its purpose, its work and its role as a Trade Union and a professional membership body and Royal College and an understanding of the RCN as the voice of nursing and the need to promote it more widely.
3. an understanding of the challenges and issues currently faced by nursing and health care nationally and internationally.
4. an awareness of the importance of evidence and nursing research and its application to nursing practice.
5. experience in developing and influencing local or national policy development and monitoring its implementation and effectiveness.
6. an active commitment to the RCN Respect Charter, EDI and the Nolan Principles.
7. a willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort.
8. a readiness to take and be accountable for decisions.
9. understanding and experience of governance, management and leadership.
10. integrity and commitment to act in the best interests of the RCN without regards to personal interest or benefit.
11. objectivity, fairness, independence of mind, integrity, wisdom, discretion and good judgement.
12. the ability to give direct and honest opinions and add value to decision making by offering different perspectives and constructive suggestions.