



# RCN Learning Reps

## Role descriptor

Learning reps ensure that members have fair access to the learning and training they need to do their jobs well and progress in the profession. They bargain for skills. Where a member needs and wants, learning reps help them access support and resources and challenge barriers that might be getting in their way.

They do this by building strong relationships in their workplace to identify needs and wants and working to ensure these are met. This may be signposting to existing resources, organising training with RCN support, or working to ensure the employer provides education and is meeting their contractual obligations regarding training.

As union representatives, RCN learning reps have the right to time off to do their duties, detailed under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Acts 1992.

As an RCN learning rep, your role may include the duties below.

### Engaging members

- Carry out regular visits to your workplace area to meet members and colleagues, and identify learning and development needs.
- Take part in orientations for new starters, including students.
- Be an RCN point of contact for your employer's learning and development staff.

### Tackling issues

- Carry out or take part in casework relating to access to training and learning, including capability assessments and supported improvement plans.
- Co-ordinate and support the delivery of learning events which meet member needs, with the local RCN region or country.
- Monitor and advocate to make sure that employers fulfil contractual obligations regarding training and development requirements.
- Support members and their colleagues in appraisal preparation.
- Support members and their colleagues in revalidation preparation.
- Direct members to learning and development resources.
- Connect students with experienced staff or peer mentors where needed, to ease transition into clinical practice.
- Advocate for protected time and reasonable workload to allow for supervision.

### Creating long-term change and improvements at work

- Advocate for learning needs to be incorporated into discussions about organisational change, policy development and workplace culture on staff representation and negotiation groups.

- Engage with education and other relevant teams in your organisation to inform their strategy development.
- Represent and negotiate for the collective interests of members and the workforce on staff side and in partnership forums (eg, Joint Consultative Negotiating Committee, Health and Safety Committee, Learning and Development Committee).
- Communicate national RCN campaigns to members and co-ordinating activities where relevant.
- Run local and workplace specific campaigns and activities to improve learning and development policies and practices, where needed.

### **Ensuring an equal and fair workplace and profession**

- Promote equitable access to learning and monitor any disparities in this.
- Challenge workplace culture and policy to ensure learning is equitable regardless of any protected characteristic.
- Campaign for inclusive policies and cultures.
- Ensure RCN meetings and communications reflect the diversity of the workforce.
- Promote allyship and challenge exclusionary behaviours in RCN spaces.
- Engage with staff EDI networks and/or leads, self-organised groups and RCN networks.
- Ensure RCN reps and members are supported and encouraged to contribute to workplace EDI initiatives and policies.

### **Co-ordinating RCN presence in the workplace**

- Hold regular meetings with fellow reps to co-ordinate efforts and ensure all members in your workplace are kept updated on RCN activity.
- Serve as a contact point for RCN activists such as student ambassadors and voting volunteers.
- Make sure your RCN contact details and availability are clear to all members.
- Keep noticeboards and intranet updated with RCN materials and meeting information.
- Recruit and support new reps and members, including student members.

### **Engaging with the RCN**

- Attend and update branch meetings and AGMs.
- Work with RCN officers and your region to share workplace insights.
- Participate in support and supervision with your RCN officer.
- Maintain and develop your rep skills through ongoing learning and development.
- Record rep activities on the RCN system provided.

**Please note that members who are stewards, health and safety reps or learning reps, and who hold principal governance committee roles within the RCN, may be unable to carry out the full remit of the role due to their additional governance responsibilities.**

**Additionally, to be clear, representatives elected into principal governance roles such as the RCN Trade Union Committee, RCN Professional Nursing Committee or RCN Council should not be placed on hold where they are fulfilling their national governance duties and responsibilities.**