

RCN forum steering committees – terms of reference

1. Role and purpose of the committee

The forum steering committee is responsible for

- Championing the RCN and promoting the advancement of nursing itself
- Acting as the voice of nursing in their specialist areas of interest.
- Proactively engaging with members and representing their views to ensure that the RCN's Royal College agenda reflects their priorities and needs
- Leading the development of knowledge within specialist areas of interest
- Holding events, meetings and other activities to enhance the skills of members by providing opportunities for members to participate in professional activities and promote excellence of practice, to network and to share best practice
- Signposting members to RCN benefits and services
- Supporting nominations for elected roles in the RCN including President, Deputy President, Council, board members and Chair and Vice Chair of Congress
- To submit proposed agenda items for Congress ensuring that forum members have an opportunity to contribute to and develop proposed agenda items.
- Ensuring the forum is represented and votes at RCN Congress
- Ensuring that forum members attend and participate in the RCN's general meetings

2. Membership and chair of the committee

The forum committee will be made up of seven members of the forum.

The chair will be elected by the Committee from amongst the forum membership as a whole.

All members of the committee may sign documentation on behalf of the forum – for example, to support election nominations or Congress agenda submissions.

Members of the committee must be in current membership of the RCN. They can be in any membership category paying full or discounted payment plans. There is no qualifying RCN membership period.

3. Appointments to the committee

Members will be appointed to the committee in accordance with the procedure for forum steering committee members.

The chair will be elected from amongst the full forum membership in accordance with the procedure for electing forum chairs.

4. Terms of office

Forum steering committee members may be appointed for terms of two or four years. However, there is a maximum term of office of eight consecutive years in total on the committee. Following which there must be a two year break before a member can re-join up to a maximum of another four years. No more than 12 years can be served in total.

5. Mid-term (casual) vacancies

If a vacancy occurs mid-term it will only be advertised and members invited to apply if the Forum Committee membership falls below 4 members.

6. Meetings of the forum steering committee, making decisions & ways of working

Meetings of the forum committee will take place in accordance with the policy and process for forum steering committee meetings.

The committee may make decisions on behalf of the forum by email, teleconference or other ways of working.

The quorum for each meeting shall be half the forum steering committee or, if an odd number, rounded up (ie if there are five people on the committee then you need three to be quorate). If the committee makes decisions in the ways described in the paragraph above they must ensure a quorum is also achieved.

All decisions require a majority of those voting to be passed. The Chair has the casting vote in instances where there is an equality of votes.

Another member of the committee may chair a meeting in the absence of the chair.

Example:- a forum committee of six starts an email communication between themselves to discuss and agree a proposal for a fringe event at Congress. Two of the committee are on holiday so cannot take part in the discussion. However, the remaining four form a “quorum” and so

can make the decisions required as long as at least three of them agree to any proposal.

7. Removal from the forum steering committee

A forum steering committee member may be removed before the end of their term of office on the grounds that they have:

- a) exceeded their powers in a way that is detrimental to the RCN
- b) failed to discharge their duties
- c) acted in breach of the RCN's Dignity Charter
- d) acted in a manner likely to bring the RCN into disrepute

The policies and processes laid down by RCN Council in relation to disciplinary and competence matters will be followed in such circumstances.

Advice must be sought from the RCN Governance Department before action is taken.

8. Forum unable to elect a committee or chair.

If it is not possible to appoint a minimum of four to the committee, then as a last resort, the Forums Governance Group may ask the Nursing Practice and Policy Committee to dissolve the forum and create a network.

If no-one stands as chair then, as a last resort, the forum may wish to consider asking the Forum Governance Group to agree to a limited term appointment while a succession plan is developed and put into action.

Role Descriptors

Forum Committee Member

The main responsibilities of a Forum Committee Member includes:

- Participating in a mandatory induction to the role.
- Contributing to the development and delivery of the annual strategic plan for the Forum.
- Contributing to the annual report to be submitted by the Forum.
- Taking part in a minimum of 50% of Forum monthly teleconferences
- Completing an RCN representation from on each occasion he/she represents the RCN.
- Taking on an equal part of the Forum Committee's total workload.
- Delivering pieces of Forum work which they have agreed to lead, with the support of the RCN Nursing Department, on time and on budget.
- Playing an active role in RCN Congress
- Actively promoting the work of the Forum and the recruitment and retention of Forum and RCN members.
- Discharging their role in line with RCN policies, procedures and regulations.

Personal specification

When being interviewed for appointment the panel will look for evidence that the applicant can commit to the role alongside their professional life or study and has the knowledge of the specialist areas represented by the Committee and the communication skills needed to represent the forum and the RCN.

Forum Chair

The RCN Forum Chair is a senior national leadership role in UK Nursing.

The main roles and responsibilities of the Forum Chair include

- Leading the Forum committee, facilitated by the RCN Nursing Department, in line with RCN policies, procedures and regulations.
- Being a figurehead for the forum – personally leading communication with Forum members and that the views of forum members are informing the work of the College
- Participating in mandatory induction and the training required before gaining access to direct member communication channels via the RCN Portal.
- Ensuring that an annual strategic plan is in place for the Forum and that its priorities reflect the needs of forum members
- Ensuring that an annual report is submitted by the Forum.
- Leading the Committee Member appointments process.
- Chairing a minimum of 50% of Forum monthly teleconferences and delegating the chairing of those meeting which they cannot attend to a committee member.
- Ensuring that the most appropriate members represent the forum at both internal and external events
- Ensuring that the forum works with other forums and with other parts of the College as appropriate to inform the development of RCN policy and practice
- Completing an RCN representation form on each occasion he/she represents the RCN, and expect this of the committee.
- Leading or delegating leadership of the Forum's Congress planning and ensuring the voice of the Forum is heard at Congress.
- Signing off all Forum bids for RCN funding made to FGG.
- Playing an active role in Forum Chairs Committee attending a minimum of 50% of FCC meetings.
- Succession planning for new Forum Committee Members and future candidates for Forum Chair.

Personal specification

When standing for election as Chair candidates will be asked to complete a supporting statement which demonstrates that the candidates have a proven record in leadership and as a Chair and has significant relevant experience and currency relevant to the Forum.