



## Terms of Reference: Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee

### 1. Name of Committee

Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee

### 2. Purpose

The Fellows Co-ordinating Committee works to facilitate the continuing involvement and engagement of the community of Fellows in the work of the Royal College of Nursing and to support the development and evaluation of the professional agenda of the College. This includes clinical innovation, practice development, education or research that improves patient care, thereby advancing the art, science and practice of nursing.

The Fellows Co-ordinating Committee will work in unison with the Chief Nurse to exploring opportunities for Fellows to contribute to the work of the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence.

### 3. Delegated responsibilities

#### 3.1 The role of Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee, as delegated by the Professional Nursing Committee, is:

- a) To organise activities for and by the community of Fellows, including at least one full in person meeting each year at HQ;
- b) By involving RCN Fellows to examine and help inform the College position on long term issues relating to the strategic role of the College and to the development of organisational systems, policies and procedures that are designed to purposefully and effectively promote the science and art of nursing;
- c) To act as a point of reference and contact when a Fellow is requested to contribute to a project; a 'task and finish group' or other professional activity within the College;
- d) To be informed of any opportunities for Fellows to engage and contribute to the work programmes of the College (Professional Nursing Committee, and Trade Union Committee);
- e) To discuss opportunities for Fellows to contribute to the work of the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence;

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- f) To contribute to RCN Congress, including the Learning and Wellbeing Programme and arrangements for awarding new Fellowships;
- g) To support new Fellows through ensuring they are introduced to the Fellow's Convenor and Co-ordinating Committee and provided with a mentor for their first year;
- h) To ensure the work and activities of the Fellows is promoted to RCN members, the public and other stakeholders;
- i) To foster links between the Fellows and RCN forums;
- j) To ensure the voice of the Fellows is reflected in RCN policy, responses to consultations and positions, where appropriate;
- k) To make recommendations and evidence to Council to remove a Fellow, should exceptional circumstances arise that require such a recommendation being made.

#### 4. Reporting and accountability

- 4.1 The Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee is responsible and accountable to Professional Nursing Committee.
- 4.2 Formal minutes of meetings will be kept and approved at subsequent meetings of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee.
- 4.3 The deliberations of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee shall be reported to Professional Nursing Committee and any resolution passed or decision taken shall be reported back to the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee.
- 4.4 Formal minutes of meetings of Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee will be included in Professional Nursing Committee papers for information. Associated papers will be made available to RCN Council at their request through the Convenor of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee.
- 4.5 At the request of Professional Nursing Committee, the Chair of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee will attend a designated section of Professional Nursing Committee meetings to deliver regular Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee updates.
- 4.6 The Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee may set up such sub-committees or other groups as it thinks fit to further its work.

#### 5. Meetings and quorum

- 5.1 The Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee will meet at least three times a year.

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5.2 Special ad hoc meetings may also be called if the business of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee is of such urgency that it cannot wait until the next quarterly meeting.

5.3 The quorum for decision-making is half the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee (3 people).

5.4 The rules and procedures in the *RCN meetings policy and process* apply to the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee.

## 6. Membership

6.1 There shall be a maximum of 5 members of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee as follows:

- Convenor of the Fellows (Chair)
- 4 elected members

6.2 Further eligibility requirements are set out in the *RCN elections policy* and in the specific election procedure for each election which is held.

## 7. Observers

7.1 Observers may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair and the agreement of the Fellows 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 Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee.

## 8. Election to the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee

8.1 Members of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee are elected from the community of Fellows.

8.2 Elections to the committee will be conducted in accordance with the *RCN's elections and appointments policies* and with a specific procedure for each election.

8.3 Half the Committee will be elected every two years.

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9. Terms of office

9.1 Terms of office will be for a maximum of 4 consecutive years except for casual vacancies which will be to the end of the vacant term.

9.2 Members of the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee are asked to commit to serving their full term once elected and not stand for another RCN role if that means they would need to stand down from the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee mid-term.

9.3 The *RCN regulation on terms of office* shall apply in respect of serving more than one term.

10. Mid-Term (casual) vacancies

10.1 A casual vacancy on the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee shall be filled in accordance with the *RCN's process for filling casual vacancies*.

11. Chair and vice chair

11.1 In accordance with Rule 2.2 in the *Royal Charter* the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee shall have a Chair.

11.2 The Convenor of Fellows is elected from amongst the community of Fellow.

11.3 The Convenor of Fellows chairs the Fellows Co-ordinating Committee *ex officio*.

11.4 The Convenor must relinquish this role at the end of their term as Convenor, or if, for whatever reason, they cease to be Convenor.

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 Fellows 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 Fellows 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/sponsor conclude this position poses a risk to

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the organisation and its members, the circumstances will be brought to the attention of the General Secretary/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 Secretariat support to the Fellows Co-ordinating Committee is provided by the Governance Support Team.

13. Removal from the Fellows Co-Ordinating Committee

13.1 A Fellows Co-Ordinating 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 NMC cautions against their name, are currently subject to any NMC sanction, and/or they are subject to any ongoing disciplinary proceedings with any of their employers or professional disciplinary proceedings before the NMC.
- 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 policy.

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They should be read in conjunction with the *Operating Framework for RCN Committees*\*\* and other documents referred to above.

*Note – these terms of reference are subject to ongoing change in line with the implementation of the recommendations of the Council-led governance review (2022). \*Scheme of delegation under revision. \*\* Operating Framework for Committees in development [July 2022]*