



Royal College of
General Practitioners

Decision Making Framework



The Scheme of Delegation is intended to provide clarity on where key governance decisions for the College may be made.

The delegation of responsibilities from either Trustee Board or Council are set out in

- Trustee Board Regulations and Committee Terms of Reference.
- Council Standing Orders, Committee Terms of Reference, Devolved Nation and Faculty Byelaws.
- Financial Regulations of College.

Principles of Delegation

The general principles which apply to delegation in all contexts:

- The body making the delegation must have the legal power to do so.
- Where powers are to be delegated the scope (and any limitations) should be clearly identified.
- Delegation does not relieve the original body from responsibility so there should be a clear reporting process.
- The delegated power does not have to be exercised. The committee can just make a recommendation or offer options leaving the original body to make the decision.
- The original body still has power to act within the delegated area.

The authority to take action flows from the Articles in the College's Royal Charter. There are two College bodies which have distinct roles and respective powers which can be delegated.

The Trustee Board is responsible for the management and administration of College including all financial, governance and compliance matters (Article 15).

The Council is responsible for clinical and professional policy (Article 16).

Trustee Board Delegations

The Trustee Board has powers to delegate to Committees and staff only. It delegates operational management of RCGP to the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors who collectively make up the Executive Management Team.

It gives delegated authority to five Committees – Audit and Risk, Planning and Resources, Governance, Nominations and Remuneration whose authority is set out in the Trustee Board Regulations.

Trustee Board members have specific duties set out in role descriptors and are set out as members of the Trustee Board. The Chair of Trustees, the Chair of the Board and the Honorary Treasurer.

The Trustee Board can delegate to ad-hoc groups – such as Short Life Working Groups – with an agreed terms of reference which must specify the scope of their powers (if any). The Trustee Board generally meets four times a year and meetings scheduled to align with business requirements and the governance cycle.

From time to time there may be an urgent matter requiring a decision by the Trustee Board. If this happens, the Chief Executive Officer will consult with the Chair of the Trustee Board (or in their absence, the Senior Independent Trustee) and if they agree the matter is urgent, convene a meeting of the Board (either in person or online).

If it is not possible to arrange a meeting involving a majority of members of the Board, they will seek a written resolution by e-mail approved by the majority of the members of the Board. In this case the Chief Executive Officer will ensure every effort is made to contact all members of the Board (i.e. phone, online and e-mail) for a response.

Regarding issues reserved to Trustee Board, in exceptional circumstances, when a decision is required between meetings and when, having discussed the matter with the Chief Executive Officer, the Chair of Trustees decides that it is not possible to convene an urgent Trustee Board meeting or receive a written resolution from the majority of Trustees in time to respond to an issue needing immediate action, the Chair of the Trustee Board must consult with the Chair

of Council (or deputising Officer, in their absence) and the Chief Executive Officer and make a full note of the decision in writing. Every effort should be made by the Chair of Trustees to ensure that the Senior Independent Trustee, at least, is aware of the decision.

The issue and decision-making must be formally noted at the next Trustee Board meeting.

Council Delegations

The Council has powers to delegate to Committees, Officers and Staff.

It delegates duties for leading areas of Council responsibilities to five Officers – the Chair, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer and two Vice-chairs. The duties are set out in role descriptors proposed by the Nominations Committee of the Trustee Board and approved by Council

Council delegates authority to Devolved Councils in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to co-ordinate matters relating to professional policy and leadership in their geographical areas. This delegation is set out in Ordinance 36 and Byelaws 4.6-48

Council delegates authority to Local Faculties to co-ordinate engagement with members in the geographical area agreed by Council. Only Council has the power to create faculties and this delegation is set out in Ordinance 38 and Byelaws 52 -55.

Council has five Committees – Fellowship and Awards, Scientific Foundation Board, Speciality Training Board, Patient and Carers Participation Group and the Committee on Medical Ethics. The delegation is set out in the Council Standing Orders and annual reports from each Committee are provided to Council.

Financial Management Delegations

The Trustee Board approves financial management delegation in the Financial Regulations of College. This allows on the following individuals to approve financial transactions with specified limits:

- Budget Managers.
- Executive Directors.
- Chief Executive Officer.
- Honorary Treasurer.
- Chair of the Trustee Board.

The Regulations approve the financial limits for these individuals to approve and sign contracts on behalf of College.

Trading Companies

The College has established three trading companies:

- RCGP Enterprises Limited – responsible for operating 30 Euston Square's commercial activities.
- RCGP Conferences Limited – responsible for the RCGP Annual Conference.
- RCGP International Limited – the commercial international work of the College.

These companies operate at arm's length from the College. Each has a Board of Directors which is responsible for running the company.

The Trustee Board is responsible for oversight of the RCGP interest in trading companies.

Delegations Schedule

Annex 1 is a table of delegations from the Trustee Board and Council. It is refreshed as regulations and policies are updated and reviewed annually by the Governance Committee which recommends its approval to the Trustee Board.

Annex 2 are infographics which show the roles and responsibilities of the decision-making and delegated bodies. It comprises an explanation of roles and illustration of how this scheme of delegation enables decision-making.



Delegation at a glance

Area	Individual/Committee																	
	Budget Manager (approved by ED P&R)	Executive Director	CEO	Council Chair	TB Chair	Hon. Treas.	Hon. Sec.	TB	ARC	P&R	Gov.	Nom.	Remun.	F&A	Council	DN Council	AGM/ EGM	Notes
Governance																		
College Governance								A			R				R		✓	Council has final say but Governance Committee must agree
Council Standing Orders											R				✓			
Agrees DN Council Terms of Reference								✓			R	✓			R			
College Strategy								✓							R			
Council Strategic Objectives															✓			
KPIs and Operational Delivery								✓										
Scheme of Delegation								✓										
Membership Categories															✓			
Election of Officers, Chair of Trustees Board and Member Trustees												R			✓			
Election of DN Council Chairs and Vice Chairs												R				✓		
Appointment of Independent Trustees and Committee Members								✓				R						
Agrees Trustee and Committee Regs and Terms of Reference								✓			R				✓			
Agrees F&A/SFB/SAC/PCPG Terms of Reference															✓			
Agrees Career Group (AiT/First 5/ LCARM) Terms of Reference		✓																
Agrees Community of Interest Terms of Reference		✓																
Convenes and Disbands Trustee Board Committees								✓			R				✓			
Convenes and Disband Council Sub-Committees											R							
Conflicts of Interest								✓			R				R			Council would need to be content with changes to Code of Conduct
Code of Conduct*								✓			R							
Modern Slavery Annual Statement								✓			R							
Appoints Auditors								✓	R									TB appoints but is also confirmed by AGM
Internal Audit Reporting								✓	✓									
Annual Report and Accounts approval								✓	R									
External Audit Reporting								✓	R									
Strategic Risk Register								✓	R									

Hon. Treas. = Honorary Treasurer, Hon. Sec. = Honorary Secretary, Gov. = Governance, Nom. = Nominations, Remun. = Remuneration

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Financial Management																		
Financial Strategy								✓		R								
Annual Budget Approval								✓		R								
Financial Regulations								✓		R								
Operational Delivery		✓																
Travel & Expenses Policy								✓		R								
Reserves Policy								✓		R								
Fast Payment Approval																		
Next day payment		✓ (by staff given delegated authority by ED P&R)																
Same day payment under £5K		✓ (by staff given delegated authority by ED P&R)																
Same day payment over £5K		Member of the EMT																
Purchasing and Contracting Goods and Services Within Budget																		
Up to 25K	✓																	
£10,000 and £25,000 (at least two written quotations from suppliers)		✓																
£25K - £50K (at least three detailed written proposals in response to a detailed written specification)			✓ (must also be discussed with ED P&R if over £100K)															
Over 50K and up to £250K (4 tenders and mandatory Procurement Team involvement)			✓ (must also be discussed with ED P&R if over £100K)															
Single tender waiver – up to £10K	✓ (with support from Procurement and AD Finance)																	
Single tender waiver – between £10K and £250K																		
Single tender waiver – over £250K								2 members of the TB										
Purchasing Clinical Consultancy Within Budget																		
As above but managed by Procurement																		

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Purchasing New Goods and Services Not Within Budget																		
Up to 10K	Budget Manager must secure approval of Executive Director (unless signed off by EMT and Hon Treasurer)	✓ (balances from underspend in another area of the Directorate Budget)																Financial Regs Section 5.3/4 budget overspend procedure
IT and digital		✓ (and requires approval of Digital Transformation Board)																
Spending from reserves								✓ (agrees the purpose of the reserve spend)		✓ (agrees spend items from agreed reserve)								
Write-off s																		
Bad debts up to £1.5K																		Section 8 Financial Regs
Bad debts over £1.5K up to 5K		✓																Level to be reviewed in next refresh of the Regs – this is a low amount
Bad debts over £5K not recovered after legal action								✓										
International bad debts up to £5K	✓ (by ED with responsibility for international)																	
International bad debts between £5K - £10K		✓ (with advice ED P&R)																
International losses between £10K and £25K					✓													
International losses over £25K								✓										
Investments																		
Policy								✓		R								
Investment Review								✓		R								
Investment transactions										✓								

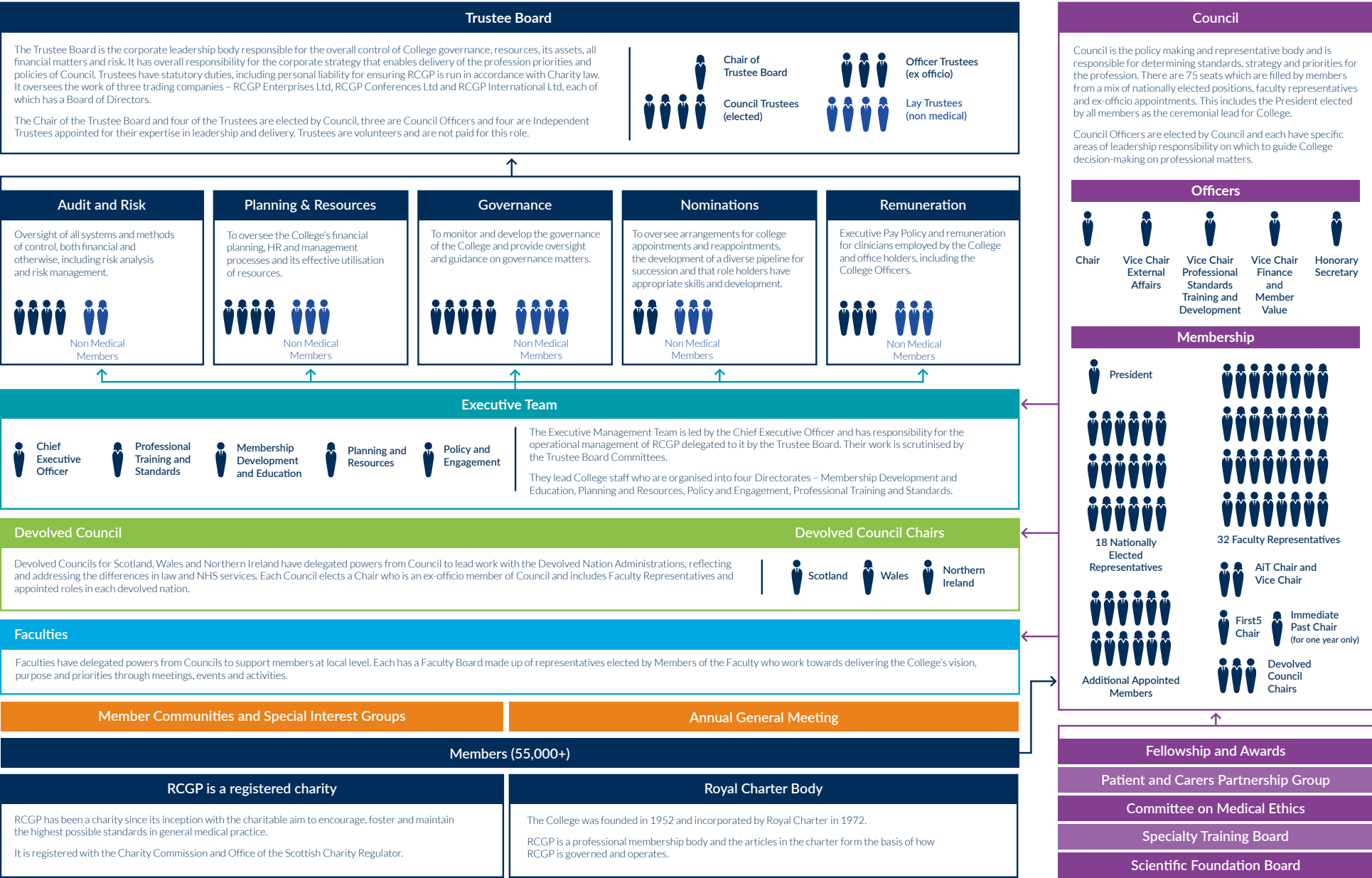
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Delegation at a glance

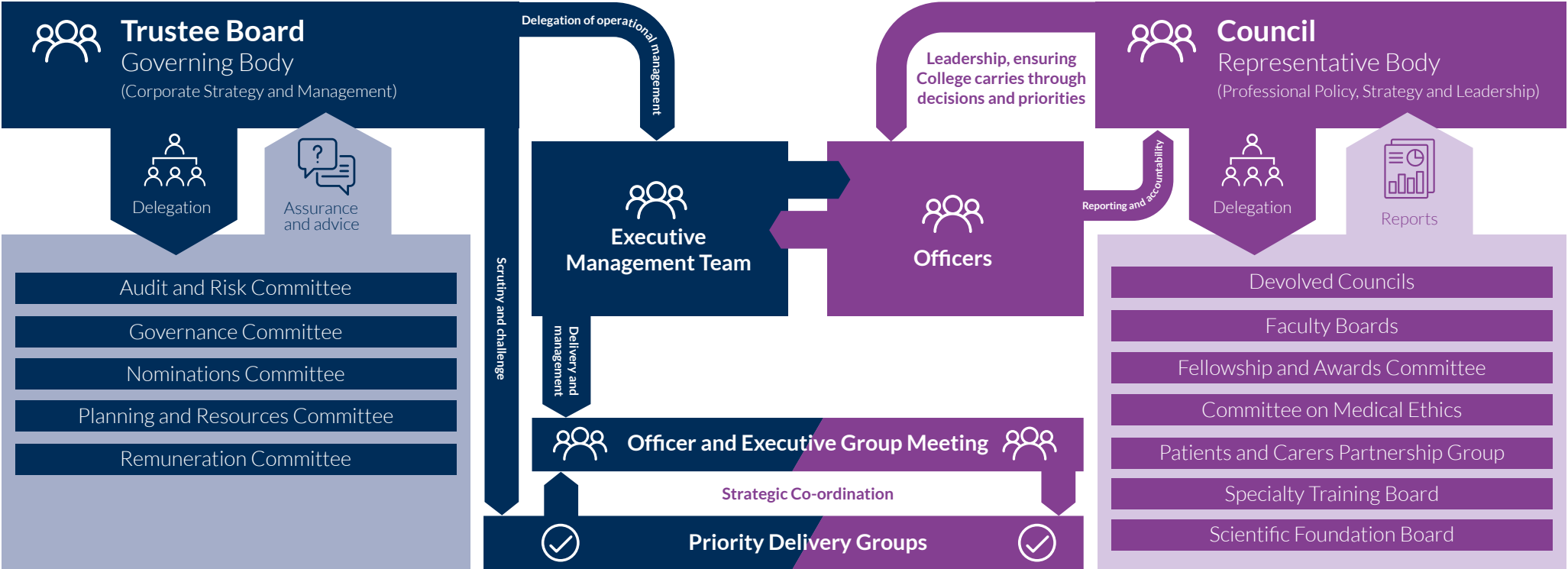
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Income, Fees and Donations																		
Subscriptions								✓										Has to be within cap set by AGM
Exams								✓										
Donations under £5K		✓					✓											Current policy under review
Donations over £5K		R																Current policy under review
Grants (conditions on what the income is for)	✓ (up to £25K by AD with responsibility for business activity with approval by ED P&R)	✓ (up to £100K by ED with responsibility for business activity with approval by ED P&R)	✓ (over £100K on recommendation of ED with responsibility for business activity with approval by ED P&R)															in Donations Policy
Non cash donations								✓										
Other fees and pricing																		Hon. Treas. has discretion to waive on hardship grounds may require update on criteria
Staffing and Remuneration																		
Organisational design								✓		R			R					
Executive pay policy and pay award								✓										
Non Executive Staff pay policy and pay award		✓ (Budget envelope set by TB distributed by CEO consulting EMT)						✓		R								Non Executive Staff policy and award – section 5.1 and 9.2 Financial Regs
Appointment of the CEO			✓					✓										
Appointment of Executive Directors																		
Officer remuneration								✓					R					
Clinician session rates								✓					R					
New posts		R																
Replacement posts		R																
Clinicians on payroll								✓					R					
R = Recommendation to higher authority																		
A = pre-approval required																		
* Appointed panel has final say on outcome of hearings, including termination of membership																		

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RCGP Governance



Scheme of Delegation



Chair of the Trustee Board

The Chair of the Trustee Board has lead responsibility for ensuring that appropriate measures and systems are in place for effective governance of the College. They must ensure that the College acts wholly within the remit of its Charter and Charitable Object.

Main Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership

- a. To chair meetings of the Trustee Board to ensure the overall purpose of its role is met.
- b. To provide support and advice to the Board and its Sub-Committee Chairs.
- c. To ensure that the Board has agreed strategic priorities.
- d. To build and maintain close relations between the College's various constituencies, and stakeholder groups to promote the effective operation of the College.
- e. To set the conditions for the overall board and the individual effectiveness of Trustees.
- f. To set clear expectations concerning the College's culture, values, and behaviour, leading the board in ensuring that these are embedded and enforced.
- g. To promote the College's Core Values and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy.

2. Relationship with, and Accountability to, Council

- a. To ensure that any matters raised by Council members and Faculties that fall within the remit of the Trustee Board are dealt with and reported back to Council.
- b. To provide an oral report to Council at each of its meetings on the work of the Trustee Board in order to demonstrate that the responsibilities of the College Trustees are being carried out effectively.
- c. To maintain and foster a strong working relationship with the Chair of Council in order to work jointly in best interests of the College.
- d. To attend General Meetings of the College to answer any matters that may arise concerning the trusteeship of the College.

3. Governance

- a. To operate within the schedule covering the mutual reporting arrangements between the Trustee Board and the Council, as contained in the Trustee Board Regulations.
- b. To ensure that oversight and appropriate consultation is undertaken with the Council on College governance issues – including the size and composition of the Council, the structure of Boards and Committees, proposals for amendments to the Charter, Ordinances, Byelaws and Standing Orders, and contacts with the Privy Council Office.
- c. To ensure that all actual or potential litigation undertaken by or against the College is managed effectively, ensuring any damage to the College's reputation is mitigated.



Current role-holder
Mike Holmes

Professor Mike Holmes is the current Chair of the Trustee Board. He has been a GP Partner for over 20 years and works in a large practice caring for almost 100,000 patients across York, Hull and Scarborough.

He chairs a GP owned Provider Organisation in York, bringing together all practices in the city of York caring for a population of 250,000 people and delivering services at scale in conjunction with multisector stakeholders in areas such as Urgent Care, Community Diagnostics and Community Services. He provides the General Practice voice at Place level within his ICS and is part of the ICS Primary Care Collaborative.

Mike has previously served as a Vice Chair (Membership and International) at the Royal College of General Practitioners (2018-21). He contributed to the College's Health and Wellbeing offer during the pandemic and in particular the offers developed for all those working in Primary Care by NHSE

He holds a number of other roles; He is an Honorary Professor in the Department of Health Sciences at the University of York and a Trustee at St Leonard's Hospice in York.

Committee memberships: Remuneration Committee

Chair of Council

The Chair of Council is the lead Officer of Council and has responsibility for all matters relating to policy and strategy for the GP profession and for leading Council which is the most senior membership and professional body in College.

Main Responsibilities

1. General

- a. To uphold the aims, objectives and values of the College and act in its best interests and enhance its reputation as a respected professional and academic body for GPs.

2. Professional/ Academic

- a. To ensure the College promulgates clear views on the professional / academic issues of the day.
- b. To maintain appropriate contact with other professional/ academic institutions and Primary Care stakeholders.
- c. With the President, to sign all Membership and Fellowship certificates.

3. Political

- a. To ensure a clear direction for Council policies.
- b. To represent and guide the views of the Council.
- c. To ensure appropriate representation of the College at all policy-making meetings and discussions.
- d. To speak on College policy matters for the College to the press and media, and to approve all press communications.
- e. To ensure appropriate relations are maintained with the GMC, the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the Departments of Health in the countries of the UK, the GPC and other GP / Primary Care organisations and institutions of the UK.
- f. When engaging in political debate, to ensure that the College remains strictly neutral in its dealings with the political parties, in line with the Charity Commission's guidelines.

4. Governance

- a. To be an ex officio member of the Trustee Board and ensure that all those to whom the Council delegates its responsibilities are working to the objectives and programmes set, to agreed timescales and targets.
- b. To ensure maximum engagement with all members and Faculties in furthering the College's aims.
- c. In conjunction with the Honorary Secretary, to approve all items for the Council agenda, and for other meetings which he or she chairs.
- d. To chair the Council effectively to ensure time is spent on issues which only the Council can and should decide.
- e. To lead and develop the College Officer team.
- f. To provide advice and support to the Council, Trustee Board and Devolved Council / other Committee Chairs.
- g. To ensure that all necessary follow-up action is taken on the resolutions agreed by the Council at its meetings.
- h. To ensure that the Council is kept informed of the achievement and delivery of its decisions and policy priorities.
- i. To be an approved signatory for the College.



Current role-holder
Kamila Hawthorne

The current Chair of council is Professor Kamila Hawthorne. She has been a GP for 34 years, with 27 of them spent working in South Wales. She qualified from Somerville College, Oxford, in 1984, and completed her GP training in Nottingham in 1988. Kamila was Head of the Graduate Entry Medicine Programme at Swansea University and is on the Trustee Boards of the Kings Fund, and Cardiff Women's Aid. She is also a Bevan Commissioner and a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales.

Kamila has a deep interest in medical education, and believes that we should be training excellent, caring and inclusive clinicians, for a global society. She is passionate about the role of GPs in patient care and as advocates for patients.

Her research and clinical working interests have been in health inequalities and access to health services, (her MD was based on working with BAME patient groups with Type 2 diabetes in Nottingham, Manchester and Cardiff). With wide experience of general practice and running community projects in diabetes and heart disease, she has been named 'GP of the Year' twice and was awarded an MBE in 2017 for services to General Practice.

The Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), is the most senior executive within the RCGP (the College) and is responsible for ensuring the direction and leadership of the RCGP's corporate activities, the day-to-day operations of the College, and for implementing the organisation's strategic goals as established by the College Council and the Trustee Board.

Main Responsibilities

- 1. Accountable to the Chair of Council and work closely with Council to develop College strategy and report to the Chair of the Trustee Board and work closely with the Trustee Board and Council Officers to facilitate the achievement of College strategy, policy and objectives by ensuring that:**
 - a. Council agrees an overall strategy and appropriate policies
 - b. all sectors of the College undertake appropriate forward-planning and delivery of agreed objectives
 - c. the progress of the College in achieving its strategy, policies and objectives is monitored – including review on a periodic basis against key performance indicators agreed with the Chair of Council and Trustee Board
 - d. the resources of the College are best deployed to achieve the required objectives
 - e. good communication is promoted and sustained with Officers, Trustees, Council and the wider membership
 - f. networks are established and sustained, through the Chair of Council and others as appropriate, with appropriate external bodies including the NHS, regulatory bodies, academic partners including other Medical Royal Colleges, the third sector, non-governmental organisations, public and patient organisations, and health organisations in all four countries of the UK.
- 2. Take lead responsibility, accountable to the Chair of Council, for enabling the College to meet its aims and priorities within agreed College strategy by effective and inclusive internal leadership and management of the organisation by:**
 - a. working closely as a member of the Leadership Team, using initiative and innovation to achieve key strategic internal goals of the organisation
 - b. providing effective leadership, co-ordination and management to the Executive Management Team and staff taking forward and delivering the strategic aims and organisational objectives
 - c. ensuring that projects are managed and delivered innovatively and effectively
 - d. ensuring that College assessments are developed and delivered effectively.
- 3. Enable the College to fulfil its charitable duties, reporting to the Chair of the Trustee Board, making sure of the proper governance and financial management of the College by ensuring that:**
 - a. the College sets an achievable budget
 - b. there is effective monitoring of financial performance of the College against budget
 - c. there are effective arrangements for managing risk (including, but not limited to financial, reputational and strategic risk) at all levels within the College
 - d. all legal and statutory obligations including those relating to health and safety, employment legislation and data protection are discharged
 - e. the Trustee Board receives appropriate and timely information and advice on all matters relevant to the discharge of its obligations and statutory responsibilities
 - f. all elections are properly organised and delivered by acting as Returning Officer
 - g. joint responsibility is taken, with the Honorary Treasurer, for approving and signing all contracts including all contracts of employment
 - h. the role of Company Secretary of the College Pension Schemes, RCGP Conferences Ltd and RCGP Enterprises Ltd is discharged effectively.
- 4. Lead the engagement, wellbeing, inclusion, motivation, efficiency and productivity of staff, also ensuring compliance with all current employment legislation, by ensuring that:**
 - a. the College's people and resources are engaged and developed to meet the needs of a modern, professional organisation, being sufficiently flexible to adapt rapidly to change and be self-sustaining
 - b. there is a positive, inclusive culture that embraces the values of the College – Compassion, Inclusivity, Sustainability, Accountability and Integrity – and attracts, motivates, engages, develops and retains high-performing staff
 - c. leadership, recruitment, management, training and development of staff are directed to achieving the strategy and objectives of the College
 - d. there is excellent communication with staff across the College, including those in all four nations and Faculties
 - e. equality, diversity and inclusion are positively and proactively pursued and all related policies are effectively enacted throughout the organisation
 - f. all College policies are lawful, relevant, fair and consistently implemented.

The Chief Executive Officer

5. Support and advise College Officers and lead, direct and support the Executive Management Team (EMT) to ensure the collective leadership of high-quality services for members, by:

- leading a collaborative, collective culture, encouraging the various parts of the College – Officers, Trustees, EMT, leadership group, staff and more – to work as one organisation, complementing each other towards a common purpose and shared objectives
- sustaining the breadth and quality of all College products, including education and assessment activities
- ensuring the further development of services for members which will enhance the quality of general practice and patient care
- developing and maintaining international relationships, working to deliver the international strategy as agreed by Council, to support the development of primary care and promote the standards of general practice around the world.

6. Enable and supervise the College's commercial activities, ensuring consistency with the charitable aims of the College, working with the Chair of the Trustee Board and the Trustees, by:

- developing and implementing a strategy to deliver a significant increase in the commercial business of the College and to continue to maximise its business potential
- driving innovation and organisation development in line with the risk appetite in given areas identified and agreed by the Trustee Board
- ensuring that the potential of all properties and facilities owned or run by the College, especially but not limited to the Headquarters building in Euston Square, are fully realised
- ensuring the risks relating to the HS2 development are assessed and managed.

7. Work with Medical Leads, Officers and EMT to ensure that the RCGP maintains and enhances its role as the quality standards setting body for education and assessment in general practice, by:

- supporting the professional development of general practice to maintain standards of excellence and promote quality general practice
- supporting the professional and personal development of GPs through all stages of their careers from training to retirement
- ensuring continuous improvement in the calibre of clinical care provided in general practice by setting quality standards for education, training, continuing professional development, revalidation and the whole practice environment, and by implementing quality development initiatives
- encouraging the promotion of general practice as a career to schools, medical students and junior doctors.



Current role-holder
Chris Askew

Chris Askew is the current Chief Executive Officer. He joined the College in October 2023, after eight years as CEO at Diabetes UK.

He was previously Chief Executive at Breakthrough Breast Cancer where he led the charity eventually into a merger to form the new charity Breast Cancer Now.

After working as a shipbroker in the international freight markets, he moved into the charitable sector in 1997. He has subsequently held senior fundraising positions at the charities Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Crisis, and Action for Children.

He is a Trustee of the National Academy for Social Prescribing and the charity Action for A-T.

He was awarded an OBE in the Queen's 2020 Birthday Honours List for services to people with diabetes.



Royal College of
General Practitioners

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RCGP is a registered charity in England & Wales (No. 223106)
and Scotland (No.SC040430)

rcgp.org.uk/membership

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 instagram.com/royalcollegeofgps

Photographs used in this publication are of RCGP members and their practice colleagues.

