

**Minutes from the RCoA Council Meeting
Wednesday 2 July 2025
10:00 – 13:00
Churchill House and Online**

Members Present:

Elected Council Members:

Dr Claire Shannon, President
Dr Toni Brunning, Vice President

Dr Chris Carey, Vice President
Dr Sarah Ramsay, Treasurer & Consultant representative
Dr Rosalind Bacon, Consultant representative

Dr Catherine Bernard, Anaesthetist in Training representative
Dr Elisa Bertoja, Consultant representative
Dr Jonathan Chambers, Consultant representative
Dr Satya Francis, Consultant representative

Professor Mike Grocott, Consultant representative
Dr Sri Gummaraju, Consultant representative
Dr Sophie Jackman, Anaesthetist in Training representative

Dr Helgi Johannsson, Consultant representative
Dr Ashwini Keshkamat, SAS Doctor representative - Online
Dr Kirsty MacLennan, Consultant representative
Dr Kirstin May, SAS Doctor representative

Dr Ramai Santhirapala, Consultant representative - Online
Dr Emily Simpson, Consultant representative

Professor Andrew Smith, Consultant representative
Dr Paul Southall, Consultant representative
Professor Jonathan Thompson, Consultant representative
Dr Sarah Thornton, Consultant representative
Dr Christopher Till, Consultant representative
Dr Matthew Tuck, Anaesthetist in Training representative

Co-opted Council Members:

Dr Lorraine De Gray, Dean of the FPM
Dr Sandeep Lakhani, Chair of CLAN

Dr Tim Meek, President Association of Anaesthetists - Online
Colonel Giles Nordmann, representing Defence
Dr David Selwyn, representing CPOC

Dr Roger Sharpe, representing FRCA Examinations
Dr Nirmala Soundararajan, representing Regional Advisers
Dr Daphne Varveris, Chair of RCoA Board for Scotland
Jenny Westaway, representing PatientsVoices@RCoA

In attendance:

Corresponding/Invited Members/observers:

Professor Julian Bion, Chair, National Honours Committee
Dr Jack Parry-Jones, FICM Vice Dean

Frances Bright, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications

Staff Members:

Jonathan Brūn, Chief Executive Officer

Sharon Drake, Deputy CEO and Director of Clinical Quality and Research
Mark Blaney, Director of Finance & Resources
Russell Ampofo, Director of Education, Training and Examinations

Graham Blair, Director of Membership, Media and Development (MMD)
David Hunt, Director of Digital, Data and Technology

Rose Murphy, Head of Governance – Online
Natalie Walker, Governance Manager - Online

1.1 Welcome, Apologies and Declaration of Interests

Dr Claire Shannon, President opened the meeting and welcomed all Council members to the meeting.

The following attendees were welcomed to the meeting:

- Professor Julian Bion, Chair of the RCoA National Honours Committee for agenda item 1.2 only
- Dr Jack Parry-Jones Vice Dean of FICM, to cover for Dr Daniele Bryden, Dean of FICM
- Frances Bright, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications as an observer

Council noted the apologies for absence received from:

- Dr Chris Taylor, Elected Consultant representative
- Dr Rashmi Rebello, Anaesthetist in Training representative
- Dr Daniele Bryden, Dean of FICM
- Dr Felicity Plaat, Clinical Quality Adviser
- Dr Simon Ford, Chair of the Welsh Board of the RCoA
- Dr Simon Howell, British Journal of Anaesthesia

1.2 National Honours Committee

The President introduced Professor Julian Bion, Chair of the RCoA National Honours Committee. Professor Bion set out a summary of the work National Honours Committee. Topics discussed included:

- criteria for nominations;
- National Honours Committee composition, inclusivity and potentially including other professionals with national honours; and
- the influence of background and protected characteristics on the success of nominations.

Professor Bion noted that the committee already seeks nominations from the wider membership via the RAA group, CLAN, and the College Tutor network, and encouraged Council members to consider proposing nominations themselves. Nominations should be sent in the first instance to Rose Murphy, Head of Governance at the College.

Professor Julian Bion left the meeting.

2.1 Council minutes from the meeting held on 14 May 2025

Council approved the minutes from the previous Council meeting on 14 May 2025 as an accurate record subject to the following amendment:

'There were concerns about misrepresentation in a summary produced by NHS Education for Scotland, which inaccurately suggested huge support among the anaesthesia community for a ~~particular~~ initiative survey on Anaesthesia Associates.'

2.2 Matters arising and actions

Council noted actions arising from previous meetings. It was noted that a column had been added to the action tracker to include information on timescales for actions.

2.4 Board of Trustees meetings

2.4.1 Board of Trustees Meeting on 28 May 2025:

Council noted that the Board of Trustees met on 28 May 2025 to discuss the progress of purchasing new premises. Detailed decisions and actions on this topic were due to be covered later in the meeting during agenda item 4.2 Estates update.

2.4.2 Board of Trustees Meeting on 11 June:

Council received an update on topics discussed and approved at the 11 June Board of Trustees meeting, which included:

Draft Disciplinary Policy & Terms of Reference: A Draft Disciplinary Policy & Terms of Reference had been submitted to the Privy Council as part of their approval of changes to Governing documents approved at the 2024 AGM. The College was currently awaiting a response from the Privy Council.

Membership Approval: The Board of Trustees had approved a number of recommendations to streamline the College membership approval process. The significant change empowered the Membership Engagement Team to approve engagement activities directly.

Scheme of Delegation Update: A Scheme of Delegation update had been brought to and approved by Trustees which clarified delegated responsibilities across College activities.

Risk, Internal Audit & Governance Committee Terms of Reference: An updated Terms of Reference for the Risk, Internal Audit & Governance Committee had been approved. Tim Golborn, Lay Trustee had been appointed as the Chair.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Terms of Reference

An updated Terms of Reference for the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee had been approved.

Operational Plan: An operational plan for 2026-27 had been agreed.

Humanitarian Emergencies & Conflict Statement Policy: The Board of Trustees had discussed and supported Council's position regarding the College's position on humanitarian emergencies. The default stance was not to issue public statements on such matters.

3.1 Update regarding CEO:

Council noted that they had been informed via email that Jonathan Brүүn, Chief Executive Officer, had accepted the role of Chief Executive Officer of the Royal College of Physicians commencing in January 2026. He had therefore resigned from his role of Chief Executive Officer at the College. Council passed on their congratulations to him on his appointment to this role.

Trustees had met informally the previous week to discuss a Chief Executive Officer recruitment process which had subsequently commenced. It was estimated that the process could take between 9-12 months in order to find the person to lead the organisation into the next phase. As a result, Trustees had unanimously agreed that Sharon Drake, Deputy CEO and Director of Clinical Quality and Research be offered the post of Interim CEO in due course to cover any gaps.

Stakeholder engagement overview

Council noted paper in the pack that set out the President's stakeholder engagement since the last meeting.

3.2 Deceased members

Council observed a minute's silence for the following members that the College had been informed had passed away since the last Council meeting:

- Dr Oliver Dearlove
- Dr Victoria Wroe
- Dr Gordon Murray Paterson
- Dr Bai Kuriakose Naduviledath
- Dr Kush Nath Duggal

4. Operational updates

4.1 CEO Update

Council received an update which set out the procedures for the upcoming Council elections taking place in 2025 and commencing with the induction of new members in March 2026. The final vacancies going forward for the election were:

- Six Consultant vacancies
- One Anaesthetist in Training vacancy

4.2 Estates Update

Council received a verbal estates update. The following matters were discussed:

Sale of 34 Red Lion Square: Council discussed the sale of 34 Red Lion Square. The Board of Trustee's decision to sell the property was driven by longer term benefits including the need to see a greater return on the investment of the College's resources, as this asset had underperformed for many years. The sale process had been carefully managed to ensure that the organisation received a fair market value for the property. The completion of the sale would be subject to Board of Trustees approval.

Acquisition of Jubilee House: The Board of Trustees were in the process of finalising the acquisition of Jubilee House. The acquisition was part of a broader strategy to ensure that the College had the necessary infrastructure to manage its resources with care and support its growth and development. Council discussed the financial implications of the acquisition and the measures taken to ensure that the purchase was financially viable. The acquisition process involved thorough due diligence to ensure that the property met all necessary requirements. This new premises was chosen for its suitability to meet the organisation's current and future needs. Council highlighted the benefits of the new premises, including its modern facilities and improved accessibility. It was seen as a positive step towards enhancing the College's operational efficiency, improved venue to support members as well as providing a better working environment for staff.

Examination Delivery Planning 2026–27: Initial plans had assumed that examinations would not be held at the College's new premises following a move. In response to feedback from members, examiners and staff, a decision had been taken to change tack and acquire premises that could deliver examinations after all. Council members were pleased that progress had been made to hold examinations at the new headquarters but raised concerns about the readiness of the premises for the beginning of the academic year 2026-27. A Council member suggested considering alternative venues and allocating funds for this. Council was assured that this plan was already underway. It was noted that FICM exams were included in the planning.

Member Concerns: During the discussion, concerns were raised about the accusations from a small but senior group of College members and ex-employees regarding the sale and purchase process, which had called into question the transparency and decision-making involved in the transactions, and the conduct of senior staff members and the College's clinical leadership. Specific accusations included a lack of consultation with members, insufficient disclosure of the commercially sensitive information, and potential conflicts of interest. Council members robustly refuted the accusations and reiterated their position that the process and the strategic rationale behind key decisions had been thorough, necessarily discreet, but transparently shared with them on multiple occasions. Council emphasised that the sale and acquisition were conducted with the involvement of independent advisors to ensure compliance and good practice. Council also highlighted the steps taken to keep members informed, including regular updates and open forums for discussion.

Statement from Council: Due to the commercial sensitivities required when selling and purchasing a premises, a number of discussions by Council had been undertaken in a confidential manner. Council therefore requested that the following statement be recorded in the minutes to confirm their support for the process:

RCoA Council, Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and Faculty of Pain Medicine fully support the process undertaken regarding the sale of Churchill House and 34 Red Lion Square, and the purchase of Jubilee House. They have felt fully appraised, informed and involved throughout the decision-making process led by the Board of Trustees.

Professor Mike Grocott and Professor Jonathan Thompson left the meeting at this point to attend other meetings.

4.3 Management Accounts - P11 May 2025

Mark Blaney provided an update on the College's Management Accounts to keep Council informed on the finances of the College. The annual audit would proceed at the end of the month, and the finance team was preparing the accounts, which would include full disclosure of the sale of Churchill House.

5.1 Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine

Jack Parry-Jones provided an update from the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FICM) Board meeting on 2 April 2025. The following matters were noted:

- National Recruitment for Intensive Care Medicine: 2025 marked the first simultaneous recruitment, with fifty candidates falling into that group out of 181.
- Rotational Training Guidance: This guidance had been published on the FICM website on 14 April, titled "Maximising Training Opportunities" and addressed the impact of rotational training within the ICM training programme.
- AI Statement: Following a meeting with the GMC about generative AI, interim guidance was issued. It covered the use of generative AI by intensivists for revalidation or as part of training programmes. The guidance supported AI use but emphasised the need for personal reflection, clinical reasoning, judgement, experience, and insight. It also highlighted potential probity and professional standards issues if breached.
- Consultant in Transition Course: FICM had run this course for the first time, focusing on areas identified as useful for new consultants, such as medico-legal aspects and managing life as a consultant. Originally from Australia, it was brought to the UK by Dr James Day and had received excellent feedback to date.
- FICM disaggregation: FICM disaggregation had been proceeding as planned, with a member engagement event held on 10 June. Key issues for residents included fees, geography, and examinations. The commitment was to co-locate for a minimum of two to three years to ensure stability and continuity.

5.2 Faculty of Pain Medicine

Dr Lorraine de Gray provided an update from the Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) Board meeting on 13 June 2025. Matters discussed included:

- Dr Ganesan Baranidharan had been approved as incoming FPM Dean and would begin his term on 12 September 2025.
- A letter highlighting the need to improve pain management from the FPM, RCoA and the British Pain Society had been sent to the Secretary of State for Health. The letter had not been acknowledged and would be followed up with a hard copy.
- Dr Helen Makins, FPM Board member, had been appointed co-lead of GIRFT for Pain through an open application process.
- FPM had submitted an application for the Clulow Research Grant for a registry for pain procedures.
- The process for credentialing in Pain Medicine had been signed off and this would be opened up in phases.
- FPM had created a Clinical Directors group with the aim of supporting discussion through group meetings.
- Opioids Aware, a resource set up by FPM for patients and healthcare professionals to support prescribing of opioid medicines for pain had been finalised and updates to the website were underway.

Credentiailling: There was a discussion about the need for training and support for Regional Advisors (RAs) in pain medicine regarding the credentialing process. It was confirmed that there would be training and support available. From August 2025 onwards, any doctor in training who completed the SIA in Chronic Pain and passed their exam would be referred to the GMC for credentialing. Those who completed their SIA in Pain but took the exam later would be able to apply through an alternative route. There was also an intention to include representation from other specialities within the Training and Assessment Committee to ensure close working relationships. Council agreed to support the opioid position statement, and the Membership Media and Development Board would handle communication with members.

6.1 Update on actions from the Joint RCoA and Association of Anaesthetists Council meeting on 25 April 2025

Sharon Drake introduced an update on actions from the joint RCoA and Association of Anaesthetists (AoA) Council meeting held on 25 April 2025.

6.1.1 Mandatory Training for Emergencies: is now the time for specialty specific mandatory training?

Council noted an action from the joint meeting where the principle of introducing regular training in anaesthetic emergencies and making this training mandatory for anaesthetists was discussed. The joint meeting had been supportive of progressing the idea and agreed the importance of the training occurring within teams and within departments in which anaesthetists work. Following the joint meeting a scoping group had met including representatives from AoA, DAS, OAA and Simulation Group to start mapping out a plan for the delivery of the training. The outputs from this meeting were presented to Clinical Quality & Research Board at their May 2025 meeting where a number of themes emerged. Council supported the proposal in principle. The plan was to begin the work, provide regular updates, and seek approval at each stage.

6.1.2 Proposal to retire 'No trace wrong place' and adopt the need for 'sustained exhaled CO2'

Sharon Drake noted with Council that the College had updated web pages on this initiative and was working with the AoA and other organisations to replace content and create a communications piece to move away from 'No trace wrong place' and adopting 'sustained exhaled CO2'.

6.1.3 Environmental sustainability in anaesthesia

Dr Paul Southall provided updates on environmental sustainability. A paper on environmental pollution from pharmaceuticals had been submitted to The Lancet, aiming to involve the College, and provided a roadmap for addressing pharmaceutical pollution. A pilot study with the University of Birmingham had revealed significant microplastics in intravenous fluids, and plans were in place to apply for funding to conduct a comprehensive study on this issue.

6.1.4 Draft Joint Equity, diversity and inclusion Statement

Council received an equity, diversity and inclusion statement on behalf of RCoA, AoA, FPM and FICM. The intention was to agree the statement before arranging for it to be published jointly by all parties. **Council approved the resolution to support the Joint Equity, diversity and inclusion statement.**

6.2 Digital update

Council received an update on the College's digital strategy which aimed to combine both the member-facing and internal College strategies. David Hunt's recent appointment as Director of Digital, Data and Technology was noted as a significant role in this strategy. Timescales were being reviewed and an update would be brought back to Council at a future meeting.

7.1 Education, Training and Examinations

7.1.1 College of Anaesthesiologists and Intensivists of Sri Lanka - Letter requesting renewal of MoU 2025

Russell Ampofo presented a paper inviting Council to approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between RCoA & College of Anaesthesiologists and Intensivists of Sri Lanka.

Council approved the resolution to approve the signing of the MOU between RCoA & College of Anaesthesiologists and Intensivists of Sri Lanka for a further 2 years.

7.1.2 Anaesthetists in Training Committee

Dr Sophie Jackman provided a verbal update from the Anaesthetists in Training Committee. Reports on phase one of the postgraduate Medical Training Review were expected during July 2025. Two webinars had been held for discussion on the Review. The College's Examinations Team had successfully run the primary and final exams. Candidates reported that the examinations had been run very well. Recruitment remained a major issue, particularly at the CT1 level, with a bottleneck expected for the August 2025 intake. The need for decisive action at the middle level was highlighted.

7.1.3 SAS Committee

Dr Ashwini Keshkamat provided a verbal update from the SAS Committee. SAS breakout sessions had been held during Anaesthesia 2025. Feedback and discussions had been undertaken around career progression portfolio, pathway specialist post roll out, and the role of autonomous practice. Work was already underway in these areas, especially around the portfolio. The Development and Innovation Group recorded a series of short podcasts with information for applicants, expected to be aired in the coming weeks. New guidance on autonomy and progression for ACSN status had been published on 21 May 2025. The Association of Anaesthetists had organised a reception hosted by MP Peter Princely for SAS doctors, which was well attended by SAS core members, members from the Academy, College and Association, clinic leaders, CEOs of Trusts, and MPs. Planning was underway for the Autumn Bulletin issue, themed around SAS careers. SAS week was announced for the week commencing the 29 September 2025. A SAS representative from the Welsh Board was set to join the committee starting in October 2025 with special thanks to Dr Simon Ford for assisting with this.

7.1.4 Anaesthesia Associates Update

Dr Chris Carey provided an Anaesthesia Associates (AA) update. The following matters were discussed:

Scope of practice and curriculum: The Interim Scope of Practice for Anaesthesia Associates, which had been updated and released at the turn of the year, no longer aligned with the draft curriculum, which included regional anaesthesia. The GMC had requested a consultation process, and the results showed overwhelming support for removing regional anaesthesia from the curriculum. The consultation report would be sent to the GMC and published on the website, and a proposal to update the curriculum in line with the Scope of Practice would be made. Comments would be included as an appendix.

Leng Review: The Leng Review was scheduled to be published in the upcoming month. Fuller discussion about the review would be brought back to the 10 September Council meeting, where a more detailed appraisal of the review would be discussed.

7.2 Clinical, Quality and Research

7.2.1 Minutes from the Clinical Quality & Research Board meeting on 8 May 2025

Council received an update from the Clinical Quality & Research Board from 8 May 2025. It was noted that a bid a HQIP perioperative audit had been successful.

7.3 Membership, Media & Development Board

7.3.1 Update from 18 June MMD Board meeting

Council received an update from the Membership, Media & Development Board from 18 June 2025.

- Education Events: The annual conference was successful, with slightly higher revenue than in 2024. Thanks were extended to the team for organising the event.

- Funding and Media Coverage: Funding for the learning management system had been improved. Marketing and communications noted excellent media coverage around the SNAP three report and the social media campaign for Anaesthesia 2025.
- Bulletin: The new Bulletin had been released, and members were encouraged to share it with colleagues, as it contained several easy-access articles.
- Member Engagement Review: The review was ongoing and would report in the late summer or early autumn. Council would be briefed on findings and next steps.

7.3.2 Approval of nomination

Council was invited to ratify the approval of Dr Niall McMahon the Samuel Thompson Rowling Oration which was awarded annually on the recommendation of the Events and Professional Development Committee.

Council ratified Nominations Committee's decision to award Dr Niall McMahon the Samuel Thompson Rowling Oration.

7.4 Devolved Nations Board

7.4.1 RCoA Scottish Board

Dr Daphne Varveris provided a verbal update from Scottish Board from their last meeting on 7 June 2025 meeting. The following matters were discussed:

Training issues: The promise of whole-time equivalents expansion had been rescinded, and there was no expansion of new posts. Helen Freeman, the new Scottish Government advisor for workforce, was developing a future medical workforce plan, currently in its first stage (June to October 2025). Concerns had been raised about the potential decrease in demand due to preventative medicine initiatives.

Workforce Concerns: Recruitment and retention in Scotland had been well supported, however, there was a limitation in releasing new consultant posts.

Remote and rural SIA: A remote and rural SIA was being considered for wider applications across the UK.

MAPS Group: The Scottish Government's MAPS group was awaiting the Leng Review report but had issued position statements that had been challenged.

CPOC Collaboration: Work was being undertaken with general practice to improve prehabilitation and addressing the growing waiting lists in Scotland.

7.4.2 RCoA Welsh Board

Dr Simon Ford, Chair of the Welsh Board had sent apologies and had indicated that there were no Welsh Board matters to report on.

7.4.3 RCoA Northern Irish Board

The President updated Council that Dr Will Donaldson had resigned from his post as RCoA Northern Ireland Board Chair after fulfilling his term of office. There had been some interest in the Vice-Chair role, and the governance team were working on this recruitment with a Northern Ireland Board representative due to come to the next Council meeting.

8. Co-Opted Member Reports

8.1 Centre for Perioperative Care (CPOC)

Dr Dave Selwyn provided a CPOC update. There were significant changes anticipated for CPOC as the team commenced the process of embedding CPOC in its permanent home at the RCoA and determining the implications for the centre.

8.2 Association of Anaesthetists Update

Dr Tim Meek provided a verbal update from the Association of Anaesthetists.

The parliamentary drop-in session at Portcullis House, focusing on the SAS workforce, had been successful and well-attended. Efforts continued to promote the SAS 6 principles of the SAS collective. Meetings with policymakers, including Michelle Welsh MP and Peter Prinsley MP, were held.

Discussions on legislation to grant legal protection to the titles 'anaesthetist' and 'anaesthesiologist' were held. A parliamentary question had been submitted and the response from Karen Smyth MP and Peter Prinsley MP was supportive.

Attendance at the final stakeholder meeting of the Association was noted, followed by participation in an expert panel with Professor Leng. The Association was expected to respond briefly when the report was released.

The Euro Anaesthesia 2025 conference in Lisbon was attended, discussing common issues across Europe. The updated Helsinki Declaration on Patient Safety had been co-signed.

A highly successful doctors' committee meeting had been held with over 400 attendees.

8.3 PatientsVoices@RCoA

Jenny Westaway provided a verbal update on PatientsVoices@RCoA who had an away day at which two key issues were discussed.

Firstly, the exams and assessments were changing, and the exam team sought advice on what should be assessed, particularly focusing on communication, consent, and shared decision-making. Feedback indicated that the session was well-structured and engaging.

Secondly, a document was being developed to help patient voices contribute more effectively to committee work. The document was based on feedback from both new and long-standing patient voices and would include tips for staff, committee chairs and patients.

Additionally, following Anaesthesia 2025 in Belfast, a session was held on enabling patients with learning disabilities and autism, in collaboration with the charity My Life My Choice. A new project was being scoped to create a resource for anaesthetists on how to meet the needs of these patients.

8.4 BJA and RCoA Liaison Group

Council received a BJA – RCoA paper in the pack to note. Professor Simon Howell had sent apologies due to the BJA meeting taking place concurrently.

8.5 Clinical Leaders in Anaesthesia Network (CLAN)

Dr Sandeep Lakhani provided a CLAN update. CLAN had welcomed five new members to their Executive Committee. There were delays in assigning CLAN Representatives to RCoA committees, but the meeting schedules had now been confirmed, and committee chairs would be contacted in the upcoming week. The next annual meeting of CLAN would be a face-to-face event at Churchill House on Monday 17 November 2025. Dr Claire Shannon had been contacted regarding the event.

9. Matters for information

9.1 Current Consultations- COPES update

Sharon Drake provided a verbal COPES update. Council members were thanked for their contributions.

9.2 CCTs for Council

Council noted the recommendations made to the GMC for approval, that CCTs be awarded to those who had satisfactorily completed the full period of higher specialist training in Anaesthesia, or Anaesthesia with Intensive Care Medicine or Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine where highlighted.

9.3 Regional Adviser Anaesthesia changes

Council was invited to ratify the following update regarding regional advisers for anaesthesia:

Regional Adviser Anaesthesia

Dr Helen Underhill, to succeed Dr Emily Simpson as RAA for East of England.

Deputy Regional Adviser Anaesthesia

Dr Jeremy Morton to succeed Dr Kirsteen Brown as DRAA for Southeast Scotland.

Dr Gemma Woodward as DRA for West Yorkshire.

Council approved the regional advisors as set out above.

10. Any other business

No other business was raised.

The next Council meeting would be held 9:30 to 13:30 on Wednesday 10 September 2025 at Churchill House.

END OF MEETING