



Royal College of Anaesthetists

Code of Conduct

Introduction

The College trustees have set the College's strategic direction in the College Strategy 2018-2021. The College Council oversees delivering the many professional aspects of this strategy. The trustees empower the following groups to deliver the strategy:

- The staff: which the RCoA's scheme of delegation sets out specific responsibility for: the Chief Executive Officer, Senior Management Team (SMT), Finance & Resources Director, Heads of (SMT+) and managers
- Volunteers, who are:
 - Clinicians, the vast majority of whom are unpaid but a number are backfilled (no clinician in this group is paid directly by the College)
 - Other volunteers in the form of the lay committee etc who are unpaid.

Vision for the College

We, the trustees, volunteers and staff, are understanding of our respective roles in both delivering the strategy and the day-to-day running of the College. We respect, and must be seen to respect, each other for our expertise, commitment and experience. This recognition creates a harmonious working relationship that supports an engaged, productive and creative organisation that has a clarity of purpose.

Our Principles

The College values, as outlined in the strategy, guide how the staff group, trustees and volunteers involved with the College work together. These values are:

- Expert: we must be expert in what we do to be effective in our aims. We aim for excellence in all our disciplines
- Positive: we are constructive, collaborative and proactive. We focus on achieving positive outcomes
- Inclusive: our membership is as diverse and vibrant as the community at large and, to support them, the College is direct, open and approachable
- Forward thinking: as our specialty continues to advance, so must the College. We look for opportunities to innovate and improve. We intend to stay ahead and set the healthcare agenda
- Ambitious: we are committed to remaining a world leader in anaesthesia and for our members to be at the top of their profession

We will ensure that these always underpin our behaviour.

We will work together in a way that:

- delivers the best quality service to our membership and the public through our teamwork and partnership working (inclusive, ambitious)
- recognises the clear separation between trustee, volunteer and staff roles and responsibilities (expert, inclusive, positive)
- draws on our respective skills, knowledge and perspectives (expert, inclusive)
- demonstrates mutual respect, in particular of each other's professional skills (positive, inclusive)
- ensures clear sharing of information (inclusive, positive)
- ensures that the Board of Trustees' policies, plans and strategies are implemented (expert, forward thinking, ambitious)
- enables an active and ongoing dialogue about the College's current performance and its future direction (positive, forward thinking, inclusive, ambitious)

Policy Approved: April 2019 (to be confirmed)

Review Date: April 2021

To work together harmoniously trustees, volunteers and the staff group will follow the above principles when interacting with each other. In addition SMT, SMT+ and the wider staff group are guided by the College's HR policies. Some of these policies will apply to trustees and volunteers as well.

Strategic Delivery and Trustee Oversight & Assurance

In law, the trustees are responsible for the College. They ensure that the College provides public benefit as is statutorily mandated of all charities.

The trustees define the overall strategic direction for the College, with the staff group assisting them in this process.

Once they have set the strategy and organised the governance of the College, they monitor, constructively challenge and review the delivery of the strategy by the College.

To deliver the strategy, the staff group (with advice from trustees) will create annual directorate operational plans that turn the College's strategic objectives into work streams, team objectives and individual objectives so that the College delivers the strategy within the timeline set and the College resources available.

Trustees will receive regular reports from SMT, SMT+ and the staff group on strategic delivery and any significant operational matters that impact on this delivery.

Operational Delivery

SMT and SMT+ will oversee the operational day-to-day business of the College on behalf of the trustees.

The College's volunteers and the staff group will work to maintain and improve delivery of these activities, including statutory and regulatory compliance for the College as a charity.

SMT and SMT+ will regularly report to the trustees on any business as usual matters that affect the trustees' ability to discharge their statutory duties.

Resourcing the College

There will always be a tension between the strategic and operational ambition of the College and the resources available to deliver this ambition.

Our most important resource is staff and their time. This staff time resource is limited with trustees approving that level of resource through the budget approval process.

In year, as trustees, volunteers and the staff group identify and initiate new work streams, each group can ask the trustees to either additionally resource them or indicate which previously funded work streams should cease or be delayed, if necessary amending the strategy to reflect this.

Guardian of RCoA Safe Working

To ensure that we treat everyone fairly and this code is upheld the College will appoint a Guardian of Safe-working Appendix 1. This is intended to supplement and not replace existing HR practices and process, complaints procedures etc and only relates to College work and activities.

Appendix 1: The Guardian of RCoA safe working:

The guardian is a senior person, independent of the College management structure (ie not a trustee, volunteer or member of staff). The guardian is responsible for protecting the principles outlined in the RCoA code of conduct for all members of staff, trustees, volunteers and anybody else involved with the College.

The guardian will address issues and concerns as they arise, with the volunteers and/or employer, as appropriate; and will provide assurance to the RCoA that the Code of Conduct is being complied with.

- **Accountability:**
 - Working to the President and CEO, accountable to the Audit & Internal Affairs Committee and ultimately the Board of Trustees.
 - The work of the post holder is generated through exception reporting and queries from members of staff, volunteers and anyone else involved with the College.
 - The post holder is also expected to generate work in response to areas of concern.
 - The post holder will agree objectives with the Audit and Internal Affairs Committee.

- **Communications and working relationships**
 - The role of the guardian must be independent from the line management arrangements in the RCoA to ensure that the post holder has the confidence of members of staff, clinicians and anybody else involved with the College.
 - The post holder must be of sufficient seniority to ensure that the role has an effective voice within the organisation.
 - (If other Colleges agree) The post holder will also have links with other guardians in other royal colleges.

RCoA's Guardian of Safe Working contact details:

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The above is based on the generic NHS Employers job description for the NHS's Guardian of safe working.