

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNAECOLOGISTS
Minutes of a Meeting of Council held at the RCOG and virtually on
2 May 2025

PRESENT

President	Miss Raneer Thakar (Chair)
Senior Vice President, Global Health	Professor Hassan Shehata
Vice President, Clinical Quality	Mrs Geeta Kumar
Vice President, Membership & Workforce	Dr Laura Hipple
Vice President, Academia and Strategy	Professor Asma Khalil
Vice President, Education	Mr Ian Scudamore

ELECTED FELLOWS

Mr Sherif Abdel-Fattah
Professor Dilly Anumba
Professor Alastair Campbell
Professor Justin Clark
Professor Peter von Dadelszen
Miss Mausumi Das
Professor Stergios Doumouchtsis
Professor Colin Duncan
Miss Fatima Husain
Mr Joseph Iskaros
Professor Swati Jha
Mr Andrew Leather
Dr Hans Nagar
Mr Andrew Pickersgill
Mr Philip Rolland
Mr Dudley Robinson
Miss Suzanne O'Sullivan

ELECTED MEMBERS

Dr Jenny Barber
Dr William Dudill
Dr Helen Goodall
Mr Peter Harris
Dr Chimwemwe Kalumbi
Dr Aditi Miskin
Dr Hannah Mistry
Dr Hanan Mustafa
Dr Diane Nzelu
Professor William Parry-Smith
Dr Alison Wiggans

MEMBERS

Dr Janet Barter FRCOG, FSRH President
Dr Kat Barton MRCOG, Trainees' Committee Chair
Ms Freya El Baz, Women's Network Vice Chair
Dr Abigail Hyland MRCOG, Trainees' Committee Vice Chair for Strategy
Ms Jane Plumb FRCOG, Women's Voices Lead
Dr Eman Toeima FRCOG, Specialty and Associate Specialist and Locally Employed Doctors Lead

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Ms Kate Lancaster
Executive Director, Education and Quality	Ms Carly Edwards
Executive Director, Global, Membership & Governance	Ms Kristen Morgan
Executive Director, Finance & Commercial	Ms Ashley Wang
Executive Director, External Affairs	Mr Ben Butler
Head of Corporate Governance and Risk	Mr Christopher Smith
Business Administrator	Ms Natasha Sullivan

1	Welcome The President welcomed all to the meeting.
2	Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from: Jyotsna Acharya FRCOG Sujeewa Fernando FRCOG Javaid Muglu MRCOG Melanie Tipples FRCOG Ganga Verma MRCOG
3	RCOG Confidentiality Agreement and Declaration of Interest and Good Standing The RCOG Confidentiality Agreement and Declaration of Interest and Good Standing had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Council was asked to complete and return the form if they had not done so within the last year.
4	Minutes and Matters Arising
4.1	Minutes from the last meeting The minutes from the meetings held on 14 February 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
4.2	Actions record The actions from the 14 February 2025 meeting of Council were noted.
5.1	Obituaries Resolved: Mr Aly Bashir Alaily – Fellow of England Dr Samuel Alexander Festus Quist – Fellow of Ghana Professor John Alfred Collins – Fellow of Canada Mr Hugh Malcolm Bristow Busfield – Fellow of England Dr Mrs Mahbuba Hussain – Fellow of England Mr Robert Marshall Graham – Fellow of England Dr Karen Anne Lincoln – Fellow of England
6	Regional Presentation
6.1	East of England The Fellows and Members’ representatives for the East of England presented an update from their region. Topics of focus included the economic and social context of the region, the structure and performance of hospitals within the region, and the academic and teaching landscape. Council thanked the Fellows and Members’ representatives for the East of England for their presentation.
7	President

7.1	<p>President's Report</p> <p>The President updated Council on progress towards the delivery of the Presidential Priorities.</p> <p>Council noted the President's Report.</p>
7.2	<p>RCOG Climate Sustainability project</p> <p>The Clinical Fellow for Sustainability and Climate Change presented an update on the RCOG Climate Sustainability project.</p> <p>Council was informed that 2024 was the first year where average global temperatures have clearly exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, a threshold beyond which we can anticipate significant harms from climate change. Simultaneously, there is mounting evidence that exposure to extreme heat leads to poor birth outcomes.</p> <p>It was noted that, whilst the UK is unlikely to experience some of the more extreme climate change that will be seen elsewhere there will be challenges for the NHS to address including the need to modernise poorly designed building stock.</p> <p>Healthcare professionals have a role to play in effecting change. To support this, the College launched the Green Maternity Challenge in June 2024. 30 applications were received with nine teams chosen to progress to the next stage. Successful applications were chosen based on the likely impact, as well as social and financial costs. The overall winner was a team from Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust for their work to reduce the physical, psychological, and social impact of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy and hyperemesis gravidarum through a virtual telephone clinical and a virtual ward pathway.</p> <p>Overall, the nine projects combined are projected to save 101,263 kgCO₂e and £860,669 in the first year.</p> <p>The project is now in its third phase, focused on disseminating the learning. Council members were encouraged to share and promote the outcomes of work across their networks.</p> <p>Council commended the Clinical Fellow for Sustainability and Climate Change for their presentation and work in this important area.</p> <p>Council enquired whether accessibility was a factor in selection the projects to take forward. The Clinical Fellow for Sustainability and Climate Change confirmed the project teams had to demonstrate they were addressing inequities in the system through their project work.</p> <p>Council enquired about the timelines involved in replicating the project work. The Clinical Fellow for Sustainability and Climate Change confirmed that they are meeting with College teams and hope to launch the first resources in the summer.</p> <p>Action: Circulate slides from the Climate Sustainability and Surgical Training Clinical Fellows' presentations.</p> <p>Council noted the update on the RCOG Climate Sustainability project.</p>
7.3	<p>RCOG Surgical Training project</p> <p>The RCOG Surgical Fellow presented an update on the RCOG Surgical Training project, which aims to assess the current state of surgical skills, identify areas for improvement and recommend strategies to future-proof the surgical skills of our workforce.</p> <p>Council noted that Phase I of the project, which focused on establishing the current baseline of surgical skills training in O&G, changing trends in operating practices and looking at potential solutions, has now concluded with the publication of the interim report, published in February 2025.</p>

	<p>Phase 2 of the project, focused on the development of potential solutions to improve gynaecological surgical training, is now underway. The work is focusing on five key areas: workforce of the future, investing in the educators, simulation and virtual learning, reprioritising surgical training, and lifelong learning. Each area will be considered by a different workstream. The Chairs and members of each workstream have been appointed and work is due to commence in May. It is anticipated that Phase 2 will conclude by the end of 2025, with the final output expected in 2025.</p> <p>Council commended the RCOG Surgical Fellow for their presentation and work in this important area.</p> <p>Council discussed priority areas for this work including open surgical skills, vaginal surgery and the use of AI to support improvement. The President confirmed that these areas will be considered.</p> <p>Council enquired about whether learning from other countries will be included in the work. The President confirmed that the College will be looking at best practice from other countries.</p> <p>Council noted the update on the RCOG Surgical Training project.</p>
7.4	<p>Tommy's Centre Pathway The Tommy's decision-pathway support tool was the subject of a confidential discussion.</p>
8	<p>Clinical Quality</p>
8.1	<p>Report on Clinical Quality Activities The Vice President for Clinical Quality presented the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.</p> <p>Council was informed that, since the previous meeting, the College had published several pieces of clinical guidance including an update to the Green-top Guideline No. 55 Management of monochorionic twin pregnancy and the development of a new Green-top Guideline No. 76 Management of thyroid disorders in pregnancy.</p> <p>Council was updated on the Avoiding Brain Injuries in Childbirth (ABC) programme, which concluded on 30 April 2025. The programme's final report, which includes specifications and recommendations for national roll-out, as well as the finalisation of the training resources that support the programme has now been issued to the DHSC.</p> <p>With regards to the National Maternity and Perinatal Audit, Council was informed that work is continuing to produce the next annual clinical report. The draft report has been submitted to NHS England for review and they have indicated that they are broadly supportive of all of the recommendations. Due to a delay in receiving feedback, the report has a projected publication date has been delayed slightly to June 2025.</p> <p>Council noted the progress on the PREM Project. A conceptual framework is currently being developed for the questionnaire and 10 sites across England have been recruited to participate in data collection in the Summer.</p> <p>Council received an update on the BEACON Project, which is due to conclude in December 2025. The project team are currently working on a consensus building workshop to select four initial programme theories to take forward to testing stage.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.</p>
9	<p>Membership and Workforce</p>
9.1	<p>Report on Membership and Workforce Activities The Vice President for Membership and Workforce presented the Report on Membership and Workforce Activities.</p>

	<p>Council was informed that the College’s global membership now stands at 18,178 with 19% growth over the period 2021-25.</p> <p>181 new Fellows and Members were welcomed at the 1 May Membership Ceremonies. Council was thanked for their contribution to these events.</p> <p>Following an appeal and subsequent review of evidence, two Fellowship applications from the November 2024 round were presented for approval to Council. The Fellows on Council approved the elevation to Fellowship for Dr Erum Abdul Qadir (UK) and Miss Tasnim Zahid Hussain (UK).</p> <p>Council noted that the job planning pages on the RCOG website have been updated to focus on improving clarity and accessibility. Since Council last met in February, the College has approved a further 17 job plans. There are currently 12 active cases, nine of which are with trusts and three are with reviewers. Council members were requested to ensure that cases were reviewed prior to submission into the system.</p> <p>Council was reminded that the RCOG’s 2025 Workforce Census was still live and that the deadline for responses was 2 May 2025.</p> <p>Council noted that the RCOG Careers Day for Medical Students and Foundation Doctors will take place on 17 May 2025. Council members were requested to promote this across their networks.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Membership and Workforce Activities.</p>
<p>9.2</p>	<p>Membership Board Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Vice President for Membership and Workforce presented the 2025 Membership Board Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Council approved the 2025 Membership Board Terms of Reference.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Academia and Strategy</p>
<p>10.1</p>	<p>Report on Academia and Strategy Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Academia and Strategy presented the Report on Academic and Strategy Activities.</p> <p>Council was updated on the Women’s Health Research Prioritisation (WHiRP) Project, which aims to use a modified Delphi consensus process to gather input from the public on priorities for women's health research in the UK. The initial phase of the work saw members of the public being asked to provide their top five research priorities for women’s health via an online survey. The College had 1,441 responses to the survey, with over 4,000 research topics identified for analysis before final research questions are selected. The Lancet are publishing a new journal focused on women’s health and have expressed an interest in publishing the findings of this project.</p> <p>Council enquired about how participants in the survey were selected. The Vice President for Academia and Strategy confirmed that representation was considered in the design of the survey. The deadline of the survey was also extended to help improve the range of results received. The Vice President also confirmed that they attended a range of conferences and events to promote the survey.</p> <p>Council was informed that the Genomics stream for Congress had been agreed and all speakers have been invited to attend.</p>

	<p>Council noted that the Academic Board is currently recruiting a new undergraduate lead representative to join in September. A women’s network representative has been appointed and will join the next Academic Board committee meeting.</p> <p>Council noted that RCOG Awards 2025 are now open for applications with the deadline being 15 May 2025. Council members were encourage to apply and also to promote the awards across their networks. Council noted that, in 2025, the Eardley Holland medal will also be awarded. This is awarded once every five years to a Fellow or Member for original work of outstanding merit in the field of O&G.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Academia and Strategy Activities.</p>
10.2	<p>Academic Board Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Vice President for Academia and Strategy presented the 2025 Academic Board Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Council approved the 2025 Academic Board Terms of Reference.</p>
11	<p>Education</p>
11.1	<p>Report on Education and Exams Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Education presented the Report on Education and Exams Activities.</p> <p>Council was informed that 10,307 candidates sat an MRCOG examination in 2024, 27% growth since 2019. With regards to MRCOG Part 2, the College had seen a return to pre-pandemic levels of activity. In addition, the MRCOG Part 3 exam has seen significant growth globally and has now surpassed pre-pandemic activity levels.</p> <p>The College will be running a pilot exam on 26 July 2025 to test the operational and logistical feasibility of a revised examination model. The Pilot will consist of two parallel circuits of 10 tasks, run three times. It will involve 20 clinical examiners and four lay examiners. It is expected that this model will increase capacity by almost 50% for the same number of examiners.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Education and Exams Activities.</p>
11.2	<p>New Part 3 exam centre – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</p> <p>The Vice President for Education update Council on the College’s work to establish a new Part 3 exam centre in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.</p> <p>The strategic rationale for the development of the centre was explored with Council informed that this would help address sustained demand for the exam, support the College’s goal of supporting MRCOG internationally, and provide more equitable access for candidates looking to take the exam.</p> <p>Council was informed that, following a review of options, the College was recommending that the new centre be built in Jeddah. Council noted that this proposal had been reviewed by the Examination and Assessment Committee, as well as the Education Board who were recommending it for approval.</p> <p>Council enquired whether religious holidays had been taken into consideration when planning for exams. Ms Carly Edwards provided assurance that the Exams team look at, amongst other things, religious holiday at least three years in advance to ensure that there is no clash.</p> <p>Council discussed the impact of artificial intelligence on College exams. Council was informed that, at present, artificial intelligence is not considered a threat to the delivery of RCOG exams. This is because candidates do not have access to mobile devices or other similar technology during their examinations.</p>

	Council approved the new Part 3 exam centre in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
11.3	<p>Education Board Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Vice President for Education presented the 2025 Education Board Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Council approved the 2025 Education Board Terms of Reference.</p>
12	Global Health
12.1	<p>Report on Global Health and Events Activities</p> <p>The Senior Vice President for Global Health presented the Report on Global Health and Events Activities.</p> <p>Council noted that the College has secured funding for a six-month extension to implement the Gynaecological Health Matters programme in Nigeria. Additional training on essential gynaecological skills is being rolled out to healthcare professionals in Enugu State, a new region for the project, and the Council is advocating for further roll out in six new states, as well as nationally. Lite and self-care options of the programme are being explored.</p> <p>Council noted that the College continues to be committed to supporting an end to all forms of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) worldwide. The College is working with Options, a global health consultancy organisation, to further develop its ‘trainer of trainers’ course in Egypt. The College is exploring how the programme can be extended into new regions of Egypt, including work to map possible funders.</p> <p>Council was informed that, in March 2025, the RCOG participated in the sixty-ninth session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) in New York. At the session, the College secured agreement from two organisations to collaborate to scale up the RCOG’s work on ending female genital mutilation in the Asia region, and was also signatory to a written statement to CSW, which was published by UN Women and a new position statement on global gynaecological health.</p> <p>Council noted that the early-bird deadline for Congress has been extended to 12 May.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Global Health Activities.</p>
12.2	<p>Global Health Board Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Vice President for Global Health presented the 2025 Global Health Board Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Council approved the 2025 Global Health Board Terms of Reference.</p>
13	CEO
13.1	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the report on the latest activity across the College.</p> <p>Abortion Reform</p> <p>The College continues to work with partner organisations and Parliamentarians to advocate for the decriminalisation of abortion and is working with Parliamentarians to submit an amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill to stop the arrest, investigation and prosecution of women.</p> <p>Maternity Safety</p> <p>The Progress in Partnership Group is hosting a maternity safety summit on 16 July with the aim of sharing knowledge and best practice in maternity care, to develop practical partnerships between Trusts, Board and ICBs and to seek commitments to improving safety in maternity and neonatal care.</p>

	<p>10-Year Health Plan On the 27 March, the College published its key priorities for the 10 Year Health Plan.</p> <p>Strategy development In March, the Board of Trustees approved the Case for Development and new strategic goals for the next College five-year strategy. Focus is now on agreeing the activities that will support the delivery of these strategic goals, and these will be approved at the May Board of Trustees meeting. A further update will be brought to the next Council meeting.</p> <p>Council noted the high volume of work that the College is due to deliver in 2025. This includes the President, Vice President and Council elections, the largest ever exam diet, Congress and the implementation of CRM and SharePoint systems. The College is reviewing key activities and current plans to deliver them. This may result in the work being rescheduled.</p> <p>Council noted the CEO’s report.</p>
14	<p>Report from SAS/LED Lead The SAS/LED Lead presented their report, which highlighted the breadth of work that the SAS/LED Committee had undertaken since the last meeting.</p> <p>Council noted that the SAS/LED Lead had recently chaired a RCOG London Council Engagement event on 26 March 2025.</p> <p>Council was informed that planning was underway for SAS Awareness Week, which will take place between 29 September and 3 October 2025</p> <p>Council noted the Report from the SAS/LED Lead.</p>
15	<p>Report from FSRH President The FSRH President presented their report on the activities of the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.</p> <p>Council was informed that following a nominations process and a ballot of Council, Dr Zara Haider has been elected as the next President of the FSRH. An election process is now underway to elect Dr Haider’s as Vice President, Membership and Workforce.</p> <p>Council noted that the FSHR will become the College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare in August 2025.</p> <p>In July, the FSRH will be launching a report post pregnancy contraception. The report has been developed collaboratively with contributions from across SRH, Obstetrics, Nursing and Midwifery, as well as commissioners of services, demonstrating how post pregnancy contraception can be provided successfully on labour wards.</p> <p>Council noted the FSRH report.</p>
16	<p>Report from Women’s Voices Lead The Women’s Voices Lead noted the written update on recent activities of the Women’s Network and Voices Panel.</p> <p>Council was updated on the contributions of the Women’s Network on RCOG campaigns and consultations including the updated Outpatient Hysteroscopy patient information resource.</p>

	<p>Council noted that the Women’s Network will be hosting a session with Mariya Kalgo at Congress on Wednesday 25 June at 9:30am on Women's Health Matters: Communication, Consent, and Clinical Excellence.</p> <p>In addition, Jane Plumb and Emma Crookes will be speaking at the British Society of Undergraduate Society and Obstetrics and Gynaecology and RCOG Careers Day in May, where their presentation will focus on ‘Listening to patients and championing women’s health care: RCOG Women’s Network’.</p> <p>Council noted the report from the Women’s Voices Lead.</p>
17	<p>Report from Trainees’ Committee Chair</p> <p>The National Trainees’ Committee (NTC) Vice-Chair presented their report, which provided an update on the NTC’s recent activities.</p> <p>Council noted the ongoing work between the College and the NTC to enhance the trainee’s online presence. This includes the development of a newsletter and online platform where resources will be collated for trainees.</p> <p>Council was informed that planning for the National Trainees Conference 2026 was now underway. Regions will be able to bid until 30 April 2025 with interviews then scheduled for 30 May 2025.</p> <p>Council was made aware that the NTC intends to review the award categories for the Trainee and Trainee of the Year awards to include allied healthcare professionals. A proposal will submitted to Education Board setting out suggested changes for 2026.</p> <p>Council noted the report from the National Trainee’s Committee Chair.</p>
18	<p>Board of Trustees March 2025 meeting</p> <p>Professor Alastair Campbell presented the report on the March 2025 Board of Trustees meeting, which included discussion of the Tommy’s National Centre for Maternity Improvement transition, the development of the College’s 2025-2030 strategy and the Presidential Priorities.</p> <p>Council noted the report on the March 2025 Board of Trustees meeting.</p>
19	<p>Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee Report</p> <p>The DRRC Chair presented the Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee Report, which provided an update on the removals, reinstatements and sanctions conferred by the Committee.</p> <p>Council noted the Disciplinary, Removals and Reinstatement Committee Report.</p>
20	<p>Council Membership</p>
20.1	<p>RCOG Elections 2025</p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the RCOG Elections 2025 update, which provided an update on the various RCOG elections in 2025.</p> <p>Regarding the President election, Council noted that the Presidential candidate profiles will launch on 2 May 2025. In addition, all candidates have been invited to participate in a Q&A panel event on Monday 12 May.</p> <p>Council noted that the nominations process for the Vice President election will launch on Monday 7 July and conclude Monday 4 August. The Vice President role description and application pack will be brought to the next Council meeting for approval.</p> <p>Ms Lancaster informed Council that nominations for the Council elections closed on 23 April, and all 18 vacancies have received valid candidate nominations. Voting for the Council elections will take place between Tuesday 27 May and Thursday 26 June.</p>

	Council noted the RCOG Elections 2025 update.
20.2	<p>Committee and Honorary Appointments and Extensions 51 new appointments and 12 extensions were ratified.</p> <p>Council noted that extensions are proposed by exception and Officers have reviewed the rationale for each extension proposed.</p>
20.3	<p>Council representatives on Board/Committees:</p> <p>Expressions of interest for the following positions coming vacant in June/July were requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee: FRCOG - Audit & Risk Committee: FRCOG and MRCOG - Education Board: FRCOG and MRCOG <p>Council members were advised to contact Natasha Sullivan to confirm their interest in any of the roles.</p>
21	<p>Reports/minutes Council noted the following minutes:</p> <p>21.1 Workforce Board Minutes 24 January 2025 21.2 Education Board Minutes 23 January 2025 21.3 Membership Board Minutes 27 February 2025 21.4 Academic Board Minutes 28 March 2025</p>
22	<p>Any other business Dr Hans Nagar highlighted that there was no commissioned first trimester screening service in Northern Ireland at present and request Council's advice and support on lobbying government on this matter.</p> <p>It was agreed that the College would consider how best to support Dr Hans Nagar regarding this matter.</p> <p>Action: Consideration to be given to how best to support Dr Hans Nagar regarding first trimester screening services in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>There was no other business and so the meeting was closed.</p>