

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

PRESENT

President	Dr Alison Wright
Senior Vice President, Membership	Mr Andrew Leather
Vice President, Clinical Quality	Dr Jenny Barber
Vice President, Global Health	Dr Sherif Abdel-Fattah
Vice President, Workforce	Mr Sujeewa Fernando
Vice President, Education	Miss Melanie Tipples

ELECTED FELLOWS

Dr Santanu Acharya
Mr Samson Agwu
Dr Rachna Bahl
Professor Justin Clark
Professor Peter von Dadelszen
Miss Mausumi Das
Professor Stergios Doumouchtsis
Dr Evelyn Ferguson
Mr Joseph Iskaros
Professor Swati Jha
Mr Alastair McKelvey
Dr Paul Mills
Dr Hans Nagar
Dr Suzanne O’Sullivan
Mr Andrew Pickersgill
Dr Aparna Reddy
Mr Dudley Robinson

ELECTED MEMBERS

Dr Helen Goodall
Mr Peter Harris
Dr Frances Hills
Dr Chimwemwe Kalumbi
Miss Aditi Miskin
Dr Hannah Mistry
Dr Hanan Mustafa
Ms Diane Nzelu
Dr Ganga Verma
Dr Alison Wiggans

MEMBERS

Ms Emma Crookes, Women’s Network Vice Chair
Dr Zara Haider FRCOG, CoSRH President
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

Executive Director, External Affairs
 Executive Director, Education and Quality
 DHSC Women’s Health Ambassador for England
 Chief Executive
 Executive Director, Global, Membership & Governance
 Obstetrician and Professor of Fetal Medicine
 Head of Corporate Governance and Risk
 Business Administrator

Mr Ben Butler
 Ms Carly Edwards
 Professor Dame Lesley Regan FRCOG (for item 5.1)
 Ms Kate Lancaster
 Ms Kristen Morgan
 Professor Aris Papageorghiou FRCOG (for item 21)
 Mr Christopher Smith
 Ms Natasha Sullivan

1	<p>Council Elected Trustee Election 2025 ballot Council voted in the ballot for the Council Elected Trustee election.</p> <p>The President thanked all those standing for election.</p>
2	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence The President welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from: Kat Barton MRCOG Archana Hatti MRCOG Javaid Muglu MRCOG</p>
3	<p>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.</p>
4	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p>
4.1	<p>Minutes from the last meeting The minutes from the meetings held on 11 and 12 September were approved as an accurate record of the meetings.</p>
4.2	<p>Actions record The actions from the 12 September 2025 meeting of Council were noted.</p>
5.1	<p>Obituaries Resolved: Dr Sadhan Datta – Fellow of India Professor Timothy John Draycott – Fellow of England Mr David Ian Fraser – Fellow of England Dr Biman Kumar Ghosh – Fellow of India Mr John Booth Jones – Fellow of England Dr Matti Kimberg – Fellow of Namibia Professor John Murphy – Fellow of Ireland (Dr Suzanne O’Sullivan gave the tribute) Dr John Humphrey Williams – Fellow of England</p>
5.2	<p>Tribute to Mr David Fraser FRCOG Mr Alastair McKelvey gave the tribute.</p>
5.3	<p>Tribute to Professor Tim Draycott FRCOG, immediate past Vice President Professor Dame Lesley Regan gave the tribute.</p>
6	<p>President</p>
6.1	<p>President’s plans for Council The President outlined her plans for the coordination of Council.</p> <p>The President stated that it was her intention to make Council stronger and more effective, and to encourage more discussion and debate within meetings. As a first step to support this, Council noted that the President will be considering the way in which Council meetings are structured. Council</p>

	<p>members were informed that a short survey on this matter was being developed and would be circulated to all members for feedback via email.</p> <p>Action: Feedback on Council format to be sought by survey or alternative method.</p> <p>The President highlighted what she considered the key principles for how items would be approached and discussed at Council. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council would be a safe space for Council members to discuss important topics for the College and the profession • All Council members must commit to respect confidentiality of Council • Council will speak up about what is right <p>Council noted the President’s plans for Council.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Vice President portfolios and Senior Vice President</p> <p>The proposed Vice President portfolios and Senior Vice President were presented to Council for consideration as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Vice President and Vice President for Membership - Andrew Leather • Vice President for Global Health - Sherif Abdel-Fattah • Vice President for Clinical Quality - Jenny Barber • Vice President for Workforce - Sujeewa Fernando • Vice President for Education - Melanie Tipples <p>Council discussed the rationale for removing the Vice President for Academia and Strategy role. It was noted that this step was taken to accommodate the separation of the Membership and Workforce Vice President portfolios. It was noted the Academia portion of this role will be incorporated into the Education portfolio and that all of the Officers will collectively be responsible for Strategy.</p> <p>It was noted that the previous Vice President for Academia and Strategy had been awarded a one-year extension to their role as Chair of the Academic Board. The President confirmed that, as with any extension, this would be subject to review and advertised at the end of the one-year term.</p> <p>Council approved the Vice President portfolios and Senior Vice President.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Introduction from Vice Presidents</p> <p>Council noted the introductions from the new Vice Presidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Sherif Abdel-Fattah • Dr Jenny Barber • Mr Sujeewa Fernando • Mr Andrew Leather • Miss Melanie Tipples
<p>9</p>	<p>Report on Education and Exams Activities</p> <p>The Executive Director, Education and Quality presented the Report on Education and Exams Activities.</p> <p>Council noted that the most recent Part 3 exam took place in November 2025. In total, 1,023 candidates sat an exam during this diet, with 88 circuits supported by 504 Clinical Examiners and 52 Lay Examiners taking place across a four-day period. Council noted that a record number of MRCOG Part 3 examinations were delivered across 2025, with more than 2,200 candidates sitting globally (a 35% increase on 2024). Across all exam types, the College delivered 10,941 exams across 50 countries in 2025. The Executive Director, Education and Quality thanked all those who contributed to the success of these exams.</p>

	<p>Council noted that, in October, the College established the RCOG Centre of Excellence and national accreditation model with the Malaysian Ministry of Health and Academy of Medicine Malaysia. The Executive Director, Education and Quality commented that this programme will embed the MRCOG within the Malaysian training system. To support this, the Accreditation team conducted visits to three government hospitals across Kuala Lumpur. Linked to this, Council was informed that the Curriculum 2024 programme is set to begin in July 2026 and, over five-years, will support up to 250 Malaysian O&G doctors to train to specialist level.</p> <p>Council noted that the College had been invited to participate in Phase 2 of the Medical Education and Training Reform Programme. It was noted that a range of senior clinical educators had contributed on behalf of the College.</p> <p>Council enquired about what reasonable adjustments were in place for exams. The Executive Director, Education and Quality highlighted that the College had a well-documented Reasonable Adjustments Policy.</p> <p>Council commented that there may be merit in introducing an Education stream at Congress. It was agreed that this would be explored for 2027 Congress in Malaysia.</p> <p>Action: College to explore the introduction of an Education stream at Congress.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Education and Exams Activities.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Report on Global Health Activities</p> <p>The Executive Director, Membership, Global and Governance presented the Report on Global Health Activities.</p> <p>Council noted that the six-month extension from the DHSC to implement the <i>Gynaecological Health Matters</i> programme had concluded. Stakeholder feedback demonstrated strong understanding of, and support for, the integration of gynaecological health at the state level, with 99% of surveyed government respondents indicating their support for the rollout of essential gynaecological skills training.</p> <p>Council noted that the College was undertaking a strategic review of the Centre for Women’s Global Health and would provide further updates on this in due course.</p> <p>Council commented that feedback received from members demonstrated that there was an appetite for additional IRCs to be established to better represent those members who did not currently feel represented. The Vice President for Global Health confirmed that consideration would be given to this matter.</p> <p>Action: The Vice President for Global Health to explore and discuss with others the potential formation of additional Regional IRCs.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Global Health Activities.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Report on Clinical Quality Activities</p> <p>The Executive Director, Education and Quality presented the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.</p> <p>Council was informed that, since the previous meeting, the College had published two Scientific Impact Papers covering <i>Artificial intelligence in gynaecology oncology</i> and <i>Impacted fetal head at Caesarean birth</i>.</p>

	<p>Council noted that NMPA <i>State of the Nation</i> report was published on 11 September 2025. The report analysed maternity data from 2023 and was widely promoted including coverage from The Guardian and the BMJ. The College has agreed an extension for this important work until 31 December 2027 with the funder HQIP.</p> <p>Council noted that the College’s updated <i>Maternity Safety Standard Framework</i> was published on 8 December 2025.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.</p>
<p>12.1</p>	<p>Report on Membership Activities</p> <p>The Executive Director, Membership, Global and Governance presented the Report on Membership Activities.</p> <p>Council noted the 2025 ceremonies that took place in London in April, June, September and December as well as in Chennai as part of the AICC Annual Conference. The dates for the 2026 ceremonies were shared, which include the ceremony in Lahore to coincide with the third Pakistan IRC and RCOG Summit.</p> <p>Council noted that the 2026 annual subscription cycle was successfully launched in October with over 12,000 subscription notices sent to Fellows and Members. To support this, a ‘win-back’ campaign to encourage former Fellows, Members Associates to rejoin the College was launched on 17 November.</p> <p>Council enquired about how membership rates were set for global members. The Executive Director, Membership, Global and Governance confirmed that this was set according to the World Bank’s framework.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Membership Activities.</p>
<p>12.2</p>	<p>Elevation of Members to Fellowship</p> <p>The Vice President for Membership asked Council to approve the applications for elevation to Fellowship.</p> <p>Council enquired about the steps required for the elevation of Members to Fellowship required. It was confirmed that this would be circulated to Council members.</p> <p>Action: Steps for elevation to Fellowship to be circulated to Council members.</p> <p>Council approved the applications for elevation to Fellowship.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Report on Workforce Activities</p> <p>The Executive Director, Membership, Global and Governance presented the Report on Workforce Activities.</p> <p>Council was informed that the Workforce Census 2025 report was published on 20 November 2025. This is the first report of this kind to be published since 2018. The report provides important insights into the challenges facing the O&G workforce including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 1 in 5 (19%) O&G doctors report being at high risk of burnout, • 68% report always or often working beyond their contracted hours, • 35% report not able to take their full annual leave entitlement, • 67% report gaps in their level of the rota, and • 19% intend to leave the profession within the next five years.

	<p>Council discussed the Workforce Census 2025 response rate. The President confirmed that the College would explore different mechanisms to incentivise members to complete surveys on behalf of the College.</p> <p>Council noted that the College hosted an in-person meeting of clinical directors working in O&G in the UK on 7 November 2025.</p> <p>Council noted the launch of the Race Equity in the Workforce eLearning Resource, which forms a key part of the previous President’s priorities.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Workforce Activities.</p>
14	<p>CEO Report The Chief Executive presented the report on the latest activity across the College.</p> <p>Women’s Health Hub Council noted the two new tenants at Union Street: the British Pregnancy Advisory Service and Target Ovarian Cancer. This brings the total number of women’s health organisations within the building to 16.</p> <p>Women’s Health Strategy The important work of the College to inform the refresh of the Women’s Health Strategy was noted. This includes working closely with the DHSC to advise on engagement activities, attending DHSC roundtable engagement events, and hosting an event with the Union Street organisations, the Women’s Health Ambassador and the National Clinical Director for Women’s Health to identify collective priorities for the Strategy.</p> <p>Abortion reform Council noted that the amendments to the Crime and Policing Bill are expected to receive Royal Assent in Spring 2026. The College continues to brief Peers about the amendment in order to support its passing through the House of Lords.</p> <p>Gynaecology waiting lists Council noted that the latest elective waiting time data reveals that the gynaecology waiting list now stands at approximately 575,000, a slight decrease on the previous month. The number of women waiting beyond 52 weeks has also slightly declined. The College has published a short update to its <i>Waiting for a Way Forward</i> report, highlighting the current scale of waiting times in gynaecology and emphasising the importance of continued UK Government focus on action to address them.</p> <p>Workforce Census 2025 Council noted that the RCOG Workforce Census Report was published on 20 November. The report highlights, amongst other things, the systemic pressures that the O&G workforce currently face.</p> <p>Council enquired whether there was any possibility that the DHSC would publish the College’s Workforce Tool. Ms Lancaster commented that the data that informed this work is now out of date and, as such, its publication is unlikely. However, the learning from this work has not been lost and may be used to inform future projects.</p> <p>Council noted the CEO’s report and the candidate pack for the Council Representative on the Board of Trustees.</p>
15.1	<p>Board of Trustees report Council noted the Board of Trustees report, which was taken as read.</p>
15.2	<p>To note the Vice President Trustees Council noted that the Vice President Trustees will be Dr Sherif Abdel-Fattah and Mr Andrew Leather.</p>

<p>16</p>	<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 the significant amount of RCOG activity undertaken to mark SAS Awareness Week. This included a message from the President, videos and blogs, and promotion across social media.</p> <p>Council noted the regional updates from SAS/LED colleagues. Key points highlighted included the difficulty that some colleagues have had in registering for SITMs and that Scotland and Wales were offering colleagues the opportunity to apply for specialist posts automatically.</p> <p>Council noted the report from the SAS/LED Lead.</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>Report from College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (CoSRH) The CoSRH President presented the report on the activities of the College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.</p> <p>Council noted that the CoSRH Annual General Meeting took place on 25 September 2025. During this meeting, a special resolution was passed to separate the role of the President and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Council noted the success of the CoSRH’s Annual Conference which attracted 160 in-person attendees and a further 290 virtually. During the conference, the updated UKMEC was launched. The 2025 update incorporates four new areas: multiple sclerosis, CKD, sickle cell trait and considers multiple risk factors for VTE across a range of conditions including in the post-partum period.</p> <p>Council noted the departure of Gary Waltham as Chief Executive of the CoSRH. He will be replaced by Jo Tanner who joins the College from the Royal College of Midwives.</p> <p>Council noted the CoSRH report.</p>
<p>18</p>	<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 to the Green Maternity report, to the RCOG Strategy 2025-2030 and the Workforce Census 2025 report.</p> <p>It was noted that the Women’s Network have been invited to contribute to Baroness Amos’ review in the new year.</p> <p>Council noted the report from the Women’s Voices Lead.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>Trainees</p>
<p>19.1</p>	<p>Report from Trainees’ Committee Chair The National Trainees’ Committee (NTC) Vice-Chair presented the Report from the Trainees’ Committee Chair, which provided an update on the NTC’s recent activities.</p> <p>Council noted that recruitment for Regional Representatives for Kent, Surrey and Sussex and Severn is now underway. The successful candidates will begin their term in January 2026. A process to recruit a new Vice Chair (Strategy) will also be need from April 2026.</p> <p>Council noted the appointment of Emma Badger as the new Vice Chair (Quality) who takes over from the previous Vice Chair, Kat Lattery.</p>

	<p>Council was informed that the terms of reference for the NTC had been updated. The main change is an extension to the term length for representative to up to three years with a minimum term of two years.</p> <p>Council approved the addition of two additional categories (Allied Health Care Professionals and Non-training grade doctors) for the Trainee of the Year Awards.</p> <p>Council noted that recruitment of judges for abstracts for the National Trainees Committee is now underway. Council members were asked to promote this role with consultant colleagues.</p> <p>Council noted the Report of the National Trainees' Committee Chair.</p>
20	<p>Disciplinary, Removal 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>
21	<p>Innovations in Ultrasound Scanning</p> <p>Professor Papageorghiou presented to Council on innovations in ultrasound scanning.</p> <p>The presentation particularly focused on the use of AI to improve imaging in screening. A range of systems were shared with to Council and the significant progress had been made in this field was demonstrated.</p> <p>Council noted that the use of such technologies had the potential to drive significant improvements in obstetrics and gynaecology and could also have wider benefits including with regards to workforce recruitment and retention. In particular, it was highlighted that the use of such systems could be used to train sonographers and trainees at lower cost and more accurately.</p> <p>Council noted the presentation on innovations in ultrasound scanning.</p>
22	<p>Council Membership</p>
22.1	<p>Council Elections Autumn 2025 results</p> <p>Council's congratulations were noted for the successful candidates in the following constituencies:</p> <p>Fellows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle East and North Africa – Ahmed Khalil • Wales – Manju Nair • Kent, Surrey and Sussex – Sridevi Sankaran <p>New Council members will be inducted prior to their first Council meeting on 13 February 2026.</p> <p>Council noted the Council Elections Autumn 2025 results.</p>
22.2	<p>Committee and Honorary Appointments and Extensions</p> <p>18 new appointments and 10 extensions were ratified.</p>
22.3	<p>Council representatives on Board/Committees:</p> <p>Expressions of interest for the following positions were requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workforce Board: Member - Finance and General Purposes: Fellow <p>Council members were advised to contact Natasha Sullivan to confirm their interest in any of the roles.</p>
23	<p>Reports/minutes</p> <p>Council noted the following reports and minutes:</p>

23.1 Workforce Board 6 November 2025 minutes
23.2 Clinical Quality Board 13 November 2025 minutes
23.3 Global Health Board 4 September and 20 November 2025 minutes
23.4 Membership Board 25 September 2025 minutes
23.5 Academic Board 31 October 2025 minutes
23.6 Education Board 24 October 2025 minutes

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Any other business

Council discussed the recent covering of freebirthing in the media. It was noted that it will be important that the language around this is correct and that the public does not conflate homebirth and freebirth.

Council discussed the National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation interim report, which was published on 9 December 2025. It was noted that the report had left many members feeling vulnerable and that it was important that the College continued to support them during this period. It was noted that the statement from the College, also published on 9 December 2025, was helpful in this regard.

It was confirmed that the College is in discussion with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and their team to communicate the challenges that the O&G profession is facing as well as noting the progress and improvements that have been made in these fields. It was noted that in doing this, the College had been careful to frame the discussion in a way that does not belittle the experience of the bereaved families, who are rightly upset.

In addition, the College has been increasingly encouraging NHS trusts to exercise their duty of care over their workforce including providing support around areas such as social media abuse.

It was noted that the President will be meeting with Baroness Amos in the new year to input into ongoing work. It was agreed that Council members would be invited to provide input on discussion points for this meeting.

Action: Feedback from Council members on discussion points for President's meeting with Baroness Amos to be sought by email.