

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

PRESENT

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

ELECTED MEMBERS

Dr Jenny Barber
Dr Helen Goodall
Dr Peter Harris
Dr Javaid Muglu
Dr Hanan Mustafa
Dr Diane Nzelu
Dr Ganga Verma
Dr Alison Wiggans
Aditi Miskin
Archana Hatti
Frances Hills
Chimwemwe Kalumbi

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	Vice President Election 2025 ballot Council voted in the ballot for the Vice President election. The President thanked all those standing for election.
2	Welcome and apologies for absence The President welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from: Hannah Mistry
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 4 July 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
4.2	Actions record The actions from the 4 July 2025 meeting of Council were noted.
5.1	Obituaries Resolved: Dr John Michael Read – Member of South Africa Dr Margery Ritchie Lane – Fellow of Australia Mr John Philip Calvert – Fellow of England Dr James Gardiner Ogilvy – Member of Australia Professor John Joseph Sciarra – Fellow ad eundem of the United States of America
6	Introduction from new Council members
6.1	Council noted the introductions from the following new Council members: Santanu Acharya, International Representative South Asia Samson Agwu, International representative Sub-Saharan Africa Rachna Bahl, Fellows’ Representative South West Evelyn Ferguson, Fellows’ Representative Scotland Archana Hatti, Members’ Representative West Midlands Frances Hills, Members’ Representative East Midlands Alastair McKelvey, Fellows’ Representative East of England Paul Mills, Fellows’ Representative Scotland Aparna Reddy, Fellows’ Representative Thames Valley and Wessex
7	President

President's Report

The President updated Council on progress towards the delivery of the Presidential Priorities.

The President noted that the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare became the College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (CoSRH) on 20 August 2025. The Officers attended a parliamentary reception to mark this. In addition, the RCOG and the CoSRH have collaborated on a joint report on post-pregnancy contraception, which will be shared with all Council members.

Action: Joint report between RCOG and CoSRH on post-pregnancy contraception to be shared with Council members.

Improving Surgical Training

Council noted that Phase 2 of this project is underway with five dedicated workstreams established to undertake research into the challenges identified in Phase 1 and develop potential solutions to improve training. Council was informed that focus was now shifting to Phase 3 which will see the implementation and evaluation of recommendations.

Race Equity

Council was updated on the RCOG Race Equity Care Package, which was developed in response to the College's 2023 discrimination survey. The resource has been piloted in Leicester and is currently being reviewed by the College's eLearning team. It is intended that the resource will be published on the College's website in early October.

The resource has been designed to help healthcare professionals address racism within the workplace. It consists of six eLearning modules (Introduction, Anti-racist leadership, Creating equitable teams, Support, Empowerment and Psychological safety).

Sustainable care

The College's Green Maternity Challenge project has now concluded. Nine multidisciplinary teams developed carbon cutting initiatives driving combined savings of 101,263 kg CO₂ equivalent and £860,669 over the 16-week challenge.

The findings and recommendations from the Green Maternity Challenge were presented at the Green Maternity Conference on 19 March 2025, with the full report expected to publish on 22 September 2025.

Action: Green Maternity Challenge Report to be shared with all Council members upon publication.

The College is developing a sustainability hub for members wanting to provide more sustainable care across obstetrics and gynaecology and a scientific impact paper on the effects of environmental changes on perinatal health has been commissioned led by Professor Jane Hirst.

Maternity Safety

Council noted that the review and update of the Maternity Services Standards Framework is underway and due to be published in November 2025.

Council noted that the College had supported the announcement of the rapid review of maternity and neonatal safety at Congress 2025 and continues to engage with Government around this. Two additional sessions on Maternity Safety were hosted at Congress focusing on 'Maternity Safety a Global Perspective,' and 'Confronting the challenge of inequalities in healthcare.'

The President continues to take a proactive approach to media engagement, using recent interviews to highlight workforce challenges and promote more balanced reporting on maternity safety. Several recent publications including a video series on 'Tackling inequalities and disadvantage during

	<p>pregnancy and birth,' and an interview with the BMJ with an in-depth focus on maternity safety were highlighted to Council.</p> <p>Council enquired whether the College had any influence on the selection of units to be included in the rapid review. The President confirmed that the College continues to engage with Government on this.</p> <p>Council noted the President's Report.</p>
8	Education
8.1	<p>Report on Education and Exams Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Education presented the Report on Education and Exams Activities, particularly reflecting on the key achievements from their term of office.</p> <p>Council considered the July MRCOG Part 1 and Part 2 exam results data. It was noted that the candidate numbers were consistent with the recent steady state and that results were comparable across UK and international candidates.</p> <p>Council was updated on the MRCOG Part 3 contingency exam which took place as a result of the exam that was cancelled in Lahore in May. 100 candidates sat the exam with a pass rate of 61%. This is comparable with previous exams. It was acknowledged that the Part 3 exam had become more difficult over time with an overall pass rate of around 60% and better outcomes achieved in the UK.</p> <p>Council noted that Curriculum 2024 was approved by the GMC and launched on 7 August 2024. This includes 21 Special Interest Training Modules (SITMs) (7 Obstetric and 14 Gynaecology) and 3 Special Interest Professional Modules (SIPMs). To date, there have been 1,077 SITM registrations and 45 SIPM registrations. An evaluation is currently underway and will be reported to the GMC in December 2025.</p> <p>Council noted that the Learning Management System, which launched in September 2022, has now been comprehensively embedded. Since launch, 25,974 learners have registered on the system and are able to access a range of resources including toolkits, podcasts and exam preparation resources. The College has a partnership with RANZCOG giving their members access to content.</p> <p>Over the previous three years, the College has doubled the number of international partners on its Accreditation/Education Pilot Programme. The College now has now has four partners delivering structured training programmes aligned to Curriculum 2024. With the growth of the MRCOG globally, the importance of these accreditation centres was acknowledged.</p> <p>Council enquired whether an exam centre would be introduced in Sub-Saharan Africa. It was confirmed that the pipeline is not currently strong enough to introduce one but that this would be kept under review.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Education and Exams Activities.</p>
9	Global Health
9.1	<p>Report on Global Health Activities</p> <p>The Senior Vice President for Global Health presented the Report on Global Health Activities, particularly reflecting on the key achievements from their term of office.</p> <p>Council noted that the Making Abortion Safe Programme, a four-year programme in Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Nigeria, closed in 2024. Through the programme, the College worked with 60 SRHR advocacy champions, enabled nearly 3,000 healthcare professions to access online learning resources on abortion and post-abortion care and supported the implementation of nation reforms on abortion care in Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Rwanda.</p>

	<p>The Gynaecological Health Matters programme saw training and development provided for healthcare workers in Bangladesh and Nigeria, and significant engagement with the Government in each country to improve the care provided to women with gynaecological problems. A focus of the programme has been on training the trainers to ensure its sustainability. The College is also developing a 'lite' version, which community workers can deliver, and a 'self-care' version.</p> <p>Council noted that specialist training to equip healthcare workers in Egypt to combat female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) within the country was provided in Alexandria in 2023 and subsequently in Cairo and Sohag in 2024. 97% of participants trained in Alexandria felt that the training improved their confidence in challenging medicalised FGM/C. The College is supporting the development of a network of anti-FGM/C champions in Egypt and collaborating with local NGOs.</p> <p>The 2025 World Congress attracted more than 2,500 delegates from 95 countries and delivered the largest programme in Congress history. Moving forward the Congress will be delivered every two years.</p> <p>Council ratified the proposal to extend the tenure of the Congress Scientific Programme Committee Honorary Director and Deputy Director for a further year to help ensure continuity of expertise in these roles. The proposals had previously been considered by Officers.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Global Health Activities.</p>
10	Clinical Quality
10.1	<p>Report on Clinical Quality Activities</p> <p>The Vice President for Clinical Quality presented the Report on Clinical Quality Activities, particularly reflecting on the key achievements from their term of office.</p> <p>Council noted that the previous three years had been the College's most productive in terms of the output of clinical quality guidance. Between December 2022 and September 2025, the College published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14+ patient information resources, • 4+ Good Practice Papers, • 9+ Green Top Guidelines, and • 8+ Scientific Impact Papers <p>Council noted that the Maternity Services Standards Framework has been circulated to all Council members. Council members were asked to provide feedback by 5 October 2025. The Governance team will recirculate the link to Council members to ensure that all have received it.</p> <p>Action: Link to Maternity Services Standards Framework to be sent to Council members for feedback.</p> <p>The Vice President for Clinical Quality also highlighted the range of high-quality projects and audits were also delivered during this period including the Avoiding Brain Injuries in Childbirth Collaborative, the National Maternity and Perinatal Audit, the Tommy's National Centre for Maternity Improvement, the Patient Reported Experience Measure questionnaire, and the BEACON Project.</p> <p>Council discussed the Tommy's app. It was noted that the College is taking action to transition ownership of this to a new provider.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Clinical Quality Activities.</p>
10.2	<p>Clinical Quality Board Terms of Reference</p> <p>Council approved the Clinical Quality Board Terms of Reference</p>

11	Membership and Workforce
11.1	<p>Report on Membership and Workforce Activities The Vice President for Membership and Workforce presented the Report on Membership and Workforce Activities, particularly reflecting on the key achievements from their term of office.</p> <p>The Vice President for Membership and Workforce thanked those who attended the membership ceremony that took place on 11 September, which saw 160 new Fellows and Members welcomed.</p> <p>The Vice President for Membership and Workforce also thanked those who provide their time voluntarily to support job plan review and approval. A new AAC Panel RCOG Representative feedback form has been developed and a webinar delivered on 24 July to help socialise this.</p> <p>Council noted that SAS Week 2025 will take place between 6-10 October and is an opportunity to celebrate SAS doctors across all specialties.</p> <p>Council was informed that a call for applications to become Peer Supporters is currently live until 1 October. Council was asked to promote and signpost these roles to colleagues that may be interested.</p> <p>Council noted that, since December 2022, the membership of the College has increased to more than 18,000 from across 125 countries. A review of the Fellowship proposition, in particular, has had a notable impact with more than 690 new Fellows elevated.</p> <p>Council noted the development of a Return to Work toolkit and Wellbeing resources hub both of which are now freely available to members of the RCOG website.</p> <p>Council noted that the Executive Summary and Workforce Census Report will be published imminently. Some of the headlines from the Census include 68% reporting satisfaction with their day-to-day work, 1 in 5 reporting risk of burnout and 67% highlighting rota gaps.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Membership and Workforce Activities.</p>
11.2	<p>Workforce Board Terms of Reference Council approved the Workforce Board Terms of Reference.</p>
11.3	<p>Honorary Fellowships and Distinguished Service Medal Awards Council noted that 80 applications were considered for honorary fellowships at Officers and that 22 are being recommended to Council. In addition, it was noted that Officers may also choose to confer a Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution in a specific area of women’s health and that, this year, three individuals have been chosen.</p> <p>Council ratified the proposal to admit ten Fellows ad eundem and twelve Fellows honoris causa, as well as to confer three DSM awards.</p>
12	Academia and Strategy
12.1	<p>Report on Academia and Strategy Activities The Vice President for Academia and Strategy presented the Report on Academia and Strategy Activities, particularly reflecting on the key achievements from their term of office.</p> <p>Council noted the launch of the Women’s Health Research Prioritisation Project in February 2025, 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 first survey closed with 1441 respondents and provided over 4000 research topics/questions for analysis. A second survey ran until the end of July and received a further 931 responses with participants asked to rank the importance of research topics identified through the first survey. Analysis of this is currently underway with a further workshop planned to support the finalisation of the list. The project is due to complete on 30 November 2025.</p>

	<p>Council was informed that good progress had been made on the development of a Women’s Health Innovation Hub, which aims to connect the 14 women’s health organisations with a global network of nearly 20,000 clinical experts.</p> <p>The introduction and success of the Genomics Committee was highlighted. This is part of the College’s strategy to embed genomics expertise within the profession by embracing an understanding of the new genomic technologies and by becoming involved in the discussions and decisions about their implementation.</p> <p>Council also noted that an eLearning platform for maternal vaccination had been developed to provide educational material on maternal vaccination for healthcare providers who provide guidance on maternal vaccination to pregnant women.</p> <p>Council noted the Report on Report on Academia and Strategy Activities.</p>
12.2	<p>Awards, Prizes and Bursaries</p> <p>Council noted that, in 2025, the College hosted 18 different academic awards including travel awards, manuscripts, case histories, guest lectures and research fellowships. The total number of applications received was 246 applications, an increase from 224 in 2024.</p> <p>Council ratified the awarding of the College awards, prizes and grants.</p>
13	CEO
13.1	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>Council noted the CEO’s report and the candidate pack for the Council Representative on the Board of Trustees.</p>
14	<p>Board of Trustees report</p> <p>Council noted the Board of Trustees report.</p>
15	Council Membership
15.1	<p>Council Elections Autumn 2025</p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the paper on the Council Elections taking place in Autumn 2025.</p> <p>Council was informed that further Council elections will likely be required in 2025 to fill any vacancies which arise as a consequence of the Vice President election that took place earlier in the meeting. It was noted that, if needed, the election period would be 25 September-4 December with the results of the announced at Council on 12 December.</p> <p>Council commented that the current word limit of 60-words set for both the statement of interest and summary of professional activities could be perceived as restrictive. It was agreed that this would be reviewed ahead of any 2026 elections.</p> <p>Council approved the President Election Guidance, President role description and nomination form.</p>
15.2	<p>Committee and Honorary Appointments and Extensions</p> <p>13 new appointments and two extensions were ratified.</p>
19.4	<p>Council representatives on Board/Committees:</p> <p>Expressions of interest for the following positions were requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education Board: MRCOG <p>Council members were advised to contact Natasha Sullivan to confirm their interest in any of the roles.</p>
16	<p>Reports/minutes</p> <p>Council noted the following reports and minutes:</p> <p>16.1 Academic Board 13 June 2025 meeting minutes</p>

	<p>16.2 Clinical Quality Board 10 July 2025 meeting minutes</p> <p>16.3 Report from College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare</p> <p>16.4 Report from Women’s Voices Lead</p> <p>16.5 Report from SAS/LED Lead</p> <p>16.6 Report from Trainees’ Committee Chair</p> <p>16.7 Removals and reinstatements to the Regulatory Registers</p> <p>16.8 Workforce Board meeting 18 July 2025 minutes</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>The President thanked the retiring Vice Presidents, members of RCOG staff, Women’s Network, the Council secretary and retiring CoSRH President.</p> <p>The Vice Presidents and Council thanked the President for her excellent leadership of the College over the last three years</p> <p>There was no other business and so the meeting was closed.</p>