

Document name
Who does this policy apply to? All RCN members.
Purpose To define the purpose of Congress as the annual representative meeting of RCN members
Description of the policy This policy outlines how RCN Congress works
Author/s Executive Director of Governance
Cross Reference Elections Procedure for Chair and Vice Chair of Congress
Status: Approved by RCN Council January 2025
Policy owner: RCN Governance Team
Date policy approved and by whom RCN Council - January 2025 RCN Agenda Committee – January 2025
Date of implementation: January 2025



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[Definition and purpose of Congress](#)

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- 1.1 Congress is the annual representative meeting of members which focusses on influencing the policy and future direction of the College (RCN Royal Charter)
- 1.2 Its purpose is to:
- promote the objects of the RCN as laid down in the Royal Charter
  - promote the profession of nursing
  - express views and opinions on matters of importance to nurses and the nursing profession
  - express views and opinions, and influence the health and social care services the nursing profession provides to the people of the United Kingdom
  - express views and opinions, and influence health care policy for the people of the United Kingdom
  - be involved in international matters relating to nurses, nursing and health care
  - to exert political pressure to further these aims
  - participate in and influence the policy-making agenda of Council
  - express views and opinions, and influence the organisation of the RCN
  - recommend action by Council or its committees and boards
  - initiate immediate action subject to the agreement of Council members present after meeting in formal session
  - provide a variety of educational opportunities for nurses
  - facilitate membership networking.
- 2.1 As per the Royal Charter, Congress is the annual representative meeting of Members. It is the responsibility of the General Secretary and Chief Executive to give at least 28 clear days' notice of the date, time and place of the meeting.

3.1 All RCN members (nurse members, nursing support worker members, retired members and student members in any payment plan), have the right to attend and speak on any matter before Congress.

3.2 RCN members employed by the RCN at the time Congress takes place are permitted to speak at the invitation of the Chair of Congress and with an appropriate declaration.

4.1 Any member of the submitting entities below can submit items on behalf of the entity to be considered for inclusion on the Congress agenda:

Country and Regional Boards

Branches

Council

Forums

Nursing Support Workers Committee

RCN Professional Nursing Committee

RCN Trade Union Committee

Students Committee

UK Health and Safety Representatives Committee

UK Learning Representatives Committee

UK Stewards Committee

However, each submission must be authorised from one of the following

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student member of Council  
the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Nursing Support Workers  
Committee or the Nursing Support Workers member of Council  
a Board Chair or Vice-Chair  
the Chair or Vice-Chair of Council

5.4 Members of Governance bodies, i.e. Council, Boards and the RCN  
Pro11.04 RCN







available, the Chair of Congress will read out the matter for discussion or resolution headline.

## 12.5 Agenda items submitted by the General Secretary and





16.2 Voting members may propose a variation to time limits using a procedural item card. This must be seconded by a voting member from a

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must specify the proposed new order of agenda items. A procedural item vote is then taken. If passed, the new order of agenda items will take effect. If the procedural item vote is lost, the order of agenda items remains unchanged.

Amending an agenda item from the floor – amendments to an agenda item may be proposed and seconded by voting members from the floor by way of the procedural item process (see section 14 and 17 for the full process).

The proposer of the procedural item must specify the amendment to the agenda item in full. A vote on the procedural item is then taken. If the procedural item vote is passed, the new wording will take effect. If the procedural item vote is lost, the original wording of the agenda item remains unchanged.

- 18.1 A point of order card is used to challenge the conduct of the meeting, or to seek clarification from the Chair. The main hall slides set out what is a Point of Order. As soon as the Chair sees a point of order card, anyone speaking may be interrupted.
  - 18.2 Point of order cards may be used by anyone who is registered and attending Congress.
  - 18.3 Any person who is registered and attending Congress who wishes to raise a point of order must in the first instance speak to a member of the Agenda Committee at their table in the main hall. The members of the Agenda Committee will ask the individual to clarify the reasons for its introduction to ensure it meets the criteria of a point of order. If it does meet the criteria, the individual will be asked to approach the stated microphone in the main hall and hold up their point of order card.
  - 18.4 If the Chair considers that the point being made is not a point of order, they may ask the person to cease speaking with immediate effect.
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- 19.1 Speakers will first state their name and whether they are attending that





The Second Report, arising from the Agenda Committee meeting immediately before Congress, will be presented by the Vice-Chair at the first session of Congress.

Subsequent reports from Agenda Committee meetings during Congress will be presented by the Vice-Chair of Congress at appropriate times throughout the week.