



Requesting RCP representative contact lists for AACs

A process guide for Trusts and Health Boards

Who needs Royal College representatives on AACs

The Department of Health makes a distinction between the different health care providers in the UK based on the statutory need for them to have an RCP Fellow as a representative on an Advisory Appointment Committee (AAC).

Thus, for NHS Trusts, Wales Health Boards, and Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts, it is a *legal* requirement*¹ to have an external RCP representative in attendance on AAC panels for consultant roles.

For NHS Foundation Trusts and certain other employers this is *not* a statutory requirement, merely advisable. However, as having an external RCP rep in attendance serves a safeguarding benefit, the RCP encourages it and facilitates it.

Who in the RCP can help

The AACs Team within the RCP is dedicated to providing lists of nominated fellows who can be the external RCP rep on AACs and helps Trusts to find a suitable rep in good time for future AACs. The AACs team can be contacted on AAC@rcp.ac.uk

What timelines should Trusts bear in mind

Notice Period for Statutory Employers (*for whom an external RCP Rep on an AAC is a statutory requirement*)

8+ weeks from AAC Date – Ideal lead time to find an RCP rep; contact us now to requests lists

Less than 8 weeks – We will endeavour to send lists wherever possible but trusts and Health Boards should be aware there is a risk no reps will be available, in which case the AAC date will need to be moved.

For this reason, at extremely short notice, i.e. **4 weeks or less**, we **do not** send any lists, and will recommend changing the AAC date instead. ²

¹ As per *National Health Service (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations 1996, amended 2004*, and the corresponding [Department of Health Guidance](#) and [Welsh Guidance](#)

² At short notice we may also send the criteria for a suitable rep so that the trust has the option to source one through their own channels/ resources. In such cases the RCP AACs team must be

informed of the rep name as soon as possible in advance of the AAC so they may verify eligibility. The same eligibility criteria will be applied to reps sourced through lists, or by the trust.

Notice period for non-statutory employers (*for whom an external RCP Rep on an AAC is not a statutory requirement, but is recommended all the same- for e.g. NHS Foundation Trusts*)

8+ weeks – AAC admin *will* provide rep lists, for the trust to contact.

Less than 8 weeks – the RCP team may be able to provide lists at less than 8 weeks notice, subject to workload. The minimum timeline usually does not fall below 5 weeks.*

Why is it important for employers to adhere to the above timelines

Please be aware that the nominees on our lists have *not* pre-agreed for the day in question and may need 6-8+ weeks' notice to reschedule clinical commitments. Therefore, with too short notice, reps are unlikely to be available.

Timelines for requesting rep lists are important to bear in mind because of the human effort involved in finding a suitable rep- both at the RCP end, as well as on the part of the med recruitment team in Trust HR departments. We at the AACs team must manually check certain aspects of the eligibility criteria over *every single time* that we put together a list. This is a time intensive process, so it may take several working days for a response as we work through our queue of requests. For this reason, we cannot provide lists for AACs at extremely short notice, as they are unlikely to result in success, and negatively impact the service we can provide for good notice requests.

What is the process for sourcing an RCP rep

1. The employer provides the RCP AACs team (aac@rcp.ac.uk) with the following details:
 - confirmed AAC date (ideally 8+ weeks' notice)
 - RCP job description reference number(s) (10-digit number issued at the start of the review)
 - can the college representative attend by videoconference?
2. The AACs team provides the employer with a list of nominees specific to the particular post.
3. The employer contacts the prospective representatives on the list. See our [website](#) for search tips. Email everyone on the list **simultaneously**. You should ideally hear back within 3 working days, however, please **do not wait any longer than one week** to contact us if you have not managed to secure someone as a result of contacting everyone on the first list (we can send second and even third lists out provided we have 8 weeks of notice.) For subsequent lists, please contact us if you have not secured anyone within 3 working days of contacting everyone on those lists.
4. For any niche specialties, where there aren't that many Fellows for us to approach, we can let you know, and some amount of flexibility needs to be built in- for e.g. when you try to get in your Execs', HR/ medical workforce representative and other stakeholders' diaries for possible AAC dates, some trusts have more than one date ear-marked for an AAC, to plan for contingencies. Might be worthwhile asking in your organisation if this is a viable option.
5. If the invitation is successful, the employer contacts the RCP with the name of the agreed rep. If the invitation is not successful, the employer contacts the RCP for a further list of

names.

What should happen when a rep agrees to attend

The trust must inform the RCP when they have found a rep for an AAC. We would need their full name and email address. We then check that the rep meets all the criteria and confirm that back to the trust. This is true of whether the rep was found through RCP lists or the trust's own efforts. It is essential that the rep be someone who meets all the criteria to be part of an AAC as on the day of the AAC.

What if an employer provides sufficient notice, and is struggling to secure a rep

At good notice, reps are usually secured after one or two lists. If you are struggling to find a rep, please inform the AAC team as soon as possible, especially if the AAC is now less than 4 weeks away. The RCP will send further lists of potential reps to the trust on being so requested. Please also consider simultaneously trying to secure a rep through your own efforts at the same time (for e.g., colleagues of your employees, who are wholly unrelated to the Trust, but who meet the RCP criteria). The RCP AACs team can provide the criteria on request, and we must be informed of the name of anyone who agrees as soon as possible, to verify eligibility

