

Advisory Appointment Committee guidance for RCR representatives

Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to be an Appointment Advisory Committee (AAC) representative.

AAC representatives play a critical role in supporting NHS organisations to appoint the most suitable candidate for the consultant role. At the College we also believe it is good professional development for representatives to find out how other trusts and health boards operate.

In volunteering to sit as a College representative you have committed to providing your specialty expertise to help the recruiting committee select the most suitable candidate for their post and give assurance that the appointed candidate's training is commensurate with the requirements of the role, recommending further training if it is not.

This document provides information about what happens before an AAC meeting is convened, the preparation required of you before the meeting, the AAC meeting itself and the follow-up actions.

1. Background to appointment on a panel

Before you receive a call or email to invite you to sit as an AAC representative, much work has already taken place within the recruitment process.

1. Job description review

Before advertising a role, recruiting trusts and health boards are required to submit job descriptions to the RCR for review. These are reviewed by Job Plan Advisers against the College's guidance; *A guide to job planning in clinical radiology* or *Guide to job planning in clinical oncology, third edition*, and Job Plan Advisers will work with recruiting trusts and health boards as necessary to ensure that the job plan is patient-safe and allows adequate time for the consultant's professional development and non-clinical commitments, such as teaching and research.^{1,2}

If a job plan does not meet the standards set out in the College job planning guidance, and the recruiting trust or health board does not remedy this, the College will mark the job plan with a unique identifier and the date of review for future reference, but it will not be approved.

Job plans must be reviewed at least annually. If you notice that the job plan you are recruiting against has not been reviewed for over 12 months, please contact the Professional Services (aac@rcr.ac.uk) team who can advise you further.

2. Appointment as a representative

When the College sends a job description back to the recruiting team, details of AAC representatives who meet the criteria to provide appropriate expertise to the AAC will also be provided. We determine appropriate representatives based on two criteria:

- a. **Location:** we endeavour to ensure that you are geographically located in proximity to the recruiting trust or health board, but to avoid conflicts of interest will not send you to your own trust or health board.
- b. **Specialist interest:** where the role is not a generalist role we will, where possible, use representatives with a specialist interest in the site being recruited to. This is because those with a specialist interest are able to appropriately question candidates to elicit whether their skill set is appropriate and make recommendations for additional training where relevant. These specialist interests are:

Clinical oncology

- Brachytherapy
- Paediatric

Clinical radiology

- Breast
- Interventional radiology
- Paediatric
- Neuroradiology

It is for the recruiting team to make arrangements regarding interview dates with suggested representatives; they will contact you directly. They should give you at least eight weeks' notice of their intended interview dates to allow you to rearrange clinics as necessary, although often this is not the case.

If you have agreed to sit as a College representative, please make a careful note of the AAC case number. This is important for the purposes of the College acknowledging your role on a particular AAC.

Members of the AAC will be reimbursed for their expenses including travel, hotel accommodation and other subsistence allowances in accordance with regulations or rules established by recruiting trusts and health boards. We advise you to ask the recruiting trust or health board about the level of reimbursement and whether a fee will be payable before the AAC takes place.

2. Preparing for an AAC

The recruiting team should prepare the selection criteria.

As a minimum you should ensure that applicants' names appear on the appropriate General Medical Council (GMC) Specialist Register. Registrars may apply for consultant positions up to six months prior to the award of their Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT).

The requirements for a post will be defined by the person specification, some elements of which will represent essential requirements while others will be deemed desirable. The emphasis given to different qualities will depend upon the nature of the appointment. Examples of person specification criteria are:

- Experience of research, which is essential for an academic appointment, but for any post ensures the candidate is familiar with basic scientific principles, analysis of data and the application of experimental methods to clinical problems
- Experience of teaching at undergraduate and/or post-graduate level which enhances the candidate's ability to provide guidance for junior medical staff of all specialties
- Evidence of active involvement in audit or quality improvement which confirms the candidate's understanding of quality issues and review of practice
- Demonstrable understanding of local, regional and national management issues which will contribute to the effectiveness of the consultant within his/her area of clinical practice
- Clear communication skills, including good use of the English language, to allow effective transfer of information between professional and patient. Also, evidence of providing information for patients in an understandable and sensitive manner, particularly when seeking consent and breaking bad news, for example.

For clinical oncology posts, College representatives should be aware that doctors who are on the Specialist Register for 'radiotherapy' in other countries in the European Union may be legally entitled to automatic entry to the GMC Specialist Register for Clinical Oncology in the UK. It is important to establish that any applicant who has entered the Register by this route has the appropriate depth and breadth of experience to take up the consultant post being considered. College representatives requiring advice about this issue should contact the College's Education Directorate (Ruth_Gibson@rcr.ac.uk).

As the College representative, you are not in a position to insist on either the inclusion or exclusion of any candidate. You have no authority beyond that of any other member of the AAC. With your AAC colleagues you must ensure that when an applicant is not shortlisted the reasons for this are valid and clearly documented, with appropriate feedback given to the candidate.

From time to time you may find yourself considering an appointment for a candidate who you have trained or know well in another capacity. Where this arises you should inform the chair of the AAC before the interview date. The chair can then decide whether it is appropriate for you to sit on the panel or whether it would be more appropriate to source a different representative.

In this circumstance, if the chair sees fit to allow you to continue in your role as College representative, you must ensure that the candidate you know does not have an unfair advantage (or disadvantage). If you do not feel this is achievable, then you should stand down.

3. Conduct at the AAC

All members of the AAC should have been trained in fair and non-discriminatory interviewing and selection techniques and the application of equality legislation. RCR Fellows and members are asked to confirm they have received this training before they can be appointed as AAC representatives. If you feel you would benefit from refresher training, the College provides equality and diversity webinars for AAC representatives. These are available on our [website](#).

Candidates applying for posts who feel they have been unfairly treated by the AAC are entitled to ask an Employment Tribunal or court to examine the proceedings of the AAC. College representatives are advised to keep a confidential record of the AAC proceedings for six months after the date on which it took place.

4. After the AAC

Within two weeks of the date of the AAC you must submit the outcome to the College using the outcome form. Letters from the College highlighting contribution for the purposes of continuing professional development (CPD) and revalidation are predicated upon receipt of this form, so it is crucial you return it to the College.

5. Any questions?

Contact the AAC Team, email aac@rcr.ac.uk or telephone 020 7405 1282 option 8 for AACs.

References

1. The Royal College of Radiologists. *A guide to job planning in clinical radiology*. London, The Royal College of Radiologists, 2013.
 2. The Royal College of Radiologists. *A guide to job planning in clinical oncology, third edition*. London, The Royal College of Radiologists, 2015.
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The Royal College of Radiologists. *Advisory Appointment Committee guidance for RCR representatives*.
London: The Royal College of Radiologists, 2017.
RCR2017

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