

Royal College of Pharmacy Senate Meeting Wednesday 24th June 2026

Senate Members Present:

In person: Tase Oputu (TO) - Chair, Catriona Sinclair (CS), Gino Martini (GM), Ruth Edwards (RE), Josh Miller (JM), Laura Fulton (LF)

On Teams: Liz Hallett (LH), Mahendra Patel (MP), Claire Anderson (CA), Mildred Johnson (MJ), Eleri Schiavone (ES), Aled Roberts (AR)

RCPHarm in Attendance: Karen Baxter (KB), Hanna Jenvey (HJ) – item 2g only, Jessie Fromont (JF) – minutes. (In person) Louise Goldring (LG), Justine Scanlan (JS), Liz North – item 2f only, Phoebe Carlyon - minutes. (Online)

No.		Item
i	11.00	Welcome, apologies & declaration of interests
ii	-	Approval of minutes of previous meeting – not applicable this time
iii	-	Matters arising from the minutes not specifically included in the agenda – nothing to carry forward from final Assembly meeting
As this was the inaugural meeting of the Senate, there were no previous Senate minutes available for approval and, consequently, no matters arising. Members noted that while a predecessor assembly had previously existed, there were no outstanding actions or items to be carried forward from the final Assembly meeting with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society.		
1. ITEMS FOR NOTING		
1a	11.05	Senate Terms of Reference Under items for noting, the Senate's Terms of Reference were presented for approval. No comments or amendments were raised by members. It was confirmed that the document would be submitted to the Trustee Board for final ratification at a forthcoming meeting. APPROVED
1b		Reports of the three NPACs The Senate noted the report from the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils (NPACs), which summarised key discussion areas, decisions and actions arising from the Councils' first joint meeting held in June. It was confirmed that no issues required escalation to the Senate from that meeting. Members welcomed the new report format, commenting positively on its clear and accessible layout. During discussion, a question was raised regarding the process for inviting external speakers to NPAC meetings, particularly in light of presentations linked to current consultations and the potential for perceived conflicts of interest. It was suggested that a more formal and documented process for selecting and approving external speakers may be beneficial. In response, it was acknowledged that, as part of establishing new ways of working, there would be value in

		formalising such processes and continuing to refine the reporting approach. These considerations were noted for further discussion under the agenda item on ways of working. ACTION: External speaker process for NPACs to be reviewed and brought back to Senate.
1c		Report from ESC It was confirmed that the minutes from the most recent ESC meeting had previously been reported to the final Assembly meeting and that no further ESC meetings had taken place since then, with the next meeting scheduled for 9 July.
1d		Report from SRC The Senate received the Science and Research Committee (SRC) report for noting. Members noted that, due to ongoing transition arrangements and limited recent activity, there had not yet been significant input from either committee (ESC & SRC) to the Senate. It was explained that, as both committees establish their regular meeting cycles, future Senate meetings will include more detailed consideration and discussion of their work and outputs. The importance of strengthening links between the Senate and both committees was also recognised as part of the development of new ways of working.
2. FOR DISCUSSION / APPROVAL		
2a	11.15	President's update The Senate received the President's Report, which reflected on the early stages of the organisation's journey as a Royal College. The President highlighted the overwhelmingly positive response received since the transition, noting the significant levels of support, enthusiasm, hope and aspiration expressed by members, stakeholders and the wider profession. Recent activity had focused heavily on work relating to the UK Professional Leadership Advisory Board. The President also reported on a range of ambassadorial engagements, including attendance at high-profile external events and meetings with representatives from other Royal Colleges, who had expressed strong support for and confidence in the organisation's new status. Alongside external engagements, time had been devoted to working closely with the Chief Executive and Trustee Board to help shape and develop the Royal College during its formative stages. Members welcomed the report, describing it as engaging, personal and effective in conveying the progress being made. It was suggested that the content could be used more widely to increase the visibility of the President's work and strengthen engagement with the membership and enabling members to gain greater insight into the work of the Senate and the development of the Royal College. It was agreed that this would be considered by the communications team
2b	11.30	Code of Conduct – feedback for Trustee Board to consider The Senate considered the Code of Conduct for College governance members, noting that it is a comprehensive document covering the organisation's values, principles, duties and responsibilities, as well as expectations relating to transparency, accountability, confidentiality, social media use, complaints and breaches of the Code. During discussion, clarification was sought regarding the section on intellectual property, specifically whether ownership applied only to work undertaken on behalf of the Royal College rather than members' wider professional activities. It was confirmed that the intention was for the provision to relate solely to work connected to the College and that additional wording would be added to make this clearer. Members also highlighted the

		importance of supporting consistent interpretation and application of the Code, suggesting that practical examples could be provided in areas that may be subjective, such as reputational matters. In addition, consideration was given to whether further guidance should be developed on the appropriate and transparent use of artificial intelligence in governance activities. In response, it was noted that a range of supporting policies sit beneath the Code of Conduct and that greater emphasis should be placed on ensuring governance members are aware of and have access to these documents. A further query was raised regarding the Pharmacy Research Advisory Group, which was referenced in the Science and Research Committee papers. It was confirmed that this topic would be explored in more detail during future discussions on the work of the Science and Research Committee. ACTION: Code of Conduct wording regarding ownership of work undertaken on behalf of the RC rather than other professional activities to be made clearer.
2c	11.45	Senate ways of working Psychological safety The Senate discussed the importance of creating an environment in which members feel comfortable contributing openly, respectfully and confidently. Members recognised that psychological safety is closely linked to trust, relationships and familiarity with colleagues, particularly as many participants are new to the Senate structure and have had limited opportunities to work together. Concerns were raised about behaviours that can hinder effective discussion, including repetition of points already made, and the value of active listening was emphasised. Members supported the development of a shared set of behavioural commitments to guide participation and meeting conduct, drawing on previous psychological safety work undertaken elsewhere in the organisation. Suggestions included providing opportunities for members to submit questions in advance of meetings, helping less experienced members, future early-career representatives and any lay representatives to contribute, and creating additional opportunities for relationship-building outside formal meetings. Members also noted the benefits of in-person interaction, informal networking opportunities and mixed-group working arrangements to strengthen trust and collaboration across the Senate. Information flow The Senate reviewed proposed information flow arrangements designed to improve consistency, transparency and connectivity across the organisation's governance structure. Members heard that all governance groups now report through a framework ultimately connected to the Trustee Board, creating clearer lines of communication than under previous structures. A standardised reporting format will accompany meeting minutes, allowing members to gain a concise overview of discussions and decisions while retaining access to full minutes where required. Senate reports and decisions will be shared with the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils and, where appropriate, with the Trustee Board to ensure information moves effectively throughout the governance structure. Members discussed the importance of maintaining two-way communication and ensuring appropriate reporting of both governance and operational matters. The proposed approach was broadly welcomed, with recognition that it will need to be tested and refined over time. Members also highlighted the need to ensure clarity around closed and confidential business and the distinction between information that can and cannot be shared more widely.

		Senate discussed the approach to meeting transparency that had previously existed in the RPS. It was agreed that meetings would no longer be recorded and made available online as this carried high organisational burden and analytics indicated that broadly the recordings had not been watched (most received less than 3 views at least one of these would have been internal). Instead, Senate would move to ensure minutes were published more rapidly online and would continue with a comms report after the meeting. Alongside this the approach to observers would be changed. Whilst observers would still be allowed, the organisation would no longer create this as an 'event' but would permit email requests for observers. This approach is much more aligned to the way other Royal Colleges operate and operationally more aligned to the number of attendees (which is usually less than 5 registrations with not all attending). DECISION: Meeting recordings for governance meetings would no longer be published on the website. Quality improvement cycle A recurring theme throughout the discussion was the importance of adopting an iterative approach to governance and continuously assessing whether new arrangements are achieving their intended outcomes. Members agreed that governance processes, transparency measures and information-sharing mechanisms should be regularly reviewed rather than assumed to be effective. Decisions, as with the meeting recording decision, which had been informed by evidence demonstrating low engagement and significant administrative burden. At the same time, members emphasised the need to remain responsive to member expectations and to clearly communicate the rationale behind any changes. There was strong support for embedding a formal review process to assess the success of new ways of working, measure member engagement and identify opportunities for improvement. Members also suggested seeking feedback directly from members and stakeholders to ensure governance arrangements continue to meet expectations and support transparency. Senate agreed that they would continue to review process to assess the success of new ways of working, measure member engagement and identify opportunities for improvement
2d	12.30	Ratification of NPAC Chairs decision to appoint a CPA representative NPAC Chairs agreed to appoint Joseph Williams as the CPA representative: the decision was made outside of the Senate meeting cycle in order to meet the CPA deadline. DECISION: Senate ratified JW as the CPA representative.
2e	12.40	International update The Senate received an update on international engagement activity since August 2025, noting that although some work is paused during the transition to Royal College status, substantial activity continues through international partnerships and organisations. Representatives attended the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Congress in Copenhagen (31/08/25-3/9/25), where they engaged with global pharmacy leaders, presented five posters and received an award recognising support for a previous FIP Community Pharmacy Section event. They also participated in the World Health

		Assembly as part of the FIP delegation, contributing to discussions on workforce development, self-care, tobacco cessation and humanitarian issues, while showcasing UK advances such as pharmacist prescribing. Further engagement through FIP summits on self-care and vaccination supported international collaboration, data collection and vaccination promotion initiatives. The Senate also noted the successful first year of full membership of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP), which has strengthened opportunities for policy influence, knowledge sharing and professional development for members. Members discussed the strategic importance of international engagement in supporting the organisation's ambition to be a global leader in pharmacy and medicines optimisation. Growing international interest in UK pharmacy practice, particularly pharmacist prescribing, has led to several overseas delegations seeking to learn from the organisation's work. The Senate also welcomed the launch of the UK–South Africa Antimicrobial Stewardship Champions Programme, funded through the Commonwealth Pharmacists Association and available exclusively to Royal College members. The programme, designed to develop leadership and stewardship skills among early-career pharmacists, attracted 47 applications for 25 places. In addition, significant behind-the-scenes work continues through policy consultations, taskforces, working groups, vaccination initiatives and professional recognition projects. Members strongly supported the continuation of international engagement, recognising its value in enhancing the organisation's influence, reputation and professional networks. While acknowledging that many benefits are long term and difficult to quantify, they agreed that greater focus should be given to demonstrating impact, clarifying strategic objectives and ensuring learning and opportunities from international relationships are shared more effectively with members. International engagement will remain an important consideration as the Royal College develops its future priorities.
2f	13.00	Increasing recognition for pharmacy with national awards The Senate considered proposals to establish a College process for supporting nominations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists for national honours, recognising that the profession is often underrepresented despite the significant contributions made by many individuals. Members welcomed the initiative as an opportunity to raise the profession's profile, celebrate excellence and ensure deserving individuals receive appropriate recognition. Discussion explored whether support should be limited to College members, the role of nominations for non-members, and the distinction between providing letters of support and making formal nominations. Members agreed that all pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists receiving national honours should be recognised and celebrated by the College, regardless of membership status. While there was broad support for a formal honours nomination process, members highlighted the considerable time, expertise and resources required to develop successful nominations. Discussion also focused on governance arrangements, including whether a dedicated awards or honours committee might be needed and how nominations would be assessed and prioritised if capacity was limited. Some members suggested that active support for honours nominations could be considered a membership benefit, while ensuring the wider profession continued to be recognised. The Senate concluded that further development is needed before a formal process can be introduced. Members supported a phased approach, beginning with greater promotion of the existing letters of support process and further consideration of how

		honours and professional recognition align with the Royal College’s broader recognition strategy. The principle of strengthening support for national honours nominations was strongly endorsed, with further work required to define the scope, governance, resources and eligibility criteria for any future programme. ACTION: Further developed proposal required to define the scope, governance, resources and eligibility criteria for any future programme of National Honours support
2g	13.20	Annual conference The Senate received an update on the Annual Conference, noting continued growth in participation and engagement. The 2025 conference attracted more than 1,000 registrations and a record in-person attendance of 675 delegates, while demand continues to increase, with places selling out more quickly and nearly 400 abstract submissions received for the forthcoming event. Members recognised the conference as a major organisational achievement involving teams across the College and noted evidence that it supports both membership growth and the re-engagement of lapsed members. Plans for the 2026 conference will build on the established format of plenary sessions, learning streams, poster presentations, networking opportunities, exhibitions and awards, under the theme “<i>Advancing Excellence in Pharmacy: Collaboration, Innovation and Impact.</i>” Accessibility and inclusion will remain key priorities, supported by measures including onsite childcare, accessible venues, session recordings and enhanced digital resources. Members heard that securing high-quality keynote speakers and sponsorship remains challenging across the sector. The conference team encouraged suggestions for inspiring speakers, including individuals from outside healthcare who could provide fresh perspectives and stimulate new thinking. The Senate strongly supported the continued use of external keynote speakers and was also asked to help identify potential sponsorship opportunities and relevant contacts. Looking ahead, the transition to royal college status was seen as an opportunity to review the conference’s long-term purpose, structure and ambition. Work is underway to develop a three-to-five-year vision for the conference and wider events programme, including greater involvement of elected members in its development and delivery. Suggestions included increasing the visibility of elected representatives, exploring conference locations across Great Britain to broaden engagement and strengthening links with other member engagement activities. Members welcomed the conference’s success to date and expressed strong support for its continued development as a flagship Royal College event.
End of Open Business		