

RCN branches – meetings guidance

This guidance provides an overview of the types of meeting held by branches together with hints and tips for them to run smoothly. The appendix includes templates for you to use.

There are three types of meetings held by branches. Meetings can be held in person, virtually or a combination of both (hybrid).

1. Full branch meetings – where all the members of a branch are invited. These meetings are to share information and discuss issues affecting the branch members in particular and the RCN in general. It is suggested they are held once or twice a year. Evidence suggests that you get a better attendance if you combine a meeting with a development event or workshop.

If decisions are to be taken at a full branch meeting, then at least ten members must be present either in person or virtually. Administration support for meetings may be provided by the country or regional office. Agenda items might include:

- Branch finance update- to note and discuss the most recent branch management accounts which will have been supplied by the country or regional office.
- Board updates and consultation requests – to respond to any consultation requests from the Board. You may want to invite a member of the Board to the meeting.
- Local matters – to discuss any local issues e.g. in respect of places of work, other professional groups, or the general public.
- Reports from stewards, safety representatives, learning representatives, student information officers, local network representatives - an opportunity to share best practice and successes as well as report on activity.
- Speaker / guest - consider inviting local MPs, campaign groups, or patient groups to give a broader perspective on nursing.

A suggested template for an agenda for a full branch meeting is attached at [Appendix A](#)

2. Branch AGM – this is mandatory and must take place in September or October each year to enable the new committee to be elected in advance of the new calendar year. An AGM must include certain items on the agenda.

Ten members must be present at an AGM in person or via a virtual meeting for it to go ahead. Members should be given 21 days' notice of the date, time and venue. If ten members are not present within 15 minutes of the start time, the meeting should be rescheduled with another 21 days' notice being given. If ten members are not present at the second meeting, the meeting can go ahead.

Note - Members can be present either in person or virtual.
The branch AGM must include the following items on the agenda:

- Report from the branch chair of the branch's previous year's activities – this can be a short, written report or verbal presentation
- Latest management account statement from the branch treasurer – this should be obtained from the country/regional office
- Ratification of RCN representatives. (Refer to [Guide to the RCN accreditation and dis-accreditation process](#))
- [Election of branch committee members](#) for the next year - there are separate procedures and guidance on how to do this

A template for a branch AGM is included at [Appendix B](#)

3. Branch committee meetings – these are meetings of the branch committee. More guidance on these meetings is included in the [branch committee terms of reference](#). However, agenda items could include:

- Planning the next full branch meeting
- Planning for Congress
- Discussing requests to sign election nominations
- Planning the branch AGM
- Planning member recruitment events
- Reviewing the latest branch management accounts as supplied by the country/regional office.

A template for a branch committee meeting is included at [Appendix C](#)

4. Tips for organising meetings

The branch chair and secretary should meet beforehand to discuss and plan the agenda. If it is full branch meeting or AGM then all the committee should be involved. It's also a good idea to speak to officers from the RCN country or regional office in advance of any meeting, and to let members know how they can put forward items for the agenda.

Don't forget to review the notes and actions of the previous meeting to see if there are any matters which need to be brought forward to this meeting.

Remember to tell people about when and where it will be held (including option for joining the meeting online, where applicable) and make any logistical arrangements.

Make sure you record attendance at the meeting. A template is included at [Appendix D](#).

5. Guidance on taking notes and recording decisions and actions at meetings

The branch secretary should take notes of branch committee meetings and formal branch meetings including the branch AGM. They don't have to be formal minutes, just a brief record of any decisions made, or actions decided.

The type of decisions you should record are things which might have a financial implication for the branch, or when the date of an event has been sent. Actions are things where someone has committed to do something after the meeting – in which case you should note what is going to be done plus the name of the person who is going to do it. The branch secretary should chase any outstanding actions in good time.

Our auditors have asked that these notes should be formally lodged with the RCN country or regional office following the meeting. Your country or regional office will let you know who to send them to but if not please email governance.support@rcn.org.uk for help. They will be kept in line with the RCN data retention schedule.

Tips for note taking:

- only record key points.
- note any conclusions or action points.
- break up notes by using paragraphs, headings, bullet points or numbers.
- highlight key words or points by underlining, using bold or coloured pens.

A template is included at Appendix E.

Approved by RCN Council 3 December 2015

Light-touch review to update factual inaccuracies – August 2024

Full review of this guidance will commence in Autumn 2024.

Linked documents [RCN governance documents](#) | [Royal College of Nursing](#)

1. Regulation on Branches
2. RCN code of conduct
3. RCN Respect charter
4. Election policy and processes for branch committee members
5. Branch meetings guidance
6. Terms of Reference for branch committees
7. Branch Officer role descriptors

Appendix A - Templates



[Insert name of branch]
Full Branch meeting
Agenda
Date:
Time:
Venue:

No.	Item	Lead Person
1.	Welcome and introductions	[Insert name of Chair]
2.	To agree the notes of the previous meeting and update on any actions or matter arising.	[Insert name of Chair]
3.	Branch finance update	
5.	Update from your Board	
6	Local issues	
7	Reports from stewards, safety representatives, learning representatives, student information officers, local network representatives	
8	Speaker / guest/ development or workshop session	
9	Plans for Congress and the AGM	
10.	Close of meeting	

Appendix B



[Insert name of branch]
Annual General Meeting
Agenda
Date:
Time:
Venue:

No.	Item	Lead Person
1.	Welcome and introductions	[Insert name of Chair]
2.	Notes and actions from the previous AGM – to agree the notes as an accurate record and to update on any actions and matters arising from the previous year’s AGM	[Insert name of Chair]
3.	Report from the Branch Chair – an update of the branch’s activity over the last 12 months, followed by questions	[Insert name of Chair]
4.	Report from the Branch Treasurer - an update of the branch’s most recent financial report, followed by questions	[insert name of treasurer]
5.	Ratification of RCN representatives	[Insert name of Chair]
6.	[Insert other specific agenda items if required]	

7.	Election of branch committee members: Chair Secretary Treasurer [insert other roles as determined by the branch]	[Insert name of Returning Officer]
8.	Close of meeting	

Appendix C



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[Insert name of branch]
Branch committee meeting
Agenda
Date:
Time:
Venue:

No.	Item	Lead Person
1.	Welcome and introductions	
2.	To agree the notes of the previous meeting and update on any actions or matter arising.	
3.	Planning for the next full branch meeting/AGM	
4.	Discussing requests for election nominations	
5.	Planning member recruitment events	
6.	Reviewing the latest branch management accounts as supplied by the country/regional office	
7.	Plans for Congress and the AGM	
8.	Close of meeting	

Appendix D



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[Insert name of branch]
[insert name of meeting]
Attendance Sheet
Date:
Time:
Venue:

Name	Signature

Appendix E



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[Insert name of branch]

Notes and actions of the [insert name of meeting] held on [insert date]

No.	Notes	Actions