



Australasian College
for Emergency Medicine

Networks

Policy COR602

Document Review

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Revision History

| Version | Date | Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision |
|---------|----------|---|
| v1 | Apr-2018 | Approved by Board |
| v2 | Aug-2018 | Revision to lines of reporting |
| v3 | Dec-2019 | Amendments to Section Executive membership |
| v4 | Oct-2021 | Revised throughout following review of the operation and governance of Sections |

1. Purpose and background

The purpose of this Policy is to define the requirements for the establishment and operation of Networks within the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM; 'the College').

Networks come under the jurisdiction of the governing body to which their 'parent committee' reports. Liaison between Networks and any other College entity is, ordinarily, conducted via the relevant College Executive Director(s) pursuant to the relevant sections of regulation A9.3.2.

2. Terminology

College member

means a person admitted as a member of the College pursuant to the provisions of the ACEM Constitution and associated regulations, and, for the purposes of this policy, also includes trainees.

External member

means a person (not being an ACEM member or trainee) whose membership of a Network would, in the opinion of the governing body, enhance or promote the work of a particular Network – for example, a representative from another organisation, a consumer representative, a person with a special expertise in a particular area.

Governing body

means the ACEM Board, the Council of Advocacy, Practice and Partnerships (CAPP), or the Council of Education (COE), which has overall responsibility for and authority over the Network in question.

Parent committee

means the Committee or other College entity to which a Network reports.

Special area of practice

means a particular identifiable area of practice within the body of knowledge that is emergency medicine and formally designated as such by the applicable Council and/or the ACEM Board.

Trainee

means trainees enrolled in and undertaking the FACEM Training Program and, for the purposes of this policy, also includes Emergency Medicine Certificate, Emergency Medicine Diploma, Emergency Medicine Advanced Diploma and Diploma of Pre-Hospital and Retrieval Medicine (DipPHRM) trainees, and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) undertaking College requirements for the purpose of attaining eligibility for election to Fellowship of the College.

3. Network membership

3.1 Composition

A Network shall include a minimum of 30 FACEM members and two trainee members, with no maximum limit on the total number of College members or trainees.

At its discretion, the governing body may grant approval for the Network to include external members.

Applications for membership

Applications for membership of a Network shall be submitted in writing in the format approved by the ACEM Board from time to time, and must be accompanied by all additional information as requested.

3.2 Network Executive

Each Network shall have an Executive consisting of a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of twelve (12) members. Unless otherwise provided for in the Network's Terms of Reference, of the maximum 12 members up to two (2) members shall be a trainee member of the Network and up to two (2) members shall be ACEM members in a category other than that of Fellow. The Executive shall be responsible for conducting the activities of the Network.

The Network Executive shall have a Chair and a Deputy Chair, who shall be the Network's office bearers.

Unless otherwise specified in the Network's Terms of reference, a maximum of one (1) each of external and/or supernumerary non-voting members may be co-opted where the Terms of Reference so permit.

Appointments to Executive

The members of the Network Executive shall be appointed by the governing body for a period of two (2) years. Nomination to the governing body shall follow the outcome of an election or appointment process outlined in Regulations approved by the ACEM Board for that purpose. Pursuant to Regulation A9.3.2, the Chair and Deputy Chair shall be appointed by the governing body from the FACEM membership of the Network Executive, either prior to or following the appointment of the Network Executive. Appointment will be by a simple majority vote of the governing body pursuant to the relevant sections of regulation A9.3.2.

The term of office and maximum tenure of the Network Executive shall be in accordance with the provisions of Section 3.5 of the College Policy on College Entities (COR334).

Casual Vacancies

A casual vacancy arising in the Network Executive shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of Regulation A9.3.5.

3.3 Revocation of Appointments

The appointment of any member to the Network Executive and/or any office bearer position may be revoked at any time by resolution of a majority of members present at any meeting of the governing body of which notice had been circulated to all members of the governing body and the Network Executive members at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

4. Formation of networks

- a.** A minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) Fellows who wish to pursue the formation of a new Network ('Network Sponsors') must submit a proposal to the proposed governing body for decision as to whether a formal application to establish the proposed Network can be pursued. Any such proposal must be submitted in writing and include:
- (i) a statement outlining the nature of the special area of practice it is proposed that the Network will pursue;
 - (ii) the rationale for the proposal, including any perceived 'gap' in the College's existing offerings that the Network will fill;
 - (iii) the manner in which the proposed Network will benefit and enhance the activities of the College;
 - (iv) the objectives and values of the College with which it most closely aligns;
 - (v) a proposed parent committee, and documented prior agreement from the proposed parent committee that a formal application can be pursued;
 - (vi) an acknowledgement of understanding of the purpose and function of Networks and the responsibilities of the Network Executives for the functioning of the proposed Network.

Approval by a parent committee for a formal application to establish a Network to be pursued does not guarantee approval by the governing body of any resulting formal application.

The decision of the governing body shall be final and is not subject to reconsideration, review or appeal under College processes.

- b.** Where a governing body approves a proposal for a formal application to establish a Network to be made, a formal proposal, made on behalf of at least 30 Fellows of the College, may be made to the governing body for the formation of a Network. Any such request must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the applicable governing body and include:
- (i) a written statement of up to 500 words that outlines the nature of the special area of practice the Network intends to pursue, the rationale for the proposal, and how the intended activities of the Network align and are consistent with the objectives and values of the College; and
 - (ii) written evidence of sufficient Expressions of Interest for membership of the proposed Network (i.e. the names and signatures of those Fellows on whose behalf the proposal is made).
 - (iii) draft Terms of Reference for the Network that meet the requirements described in this policy, the ACEM Policy on College Entities and any other relevant ACEM documents. Where any doubt exists regarding the formation of draft Terms of Reference, advice should be sought from the General Manager – Governance and Standards in the Office of the CEO and President, including in relation to the most appropriate ACEM staff member for liaison.
- c.** Where the governing body to which the proposal is made is the Council of Advocacy, Practice and Partnerships (CAPP) or Council of Education (COE), and that Council endorses the formation of the Network and the associated draft terms of Reference, a recommendation will be made to the ACEM Board that the formation of the Network be approved.

The decision of the Board shall be final and is not subject to reconsideration, review or appeal under College processes.

- d. Where formation of a Network is approved, the governing body shall notify the College membership and invite Expressions of Interest from eligible members, trainees and others as applicable, for membership of the Network. Those Fellows on whose behalf the proposal referred to in (b) was made will be automatically deemed to be a member of the Network. Once the minimum threshold of members as outlined in this policy has been achieved, a call for nominations or expressions of interest as applicable from those admitted as members of the Network shall be called for positions on the Network Executive.

The call for nominations or expressions of interest as applicable, and any resulting election(s) shall be conducted pursuant to Regulations approved by the ACEM Board for that purpose.

Pursuant to Section 3.2 of this policy, the governing body shall then organise for the appointment of the first Executive of the Network, which shall hold office until the date at which the entities of the governing body are next scheduled to be confirmed following a 'spill' process.

An extended inaugural term may be granted by the governing body if the proximity of the 'spill' would make it impractical to implement. Thereafter, appointment to the Network Executive shall be made in accordance with clause 3.2 of this Policy, the relevant College Regulations and the Policy on College Entities.

5. Role and responsibility

5.1 Networks

5.1.1 Role

The primary role of a Network is to promote and advance the objects and values of the College as they relate to the area of practice, and in the context of the College's strategic and business plans. In particular, this may include matters such as:

- (a) to promote communication between practitioners with an interest in the special area of practice
- (b) to promote education and scientific activities and meetings focussing on the special area of practice
- (c) to facilitate and encourage research in the area of special area of practice
- (d) on request, to progress issues or recommendations for or on behalf of the consideration of the applicable governing body.

5.1.2 Responsibility

Each Network shall:

- (a) advise the governing body promptly of any matter arising in the special area of practice likely to affect the interests of the College or its members, and
- (b) make suggestions to the governing body for appropriate action in relation to such matters.

5.2 Network Executives

5.3.1 Role

The primary role of a Network Executive is to:

- (a) lead the activities of the Network, through direct engagement with Network members;
- (b) engage directly with Network members on matters directly relevant or likely to be of interest to its members.
- (c) ensure the role and functions of the Network as set out in its Terms of Reference are progressed in accordance with the objectives and values of the College.

5.2.2 Responsibility

Unless otherwise provided for in its Terms of Reference, the Network Executive, through its office bearers, is responsible for:

- (a) scheduling and conducting meetings of the Executive in accordance with the provisions of Regulation A9.5, this Policy and the Network's Terms of Reference;
- (b) convening meetings and events for Network members in accordance with the provisions of Regulation A9.5, this Policy and the Network's Terms of Reference;
- (c) preparing the relevant materials necessary for the conduct of meetings and events, including, but not limited to, the agenda, papers and minutes of formal meetings; arranging speakers, presenters, facilitators or similar for Network events; and the sharing of materials and outcomes associated with meetings and events;
- (d) leading and facilitating direct communication with Network members and between Network members; and
- (e) ensuring active engagement of Network members to achieve a thriving Network, having regard to overall role as set out in its Terms of Reference.

6. Authority

A Network may only act in accordance with its Terms of Reference and having regard to the provisions of this and all applicable College policies. Pursuant to Section 5.2(b), a Network does not have any authority to make decisions that are binding on the College or any of its entities, including in regard to the commitment of resources to activities of the Network.

6.1 Limitations on Authority

Unless otherwise provided for in its Terms of Reference, a Network expressly does not have authority:

- (a) to initiate any action or communication of any opinion on any matters to any person or authority or organisation, except in situations where communication with medical or other bodies is undertaken as an endorsed representative of the College as part of the relationship between the College and that body, or in accordance with any other College policies;
- (b) to decide any issue or matter, but only to make recommendations (apart from where expressly specified in the Terms of Reference as agreed by the governing body);
- (c) to waive, vary or otherwise depart from:
 - its Terms of Reference
 - the terms or requirements of any approved College policy, regulation, guideline or similar applicable document, and
 - the requirements of the Constitution and any relevant legislation;
- (d) to bind or enter into any contract or other liability on behalf of the College.

7. Standards of conduct and ethics

Network members are to act in accordance with the standards of conduct and ethics appropriate to the aims and purposes of the College and the Network at all times.

In particular, members are to comply with the provisions of the following:

- [Code of Conduct \(COR235\)](#)
- [Member–Staff Relations Policy \(COR304\)](#)

8. Terms of reference

The Terms of Reference of a Network shall be determined by its governing body, and may include any requirement, limitation or other condition as the governing body deems appropriate.

In respect of each Network, the Terms of Reference shall include the following:

- the membership criteria
- specified membership of the Network
- the roles and responsibilities of the Network, and
- the terms of operation of the Network and the Network Executive.

8.1 Lines of Reporting

Each Network shall report on its activities to its parent committee and through it, the governing body to which it reports following the meetings of its members and/or its Executive, or as required by the governing body.

Any Network whose role involves providing recommendations on the disbursement of College funds, whether by way of bursary, scholarship, monetary assistance or otherwise, shall:

- provide these recommendations to the Board via the ACEM Foundation, and
- report on these and its other activities to its governing body.

9. Conduct of executive meetings

9.1 Meetings of Executive

- (a) Meetings of the Network Executive shall be held at least once a year by electronic means, with the ability to meet more frequently where necessary.
- (b) The College will provide full administrative support for one (1) half-day or one (1) full-day meeting of the Network Executive each year by videoconference or other approved electronic format, which may, at the discretion of the Network Executive, be open to all members of the Network to attend.
- (c) Where circumstances allow, the Network Executive may choose to meet face-to-face or in a hybrid format at craft events. The Executive shall be entirely responsible for arranging any such meeting and no financial or administrative support will be provided by the College in order for meetings of this sort to occur.

9.2 Quorum

The required quorum for the transaction of business at an Executive meeting shall be as defined in the Policy on College Entities.

9.3 Record Keeping

- (a) Each Network Executive shall keep adequate and proper records and minutes of its meetings, which shall include details of the nature and extent of any conflict of interest those present at the meeting, matters discussed and, where applicable, decisions made.
- (b) A copy of such minutes shall be forwarded to the relevant College Executive Director immediately following the relevant meeting in order to be made available to the next scheduled meeting of the governing body of the Network.
- (c) Support in the form of administrative support by a designated College staff member for one (1) meeting of the Network Executive is set out in Section 9.1 (above). The office bearers will be provided with the necessary documentation in order to meet the requirement of (a) above and Section 5.2 of this policy.
- (d) Where deemed necessary by a Network Executive, the office bearers may, on a case by case basis, submit a formal application for additional College administrative or other support to its governing body.
 - (i) Any such application must be made in writing and clearly outline the nature of the support being sought; the meeting, event or similar to which it relates; the reason(s) why the activity to which the request for support relates cannot be conducted by the members of the Network Executive or a member(s) of the Network; and the timeframe for which the support is required.
 - (ii) Any such application shall be considered by the office bearers of the governing body to which the Network reports and relevant senior College staff in the context of overall College priorities, activities to which the College is already committed under its Business Plan, organisational capacity and other matters as applicable.

9.4 Reporting Obligations

For the reporting obligations of Networks, see clause 8.1, Lines of Reporting..

10. Expenses

Expenses incurred by members in relation to attending any meeting of the general membership of the Network are the responsibility of the member.

11. Review of networks

In accordance with Regulation A9.1, the viability of each Network shall be reviewed every three (3) years by the governing body to which the Network reports or earlier if such a need is identified.

At the request of the Chair of the governing body, the Network Executive shall complete the review form pertaining to the membership and activities of the Network and the Network Executive. The review shall have regard to matter that include, but are not limited to:

- the criteria considered when an application to establish a network is received;
- the extent to which the Network has fulfilled its role and purpose as reflected in its Terms of Reference as from time to time updated;
- current strategic and operational priorities of the College;
- any duplication in the work and activities of the Network and/or the Network Executive with other College entities.

Where applicable, the dissolution of the Network shall be progressed in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

12. Dissolution of networks

Pursuant to regulations, the governing body of a Network may put a resolution to the ACEM Board to dissolve a Network by resolution of a majority of members of the governing body present and voting if, in the opinion of the governing body, the Network:

- (a) has been guilty of conduct detrimental to the interests of the College; or
- (b) is unable to elect an Executive; or
- (c) membership drops below the minimum threshold level of 30 FACEM members; or
- (d) the Network is no longer considered to be able to function in a manner that renders it viable.
- (e) The Board may accept or reject the resolution.



Australasian College for Emergency Medicine
34 Jeffcott St
West Melbourne VIC 3003
Australia
+61 3 9320 0444
policy@acem.org.au

acem.org.au