

# **ELECTION SCHEME 2026**





## **A. Background**

In order to prepare the Society for the transition to becoming the Royal College of Pharmacy and conform to the amended Royal Charter, the Society will run elections to the proposed College governance in 2026 as set out in this Election Scheme.

Should the transition to the Royal College of Pharmacy not take place by the Effective Date the provisions of this Election Scheme and the elections that took place hereunder shall be disregarded and elections to the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils under this Election Scheme will be treated as elections to the corresponding National Pharmacy Boards under these Society's current Regulations. All those in post on the relevant National Pharmacy Boards will then transition into equivalent roles on the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils on the subsequent Transition Date.

Any resulting vacancies on the National Pharmacy Boards arising from a difference in size between the proposed National Pharmacy Advisory Councils and the National Pharmacy Boards will run as vacancies until the next elections whether as the Royal Pharmaceutical Society or the Royal College of Pharmacy.

## **B. TIMETABLE FOR ELECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHARMACY**

<b>WEEK 0</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> December ("Notice of Elections")	Notice of elections to the proposed Royal College of Pharmacy published.
<b>Weeks 5-6</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2026 ("Nominations Period")	Nominations open at 11am.
<b>Week 9</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> February ("Deadline for Nominations")	Nominations close at 5pm.
	29 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 5pm "Roll Closure Date"	a date and time on which the election roll for any election shall be closed to Members and Fellows. This date shall be before the date on which voting instructions are expected to be distributed to voters.
	18 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 5pm "Latest Date to Withdraw"	The date and latest time by which any nominations can be withdrawn – this must be before Voting Opens. Note - in the event that a candidate withdraws after this date votes will not be re-allocated and the next candidate 'past the post' will be allocated the relevant space. Candidates who withdraw after this date will still appear on the ballot forms.
<b>Week 12</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2026 ("Voting Opens")	Vote opens at 9am.
<b>Week 14</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 ("Deadline for Voting")	Vote closes at 5pm.

	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 ("Results Date")	Result. No one takes up office until the Effective Date in 2026.
<b>Week 16 onwards</b>	w/c 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026	Appointment of Officers prior to Effective Date and Transition Date
	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	Deadline for National Pharmacy Advisory Council members to nominate themselves and others as candidates for the <b>President</b> role in accordance with the process set out in the new College Regulations.
		The members of each National Pharmacy Advisory Council meet to conduct the business of the board, (except elections).
		President elections take place in accordance with the process set out in the new College Regulations.
		The President takes up their role on the Transition Date.
	26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	The members of the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils nominate themselves or others to the role of Chair of the relevant National Pharmacy Advisory Council. Those unsuccessful for the role of President are eligible to stand.
		National Pharmacy Advisory Council Chair and Vice-Chair elections take place in accordance with the voting process set out in the new College Regulations.  The Chair will take up their role on the Transition Date but will nominate the Vice-Chair to be ratified by the Council at the Governance Induction Day.
		Governance Induction Day 2 The members of the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils nominate themselves or others to the role of Council representative on the Senate in accordance with the nomination process set out in the new College Regulations.
		Governance Induction Day 2 Elections for Council representatives on the Senate take place in accordance with the election and voting processes set out in the new College Regulations.
	TBC	The first meeting of the proposed new Senate is held where Senate officers are appointed in accordance with the new College Regulations and appointments to the Trustee Board are confirmed as set out in the new College Regulations. No one shall take up their role until the Transition Date.
	TBC	A Knowledge, Skills and Experience audit is undertaken of the Senate and the Trustee Board to determine the requirements of the externally recruited Senate and Trustee Board members.

		Open recruitment of additional appointed Trustee Board members
	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 ("Expiry Date")	This may be delayed to 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 in the event of delay to the Transition Date.
	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 ("Effective Date")	This may be delayed to 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2026 in the event of delay to the Transition Date.
	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 or the date on which the amended Royal Charter takes effect if later ("Transition Date")	The amended Royal Charter for the Royal College of Pharmacy takes effect.

## C. ELECTION SCHEME FOR THE PROPOSED ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

### Part 1 - General

#### 1. Status of this Scheme

This election scheme applies to elections to the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils of the proposed Royal College of Pharmacy, or where the Transition Date does not happen by the Effective Date, to the elections to the National Pharmacy Boards of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Where there is any discrepancy between this Election Scheme and the Regulations, the Regulations shall prevail.

#### 2. Definitions and Interpretation

**Election Pack:** means the election information published by the Society for candidates to read before nominations are made.

#### 3. Equality and Diversity

The Society shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that its election processes ensure fair outcomes for all candidates regardless of any protected or other characteristics and shall have discretion to address any perceived inclusion and diversity needs to ensure that the candidacy appropriate represents the pharmacy profession in the Election Pack. The Society has conducted an Equality Impact Assessment on its Election Pack prior to publication.

#### 4. Timetable and Applicable Dates

4.1 Unless specified otherwise, the Expiry Date shall take effect at 23.59 on the Expiry Date and the Effective Date shall start at midnight.

4.2 To run the elections process efficiently, the timetable in Part B of this Election Scheme shall apply.

4.4 All applicable dates set out in this Election Scheme shall be published as soon as practicable in advance of the elections: -

- On the Society's website;
- On any other communications medium regularly used by the Society to communicate with its membership, including the *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

4.5 The Society shall ensure that an Election Pack containing information and candidates is published on the College website and other communications channels as appropriate and in accordance with the internal Standard Operating Procedure(s).

## **Part 2 – Responsible persons**

### **5. Returning Officer(s)**

5.1 The Society shall designate an employee or employees (typically the Country Director or equivalent role) to act as the Returning Officer(s) for elections under this Election Scheme.

5.2 The Returning Officer(s) may request such administrative assistance from the Society as required to fulfil their functions under this election scheme.

5.3 The function of the Returning Officer(s) shall be: -

- To ensure that the process outlined in this Election Scheme is followed;
- To be the primary communication point for candidates and to ensure that the Society takes all reasonable steps to communicate the outcome of the elections on the Results Date to candidates prior to publication in accordance with Society processes.
- To ensure that the outcome of the elections is published on the Results Date in accordance with Society processes.
- To act as final arbiter in the following situations:
  - Any question about eligibility to stand for election;
  - Any question about eligibility to vote in an election;
  - Determining the result of any election where this is not clear from the Scrutineer reporting and/or the Society is required to interpret the election results in accordance with the Society Royal Charter and Regulations.
  - Determining the interpretation of this Election Scheme.

5.4 The Returning Officer(s) shall have the power in the event of a severe civil contingency, interruption of postal services, or delays caused by telecommunications and the internet used to transmit information regarding the election, to vary: -

- Time limits; and
- Method of delivery of documents,

required under this Election Scheme as considered necessary to ensure fairness of the elections.

### **6. Scrutineer**

6.1 The Society shall appoint a person, or persons, or a company, to act as Scrutineer, and, if necessary, Deputy Scrutineer.

6.2 The function of the Scrutineer shall be to:

- (a) preserve the integrity of the election process and take such measures as they consider necessary to guard against, and identify, electoral malpractice;
- (b) dispatch the voting instructions;
- (c) examine and validate votes;
- (d) count and record votes received; and
- (e) notify the Returning Officer of the result of the election.

6.3 Where the Scrutineer is unable, for any reason, to carry out their functions, the Society will appoint a Deputy Scrutineer to carry out the functions of the Scrutineer.

6.4 At the conclusion of the count, the Scrutineer shall prepare a report specifying:

- (a) the total number of votes received;
- (b) the number of votes rejected as invalid;
- (c) the number of votes cast for each candidate;
- (d) the names of those elected; and
- (e) if an election has been decided under paragraph (6) below, a note to that effect.

6.5 In the event of a tie, the Scrutineer shall additionally conduct a drawing of lots in accordance with this of this Election Scheme.

### **Part 3 – Eligibility and nominations**

#### **7. Eligibility for election**

Eligibility for election to a National Pharmacy Advisory Council is as set out in the Election Pack.

#### **8. Ongoing eligibility**

8.1 Eligibility for election shall be determined as at the Effective Date.

8.2 A National Pharmacy Advisory Council Member must step down and not restand for election if:-

- they become ineligible to be a Member or Fellow of the Society or terminate their Society Membership;
- they are or become unwilling or unable (under the relevant legal provisions) to act as Trustee of the Royal College of Pharmacy (whether appointed or not) – noting that both Senate and Trustee composition relies on elected National Pharmacy Advisory Council Members and whilst standing for those roles is not compulsory, the College cannot function

if no elected National Pharmacy Advisory Council Members are prepared to act as Trustees.  
The Society will set out further information about time commitments in the Election Pack; or

- they take up substantive employment with the Society.

A National Pharmacy Advisory Council Member does not have to stand down from a National Pharmacy Advisory Council if: -

- they take any form of parental leave or other authorised leave permitted by the Standing Orders;
- they change their substantive practice following the effective date.

Note – in accordance with the proposed Standing Orders of the proposed Royal College of Pharmacy, a National Pharmacy Advisory Council Member who has been appointed to Senate or the Board of Trustees may be replaced in that role on Senate or the Board of Trustees for the period of any authorised leave in accordance with the Standing Orders.

## 9. Eligibility to vote

As set out in the Regulations, only Members and Fellows of the Society can vote. No other membership category can vote.

Members and Fellows can vote for the elections as follows:

Relevant Council	National English Pharmacy Advisory Council	National Welsh Pharmacy Advisory Council	National Scottish Pharmacy Advisory Council
Eligibility to vote	Members and Fellows who have nominated their Nation as England, Channel Islands or Isle of Man by the Roll Closure Date (in accordance with the data held on the RPS CRM/Member online profile)	Members and Fellows who have nominated their Nation as Wales by the Roll Closure Date (in accordance with the data held on the RPS CRM/Member online profile)	Members and Fellows who have nominated their Nation as Scotland by the Roll Closure Date (in accordance with the data held on the RPS CRM/Member online profile)

A person who becomes a Member or Fellow of the Society after the Roll Closure Date shall not be entitled to receive a vote in that election.

## 10. Places for election

10.1 The maximum number of places on a National Pharmacy Advisory Council are as follows:

Relevant Council	National English Pharmacy Advisory Council	National Welsh Pharmacy Advisory Council	National Scottish Pharmacy Advisory Council
Maximum number of places	12	9	9

10.2 The proposed current places with incumbents or which are to be elected to under this Election Scheme (by simple majority vote) will be published in the Notice of Elections using the format and template table as shown below, subject to any of the Incumbents deciding to resign from post early in which case the Notice of Elections will show the updated list of places for election: -

	<i>National English Pharmacy Advisory Council</i>	<i>National Scottish Pharmacy Advisory Council</i>	<i>National Welsh Pharmacy Advisory Council</i>
1	Incumbent <b>CLAIRE ANDERSON</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>LAURA FULTON</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>ELERI SCHIAVONE</b> until 2027
2	Incumbent <b>CIARA DUFFY</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>LUCY DIXON</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>DYLAN JONES</b> until 2027
3	Incumbent <b>SUE LADDS</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>CATRIONA SINCLAIR</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>HELEN DAVIES</b> until 2027
4	Incumbent <b>TASE OPUTU</b> until 2027	Incumbent <b>AUDREY THOMPSON</b> until 2027.	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)
5	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)
6	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)
7	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)
8	FOR ELECTION (3 years term)	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)

9	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)
10	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)		
11	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)		
12	FOR ELECTION (2 years term)		

10.4 As set out in the Regulations, in order to balance turnover on the National Pharmacy Advisory Councils (so that the majority/more than two thirds of members do not expire in the same year), whilst the maximum Term of Office of a National Advisory Council Member shall be three years, the Society may advertise certain spaces as available for election for a shorter term. This shall be included in the Notice of Election information in the format set out in clause 10.2 of this Election Scheme.

#### **Part 4 – Elections Process**

##### **11. Notice of Election**

11.1 The Returning Officer(s) will notify all National Pharmacy Board members whose Terms are due to expire before publishing a Notice of Election.

11.2 The Returning Officer shall publish a Notice of Election specifying: -

- The information, timeline and dates set out in Part 3 of this Election Scheme;
- The Privacy Notice for Candidates.

11.3 The Notice of Election must normally be published no later than 21 clear days before the Deadline for Nominations.

##### **12. Nominations**

12.1 All nominations must be made in accordance with the nomination requirements for that election year specified in the Election Pack.

12.2 Only one candidate may be nominated per nomination.

12.3 Each candidate must provide the name and contact information of not less than two Members or Fellows of the Society who are willing to act as a Proposer and Seconded of their nomination. This is a minimum not a maximum number - the Society may specify additional nomination requirements in the Notice of Elections and Election Pack.

12.3 Candidates must provide the nomination information specified in the Election Pack which includes certain personal information required in the legitimate interests of running a fair elections process. The Society may publish such information in order to allow those voting to make a decision. The Society shall not be obliged to publish any information which, in the reasonable opinion of the Returning Officer,

- (a) would amount to the commission of a criminal offence; or
- (b) would render the Society potentially liable to civil proceedings; or
- (c) doesn't comply with any format requirements set by the Returning Officer.

12.4 All Candidates must confirm that they will be able to meet the voluntary time commitments specified in the Role Profile(s) for the spaces they are standing for.

### **13. Assessment of Nominations**

13.1 The Society shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that nominations are secured for at least the number of seats available.

13.2 In order to ensure operational viability of the election process the Society shall have discretion to review applications for nomination and implement additional nomination criteria as set out in the Election Pack.

### **14. Ballot**

14.1 The requirement to hold a ballot may be dispensed with if, after the expiry of the latest time for receipt of nominations, the number of candidates standing for election does not exceed the number of Council places for which they are nominated.

### **15. Voting**

15.1 The Society shall ensure that the Society or its authorised representative sends, by email, the voting instruction, or by post if requested, to each Member and Fellow entitled to vote in that election and issues reasonable communications to Members and Fellows about the importance and relevance of voting.

15.2 The voting instruction shall contain details as to where the information provided by candidates under clause 12.3 of this Election Scheme can be accessed. This information shall include a statement confirming that neither the Society nor the Returning Officer has or accepts any responsibility for the accuracy of any information, declaration or election statement provided by candidate.

15.3 Whilst the timeline shall specify when Voting Opens, the period for voting shall commence on the date on which the first unique voting codes/voting instructions in an election are dispatched by the Scrutineer.

15.4 If, after Voting Opens, a candidate dies or is found by the Returning Officer to be ineligible to be elected or becomes ineligible to be elected, the votes cast for that candidate shall be void.

15.5 Votes shall be cast either electronically or via another mechanism provided by the Scrutineer.

15.6 Only one vote for each vacancy may be cast by each voter. The Scrutineer may replace a voting instruction on receipt of a request confirming that the original instruction has not been received or has been lost, destroyed or spoiled, and shall take such steps as are appropriate to ensure that no person may be able to vote twice in the same election.

15.7 The voter shall submit their vote in accordance with the instructions thereon. Each voter shall have as many votes as there are vacancies for which they are eligible to vote.

## **16 Outcomes**

16.1 At the conclusion of the count, the Scrutineer shall prepare a report specifying:

- (a) the total number of votes received;
- (b) the number of votes rejected as invalid;
- (c) the number of votes cast for each candidate;
- (d) the names of those elected; and
- (e) if an election has been decided under paragraph 16.2 below, a note to that effect.

16.2 In the event of a tie, the election shall be decided between the tied candidates by the drawing of lots conducted by the Scrutineer.

## **17 Challenges to this Election Scheme**

17.1 Where the Returning Officer(s) receives any challenge to the results of an election, or any complaint or information which alleges that, or becomes of the opinion that:

- (a) a candidate was, or has become, ineligible for election;
- (b) a candidate submitted inaccurate or misleading declarations or statements;
- (c) a candidate submitted a false or misleading election statement;
- (d) a candidate committed electoral malpractice; or
- (e) there has been a failure to comply with this scheme in a significant and material respect, they may, subject to paragraph 17.2 below, consider the matter.

17.2 The Returning Officer(s) shall not consider any challenge, or any complaint or information relating to the election that is received by them after the expiry of 14 days from the relevant Results Date.

17.3 The Returning Officer(s) shall not consider any challenge that is vexatious or trivial, is purely a matter of personal disagreement or has been brought with the sole aim of deliberately preventing an individual from standing for office or taking up their office if elected

17.4 Before taking any action in relation to a challenge, complaint or information relating to an election, the Returning Officer(s) shall:

- (a) provide details of the challenge, complaint or information to the candidate(s) concerned; and
- (b) afford the candidate(s) concerned the opportunity to make representations on the allegations and on any subsequent action to be taken by the Returning Officer(s).

17.5 Upon considering any representations received from the candidate(s) concerned, the Returning Officer(s) may take such action as they consider necessary in the interests of fairness and all the circumstances of the case, which may include:

- (a) declaring the results of any candidate, or of the whole election, a nullity;
- (b) disqualifying a candidate or candidates;
- (c) rerunning any ballot or election.

17.6 Before taking any action in accordance with the above paragraphs, the Returning Officer(s) may take further steps to investigate the matter, and may seek legal advice.

17.7 The election held under this scheme shall not be invalidated by reason solely of any non-compliance with, or the non-delivery or loss of any document required under, this scheme, if it appears to the Returning Officer that the election was conducted substantially in accordance with this scheme, and that the result of such non-compliance, non-delivery or loss did not affect the return of any candidate at the election.

17.8 The decision of the Returning Officer in relation to any challenge to, or complaint or information concerning, the election, shall be final. Any further concerns or complaints must be referred to the Society Complaints Process.