**Terms of Reference**

**For the**

**Professional Standards Committee**

# SCOPE

* 1. The **Professional Standards Committee** is a committee of the Council of the Vascular Society and is established for the purpose of reviews, professional support, developing policy and advising council of issues relating to professional standards.
  2. The Committee has no executive powers other than those specifically delegated in these Terms of Reference (TOR):
     1. The committee will not enter into any contracts or commitments without the agreement of Council (or in exceptional circumstances the Executive).
     2. Literature and artwork designed or produced in connection with the Committee will require prior approval by Council and copyright in such Material will belong to the Vascular Society and must be identified as such.
     3. The Committee must treat as confidential all sensitive information concerning the Vascular Society or its members which it acquires in consequence of or in connection with its activities.
     4. Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) documentation will remain the property of the Trust or body requesting the review.
  3. In law the Vascular Society Council is responsible for the administration of the charity and for all professional standards initiatives and reviews carried out in its name. The Council have prepared these TORs to assist the Professional Standards Committee.
  4. All major Professional Standards Committee initiatives will acquire prior approval of the Council. For each such initiative the committee will prepare:
     1. A short-written brief explaining the initiative.
     2. A budget agreed with the Treasurer for the approval of the Council.
  5. The Vascular Society was registered in 2004 with the Charity Commission, registered company number 05060866.
  6. For IRM processes instigated and organised through the RCS England, the Committee is also responsible to the IRM lead and President of the RCS of England for such reviews.

# PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

# Developing policy and advising Council of issues relating professional standards in vascular surgery.

* 1. The committee will provide three main functions:
     1. To provide a **mechanism for reviews** of clinical and related practice, relating to individual vascular surgeons, units and networks, under the auspices and overriding responsibility of the Society.
     2. To provide a platform for ensuring a **support mechanism** is in place for surgeons and units in difficulty, under the auspices of the Society.
     3. To **work closely** with the Royal Colleges and other professional bodies within the NHS, to provide a fair, transparent and robust process of review, documentation and communication regarding all matters relating to the standards set out for vascular surgery within the Provision of Vascular Services document (VSGBI 2021) and GMC Good Medical Practice document (GMC 2019).
  2. Subgroups and teams for individual review processes will be selected by the Chair, the Secretary and the President to ensure no conflict of interest and a fair team-based approach, depending on expertise, experience and personal circumstances.
  3. The committee will advise Council regarding the Professional Standards content of the Annual Scientific Meeting.



# MEMBERSHIP

* 1. The Vascular Society Council will appoint the Chair and will ratify the appointment of members of the committee.
  2. The Chair will normally be appointed from existing or previously elected Council members in current NHS or Republic of Ireland vascular surgery practice.
  3. If undertaking invited reviews, Committee members should have received training in the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) processes through RCS England (or equivalent), and have completed equality and diversity training, within 3 years.
  4. The Vascular Society Council will retain the right to remove the Chair and any members of the committee.
  5. The total number of committee members will be determined from time to time by Council but will include a minimum of two elected Council members (in addition to the Chair).

3.6 The committee may invite representatives from the affiliated vascular societies when required for reviews.

**Chair** Appointed Chair (Past or Current VS Trustee)

**Other members** Honorary Secretary (who will take minutes)

Workforce Committee Chair

President Elect

One other VS elected council members (VS Trustee)

Shadow chair (for year after election)

**In attendance** Other invited representatives

3.8 In the absence of the Chair, the Workforce Committee Chair may chair.

# TERM OF OFFICE

* + 1. The Chair and members of the committee shall serve a maximum of four years, subject to the discretion of Council, and excepting the Council members who will each be replaced by a current Council member upon completion of their term on Council.
    2. The Chair is elected for a three-year term of office preceded by one year shadowing the current chair, making for a four-year committee term.

# MEETINGS

5.1 The committee will meet formally a minimum of twice each year, around the times of the spring (May) Council meetings and at the time of the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society (November).

5.2 Meeting dates will be circulated a minimum of 3 months in advance. Agendas and papers will be agreed with the Chair and circulated 10-14 days in advance.

5.3 The Chair and Shadow Chair (when appointed) of the committee will be expected to attend 100% of the meetings. Other Committee members will be required to attend a minimum of 75% of all meetings.

5.4 The quorum of meetings will be a minimum of three committee members, all of whom must be a Council member.

5.5 If a committee member fails to attend more than three meetings in a row, they will be required to give up membership of the Committee

5.6 The committee must report its advice to the Council at its next meeting, this report is normally to be given by the Chair which shall draw to the attention of Trustees any issue that require disclosure to the Council or require executive action.

5.7 The committee will keep accurate minutes of its meetings. To ensure confidentiality of sensitive information these minutes will not be circulated to Council.

5.8 In most cases decision making will be by consensus. In exceptional circumstances where consensus cannot be achieved, decision making will be by a majority vote of committee members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair will have the casting vote.

6. **MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS**

6.1 Reviews will be collated by the Honorary Secretary and a formal record with learning outcomes and implications recorded and maintained on a secure database.

6.1 This record should include learning points, outcomes and recommendations for local and national services.

6.2 The record should also include the support services utilised.

6.2 The Committee will undertake an annual review of its performance against its work plan to evaluate the achievement of its duties.

6.3 This review will inform the Committees annual report to the Members. This report will be published in the yearbook and presented by the committee Chair at the Society’s Annual General Meeting (AGM).

7. **SUPPORT**

7.1 The Committee shall be supported administratively by the Society’s secretariat:

* Society’s administrator to collate the papers
* Society’s administrator to support reviews

7.2 The Committee will work closely with the Secretary and President of the Society to ensure a timely and robust response to requests for review or support.

8. **REVIEW**

8.1 These terms of reference will be reviewed at least every 3 years as part of the process for managing the Committee’s effectiveness.

**Current version approved by Executive Committee (22nd June 2022) and for ratification by the Vascular Society Council in September.**