

Royal Society of Biology Member Organisation (MO) Education Policy Advisory Group: Terms of Reference

Mission

The Royal Society of Biology's mission is to be the unifying voice for biology: to advise Government, influence policy, advance education and professional development, and support our members.

To achieve this mission, it is crucial that the Society engages both individual members and member organisations (MOs), in its education policy work; to ensure the Society can truly represent, reflect and champion the voice of the bioscience community.

Within this mission, the role of the MO Education Policy Advisory Group is to inform the Society's education policy work at all levels – from primary school, through to secondary schools, colleges and higher education.

The MO Education Policy Advisory Group will:

- Identify and discuss current and forthcoming education policy-related priorities;
- Identify areas of collaborative working with respect to education policy activities;
- Seek to work collaboratively, wherever possible and appropriate, on education policy activities;
- Inform the Society's education policy work including, but not exclusive to: consultation responses, policy projects and position statements;
- Highlight any issues, concerns or priority areas related to 5-19 science education that should be fed back to BERG (Biology Education Research Group); the Biology Curriculum Committee; and other learned societies (Association for Science Education, Institute of Physics, Royal Society, and Royal Society of Chemistry) who we work with collaboratively on education policy issues
- Highlight any issues, concerns or priority areas relating to post 19 education that should be fed back to special interest groups HUBS (Heads of University Biosciences) and BERG (Biology Education Research Group)
- Liaise with other sub-committees and special interest groups of the Society's Education, Training and Policy Committee (including, the Curriculum Committee, the Heads of University Biosciences, Biology Education Research Group and Public Engagement Group), as appropriate;
- Horizon-scan likely future issues in education policy over the next 2-5 years; and
- Create specialised working groups to tackle specific policy issues

Constitution and members

- On an annual basis, the Society will invite all MO's to select a suitable representative to join (or continue to sit on) the Advisory Group.
- Each individual MO is responsible for deciding whether it wishes to engage with the Advisory Group and to choose a suitable representative.
- Each member will represent their respective MO.
- The number of members will depend on the number of MO's that accept the Society's offer to participate.
- Members will be required to provide a short summary of their expertise for the Society's records and for the Advisory Groups reference.
- It will be possible to co-opt additional members (for example, from an MO's staff or internal Committees) for short periods, as appropriate additional expertise is required; although prior permission must be obtained from the Chair.
- The Advisory Group will be chaired by the Society's Head of Education Policy
- There will typically be four full meetings per year (one each quarter); with one meeting per year dedicated to horizon scanning forthcoming issues over the next 2-5 years.

Tenure

The membership of the Advisory Group will be reviewed on annual basis, when MO's will be invited to select or review their most appropriate representative to serve on the Group. Members may serve on the Advisory Group indefinitely, at the discretion of their MO.

Powers and conduct of the Advisory Group

- The Group's function is advisory not executive.
- The Advisory Group will provide a report on its activities to the Education, Training and Policy Committee on an annual basis, unless pertinent issues arise in the meantime.
- Any member of the Advisory Group may be asked to resign by Resolution of Council. A written explanation will be provided.
- The Advisory Group shall abide by the Society's Regulations, including its code of conduct, at all times.

Operational matters: dealing with confidential issues

On occasion, the Society may share confidential information or issues with the members of the Advisory Group, which is *not* intended for wider circulation. Under such circumstances, it will be made explicit by the Society that the information shared is confidential; in addition, the Society will provide a clear indication of whether the information can be shared:

- With no one beyond the immediate recipients
- With a limited number of individuals beyond the immediate recipients (in which case, further guidance will provided regarding who the information can be shared with).

Reciprocally, if members wish to share sensitive information with the Society and/or the rest of the Advisory Group, they should clearly state that the information is confidential and provide similar guidance on whether the information can be shared in a restricted manner or not at all.