

RCGP BEHAVIOURAL FRAMEWORK



Background and Purpose

The RCGP is the professional membership body of general practitioners. It works to encourage the highest possible standards in general practice by representing general practice with the government and the media, setting, and administering the entry examination for general practice, improving the quality of patient care, encouraging clinical innovation, and promoting continuous professional development for GPs.



The College has over 54,000 members, who are supported through the work of around 260 employees, working across the UK. It is the biggest of the medical royal colleges, and one of the most influential. The College has played a key role in shaping modern general practice and ensuring that it is seen as the touchstone of effective health care delivery in the UK and many other nations around the world.

Since its foundation in 1952, the College has achieved its impact through its members and employees working closely together as valued colleagues in order to promote excellent patient care. Across College HQ, the Devolved Councils, and the Faculties, members of the College and members of employees work together in unison, respecting each other's expertise and the contribution they make.

For the College to continue to operate effectively, it is critical that everyone involved in the organisation treats all of those they work with – both College members and employees – in a collegiate and respectful manner. This document sets out the RCGP's expectations regarding the type of behaviours that are necessary for a successful working relationship to exist between College members and College employees. The behaviours in the document equally apply to working relationships solely involving College members, and solely involving employees. It also applies to all lay members of all committees, groups, and boards across the College.

The College offices are a professional business environment which may be culturally different from the closer-knit environment clinicians are familiar with in general practice. All who share in the College's work (both as employees and as members) are entitled to be treated with the type of professional respect commonly found in a business environment and the College is also mindful of its obligations as an employer.

To this end we are committed to ensuring that neither College members nor employees are subjected to behaviour which may be considered either out of place in a professional environment or unlawful, and we want anyone who genuinely feels they have been subjected to inappropriate behaviour to feel empowered to speak out by using the appropriate College policies and procedures, as set out at the end of this document.

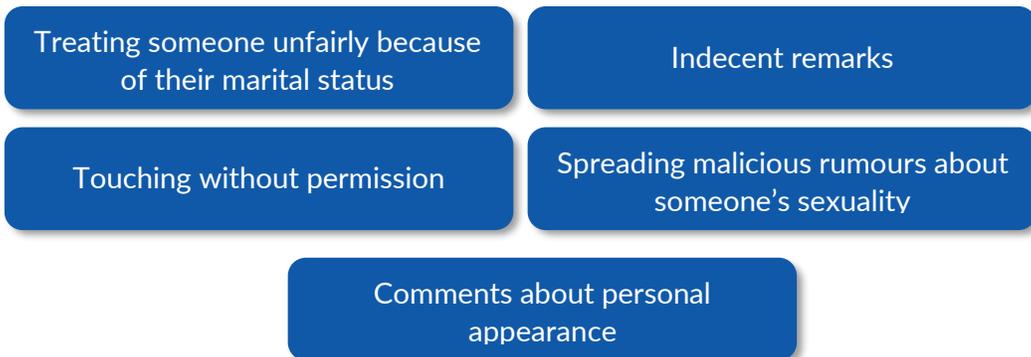
Who does the guidance apply to?



- RCGP Staff
- College Trustees
- College Officers and Devolved Council Chairs
- Council members (including Devolved Councils)
- Faculty Board members
- Lay members of all committees, groups, and boards across the College
- Clinical leads, champions, representatives
- Any clinicians employed by RCGP
- Any other clinicians engaged in a volunteering capacity for RCGP

Unlawful Behaviours

Some examples of potentially unlawful behaviours are:



It is important to emphasise that although those exhibiting a particular behaviour may intend it to be friendly it is the way that behaviour is perceived by the recipient which normally determines whether it is appropriate.

Unacceptable Behaviours

In the College's Bullying and Harassment Policy we specifically mention the following unacceptable behaviours:

- Verbal and written harassment
- Innuendos
- Other personal harassment

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Verbal and written harassment



- Verbal abuse of any kind
- Derogatory or abusive comments
- Offensive banter, insults, taunts, and insinuations
- Emails or any form of written communication that is aggressive, rude, upsetting or which could amount to sexual or racial harassment, or harassment on the grounds of someone's disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or being or becoming transgender. Email harassment can arise simply from unreasonable repeated or unwanted requests, or messages containing sexual or racial innuendos
- Emails that are critical about someone that are copied into others who do not need to know

Innuendos



- Distasteful jokes or ridicule and making someone the butt of jokes
- Asking intimate questions about someone's personal life
- Gossip, speculation, or malicious rumours
- Transmission or display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, graffiti, pin ups, screensavers
- Suggesting sexual favours that may further an employee's career or that refusal may hinder it

Other personal harassment



- Individuals can also experience harassment based on disability, race or national origin, religion or belief, age, gender, being or becoming transgender, or sexual orientation
- Assumptions based on stereotyping
- Asking intimate questions
- Unreasonable refusal to make adjustments to the working environment and working conditions



Our Behavioural Expectations

What members/employees should expect from employees



- Using their knowledge, skills, and expertise to deliver the best possible service
- Listening to views and trying their best to understand and solve problems
- Taking responsibility for problems and getting back to people when they say they will
- Being honest about what they can and cannot do
- Giving a balanced view of the facts
- Being courteous, respectful, and helpful
- Recognising members' expertise
- To be told if agreed actions have not been implemented within a reasonable time.
- Appropriate use of social media

What members/employees should not expect from employees



- Giving excuses, as opposed to reasons
- Not responding in a polite and timely way to reasonable queries and complaints
- Making assumptions and not checking them out
- Being secretive and withholding information
- Being patronising and condescending
- Bullying/harassment
- Blaming
- Discrimination of any sort
- Wearing any clothing that would be considered unprofessional (such as clothing with indecent or sexually explicit, or suggestive, slogans) under a standard professional-like dress code.

What employees/members should expect from members



- Being courteous, respectful, and supportive
- Being challenged in a constructive way at the right time and place
- Listening and understanding
- Respect for their areas of expertise
- Respect for management authority
- Freedom to say to members when something is not achievable due to resource or time constraints
- An understanding that the relationship between College members and employees is not the same as between a general practice partner and practice employees.
- Appropriate use of social media,

What employees/members should not expect from members



- Inappropriate level of challenge in meetings without prior discussion
- Bullying/harassment
- Blaming
- Criticism in public
- Unachievable demands regarding timescales and/or volume of activity
- Unreasonable demands of employees out of normal working hours, without prior agreement
- Discrimination of any sort.
- Wearing any clothing that would be considered unprofessional (such as clothing with indecent or sexually explicit, or suggestive, slogans) under a standard professional-like dress code.

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How to raise a concern

There are various ways an individual can raise their concerns about behaviour.

Please contact the Honorary Secretary, in confidence, in the first instance using: Hon.Sec@rcgp.org.uk for confirmation as to the most appropriate routing in your particular case.



Sanctions

Failure to adhere to the behaviours stated in this framework may result in sanctions in line with the College's HR policies and Members Code of Conduct up to and including dismissal and removal from membership.