



FORWARD PLAN 2008–2010

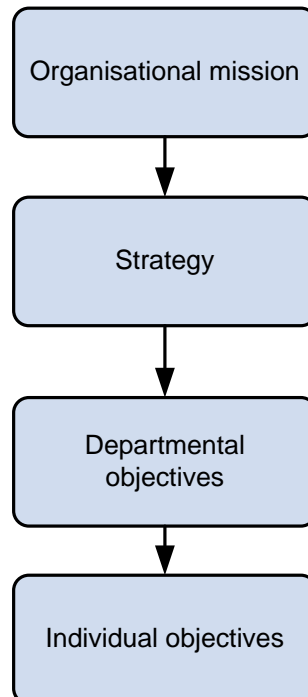
Reviewed and approved by Council June 2008

A Introduction

The College is a professional membership organisation dedicated to the advancement of the science and practice of pathology. Currently there are almost 8600 members, all of whom are based in hospitals, universities and laboratories in the UK and overseas. The main specialties of pathology which the College represents are clinical biochemistry, cytopathology, dermatopathology, clinical embryology, forensic pathology, genetics, haematology, histocompatibility and immunogenetics, histopathology, immunology, medical microbiology, metabolic medicine, neuropathology, oral pathology, paediatric pathology, toxicology, transfusion medicine, veterinary pathology, virology.

The College's mission statement is to "promote excellence in the practice of pathology and to be responsible for maintaining standards through training, assessments, examinations and professional development, to the benefit of the public."

This plan sets out the objectives which the College aims to achieve during the next two years. It constitutes a 'to do' list for the College and its Officers, Council, Directors and staff: the latter two will translate the objectives into departmental and individual objectives.



Over the past few years, the activities of the College have expanded considerably due to initiatives from UK Government relating to training, assessments, examinations and professional practice. There are also issues relating to recruitment, workforce numbers, local delivery of pathology services and the development of roles such as the advanced practitioner.

Council has agreed that the plan should be reviewed by the Executive Committee at their annual summer meeting.

B Governance

The College was established in 1962 and received the Royal Charter in 1970. The Charter states that “the management of the College shall be vested in the Council” and, together with numerous Ordinances and Bye-laws, details the procedures and processes by which this is carried out. Some examples include the categories of membership, elections to Council and to Honorary Officer posts, the procedure of the Annual General Meeting, terms of office, and how the accounts are managed and presented. As the College has charitable status, Councillors also serve as Trustees and must meet the requirements of the Charity Commission. Council comprises the seven Honorary Officers, eight nationally elected members, Chairs of the eleven Regional Councils and up to four co-opted members to accommodate the small specialties. Directors, who are appointed to oversee a particular area of College work, are invited to attend as observers.

The aims of the College, as laid down in the Royal Charter, are to:

1. advance the science and practice of pathology
2. further public education in the field of pathology
3. promote research in pathology and disseminate the results.

The aims of the Charter are fulfilled by the current functions of the College, which are outlined in the next section. These functions form the basis for the many activities that the College undertakes on behalf of its membership, Government and the public.

C Activities carried out by the College

Aim 1: To advance the science and practice of pathology

- Setting the standards for pathology training for medical doctors and for clinical scientists.
- Providing assessments and examinations for those training in pathology.
- Providing a continuing professional development (CPD) scheme available to both members and non-members.
- Organising scientific symposia and educational events.
- Developing and publishing guidance documents in order to maintain standards of practice in pathology.
- Consulting the membership and encouraging discussion via the Regional Councils, *Bulletin* and the website.

- Monitoring workforce statistics to ensure pathology services are appropriately staffed in order to ensure patient safety and making representations to Government where there are shortfalls.
- Providing an independent external accreditation service for pathology departments through its one-third ownership of CPA (UK) Limited.
- Promoting the continued development and adoption of best practice in diagnostic pathology and new tests.
- Maintenance of a clinical audit database.
- Monitoring of pathologist service standards through the Professional Performance Panel.
- Oversight of and advice to national, regional and specialist interpretive EQA schemes.
- Developing the workforce roles of scientists and biomedical scientists through the Life Sciences Taskforce and collaboration with the IBMS.
- Fostering active links with other national and international professional bodies eg the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, NICE, the Royal College of Australasia, UEMS.
- Supporting the international membership of the College through an enhanced International Committee structure.

Aim 2: To further public education in the field of pathology

- Offering professional advice on pathology related issues.
- Providing responses to consultations from government and other external agencies.
- Continuing actively to encourage input from lay and trainee representatives in the College's decision-making process.
- Striving to increase public engagement and awareness of pathology through various media.
- Continuing to support Lab Tests Online as a stakeholder.
- Continuing to support Labs are Vital as a stakeholder.

Aim 3: To promote research in pathology and disseminate the results

- Working with third-party funders (currently Baxter Healthcare, The Pathological Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Jean Shanks Foundation) to provide and manage a programme of research opportunities in pathology.
- Providing information on and facilitating research through the Research Committee.
- Commissioning articles on areas of topical interest for publication in the *Bulletin*.

D Objectives for 2008–2010

The key objectives which the College aims to achieve during the next two years, linking to the aims stated in the Royal Charter, are to:

Aim 1: Advance the science and practice of pathology

- Achieve approval by the Privy Council of the revised Royal Charter, Ordinances and Bye-laws by July 2008 (notification of Privy Council approval received January 2008).
- Implement changes in membership categories and introduction of new Affiliate category within 12 months of receipt of Privy Council approval of the revised Charter, Ordinances and Bye-laws.
- Ensure that curricula and assessments for clinical scientists in the pathology disciplines meet the requirements of the regulatory bodies by April 2009, reflecting the training and career requirements of Modernising Scientific Careers.
- Establish the underlying philosophy for revalidation and design, develop pilot tools to support revalidation in the pathology specialties.
- Ensure curricula and assessment systems for medical trainees in pathology meet the full requirements of the regulatory bodies by 2010 and ensure that there are integrated e-learning resources across all major College specialties to support the learning objectives of the curricula, integrating image data, e-learning modules, pathopedia and clinical cases.
- Support the development of an e-portfolio for medical and clinical scientist trainees by August 2009.
- Lead on the development of a strategy for training medical examiners to support the development of this new role by October 2009.
- In collaboration with the RCGP, ACB and IBMS produce guidance on point-of-care testing in primary care and the community by February 2009.
- Develop and finalise an undergraduate curriculum by November 2009.
- Launch the employers' section of the electronic workforce database (EWD) to ensure that the data on posts are completed. Fine tuning to ensure all fields are suitable and relevant is currently being undertaken and the launch is anticipated by August 2008.
- Ensure the EWD allows customisation for specialty specific surveys by August 2008.
- Establish a workforce directory of Heads of Departments and Clinical Directors by December 2008.
- Make available data on forthcoming consultant vacancies and the national distribution of posts by August 2009.
- Improve the scope, appropriateness and quality of the service through, for example, links to Lab Tests Online, development of the new test formulary, information on the need for result interpretation and QA of lab/home/commercial tests, e.g. *Making Sense of Pathology Testing*.

Aim 2: Further public education in the field of pathology

- Undertake a visual identity project and agree a College visual identity by April 2008.
- Build an Education Centre by November 2008.
- Develop a plan for an outreach programme to commence with the opening of the Education Centre in November 2008.
- Organise the first National Pathology Week in November 2008, arranging events regionally involving at least three Regional Councils and at least two national events at the College.
- Redesign the website to improve accessibility and content, making information easier to find and compliant with W3C standards at the relaunch in September 2008 – **website design may not be under the College's control. The time frame may need to be moved back and there are budgetary implications which need addressing.**
- Work with the Lay Advisory Committee and patient groups to provide stimulating content for the patient area of the website by June 2008 and to determine on an ongoing basis those issues of public interest and significance requiring College comment or guidance.
- Increase public understanding of the repertoire, development, appropriateness and interpretation of laboratory tests in context, with consideration of quality issues such as access, timeliness and quality assurance of the service by providers.
- Closer collaboration with other Medical Royal Colleges, Commissioners and others responsible for planning.

Aim 3: Promote research in pathology and disseminate the results

- Increase the number of research Fellowships offered in pathology by April 2009.
- Establish a Research area on the College website by April 2008.
- Develop a Research Sub-group in each specialty by June 2008.
- Bid for funding to increase the academic workforce in research by October 2008.
- Support trainees in research by developing guidance through meetings with specialty groups by December 2008.
- Develop an academic workforce in research through the Research Committee in collaboration with the Wolport initiative as a long-term aim.
- Develop with the Academy sub-group e-learning research training.

An additional aim is suggested.

Aim 4: Maintain an efficient organisation

- Work towards documenting College processes and procedures with a view to achieving ISO 9001:2000 registration by December 2009.
- Launch a staff intranet by June 2008 and include business processes developed so far for ISO.

- Maintain Investors in People accreditation at 2008 review.
- Ensure the organisation is adequately resourced in terms of staffing, finance, IT and that expenditure is maintained within agreed College budget.
- Produce an College environmental policy by March 2009.
- Continue to use technology appropriately in order to reduce the use of paper by April 2009 in line with the College's environmental policy.
- Make the electronic workforce database fully operational and open to members by April 2008 (the database went live in Autumn 2007 but as of March 2008 has only been accessed by less than 10% of potential users).
- Introduce an updated College membership database, ALMS.NET by April 2009 and provide training for staff in its use.