

Information for candidates. By-election to the council of the British Medical Association for the 2024-26 sessions.



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This is a general guide only. The information contained within the guide is subject to the articles and bye-laws of the association and to company and trade union law, which can be found on the BMA website.

Introduction

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in standing for election to BMA UK Council. This booklet is intended to:

- help you complete your nomination form online
- explain what the council does and its constitutional position within the association
- explain what is expected of members of council and give details about how the election will run

If anything is unclear or you would like further information or assistance please contact Xanthe Barker, by email xbarker@bma.org.uk

Due to a resignation, there is an Eastern region council seat vacancy. The successful candidate will be a voting member of the council of the British Medical Association and will serve the remainder of the 2024-25 session and 2025-2026 session.

The electorate for this election will be members of the BMA in the Eastern region.

Notes on completing and submitting the nomination form

Notes on completing the nomination form

You should read these notes before completing your nomination form.

Nominations must be made via the website www.cesvotes.com/bmanom2024. Copies received via any other method will not be accepted. The deadline for receipt of nominations is 4pm Monday 6 January 2025. The election is only open to BMA members. Late nominations will not be accepted. For information on how the BMA uses your personal data please see our [privacy policy](#).

A nomination form that is not properly completed and submitted will be considered invalid. It is your responsibility to ensure that the form is correct and complete. Amendments to forms will not be permitted after the close of nominations. If you experience any difficulties in completing or submitting your nominations via the link, please contact Civica at support@cesvotes.com

1 Candidate's name

Names will be printed on the voting paper with the surname you have given first, followed by your first name.

2 ('Geographical') region/nation

There are 10 regional zones - plus each of the three devolved nations. For this election, your 'geographical' zone must be the Eastern region. This is determined by the division you are listed under via your preferred contact address on the BMA's register of members at the time nominations in this election open on Monday 16 December 2024. You can find more information on pages 10 and 11.

3 Branch of practice

Your primary branch of medical practice will be used for the purposes of the election. This is determined by the category of medical work in which, at the time of nominations for this election open (Monday 16 December 2024), you spend most of your remunerated medical time (except for medical students and retired members). If required to do so by the Returning Officer for the election, you must show evidence of your branch of practice status or risk being disqualified from the election.

If you think that your entry in our membership records may be incorrect, you can email membership@bma.org.uk to ensure that you are correctly listed. Members can also update their details online at bma.org.uk/updatedmydetails.

In the event of a dispute as to your eligibility to stand for election the decision of the Returning Officer shall be final.

4 Gender

For the by-election you must choose one of the following three options:

1 WOMAN

2 MAN

3 IN ANOTHER WAY please specify

Please note that “IN ANOTHER WAY” is the gender category. The self-description is not a sub constituency/category. In checking the IN ANOTHER WAY box you are declaring that you do not identify as a MAN or a WOMAN.

Your self-declared gender category will not appear in the candidates’ booklet of the ballot paper.

By adding your name to the nomination form you confirm that you are lawfully entitled to stand for the position to which it relates and you specifically confirm that you have not committed any offence pursuant to which section 45B of The Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 relates.

5 Your electoral statement (150 words max)

Candidates are encouraged to read the Council member role profile and make written statements in support of their candidature. Your statements will be sent with the ballot papers and may also be made available in BMA related media.

You may wish to highlight what you believe makes you suitable as a candidate - how your ideas, philosophy, and experience will help you bring about change and improvements in the areas that interest you and which will benefit the BMA and its members.

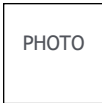
An example of how statements will be laid out and sent to voters is outlined below.

EXAMPLE

Candidates' details and election statements

This is an example of how the candidate information and statements will be formatted. There will be no spaces between the lines and the message for voters and statement sections will be formatted as one continuous paragraph.

Name: DOE, ALEX
Electoral Zone: North East o
Branch of Practice: **General Practice**
Year of qualification: **1999**
Job title: **GP Partner**



Message for voters: XX
XXXXX XX
XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Statement: AA
AAAAAA AAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAA AAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The Returning Officer will determine the type face, font size etc of the final statements produced.

6 Your brief message (30 words max)

This is for you to highlight to the membership your main message about your candidature. Your brief message will be sent with the ballot papers and may also be made available in BMA related media.

7 Your photo

Members have the option of submitting a recent passport sized photo of themselves only which will be included with their election statement to voters. This must not include any logos or election material.

8 Canvassing

Canvassing is an integral part of an election. When canvassing candidates should make sure they:

- Role model BMA behaviours at all times in the election process.
- Highlight your strengths and experience.
- Don't make negative comments about rival candidates.
- Don't put pressure on people to vote for you or ask others to do so.
- Don't make promises you can't keep - you will be held to account in the next round of elections.

Candidates must not use BMA resources to canvass voters, including:

- BMA Listservers
- BMA social media accounts
- BMA email addresses
- BMA staff resource

While canvassing through personal social media accounts and emails is allowed, you must ensure that any communication does not contravene any policies of any organisation, forum or group and is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If you're not sure what is acceptable, ask for advice from your committee secretary or elections team:

elections@bma.org.uk

6 Oversight and sanctions

The BMA's Group Co-Chief Executive Officer (or their nominated deputy) is the returning officer for all BMA elections.

These election rules are referenced in the BMA [code of conduct](#) (referred to as the BMA canvassing guide) and not adhering to these rules can lead to an investigation under the code of conduct and sanctions applied through the BMA's resolution process

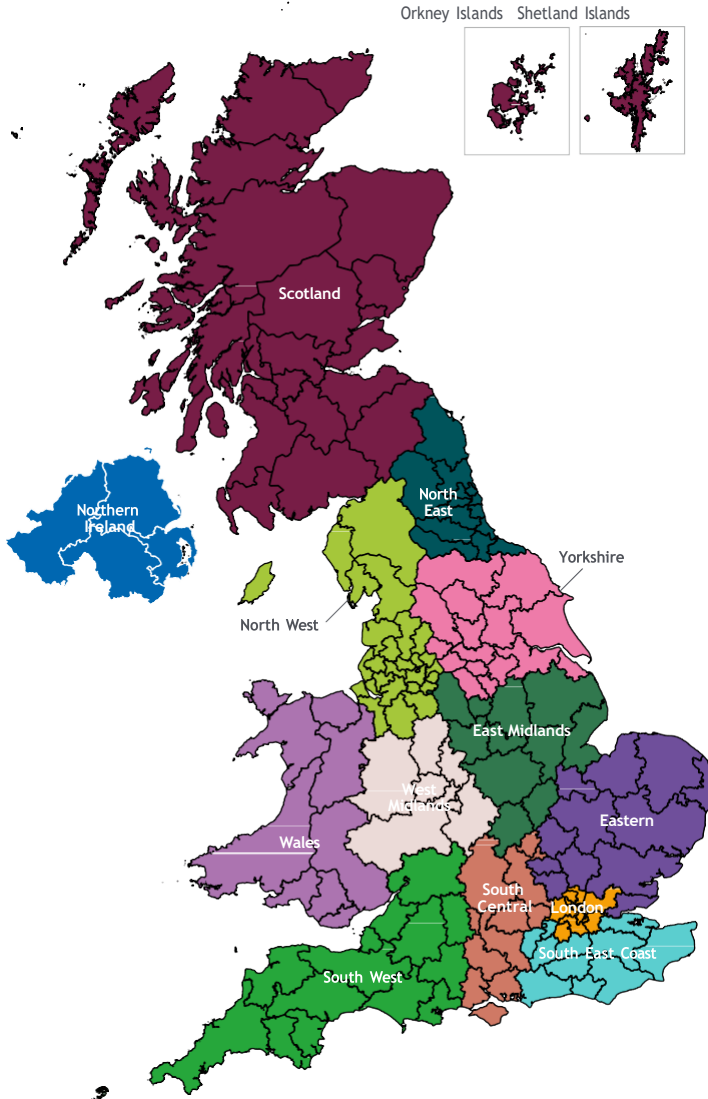
7 Statements

Any civil or criminal liability in respect of publishing or copying an election address rests solely with the candidate concerned.

Civica will acknowledge receipt of your statement.

8 The 13 council 'geographical' zones are:

Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, South Central, South East Coast, Eastern, London, South West, North West, North East, Yorkshire, East Midlands, West Midlands



Eastern geographical' zone by division

Division name
Cambridge Huntingdon and Ely
East and North Hertfordshire
Great Yarmouth and Waveney
North Bedfordshire
North Essex
Norwich
Peterborough
South Bedfordshire
South Essex
Suffolk
West Hertfordshire
West Norfolk and Wisbech

Information about BMA council

Information about BMA UK Council

Council's constitutional position and its activities

The BMA is a trade union and a company limited by guarantee. UK Council is the principal executive committee (PEC) of the trade union.

Council sets the strategic direction of the Association in line with policy decided by the representative body at the annual representative meeting (ARM). Council is responsible for the formulation of policy throughout the year and for ensuring the implementation of that policy.

Council also appoints members to committees and the board of directors. The board of directors is responsible for administering the affairs of the Association, management of the finances, general administration and ensures delivery and implementation of the strategic and operational objectives of the Association.

Arrangements for meetings of council

The association's 'session' runs from the end of one annual representative meeting (ARM) to the end of the next one, normally June to July. Council normally meets six times during the session. Members of council and those elected to take up office are members of the representative body and this normally meets at the end of June or beginning of July.

Meetings of council are normally held in BMA House in London or virtually and start at 9:30am (for virtual) or 10am (hybrid in BMA House). The business is usually concluded by approximately 5pm.

Members' receipted travel and subsistence expenses are reimbursed as are receipted locum costs. Members are also eligible for the payment of honoraria after the completion, in any session, of 24 BMA meeting days. The conduct of meetings is governed by standing orders and copies of these are available to candidates on request.

Crèche facilities and prayer rooms or quiet rooms can be provided for members on council meeting days. Further information on the BMA's care guidelines are available on the website.

Details on current council membership and constitution are also on the website.

2024-2025 session

Tuesday 18 March 2025 (Council development day)

Wednesday 19 March 2025

Wednesday 14 May 2025

2025-2026 session

Wednesday 16 July 2025

Tuesday 16 September 2025 (Council development day)

Wednesday 17 September 2025

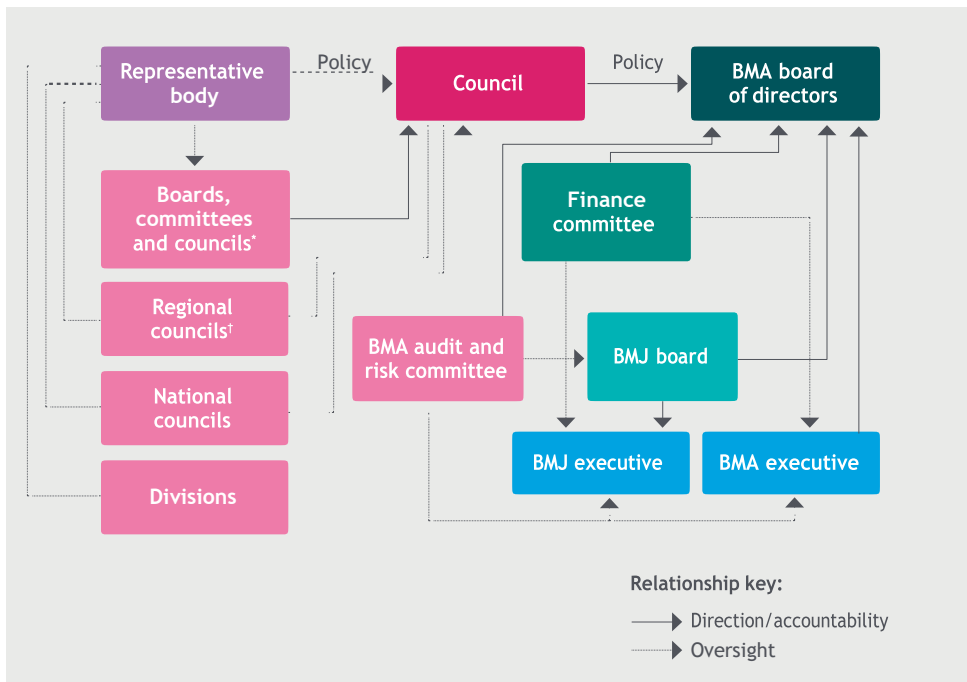
Wednesday 12 November 2025

Wednesday 21 January 2026

Wednesday 11 March 2026

Wednesday 13 May 2026

Governance



***Committees:**

- Consultants
- General practitioners
- Junior doctors
- Medical academic staff
- Medical students
- Public health medicine
- Staff, associate specialists and specialty doctors
- Armed forces
- Occupational medicine
- Civil and public service
- Forensic medicine and secure environments
- Medico-legal
- Pensions
- Private practice
- Professional fees
- Professional regulation
- Committee on community care
- Committee of medical managers
- International
- Medical ethics
- BMA charitable trust
- Board of science
- Patient liaison group

†Regional councils:

- Eastern
- East midlands
- London
- North east
- North west
- South east coast
- South west
- South central
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire

Elections to council

Relevant articles and bye-laws

Composition of UK Council

Extract from bye-laws 56(2) to 56(2) 2.3

Voting members

1. Council shall consist of 69 voting members at the point of election
2. Voting members will be elected by secret ballot by single transferable vote.
3. Voting members of council shall be drawn from the following three categories:
 - a. all UK nations/regions (as defined in paragraph 2.1 below)
 - b. all branches of practice (as defined in paragraph 2.2 below)
 - c. Ethnic minority (as further described in paragraph 2.3 below)
4. In each category the number of seats is set out in those paragraphs.
5. In each electoral category the electorate will be the whole of the membership.

2 UK nations/regions ('Geographical')

The UK nations/regions, and the number of seats each shall have on the council, shall be as follows:

London - 4 seats, of which no more than 3 shall be elected from the same gender

For the regions and nations 3 seats, of which no more than 2 shall be elected from the same gender:

Scotland - 3 seats Wales - 3 seats

Northern Ireland - 3 seats North east - 3 seats North west - 3 seats South central - 3 seats South east coast - 3 seats Eastern - 3 seats

South west -3 seats West Midlands - 3 seats East Midlands - 3 seats Yorkshire - 3 seats

21 Branches of practice ('BoP')

The branches of practice categories, and the number of seats on the council allocated to each are:

The branches of practice categories, and the number of seats on the council allocated to each are:

- (a) General practice - 4 seats, no more than 3 of which shall be elected from the same gender
- (b) Consultants - 4 seats, no more than 3 of which shall be elected from the same gender
- (c) Staff and associate specialists - 2 seats
- (d) Junior doctors - 5 seats, no more than 3 of which shall be elected from the same gender
- (e) Public health medicine and community health - 1 seat
- (f) Academics - 1 seat
- (g) Armed forces - 1 seat
- (h) Occupational medicine - 1 seat
- (i) Members in practice but not covered by (a) to (h) above - 1 seat
- (j) Retired members - 1 seat

- (k) Medical students - 3 seats, of which no more than 2 shall be elected from the same gender. The voting members elected in medical student branch of practice seats shall hold office for two years from the conclusion of the annual representative meeting in the year of their election until the conclusion of the annual representative meeting of the second year of their term of office.

22 Ethnic minority

(2.3) Ethnic minority (members who self-identify as Black, Asian and minority ethnic)

The number of ethnic minority (members who self-identify as Black, Asian and minority ethnic) elected seats shall be five of which no more than three shall be of the same gender.

Council shall have the right to amend the categories of branches of practice and shall define the criteria for each branch of practice from time to time, having regard to advice from the organisation committee.

Nomination and election of elected members of UK Council Extract from by-laws 58-62

58. Mode of Nomination and Election of Elected Members of Council

- (1) All candidates shall be voting members of the Association.
- (2) A candidate's UK nation or region shall be determined by their address on the Association's register of members at the time when nominations in the election open.
- (3) A candidate's primary branch of practice shall, save for medical students and retired members, be determined by that category of medical work in which, at the time when nominations in the election open, the candidate spends the majority of their remunerated medical time.
- (4) In the event of a dispute as to a candidate's eligibility to stand for election, the decision of the returning officer shall be final.
- (5) In the event of a tie in the election, the result will be decided by drawing lots in the presence of the chief executive and the independent scrutineer for the election.
- (6) A candidate can at the point of nomination opt out of being elected to either a geographical or branch of practice seat
- (7) A candidate can at the point of nomination opt in to be elected to an ethnic minority seat.
- (8) There shall be no age restriction on membership of council.

Term of Office and Eligibility for Re election

59.

(1) Voting members of council shall hold office for four years, with the exception of those voting members elected to the medical students branch of practice seats, from the conclusion of the annual representative meeting in the year of their election until the conclusion of the fourth next following annual representative meeting. Voting members elected to medical students branch of practice seats shall hold office for two years from the conclusion of the annual representative meeting in the year of their election until the conclusion of the annual representative meeting of the second year of their term of office.

(2) Voting members of council shall be eligible for re-election provided always that they continue to qualify for election.

(3) Ex-officio members of council shall hold office until the election of their successors.

Vacancies

60. Any casual vacancy in the council shall be filled by council, in its discretion and having regard to the branch of practice and geographical balance of council, appointing a member of the Association it reasonably believes to be qualified to fill the vacancy. The person filling the vacancy shall retain their office until the next election and they shall not have a vote.

61. A voting seat/casual vacancy can be filled by a decision of UK Council using either a ballot by the entire voting membership or the respective branch of practice/geographical voting membership subset of the Association.

62. In the case of a vacancy in the council occasioned by a failure to elect, the council in its discretion may appoint a member of the Association qualified to fill the vacancy and the person filling the vacancy shall retain their office until the next election but they shall have no vote.

Timetable for the election

The timetable for the election is expected to be as follows:

Nominations open	16 December 2024
Nominations close	6 January 2025
Voting papers posted	23 January 2025
Deadline for receipt of voting papers	13 February 2025
Results sent to candidates and placed on the BMA website.	14 February 2025

The Returning Officer shall approve all election notices and deadlines and all voting papers shall be in the form prescribed by the Returning Officer. In the event of a dispute as to a candidates eligibility to stand for election, the decision of the Returning Officer shall be final.

The ballot

The election will be conducted by secret ballot using single transferable vote. Voters will need to return the ballot to Civica as the Independent Scrutineers by post by the close of voting.

Each voter will be invited to vote by ranking the candidates in order of preference.

The Single Transferable Vote

STV (Single Transferable Vote) is a form of proportional representation where you rank the candidates.

Candidates don't need a majority of votes to be elected, just a known 'quota', or share of the votes, determined by the size of the electorate and the number of positions to be filled.

Each voter gets one vote, which can transfer from their first-preference to their second-preference, so if your preferred candidate has no chance of being elected, or has enough votes already, your vote is transferred to another candidate in accordance with your instructions. STV thus ensures that very few votes are wasted, unlike other systems, especially First Past the Post, where only a small number of votes actually contribute to the result.

Why do we use STV?

STV gives voters more choice than any other system. This in turn puts most power in the hands of the voters.

Fewer votes are 'wasted' (ie cast for losing candidates or unnecessarily

cast for the winner) under STV. This means that most voters can identify a representative that they personally helped to elect. Such a link in turn increases a representative's accountability.

Other information

The period for voting commences on the date on which the first voting papers in the election are posted. The time and date by which voting papers must be returned to Civica will appear on the voting papers.

In the event of a tie, the result will be decided by the drawing of lots in the presence of the BMA's Group Chief Executive Officer and independent scrutineers for the election.

If, after being declared elected and before taking up office, a candidate dies or withdraws their nomination or is found to be ineligible for election by the Returning Officer, the candidate elected will be the next highest candidate, allowing for any constraints that need to be met.

Candidates in the election will be notified by email, of the results and a detailed breakdown of all results will appear on the BMA's website.

Term of office

The member elected to the North East and West Midlands regional zone on council in 2024 will take up office upon election and will stand down following the ARM in 2026.

Elected members are eligible for re-election, provided that they continue to qualify for election.

An induction pack will be distributed to the elected member, which will include information on the BMA's decision-making structures, organisation chart and useful contact details.

Code of conduct

Members of council are bound by a code of conduct available from the BMA's website bma.org.uk/ukcouncil.

Elections memorandum of understanding

The elections memorandum of understanding applies to all committee members and posts in the BMA. Candidates for election to posts will be asked to declare that they have read the memorandum of understanding when submitting their nominations.

The BMA can only function with the contributions of those members who seek election as representatives. Thank you for making the commitment to help represent your colleagues. In order that elected BMA representatives can work together effectively the following principles are important.

- When you are speaking to or communicating in the broadcast, print or social media as an elected BMA representative, or are identified as such, you must honestly represent the views of the BMA.
- When speaking in a personal capacity you must explicitly ask not to be identified as an elected BMA representative.
- Committee officers must coordinate media engagements with the press office.
- You must declare and update as required conflicts of interest as outlined in the BMA conflicts of interest policy.
- You must uphold the confidentiality of your committee when requested. If in doubt, ask the chair of the committee or committee secretariat.
- As a member of the medical profession and as an elected representative, you must behave in a professional manner at all times and abide by the BMA's code of conduct. Robust debate is sometimes essential in forming policy, but you must always treat patients, colleagues and staff with respect.
- As an elected, appointed member, or representative of the BMA, you are expected to follow the guidelines and policies in place to protect you and the organisation, including, but not limited to: expenses and honoraria; technology and privacy; communication including social media policy; and anti-corruption and bribery.
- All individuals engaged in BMA business eligible for BMA membership must be and continue to be BMA members.
- In standing for election you agree to uphold these principles.

-

UK COUNCIL ELECTION CATEGORIES / SEATS (voting)* 69 seats (NB: This is in addition to ex-officio seats)	
('GEOGRAPHICAL') REGION/NATION 40 seats	BRANCH OF PRACTICE 24 seats
x1 English region - (4 seats each) , of which no more than 3 shall be elected from the same gender) - London x9 English regions - (each region has 3 seats of which no more than 2 shall be elected from the same gender) - Eastern - East midlands - North east - North west - South central - South east coast - South west - West midlands - Yorkshire x3 Nations - ((each nation has 3 seats of which no more than 2 shall be elected from the same gender) - Scotland - Wales - Northern Ireland	Consultants (4 seats of which no more than 3 shall be elected from the same gender) GPs (4 seats of which no more than 3 shall be elected from the same gender) Junior doctors (5 seats which no more than 3 shall be elected from the same gender) Medical students* (3 seats of which no more than 2 shall be elected from the same gender) *2 year term of office SAS doctors (2 seats) Academics (1 seat) Public health doctors (1) Retired (1 seat) Armed forces (1 seat) Occupational health (1 seat) Other (1 seat)
	ETHNIC MINORITY 5 SEATS
	Ethnic minority seats (for members who self-identify as Black, Asian and minority ethnic) 5 seats of which no more than 3 shall be elected from the same gender

1. President, representative body chair, council chair, treasurer, representative body deputy chair, the chairs of the following bodies: Northern Ireland council, Scottish council, Welsh council, consultants committee, general practitioners committee, junior doctors committee, medical academic staff committee, medical ethics committee, medical students committee, public health medicine committee, staff, associate specialists and specialty doctor committee, board of the BMJ publishing group, board of science, organisation committee, private practice committee, patient liaison group.

British Medical Association
BMA House, Tavistock Square,
London WC1H 9JP
bma.org.uk

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BMA 20210133