

Terms of Reference

Policy Advisory Panel

The Biochemical Society champions the molecular biosciences by identifying and acting on key science policy issues.

We aim to ensure that the views of our membership are channelled to the appropriate policy-makers. Our activities are informed by our Policy Advisory Panel and our members. Politicians, government departments and international organisations play a key role in the science sector. We work to ensure key policymakers are aware of the views and concerns of our membership.

We feed into many government consultations through our collaboration with the Royal Society of Biology. This collaboration aims to provide a unified voice when advising Government and influencing policy.

1. Duties

- To be proactive in identifying scientific and educational policy matters of relevance to molecular bioscience, and to develop and drive the strategic objectives of the Society with respect to such matters and to related public affairs.
- To consult the members of the Society whenever possible in order to reflect their views and to strengthen the authority of the Society in discussions with external agencies.
- To input in the policy work outputs by the Society (eg. consultation responses).
- To report to and advise the Executive Management Committee on appropriate resources and the mechanisms required to realise the policy objectives of the Society.

2. Membership

i. Internal structure

The Policy Advisory Panel will be composed of the Core Group and associate membership.

- The Core Group will be comprised of 5 people holding a 3 year Term of Office.
- There will be no set limit to the number of Associate Members however the group will be reviewed on an annual basis and must remain administratively viable. This review will be undertaken by the Honorary Policy Officer, the Policy Department and the Group Projects and Governance Department

ii. Composition

The Panel should be comprised of members with the following expertise:

- **Education policy** – at least one member of the Core Group should have expertise in higher education policy
- **Industry** – at least one member of the Core Group should have expertise in science policy issues relating to industry and academia relationships, as well as, able to comment on a variety of other issues (eg. antimicrobial resistance) from industry's point of view.
- **Early career researcher** – at least one Core Group member should be an early career researcher (within 10 years of gaining an undergraduate or postgraduate qualification).
- **UK research and innovation landscape** – at least one but preferably all Core Group members to a certain extent, would have in depth knowledge of the UK research and innovation landscape and research funding.

[Note: It is expected to take up to 18-24 months to fully implement the composition of the Policy Advisory Panel and recruit members with the appropriate expertise (as at mid-2016)]

3. Meetings

i. Frequency of meetings

- The Core Group of the Policy Advisory Panel will meet twice a year with additional business carried out electronically where possible.
- The Honorary Policy Officer may convene additional meetings as necessary and within budget.
- Members who fail to attend more than two meetings in a row may be asked to resign

ii. Quorum

A quorum shall be 3 members

iii. Agenda and papers

An agenda, along with documentation/information/reports supporting the items under discussion will be circulated to members of the Core Group of the Policy Advisory Panel a minimum of seven (7) calendar days before a meeting by email.

In the absence of return communication outlining errors in the delivery of email, the agenda and papers will be considered received by all parties unless otherwise notified.

It is essential that all papers are read and considered in advance of the meeting.

iv. Minutes

Formal minutes recording the proceedings of these meetings will be taken and distributed to the Chair for review within seven (7) calendar days of the meeting taking place.

Final minutes will be circulated to all Panel members, and others in attendance, as close to three (3) calendar weeks after the meeting takes place as is practicable.

v. Decision making

Where possible, a general consensus identified by the Honorary Policy Officer (Chair) will be sufficient to consider a matter passed, rejected or deferred.

Where consensus is not possible, all decisions will be made by a ballot, with each Panel member holding one (1) vote. Where an equity of votes occurs, the Chair may cast an additional vote to finalise the decision, or may defer the decision for later action.

4. Reporting

i. General

The Policy Advisory Panel reports to the Council of Trustees through the Honorary Policy Officer, and all papers of the Panel are shared with the Education, Training and Public Engagement Committee in order to facilitate effective division of responsibility in areas that overlap the remit of both committees.

ii. Annual General Meeting

The Honorary Policy Officer is to attend the Annual General Meeting held in June/July of each year to represent this Panel. If this is not possible, a further member of the Panel may attend in their stead.

5. Ownership of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are owned by the Honorary Policy Officer and Council of Trustees.