

Information for candidates, by-election to the council of the British Medical Association for the 2021-2022 session



List of contents

Introduction	2
Notes on completing and submitting the nomination form	4
Information about BMA council	9
Elections to BMA council	13

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 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 in completing your nomination please contact Elin Hearn, by email Elin.Hearn@civica.co.uk or by phone 020 8829 8473.

Voting members of the council of the British Medical Association were elected in 2018 to serve for four years for the sessions, 2018-19 to 2021-2022.

The 2021 by-election will be conducted to elect one representative to the Armed Forces UK council seat.

The electorate will be members in Armed Forces.

The elected member in the Armed Forces seat resigned in July 2021. Council through an online vote on 24 August 2021 agreed to hold a by-election for the vacant seat.

Notes on completing and submitting the nomination form

Notes on completing the nomination form

You should read these notes before completing your nomination form.

Completing the nomination form

Nominations must be made via the website <https://www.cesvotes.com/bmanoms21>. Copies received via any other method will not be accepted. The deadline for receipt of nominations is 4pm Monday 11 October 2021. Late nominations will not be accepted. For information on how the BMA uses your personal data please see our [privacy policy](#).

All overseas members by definition, have no assigned region and so are excluded from standing as candidates and voting in the regional election. Overseas members will be determined via their preferred contact address on the BMA's register of members at the time that nominations in this election open on 27 September 2021. All members standing for election must ensure that they are in a position to maintain their non-overseas status for the duration of any appointment under this process. Any change to a members' address which would result in a reclassification of the member as an overseas member will invalidate the member's appointment with effect from the date of the reclassification.

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 on Elin.Hearn@civica.co.uk

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

The 'geographical' zone is determined by what division you are listed under via your preferred contact address on the BMA's register of members at the time that nominations in this election open on 27 September 2021.

3. Branch of practice

Your primary branch of medical practice will be used for the purposes of the election and this will be determined by that category of medical work in which, at the time that nominations in this election open (which is Monday 27 September 2021), you spend the majority 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 must contact one of our advisors on **0300 123 1233** or email **membership@bma.org.uk** to ensure that you are correctly listed. Members can update their details online at **bma.org.uk/updatesmydetails**.

In the event of a dispute as to your eligibility to stand for election, your electoral zone or your branch of practice, the decision of the Returning Officer shall be final.

The definition for Armed Forces is as follows:

Armed Forces

Doctors who are either serving officers, reservists or civilian doctors employed by, contracted to, or seconded to the Ministry of Defence.

4. Gender

There are no gender constraints applied to this election.

5. Your electoral statement (150 words max)

Candidates are encouraged to make written statements in support of their candidature. Your statements will be sent with the ballot papers and will also be made available for BMA members via a publicly available and fully searchable area of the BMA website and will be made available to BMA News and 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 overleaf.

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: **SMITH**, John
BMA Membership Number: 99965235
Electoral Zone: **South East Coast**
Branch of Practice: **General Practice**
Year of qualification: **1999**
Job title: **GP Partner**



Message for voters: XXX
XX
XXXXXXXXXXXX

Statement: AAA
AA
AA
AA
AA

The returning officer will determine the type face, font size etc of the final statements produced.

6. Your brief message (20 words max)

This is intended to enable you to highlight to the membership your main message about your candidature. Your brief message will be sent with the ballot papers and, will also be made available for BMA members via a publicly available and fully searchable area of the BMA website and may be made available to BMA News and related media.

7. Your photo

Members have the option of submitting a recent passport sized photo of only themselves to be included with their election statement to voters.

8. Canvassing

Canvassing is an integral part of an election and Twitter and Facebook, for example, can be used. Members are not permitted to use BMA resources to canvas and should not send unsolicited communications.

9. Statements

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

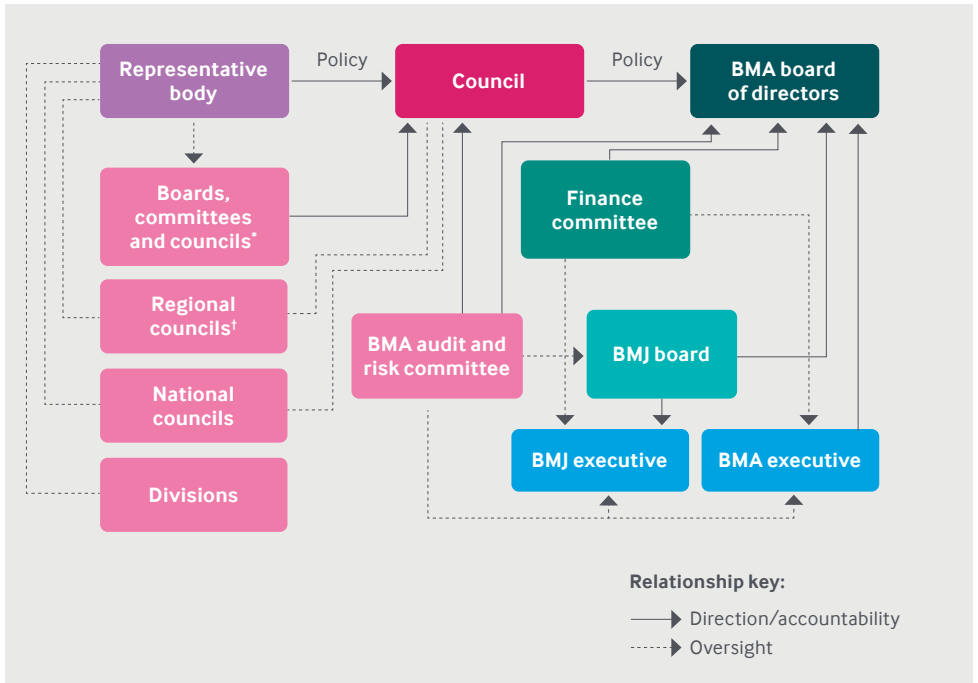
If you have any doubts as to your eligibility for election please contact Elin Hearn on T: 020 8829 8473

E: **Elin.Hearn@civica.co.uk**.

Civica will acknowledge receipt of both statement and photo.

Information about BMA council

Governance



*Committees:

Consultants
 General practitioners
 Junior doctors
 Medical academic staff
 Medical students
 Public health medicine
 Staff, associate specialists and speciality 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

Information about BMA council

Council's constitutional position and its activities

The BMA is a trade union and a company limited by guarantee. 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. 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.

BMA policy and the articles and bye-laws can be found on the BMA website [bma.org.uk/ukcouncil](https://www.bma.org.uk/ukcouncil)

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 June. 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 for four days at the end of June or beginning of July. Council members will also be invited to attend the 2021 ARM. ARM 2021 will be held on 13 and 14 September.

Meetings of council are normally held in BMA House in London or virtually and start at 10am. 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 12 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.

2021-2022 session

Wednesday 15 September 2021

Wednesday 17 November 2021

Wednesday 12 January 2022

Wednesday 16 March 2022

Wednesday 18 May 2022

Elections to council

Elections to council

Extract from bye-laws 56(2) for information

56 (2) Voting members

1. Council shall at the point of election consist of between 58 and 74 voting members.
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. across the UK generally (as further described in paragraph 2.3 below)
4. In each case in the number of seats set out in those paragraphs. In the geographical electoral category, the electorate will be those members residing in that nation/region. In the branch of practice electoral category, the electorate will be those members engaged or employed in the respective branch of practice. In the UK electoral category, the electorate will be the whole of the membership.

2.1 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
Scotland	– 2 seats
Wales	– 2 seats
Northern Ireland	– 2 seats
North eastern	– 2 seats
North western	– 2 seats
South central	– 2 seats
Eastern	– 2 seats
South east coast	– 2 seats
South western	– 2 seats
West Midlands	– 2 seats
East Midlands	– 2 seats
Yorkshire	– 2 seats

Timetable for the election

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

Nominations open	27 September 2021
Nominations close	11 October 2021 at 4pm
Voting papers posted	25 October 2021
Deadline for receipt of voting papers	15 November 2021 at 5pm
Results sent to candidates and placed on the BMA website.	Week commencing 22 November 2021

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 by post or this scanned ballot will also be accepted by Civica as the Independent Scrutineers.

The Single Transferable Vote

The STV is a system which is deemed to ensure that as far as possible every vote has a positive part in helping to elect some candidate, that no voting power is wasted and that no voter has a greater influence on the result than any other. The system gives each elector **ONE** vote, irrespective of the number of vacancies to be filled, and makes that vote transferable. Voting papers are completed by placing the candidates into a preferred order using the figure '1', '2', '3' etc. The figure '1' represents the vote and is mandatory. The rest are contingency markings and optional but important as they can influence the final result. For that reason the elector is recommended to express preferences until he/she is unable to differentiate between any remaining candidates. When votes are counted, the Returning Officer works to a Quota. This is the number of votes a candidate requires to be certain of election and is calculated to a simple arithmetical formula (number of votes cast divided by number of vacancies plus 1). Any candidate elected with more votes than needed (i.e. above the quota) has surplus votes transferred to the remaining candidates – again using a set formula (see below). Votes

of any candidates excluded from the count through insufficient support are also transferred on the same basis. In both cases the contingency markings come into play, thereby avoiding votes being wasted as would be the case in a first-past-the-post election. Votes surplus to the quota are always transferred before bottom candidates are eliminated. Under no circumstances can a later preference count against an earlier preference.

Formula for redistribution

Surplus votes are redistributed as follows. Candidate 'A' requires 25 votes to reach the quota but has received 30 votes. All 30 second votes are noted and the five surplus votes are then redistributed on a % basis and added to the total already received by each candidate.

For example:

Second Votes of Candidate A % of 5

Candidate B 10 1.67

Candidate C 15 2.50

Candidate D 4 0.66

No preference expressed 1 0.16

Should any number '2' votes have already met the quota or been eliminated then '2' is ignored and the '3' and '4' etc. votes come into play.

Extracts from bye-laws 58-60

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.

- (9) There shall be no age restriction on membership of council.

Term of Office and Eligibility for Re-election

59. (1) Voting members of council elected in the initial election shall hold office for four years 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.
- (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 have a vote.

Other information

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

If a serious interruption of postal services occurs after the Returning Officer has fixed the deadline for the return of voting papers, or after voting papers have been dispatched, a new deadline for the return of papers may be arranged and any new deadline will be notified in BMA News and on the website.

If, after the period for voting commences, a candidate dies or withdraws their nomination or is found by the Returning Officer to be ineligible to be elected, that candidate will be withdrawn from the election count and votes for that candidate will be redistributed during the count.

In the event of a tie, the result will be decided by the drawing of lots in the presence of the chief executive 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 Armed Forces seat on council in 2021 will take up office upon election and will stand down following the ARM in 2022.

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

Induction day

The induction day on 17 July 2018 was video recorded and will be available to new members.

An induction pack will also be distributed to members, 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](https://www.bma.org.uk/ukcouncil)**

Elections memorandum of understanding

Members are asked to note the following (agreed at council, March 2017):

The elections memorandum of understanding will apply 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 conflicts of interest to your committee chair / committee secretary as appropriate
- You must uphold the confidentiality of your committee when requested. If in doubt, ask the chair of the committee.
- As a member of the medical profession and as an elected representative, you must behave in a professional manner at all times. Robust debate is sometimes essential in forming policy, but you must always treat patients, colleagues and staff with respect
- In standing for election you agree to uphold these principles.

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.

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

© British Medical Association, 2021

BMA 20210343