



Minutes of Register Advisory Panel

Date Friday 26th September 2025

Meeting Time 2pm – 5pm

Via Zoom

Note on meeting dates:

The December meeting had initially been planned to be face-to, meeting is now being held via Zoom.

Commonly used abbreviations and relevance to RAP oversight

PSA	<u>Professional Standards Authority, oversee accredited registers and publish standards that ACC need to uphold</u>
PCPB	<u>Partnership of Counselling and Psychotherapy Practice</u>
SCoPEd	<u>Scope of Practice and Education. Competence framework that now sits under the PCPB</u>

Attendance

Name		RAP Panel member/ ACC	Present Sept 25
Catherine Clarke	CC	RAP Chair	Y
Dr Alison Evans	AE	RAP Panel Member	Y
Dr Heather Churchill	HC	RAP Panel Member	N

Dr Charlotte Johnson	CJ	RAP Panel Member	Y
Doreen Rowland OBE	DR	RAP Panel Member	Y
Fiona Stevenson	FS	RAP Panel Member	Y
Tim Warren	TW	RAP Panel Member	Y
Sarah James	SJ	RAP Panel Member (new)	Y
Melinda Mozes	MM	RAP Panel Member (new)	Y
Sue Monckton-Rickett	SMR	ACC Chair	Y
Sarah Palmer	SP	ACC Deputy Registrar	N
Kathy Spooner	KS	ACC CEO	Y
Marie Hooper	MH	ACC Head of Prof Standards/Registrar (new)	Y
Kate Pozzo	KP	Board Observer (rotating role)	Y

1. Welcome and Introductions

Catherine Clark, opened the meeting, extending a special welcome to new panel members

- Melinda Moses and Sarah James
- And Marie Hooper, ACC's new Head of Professional Standards and Registrar who joined ACC end of June 2025
- And also, Kate Pozzo, ACC Board member, attending as observer.

Apologies received from HC, SP

Attendees introduced themselves, outlining their professional background and RAP membership history.

2. Opening Prayer

In keeping with RAP practice, the meeting was opened in prayer.

3. Conflict of interests

No conflicts of interest were declared.

4. Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the May 2025 meeting were approved as an accurate record subject to minor typographical corrections to be passed to KS by the Chair.

Matters Arising

- 4.1 Complaints process review: underway (lead: Dr Janet Penny on contract with ACC); includes consultation phase.
- 4.2 Complaints from wording: 'safety' language removed; final text to be confirmed with HC and confirmed at next meeting.
- 4.3 PSA consultation on revised standards outcome: still awaited (indicative timing noted as November, to discuss at next meeting).
- 4.4 Terms of Reference/website updates: updates agreed in terms of makeup of RAP (including removing Catherine as Chair and adding Melinda and Sarah as new members); publication on website outstanding (and listing AE as new Chair).
- 4.5 Risk Register: full review deferred to December agenda; Board to review internal register in Oct/Nov. (See actions under 11)
- 4.6 Deputy Chair role: to be scoped; AE and KS to discuss before December meeting.

	Actions	Name	Date
4.a	Scope Deputy Chair role	AE/KS	Dec 25
4.b	Finalise complaints form wording with HC	KS	Dec mtg
4.c	Update ACC website for RAP membership changes	KS	Dec mtg

	Actions	Name	Date
4.d	Update ACC website with new Terms of Reference	KS	TBC

5 Professional Standards Authority (PSA) & Standards Update.

5.1 PSA issued a statement reinforcing intolerance of hate crime/hate speech while upholding freedom of expression.

5.2 KS has written to PSA to ask for a clear definition of hate speech. Then ACC to communicate expectations to members, reference in Terms & Conditions, and consider the scope of checks on websites and social media platforms.

5.3 Currently, professional profiles are checked; however, staff numbers do not support private social media being proactively monitored (nor do any other membership bodies do this as far as we are aware). Agreement reached that issues will be handled via complaints, i.e. that if concern is raised by third party about a counsellor's statements on social media, ACC will process it as a complaint.

	Actions	Name	Date
5a	Circulate to RAP group what received from PSA about hate crime/hate speech	KS	Dec meeting
5b	Communicate expectations to members about PSA's hate crime/hate speech statement	KS	Nov 25
5c	Update Terms and Conditions with information about PSA's hate crime/hate speech statement	KS	Dec 2025

6 RAP Policies

None

7 ACC Update

7.1 Staffing:

KS provided an update on leavers and joiners, and sick absence due to a bereavement.

7.2 Coaching & Mentoring Membership:

- soft launch targeted for November
- database and ‘Find a Professional’ website page updated
- documentation in progress.

	Actions	Name	Date
7.2a	Soft launch Coaching and Mentoring	KS	November 2025
7.2b	Finalise C&M documentation	KS	November 2025
7.3c	Plan full public launch for C&M	KS	Jan- March 2026

7.3 Articles of Association (AoA):

- Board-approved draft AoA progressed via Charity Commission regulated change pathway before member approval at AGM. Key points for RAP:
 - i. Purposes aligned to Charity Commission model (Education; Advancement of the Christian religion; Health & Saving of Lives)
 - ii. Trustees must be current ACC members
 - iii. Always have counselling as ACC’s key activity
 - iv. Board majority and Chair to be registered counsellors (Chair has casting vote) but Deputy Chair doesn’t have to be a counsellor as they are not automatically made into Chair
 - v. Clarification that professional membership standards are governed by ACC terms and conditions separate from company membership rights
 - vi. Disputes on professional conduct routed via complaints policy

- vii. EGM to be held online on 7 October with proxy voting (confusion between postal vote and proxy vote discussed and clarified) with comms issued to all members 21 days in advance
- PSA have been asked to be kept informed of progress, not asked to see documents
- Updated AoA will go to Charity Commission once members approved, then to Companies House and Scottish Charity Commission for their respective approval processes.
- The Chair shared her appreciation of the amount of work which had gone into the update of the AoA and the document of changes SMR had shared for this meeting.

7.4 PCPB Commission (Commission on Counselling and Psychotherapy paper)

- Commission launches 16 Oct comprising four workstreams including case for statutory regulation which the Chair commented she was delighted to see. UKCP are developing principles for potential regulation.
- ACC supportive but recognise the timeframe is ambitious (aiming by June 2026) but subject to adjustment.

8. ACC Counselling Update

- **SCoPEd accreditation – new routes:**
- Standard accreditation route (SCoPEd) reworked with clear online Jotform application, supervisor form, evidence upload, and competency mapping. Feedback from group was very positive on ease of use and a clear process.
- Assessment updated to Pass/Fail with clearer assessor guidance and reasonable adjustments.
- Other A to B routes will follow shortly for those with level 5+ training and those with level 4 training who have done ACC’s SCoPEd ‘top up’ training where they learn all the 26 competences.
- Use of viva being included in some routes was well received by the team.
 - i. Reviewed the ‘reasonable adjustment statement’ and feedback was supportive with the recognition that these may require individualised responses.

	Actions	Name	Date
8.1	Share Level 4 and Level 5+ finalised forms/notes with RAP members	MH	On Dec agenda

8.2 A→C and B→C accreditation upgrade routes drafted

- i. These recognise prior learning and higher-level training.
 - ii. These routes are to be approved by the Board.
 - iii. Note ACC has not had Senior level accreditation before.
- MM noted that the Churchill Framework (CF) question may be hard for some but want members to read it and reflect on what need to do differently having read it. KS will try and collate CF feedback from last 2 years to share in December’s meeting what people have said they will do differently.
 - Considered ways to further promote engagement with CF including potentially embedding it within Practice Review (MH to check if this is already done) and encourage members to share/discuss CF with supervisors. Members have to say they’ve read it when join and renew.
 - iv. Deadline for all SCoPEd-aligned routes: end Jan 2026.

	Actions	Name	Date
8.2a	Confirm if CF is included within Practice Review process	MH	Dec 25
8.2b	Share details of feedback given on CF over last 2 years in Dec mtg	KS	Dec 25
8.3c	Share level 4 and level 5+ pathways in Dec mtg	MH	Dec 25

8.3 Complaints process and ethics update:

- i. Janet Penny has got all the information and has started reviewing documentation, while also looking at what PSA has published and good practice examples.

8.4 Concerns re training eligibility for registration Feb 2026+:

- i. From 1 Feb 2026, the obligation is that everyone who comes onto ACC’s register maps to SCoPEd columns A, B or C.
- ii. Avoid duplicative/onerous accreditation and preserve provider independence.

- iii. However, in reality will take a further cycle of training to be able to formally guarantee that delegates have attended a SCoPED A + training. However, this mitigated against the fact that the SCoPED framework is formulated from current standards of training and competence.

9. Complaints

- iv. Had 10 so far this year – most we've ever had.
- v. Most have not reached threshold for formal investigation.
- vi. 1 is open, but it isn't a formal complaint and needs to be closed.
- vii. 2 required formal processes: 1 investigator finishing their report and 1 to start the investigation report.
- viii. Themes identified – people not contracting well enough – we want to do a forum and more work on supporting members with contracting. Also, the use of faith and spirituality in the counselling room remains a risk area
- ix. Themes from previous complaints were taken into consideration when Dr Janet Penny reviewed the Complaints policy.

10. Practice Review, Accreditation & Membership Reports

- i. Four reports on these areas of activities were shared with the panel– asked if there were any questions
- ii. ACC on track to complete the target of 30 Practice Reviews this year.
- iii. Admin errors identified in three PR invites (human error, not seen as an ongoing problem)
- iv. Diversity report – age profile reviewed: age categories need to align with planned PCPB reporting categories. Age distribution reflects later entry (second career) into profession and historic 'baby boom' in counselling in mid-90s. Our EDI curves are very similar to other PCPB groups – female, older, white, middle class – emphasised that this is why NHS Pathways project which gives funded training, is so vital to improving diversity.

11. Risks to ACC & register

- i. Full register risk review postponed to December meeting.
- ii. ACC Board to review internal register Oct/Nov

iii. Add risk: potential rise in complaint volumes and resourcing plan.

	Actions	Name	Date
11a	Review risk register in December mtg	MH	Dec 25
11b	Add risk on complaint volume handling to register	SMR	Oct 25
11c	Review internal risk register with Board	SMR	Oct-Nov 25

12. Process Issue Changes (Registration, Audit, Accreditation, Complaints etc)

None

13. Standards & Policy Issues and Changes (CPD, Supervision, Insurance, Practice Break etc)

None

14. RAP Standing Items / Concerns

None

15. Public Engagement

i. ACC response to The Times enquiry regarding pregnancy bereavement support noted as robust and effective by Chair

- ii. Learning point from The Times article: reinforce PCPB members to communicate when they get press enquiries, so partners are aware and also that when responding, partners need to undertake due diligence and not only rely on what is presented to them by journalists.

16. Any Other Business and Next Meetings

Thanks were expressed and formally recorded to CC her service as Chair. DR in particular, shared thanks for an excellent meeting and Catherine Clark's work as Chair – this was also DR'S last meeting on this board – and she will come to the start of the next in person meeting to share lunch and say goodbye.

Dates of next meetings (at least 2 diarised)

- i. Agreed to keep meetings on Friday afternoons in 2026 under new Chair.
- ii. 12th December 2025, 1pm lunch, 2pm meeting in person – 70 Outwood Lane, CR5 3ND (**see note at top of minutes – this is now going to be on Zoom**). Board attendee: Leroy Harvey
- iii. 13th March 2026, Friday 2-5pm on Zoom