



Ways of Working

for the JPAC Board, the Executive Working Group and the Standing Advisory Committees

May 2024

This document describes how JPAC (including the JPAC Board, the Executive Working Group and the Standing Advisory Committees) operates in practice, and accompanies the **JPAC Terms of Reference**.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Dr Stephen Thomas
Professional Director of JPAC

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1. Preliminaries

1.1. Indemnity and member liability

The work carried out by members of the JPAC Board, the Executive Working Group (EWG) and the Standing Advisory Committees (SACs) is considered to be part of their normal professional duties, which are carried out with the approval of their employing authority.

All participants are responsible for keeping their own knowledge up to date, so that advice given is always timely and takes account of scientific and technological developments.

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is the legal and financial entity for JPAC governance. Whilst undertaking activities on behalf of NHSBT, indemnity for members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs is provided by NHS Resolution under its Liabilities to Third Parties Scheme (LTPS).

1.2. Confidentiality

JPAC's work should be as open and transparent as possible. In the course of their duties, members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs may have access to information that is confidential in nature. Papers containing confidential information should be clearly marked as such. Members are expected to respect the confidentiality of such material by not discussing or distributing the material outside of JPAC.

Papers on which JPAC recommendations are based will be made publicly available on the website after approval (as Supporting Papers) unless there is a justifiable reason. Documents containing confidential information, such as papers to be published in a peer-reviewed journal or those with commercially sensitive data, may be legitimately withheld. In some instances, it may be necessary to publish documents on the website prior to peer-reviewed publication, due to an urgent need to make data publicly available. This should be discussed with the Professional Director of JPAC.

Requests for other documentation that are not usually publicly accessible should be made to the JPAC Office and will be released with the authorisation of the Professional Director.

1.3. Data protection

All members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs are required to maintain measures to protect the privacy of all individuals, living or deceased, about whom they hold information. The JPAC Office adheres to the Policy on Confidentiality and Data Protection from NHSBT, as the host organisation of JPAC. This requires compliance with all applicable common law and statutory requirements including, but not limited to:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2021,
- Data Protection Act 2018,
- Access to Health Records Act 1990,
- NHS Confidentiality Code of Practice,
- Reports of the National Data Guardian.

Members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs who are employed by an authority other than NHSBT are expected to comply with their own organisational policies on data protection in the course of their JPAC duties. It is expected that, as a minimum, members' employing organisations will abide by the data protection regulations required in the UK, namely the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR 2021.

1.4. Freedom of Information

Freedom of Information (FOI) requests are handled according to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), supported by NHSBT as the host organisation for JPAC.

The FOIA covers all recorded information held by a public authority:

- Drafts, emails, notes.
- Recordings of telephone conversations and CCTV recordings.
- Letters received from members of the public.
- Datasets (collections of factual, raw data).
- Records, receipts and invoices.

The FOIA does not cover information that is not already in recorded form (i.e. in someone's head).

To be valid, an FOI request must:

- Be in writing, although this could be a letter, an email or via social networking sites.
- Include the requester's real name.
- Include an address for correspondence, by post or email.
- Adequately describe the information requested.

The majority of FOI requests relevant to JPAC's remit are received by the NHSBT FOI Team in the first instance, who will liaise with the JPAC Office in response. If FOI requests are sent directly to the JPAC Office, or any member of the JPAC Board, the EWG or the SACs, the NHSBT FOI team should be contacted for advice at FreedomofInformationRequests@nhsbt.nhs.uk.

According to the FOIA, up to 20 working days may be taken to respond to an FOI request. However, as the time allowed for complying with a request starts when the request is first received by NHSBT, not necessarily when it reaches JPAC, we are obliged to respond to FOI requests promptly. The FOI Team usually request that information is returned from JPAC within the first 10 working days for them to formulate an appropriate response in the remaining 10 days, and allow time for additional queries, drafts and approval.

1.5. Continued Professional Development

All members of the JPAC Board, the EWG or the SACs are expected to participate in continued professional development (CPD) activities as deemed appropriate by their professional bodies. Members are entitled to up to 10 CPD credits annually, depending on their CPD scheme. It is the responsibility of individuals to claim the number of credits they deem appropriate.

1.6. Budget

The UK Services contribute to the JPAC budget *pro rata*, based on relative population sizes in the four nations, as follows (March 2019):

- **84.2%** – NHS Blood and Transplant, England (NHSBT)
- **8.2%** – Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS)
- **4.7%** – Welsh Blood Service (WBS)
- **2.8%** – Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS)

The allocated budget provides for the employment of the members of the JPAC Office, the hosting and maintenance of the JPAC website, and costs incurred for work-related travel and hosting of meetings.

The budget is the responsibility of the Professional Director of JPAC, with the Scientific Publishing Manager as an authorised signatory. If required, an increase in budget is requested from UK Forum by the Professional Director.

1.7. Secretariat support

The JPAC Office provides secretariat support to the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs, and monitors a shared mailbox (JPACOffice@nhsbt.nhs.uk) as a single point of contact.

With the agreement of SAC Chairs, the JPAC Office will set the annual schedule for EWG and JPAC Board meetings (see [4.1.2](#)) and is responsible for making meeting arrangements. Remote (online) meetings are encouraged, and in-person meetings may be held at mutually agreed locations, dependant on attendees' availability, travel provisions and affordability.

The JPAC Office is responsible for preparing the agenda for EWG and JPAC Board meetings and for circulating meeting papers to invitees ahead of each meeting. The JPAC Office will facilitate the preparation of documents arising from SAC meetings for submission to the EWG or the JPAC Board.

Draft minutes for each EWG and JPAC Board meeting will be prepared by the JPAC Office, ensuring there is timely circulation to attendees for review and comment. Minutes will then be submitted to the next appropriate meeting for approval. Approved minutes of JPAC Board meetings are published on the JPAC website.

The JPAC Office maintains a combined action list for the EWG and the JPAC Board which is updated as required. Although individual workplans are maintained by each SAC, the JPAC Office will incorporate the work programmes of each SAC into a central JPAC workplan for distribution to the EWG and the JPAC Board.

Whilst each SAC is usually responsible for the documentation of its own proceedings through its Secretary or other nominated member, the JPAC Office will support SAC Chairs, where possible, including arranging meetings, taking minutes, or by circulating documents and communications to relevant stakeholders on request.

A digital archive of agendas, minutes and other supporting documents arising from meetings of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs is maintained by the JPAC Office. SAC Chairs are asked to ensure that the JPAC Office is included in relevant meeting invitations and email distribution lists to ensure that circulated papers that have not otherwise originated from within the JPAC Office can be archived appropriately.

The JPAC Office will facilitate the publication of approved changes to the JPAC Guidelines (e.g. the Red Book, the Donor Selection Guidelines and the Geographical Disease Risk Index), including the preparation of Change Notifications, communication with relevant Quality Assurance managers across the Services, and the posting of updated documents on the website.

2. Decision-making governance

2.1. Workplans

A central JPAC workplan is maintained by the JPAC Office, incorporating the ongoing projects of each SAC, as well as overarching work programmes by the EWG and the JPAC Board. It is hosted on a NHSBT SharePoint site (<https://nhsbloodandtransplant.sharepoint.com/sites/JPACOffice>) and is accessible by members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs. Changes to the online workplan are tracked for audit purposes.

The workplan provides a means for reporting the progress of individual work programmes to the EWG and the JPAC Board and its standardised format ensures that work is coordinated across the SACs. For each item, the workplan contains:

- A brief description of the work, including its key drivers.
- A record of the meeting at which the work arose.
- Specific tasks that have been identified as required to complete the work.
- The group that holds primary responsibility for the work.
- An assessment of the size of the work and its expected level of impact.
- A consideration of the need to apply the Risk-Based Decision-Making Framework (see **2.2**).
- Target dates for submission of work to relevant meetings.
- Recent updates on work.

Whilst the exact process for documenting the work of individual SACs is left to the discretion of its Chair, the JPAC Office will coordinate with SAC Chairs to ensure relevant updates on the work of each SAC is incorporated into the central workplan for distribution to the EWG and the JPAC Board.

The workplan is regularly reviewed by the EWG and the JPAC Board at their meetings, and through annual SAC reviews held between the Professional Director of JPAC and each SAC Chair, with work programmes closed, revised or added as required.

2.2. Risk-based decision making

The Alliance of Blood Operators (ABO) Risk-Based Decision-Making Framework (RBDMF) is a flexible tool designed to organise and simplify decision-making processes relating to blood safety. The ABO RBDMF aims to optimise the safety of the blood supply while recognising that elimination of all risk is not possible, allocate resources in proportion to the seriousness of the risk and the effectiveness of any interventions, and consider socioeconomic and ethical factors that may affect decisions about risk. It is available at riskframework.allianceofbloodoperators.org.

The ABO RBDMF consists of six stages:

1. **Preparation** – reviewing the methods and types of assessment for risk management that are available, and opportunities for stakeholder engagement and risk communication.
2. **Problem formulation** – clearly defining the problem so that the most appropriate risk management options can be evaluated, and the required expertise and resources can be determined.

3. **Participation strategy** – formulating a plan that involves key stakeholders and any relevant audiences.
4. **Assessment** – gathering information about relevant risks so that their seriousness can be assessed, and determining the risks, benefits, and health economic impact of any proposed interventions.
5. **Evaluation** – comparing the different risk management options based on information gathered from your assessments, stakeholder feedback and the risk tolerability of each option.
6. **Decision** – making a decision based on the chosen risk management option, sharing that decision with relevant stakeholders, and creating a follow-up plan for a post-implementation evaluation.

Whenever a risk/benefit approach is considered, or if an increased risk is subsequently identified to arise from a decision, it is expected that the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs will refer to the ABO RBDMF to inform their decision-making processes.

Consideration of the use of the framework is incorporated into the JPAC workplan whereby each work programme must first be assessed to identify if the ABO RBDMF should be applied. If use of the ABO RBDMF is considered to be necessary for decision-making, each stage of the framework must be clearly documented as part of proceedings.

2.3. Horizon scanning processes

JPAC carries out horizon-scanning in order to identify and assess the impact of future developments that may have a significant impact on its work. These include, but are not limited to, new technologies and therapies, changing clinical practice and emerging risks. Horizon-scanning aims to allow sufficient time, expertise and resources to be allocated to new work programmes in order to respond to emerging issues in a timely and effective manner. It also highlights opportunities for engagement with relevant organisations and other stakeholders.

The EWG holds an annual horizon-scanning meeting, which informs the formulation of the JPAC workplan, and presents its discussions to the JPAC Board.

2.4. Evaluating JPAC's output

JPAC's remit does not extend to the implementation of updated guidance (which is the purview of the individual Services in the UK) but regular stakeholder feedback is sought during decision-making processes to allow the impact of JPAC's output to be considered prior to publication of any changes. To gain additional clarity on guidance implementation, the JPAC Office will also distribute an annual survey to Quality Assurance managers relating to the implementation of changes to JPAC guidance that have been issued in the preceding year. Feedback from this survey, including an understanding of the root cause of any subsequent delays in implementing changes, informs JPAC's future output and working practices.

Summary reports are regularly compiled and submitted to meetings of relevant groups, including (but not limited to) UK Forum and SaBTO. These reports include updates on the work of JPAC, the EWG and the SACs, summaries of relevant meetings and recent publications. Verbal updates, including any additional information or requests for discussion or other actions, are also given as appropriate to specific meetings.

2.5. Conflicts of opinion and dispute resolution

Disputes may arise from differences of scientific opinion, dissatisfaction with governance processes or personal conflict. In all cases, disputes that cannot be resolved in the following ways can be escalated by any committee member to one or more of the Medical Directors on the JPAC Board.

2.5.1. Differences of scientific opinion

In all scientific matters, the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs strive for consensus. Members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner if differences of scientific opinion arise.

Discussions should recognise different views on a subject and, whilst achieving consensus should be the objective, where this is not possible the minutes should reflect accurately both the majority and minority positions, explaining the differences and reasons for them and residual uncertainties. It is not necessary to name those holding majority or minority positions unless the individuals holding those positions so request.

Once a position (or a major or minor position) is established and conveyed via approved minutes of the meeting, attendees are expected to support that decision and recognise their responsibility not to undermine the authority of the committee.

The Chair of each SAC should try to resolve any differences of scientific opinion that arise amongst the members of that SAC. If one or more members of a SAC, including the Chair, remains unsatisfied with the resolution, they may raise this with the Professional Director of JPAC. If there is a difference of opinion with the Professional Director, members may choose to raise this with one of the Medical Directors on the JPAC Board.

2.5.2. Concerns about decision-making processes

The procedures outlined in the **JPAC Terms of Reference** and **JPAC Ways of Working** documents reflect those approved by UK Forum for the appropriate working of JPAC and should be followed wherever possible.

Any member with concerns about a specific decision-making process (regardless of the scientific outcome), such as governance, accountability or correct procedures not being followed, should discuss the matter with the relevant SAC Chair in the first instance with, if necessary, the involvement of the Professional Director.

2.5.3. Personal conflict

Conflicts arising between individuals should be addressed by those individuals at an early stage. If the conflict is not resolved, they should meet with the relevant SAC Chair or other supporting members of the committee to discuss the matter. If no agreement is reached, the Professional Director should be involved, unless the Professional Director is part of the conflict, in which case an external colleague, such as one of the Medical Directors on the JPAC Board, should lead the meeting.

2.6. 'Offline' discussions

Decision making should be conducted in an established setting (i.e. regularly scheduled or 'extraordinary' minuted meetings) in order to ensure the correct governance for discussion and approval is maintained. 'Offline' discussions (i.e. by email or informal conversation) may not allow the same level of preparation or consideration as those held in an established setting and so, wherever possible, should be avoided for decision-making purposes.

Discussion by email may be considered necessary if there is a significant time constraint that cannot be adequately addressed by convening a formal 'extraordinary' meeting. However, it is important to ensure that there is a clear justification for decision making outside of the established process. It is also important to ensure that all relevant parties are included in any email distribution.

Where 'offline' discussions have resulted in a decision being made or an approval being given, a summary of those discussions should be included at the next appropriate meeting to ensure an audit trail of the decision-making process is formally captured in the meeting minutes.

3. Approval of changes

3.1. Change Requests

Once discussed and agreed by a SAC, change requests are presented in the form of a discussion paper which includes the suggested changes (i.e. to the Red Book, or to one or more of the DSGs) as well as justification and any additional documentation needed to support its approval. The Change Request format is also used to submit new and revised Risk Assessments, Position Statements and any other JPAC-produced documents that require approval.

Ultimately, the JPAC Board is responsible for the final approval of Change Requests, although this responsibility can be delegated (with approved Change Requests submitted to the JPAC Board for noting) where appropriate.

3.2. Delegated Approval System

The Delegated Approval System (DAS) was introduced in 2023, following approval by the JPAC Board. It allows responsibility for decision-making and the approval of Change Requests to be delegated to different levels of the JPAC structure below the JPAC Board. The DAS speeds up the process of making minor changes and issuing updated documents whilst ensuring that significant changes to guidance are still discussed and approved appropriately.

The DAS has three levels within JPAC (Levels 1 to 3) with a further level of approval sought from UK Forum (Level 4) if required.

3.2.1. Director's Approval (Level 1)

The Professional Director of JPAC can approve minor changes to guidelines that do not require discussion by the EWG or the JPAC Board, such as:

- Updated disease outbreak dates in existing GDRI entries.
- The addition of new infectious disease risks in existing GDRI entries.
- The addition of new geographic areas of disease risk in existing GDRI entries.
- Updated maps within the DSGs or GDRI.
- Clarifications to the wording of an entry that do not constitute changes in practice.

If a Change Request cannot be approved using Director's Approval, it is submitted to the EWG.

3.2.2. Approval by EWG (Level 2)

The EWG can approve changes that do not require discussion by the JPAC Board, such as:

- Minor updates to the Red Book or entries within the DSGs.
- New entries within the GDRI.
- Revisions to existing Position Statements that do not introduce significantly different recommendations.

- Risk Assessments that do not reflect a significant change to identified risk.

If a Change Request requires further discussion and cannot be approved by the EWG, it is submitted to the JPAC Board.

3.2.3. Approval by JPAC Board (Level 3)

All changes to guidelines that reflect a significant change in risk, necessitate significant changes to practice, or have been identified as having potential operational or reputational implications for the Services if implemented, are discussed by the JPAC Board. In addition, Change Requests that have not received majority approval by the EWG can be submitted to the JPAC Board for further discussion.

3.2.4. Approval by UK Forum (Level 4)

As an organisation, JPAC reports to UK Forum via the Professional Director. If a Change Request cannot be approved by the JPAC Board because a majority position cannot be reached, or if it is decided that further discussion at a higher level is necessary before a decision can be made, items may be submitted to UK Forum for its consideration.

Additionally, any decisions that would significantly change JPAC's scope (i.e. revisions to its remit or Terms of Reference) or established structure (i.e. formation or disbanding of SACs), or any requests for additional funding or resources, will be presented to UK Forum for approval.

UK Forum holds four meetings per year.

3.3. Approval outcomes

3.3.1. Changes approved

When a Change Request is approved with no further amendments required, the JPAC Office will work in collaboration with the relevant SAC Chair to facilitate publication (see [5](#)).

3.3.2. Changes approved pending minor amendments

Approval of a Change Request may be dependent on minor revisions being made to the proposed text for clarity or readability. Provided these amendments do not significantly alter the original intention of the approved Change Request, approval for publication is considered implicit upon completion of the revision. The JPAC Office will work in collaboration with the relevant SAC Chair to make amendments and publication will proceed once the revised text has been reviewed and approved by the Chair. Unless specifically requested by meeting attendees, the Chair-approved revised text does not need to be recirculated prior to publication.

3.3.3. Changes not approved

If Change Requests are not approved by the EWG, or if having been initially approved by the EWG they are subsequently rejected by the JPAC Board, they can be taken back to the relevant SAC for further discussion and amendment.

On occasion, a Change Request might receive an agreement in principle from the EWG or the JPAC Board but is considered to require further revisions before it can be formally approved.

Revised Change Requests should be resubmitted at the next appropriate opportunity. There is no limit on the number of times a Change Request can be resubmitted for approval by the EWG or the JPAC Board.

4. Documentation of proceedings

4.1. Meetings

4.1.1. Preparation

If required, the JPAC Office can support Chairs with the hosting of online and in-person meetings.

Please note, in-person meetings require sufficient notice for arrangements to be made (e.g. a suitable date to be agreed, a venue to be secured, finance approval to be obtained).

Adequate time should be given for consideration of the agenda and any circulated papers by attendees ahead of all JPAC Board, EWG and SAC meetings.

For EWG and JPAC Board meetings, the JPAC Office will send out a call for papers at least two weeks before each meeting, with meeting papers and a finalised agenda sent out at least one week before each meeting.

4.1.2. Schedule

Wherever possible, meetings should be held within an agreed regular schedule, but extraordinary meetings may be held when there are unavoidable time constraints that may adversely impact donor or recipient care. Extraordinary meetings should be documented in the same detailed manner as routine meetings to ensure there is a clear audit trail showing how decisions were made.

The JPAC Office sets the annual schedule for EWG and JPAC Board meetings, coordinating with SAC Chairs to ensure there is sufficient space in the schedule for SAC meetings to be held.

There are usually six EWG meetings per year and three JPAC Board meetings per year.

The timetable for SAC meetings (including frequency and duration) is left to the discretion of the Chair but they are asked to consider allowing sufficient time between meetings to allow papers arising from SAC meetings to be prepared for submission to the next EWG or JPAC Board meeting.

4.1.3. Attendance

Attendance at the EWG and JPAC Board meetings is considered to be mandatory for SAC Chairs. If a SAC Chair is unable to attend, a Deputy Chair or other temporarily nominated SAC member should attend to represent the SAC at the meeting. The absence of a SAC Chair at an EWG or JPAC Board meeting, or where responsibility for decision making has been delegated to another attendee, should be clearly documented in the proceedings of the meeting. A SAC Chair who is a concurrent member of other SACs may be asked to represent an absent Chair but again, clear governance of any decisions should be reflected in the meeting minutes.

Whilst there is no stated quorum required for meetings (as decisions can be made by majority agreement if not unanimity), Chairs should consider whether those attending provide sufficient

representation for robust decision-making. If a substantial number of invitees are unable to attend, or it is considered that an appropriate decision cannot be made by those in attendance, the meeting should be rescheduled as soon as is practicable.

4.2. Agenda and papers

Meeting agendas should include:

- Details of the meeting (title, location, date and time).
- A list of attendees (including any apologies received prior to circulation).
- Items for discussion (indicating which attendee is presenting each item).

Each meeting paper should be prefaced by a summary coversheet which states:

- The title and current version of the document (by version number or date of revision).
- The document's author(s).
- The meeting for which the document has been prepared and the date of submission.
- A brief summary of the document, including any supporting information.
- The action required (e.g. review, discussion, approval). If no action is required, it should be stated that the document is provided for information only and only requires noting by attendees.
- A summary of any submissions/approvals to date.

Standard templates for agendas and document coversheets are available from the JPAC Office.

The JPAC Office will prepare and circulate papers submitted from SAC meetings for EWG and JPAC Board meetings and can provide support to Chairs for preparation and circulation of papers for SAC meetings if required.

A digital archive of past meeting papers is maintained by the JPAC Office.

4.3. Minutes

4.3.1. Content

Proceedings of meetings should be documented in sufficient detail, including reference to relevant supporting papers, through the production of meeting minutes. Meetings are not recorded, nor is audio-to-text transcription used during video conferencing, to encourage candid discussion.

Meeting minutes should clearly reflect all discussions and agreed outcomes to ensure an accurate record of any decision-making processes and will generally be written in an unattributable form. They should also be written in terms that make it easy for a non-expert to understand the process by which a decision has been reached.

Open and frank discussion should be encouraged, and differences of interpretation and opinion should be impartially and unattributably recorded in meeting minutes. It is recognised that advice includes expert judgement in addition to objective or factual information, and wherever possible the degree of certainty and the rationale for judgements should also be recorded.

Where decisions are particularly significant, SACs may decide to seek views on preliminary drafts of its advice from relevant organisations, other parts of the scientific community or, in appropriate cases, a representative sample of patient groups, members of the public or other stakeholders. Whatever mechanism is used for agreeing the advice a SAC offers, it is essential that the minutes of the meeting clearly set out the results of the discussions.

4.3.2. Format

Meeting minutes should include the version number and (once finalised) the date of approval.

The responsibility for any actions arising from a meeting should be clearly documented to allow the combined EWG/JPAC action list and central JPAC workplan to be updated.

Where discussions are aimed at settling the text of a document to be published, and the discussion continues over several meetings, a versioned draft document should be appended to the minutes (and submitted to the JPAC Office for archiving) to ensure a full record of deliberations on the text.

A standard template for meeting minutes is available from the JPAC Office.

4.3.3. Circulation and approval

Minutes should be completed within two weeks of a meeting and circulated to attendees for review. They should be submitted for approval at the next appropriate meeting and finalised as soon as possible thereafter. Where meetings are infrequent, Chairs should ensure that minutes are reviewed and approved within three months of the meeting.

The JPAC Office will produce and circulate minutes for JPAC and EWG meetings. SAC Chairs, or their designated Deputy or Secretary, are responsible for producing minutes for SAC meetings, and ensuring that these are circulated to SAC members for review.

Where relevant amendments have been made to draft minutes, but which do not reflect the proceedings of the meeting itself (e.g. subsequent clarifications or additional information), these should be clearly indicated within the document as post-meeting notes.

4.4. Actions arising

Actions arising from EWG and JPAC Board meetings are recorded on a combined action list, hosted on a NHSBT SharePoint site (nhsbloodandtransplant.sharepoint.com/sites/JPACOffice), which is updated by the JPAC Office as required.

The document contains two lists ('Open actions' and 'Closed actions') and for each action recorded, the following is included:

- A brief description of the action.
- A record of the meeting at which the action arose (date and relevant agenda item number).
- The individual or group that holds primary responsibility for the action.
- The most recent update on the action (including date updated).
- The status of the action (open or closed).

The combined action list is circulated as part of the meeting papers for each EWG and JPAC Board meeting and open actions are reviewed. Actions that have been closed since the last meeting are marked with the 'Closed' status but remain on the 'Open actions' list for the purposes of highlighting recently closed actions to attendees. These items are subsequently moved to the 'Closed actions' list following the meeting to provide a full record of previous actions.

SAC Chairs are responsible for maintaining appropriate documentation of actions arising from their respective SAC meetings, and for ensuring that open actions are closed appropriately.

5. Publication

5.1. Documentation of proceedings

Although JPAC operates on principles of openness and transparency and its professional advice (i.e. the Red Book and DSGs) is publicly accessible, the documentation of all proceedings is not wholly available for reasons of potential operational and commercial sensitivity.

The **JPAC Terms of Reference** and details of the current composition of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs are available on the JPAC website for public access. JPAC Board meeting minutes are also published in PDF format once approved.

All documentation is archived centrally by the JPAC Office and can be released subject to appropriate FOI requests (see **1.4**) or with the authorisation of the Professional Director of JPAC.

5.2. Changes to JPAC Guidelines

5.2.1. Change Notifications

Change Notifications (CNs) are used to notify end-users of upcoming approved changes to the Red Book or the DSGs. A single CN may include one change or multiple related changes (e.g. changes to multiple entries within a DSG, changes to entries across multiple DSGs, concurrent changes to a Red Book chapter and a related DSG entry).

CNs follow a standard format and include:

- CN number (using sequential numbering in the format **CN ##-YYYY**).
- CN title.
- Planned date of publication (go-live).
- Chapter or DSG entry to which the changes will apply.
- Details of the intended changes.

CNs uses markup formatting to indicate changes to text:

Unchanged (current)	Standard black text
New text	«Blue text within guillemets»
Deleted text	Red Italicised text with strikethrough

CNs are prepared by the JPAC Office based on approved Change Requests and are finalised with the authorisation of the Chair of the relevant SAC responsible for the change.

CNs are co-signed by the Professional Director of JPAC and the SAC Chair.

5.2.2. Website changes

Each guideline as it appears on the JPAC website is considered to be the currently published (live) version. Once a CN has been finalised, the planned changes are incorporated into a preview version of the website using its Content Management System (CMS).

The preview website is currently available at <https://test.aws-lon-jpac.targetservers.uk/>

Both require password-protected access and are administered by the JPAC Office.

The website also hosts static versions of the live guidelines, available for offline (i.e. non-networked) use, known as Source Files. The Source Files include PDF versions of each complete DSG and the GDRI, and a combined offline browser version (formatted html pages) of the WB-DSG and GDRI.

Each time approved changes are made to the guidelines, the updated preview version of the website is used to generate new versions of the Source Files. The JPAC Office is responsible for ensuring that any changes to the live guidelines are equally applied to the Source Files but is not responsible for a failure to update locally stored versions accordingly. Guideline users can issue printed controlled copies of the Source Files but control of such copies is the responsibility of each Service.

5.2.3. Notice period (pre-publication)

Ahead of the planned publication date, CNs are circulated to relevant stakeholders including Quality Assurance managers in the four UK Services, members of the EWG and JPAC Board and other interested parties. Pre-publication should allow sufficient time for Services to perform gap analysis, and make changes to procedures, staff training or materials that might be required for implementation.

The JPAC Office maintains an email distribution list for the circulation of CNs.

Pre-publication is discussed and agreed between the relevant SAC Chair and the JPAC Office, taking into consideration the scope and urgency of the planned changes. The notice period will vary as required but is generally:

- 1 to 2 weeks for urgent or minor changes.
- 4 weeks for most changes.
- 6-12 weeks for significant changes.

At pre-publication, any updated Source Files are made available on the website and are maintained alongside the existing (current) Source Files for the duration of the notice period.

5.2.4. Publication (go-live)

On the planned publication date the changes previously made to the preview website are published on the live website by the JPAC Office, and so the updated guidelines become publicly accessible.

At this point, any new Source File that was made available on the website is considered to be the current version, and any previous versions are removed and archived.

The JPAC Office circulates the CN again using the same distribution list used for pre-publication, confirming that the planned changes are now live. Following publication of the CN, the implementation of those changes is the responsibility of each individual Service.

5.3. Document Library

The Document Library is a repository for documents relevant to the Services and is available through the JPAC website. Some of the documents are issued by JPAC, whilst others are published at the request of relevant third parties.

5.3.1. Documents issued by JPAC

Position Statements, General Documents and Supporting Papers do not require a CN to be issued or a pre-publication notice period to be observed before publication on the website. These documents are reviewed regularly as part of each relevant SAC's individual workplans and updated versions are submitted for approval and publication as required.

Once approved for publication, a document is prepared by the JPAC Office based on its approved draft version, in collaboration with its author(s). The final version, with authorisation from its author(s) or relevant SAC Chair, can then be published on the website immediately.

Standard templates for Position Statements and other documents are available from JPAC Office.

5.3.2. Documents not issued by JPAC

Some documents are not issued by JPAC but are published on the website on behalf of its stakeholders (e.g. individual Services, external scientific or clinical groups) because they are otherwise relevant to the Blood Transfusion and Tissue Transplantation Services in the UK.

These documents are published as received and so JPAC does not take responsibility for their content. Whilst the JPAC Office makes every effort to ensure the latest versions are available, it cannot guarantee those documents are reviewed regularly or that updated versions have been submitted for publication.

5.4. Non-notifiable changes

If the need for a minor correction to the JPAC website or a published document is identified, (e.g. correction of typographic errors, revised formatting for clarity), these will be made by the JPAC Office. No amendments will be made without approval from the Professional Director of JPAC, the EWG or the JPAC Board where such changes might result in a significant change in interpreted meaning or necessitate a change to an approved practice.

The correction of a minor error does not require website users to be notified. Similarly, updates to website content that do not constitute JPAC's professional advice to the Services (e.g. updated membership lists or other information) are considered to be non-notifiable and will be applied as required.

6. Recruitment and appraisal

6.1. Appointment

6.1.1. Professional Director of JPAC

Terms of appointment

The position of Professional Director of JPAC is funded through the JPAC budget and is 0.6 WTE.

The Professional Director reports to the Medical Director of NHSBT and is accountable to the UK Forum. Their appointment will be reviewed every five years.

To avoid any conflict of interest, Medical Directors, Chief Executives or other individuals who hold national functional lead roles for implementation within their respective Service are not eligible for appointment as Professional Director.

Appointment procedure

A vacancy will be advertised through the Medical Directors of the four UK Services, and if deemed appropriate by the UK Forum, by external advertisement.

Application will be by submission of Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter, outlining the reason for application and key attributes which make the candidate suitable.

Appointment will be made by the Medical Director of NHSBT, in conjunction with the UK Forum, and will include an interview process determined by the UK Forum.

6.1.2. Deputy Director of JPAC

Terms of appointment

The position of Deputy Director of JPAC is non-remunerated.

There is no maximum period for serving as Deputy Director although the appointment should be regularly reviewed by the Professional Director of JPAC.

Appointment procedure

A vacancy will be advertised through the Medical Directors, with expressions of interest sought from potential candidates within JPAC and the four UK Services.

Application will be by submission of Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter, outlining the reason for application and key attributes which make the candidate suitable.

Appointment will be made by the Professional Director of JPAC, in conjunction with members of the UK Forum, and will include an interview process.

6.1.3. JPAC Office

Terms of appointment

The positions of Scientific Lead on Safety Policy (1 WTE), Scientific Publishing Manager (1 WTE) and JPAC Administrator (0.53 WTE) are substantive posts within NHSBT, funded through the JPAC budget.

Appointment procedure

The positions of Scientific Lead on Safety Policy, Scientific Publishing Manager and JPAC Administrator are appointed according to NHSBT's Recruitment and Induction policy.

6.1.4. SAC Chairs

Terms of appointment

The position of SAC Chair is a non-remunerated post.

SAC Chairs are accountable to the Professional Director of JPAC, and their appointment will be reviewed every three years.

To avoid any conflict of interest, Medical Directors, Chief Executives or other individuals who hold national functional lead roles for implementation within their respective Service are not eligible for appointment as the Chair of a SAC relevant to their main functional area of responsibility. However, such individuals may serve as SAC members.

Appointment procedure

A vacancy will be advertised through the Medical Directors, with expressions of interest sought from potential candidates within JPAC and the four UK Services.

Application will be by submission of Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter, outlining the reason for application and key attributes which make the candidate suitable.

Appointment will be made by the Professional Director of JPAC, in conjunction with members of the UK Forum, and will include an interview process.

During the appointment process efforts should be made to ensure continuity of the work of a SAC. This may include the appointment of an interim Chair following the notification of the incumbent Chair's intention to step down before a formal replacement can be appointed.

6.1.5. Members of JPAC, the EWG and the SACs

Terms of appointment

Membership of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs is non-remunerated.

There is no maximum period for serving as a member although each membership should be regularly reviewed by the relevant Chair.

Appointment procedure

As representatives of their respective committees, SAC Chairs are automatically considered to be members of the JPAC Board and the EWG and are appointed according to the procedure in **6.1.4**.

The appointment of additional members of the JPAC Board or the EWG is made at the discretion of Professional Director of JPAC, in conjunction with members of the UK Forum.

Members of SACs will be appointed by the relevant SAC Chair, in consultation with the Professional Director.

6.1.6. Clinical Transfusion Medicine Specialist

Terms of appointment

The position of Clinical Transfusion Medicine (CTM) Specialist is a non-remunerated post.

The CTM Specialist is accountable to the Professional Director of JPAC, and their appointment will be reviewed every three years.

Appointment procedure

A vacancy will be advertised through the UK Blood Service Medical Directors, with expressions of interest sought from potential candidates employed by one of the UKBS.

Application will be by submission of CV and a covering letter, outlining the reason for application and key attributes which make the candidate suitable.

The appointment is made at the discretion of Professional Director, in conjunction with members of the UK Forum.

6.1.7. Observers and lay representatives

Terms of appointment

Observers and lay representatives are non-remunerated.

There is no maximum period for serving as an observer or lay representative although the appointment should be regularly reviewed by the Professional Director of JPAC or relevant Chair.

Appointment procedure

The appointment of a permanent lay representative to the JPAC Board is made at the discretion of the Professional Director of JPAC. Expressions of interest may be sought from (but not limited to) blood, tissue or stem cell donors or recipients, or advocates from relevant voluntary support organisations representing disease-specific patient groups or minority ethnic groups in the UK.

There are no permanent lay representatives appointed to the EWG or the SACs.

Observers and non-permanent lay representatives can be invited to attend meetings at the discretion of the relevant Chair.

6.2. Induction of new members

6.2.1. Induction pack

Newly appointed members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs will receive an induction pack from the JPAC Office prior to the commencement of any work, which includes:

- JPAC Terms of Reference
- JPAC Ways of Working (this document)
- Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CoPSAC) 2021¹
- Universal Ethical Code for Scientists 2007²
- The Seven Principles of Public Life 1995³
- Data Protection Act 2018⁴
- Freedom of Information Act 2000⁵ and Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002⁶

New members are required to read, as a minimum, the **JPAC Terms of Reference**, **JPAC Ways of Working** and the CoPSAC guidance. They should discuss the content of the induction pack with the JPAC Office or relevant Chair if there are any concerns and/or clarification required.

The induction pack will also include instructions on how to access the JPAC Office SharePoint site, useful templates, details of JPAC's stakeholders and other relevant information. The induction pack is regularly reviewed and updated as required. The JPAC Office can also provide access to relevant NHSBT Policies and additional historic documents related to individual SACs or specific meetings (e.g. agendas, minutes, supporting papers) on request.

¹ [Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees and Councils: CoPSAC 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/Code_of_Practice_for_Scientific_Advisory_Committees_and_Councils_CoPSAC_2021.pdf)

² [Universal ethical code for scientists - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/Universal_ethical_code_for_scientists.pdf)

³ [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/The_Seven_Principles_of_Public_Life.pdf)

⁴ [Data Protection Act 2018 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/section/1)

⁵ [Freedom of Information Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/1)

⁶ [Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/36/section/1)

6.2.2. Induction meeting

Newly appointed members of the JPAC Board, the EWG and the SACs will be offered an induction meeting prior to the commencement of any work.

The induction meeting serves to introduce new members to the organisation, to discuss their new role, and to facilitate the handover of any ongoing work from outgoing members, and covers:

- Overall scope of JPAC and its associated SACs.
- Remit of the relevant committee.
- Processes by which the committee's agenda is set and its decisions are made.
- The committee's current and future work.
- Roles and responsibilities of members.
- Terms of appointment.
- Time commitment required for membership, including meeting attendance and preparation.
- Confidentiality of proceedings and papers.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Dispute resolution.
- Remuneration and reimbursement of expenses.

New SAC Chairs and other members of the EWG and the JPAC Board will meet with the Professional Director of JPAC and members of the JPAC Office. New SAC members will usually meet with their respective Chair, with the Professional Director or members of the JPAC Office attending on request.

6.3. Appraisal and review

6.3.1. General to all members

All members are expected to undertake an annual appraisal process with their employing authority. Within JPAC, the Professional Director will appraise SAC Chairs, and SAC Chairs their members, covering the scope of their work within JPAC and providing them with written feedback to contribute to this process.

6.3.2. SAC reviews

A review of each SAC is carried out annually through a meeting of the relevant SAC Chair and the Professional Director. The annual SAC reviews form part of the formal reporting process to UK Forum by the Professional Director and allows the central JPAC workplan to be collated.

Each SAC review will include an analysis of its current workplan and discussion of new items that are expected to be added in the coming year. The current membership of the SAC is also reviewed, with feedback from the Chair on members' attendance and performance, allowing an opportunity for succession planning for Chairs and members.

SAC reviews are arranged by the JPAC Office, in collaboration with SAC Chairs, and are formally documented by the production of a SAC Review Summary.

6.3.3. SAC members

Scheduled appraisal of individual SAC members is not required by JPAC and is left to the discretion of SAC Chairs. However, it is expected that Chairs will regularly review the membership of their SAC and provide feedback to members on their input to proceedings.

If a formal appraisal meeting is requested, arrangements can be facilitated by the JPAC Office.

6.4. Succession planning

6.4.1. Notification of intention to step down

In addition to reaching the end of a time-limited term of appointment, members of the JPAC Board, the EWG or the SACs may choose to resign their membership at any time.

It is expected that members will give sufficient notice of any intention to step down by notifying the Professional Director of JPAC or the relevant Chair verbally or in writing. The intention to step down should be raised at the earliest opportunity to allow a succession plan to be discussed.

6.4.2. Handover of responsibilities

For SAC Chairs, an intention to step down will require a replacement Chair to be appointed and for the coordinated handover of responsibilities to be considered. Once the usual appointment process (see 6.1.4) has been concluded, a meeting between the outgoing and incoming Chairs will be arranged by the JPAC Office. A suitable handover period should be agreed to ensure any disruption to the SAC's work programmes is minimised.

For SAC members, Chairs will need to identify where the departure of a member might result in a lack of expertise within the SAC and identify a suitable replacement to ensure the established remit of the SAC can be maintained. If a sustained lack of expertise is likely to have a significant impact on a SAC's workplan, it should be discussed with the Professional Director as soon as possible.

For other outgoing members of the JPAC Board or the EWG, the Professional Director will be responsible for ensuring that adequate expertise or stakeholder representation is maintained.

6.4.3. Interim membership

Where a SAC Chair has notified the Professional Director of their intention to step down, but a suitable replacement cannot be formally appointed before they do so, an interim Chair may be appointed on a temporary or fixed-term basis.

There is no formal appointment process for an interim Chair and their engagement is at the discretion of the Professional Director, in discussion with the UK Forum. Interim chairship should be restricted to a period that is as short as is practicable.

Standard JPAC governance requirements apply for the duration of any interim period and the status of an interim Chair should be clearly reflected in the record of any decision-making processes.

Similarly, any other member of the EWG or the JPAC Board that is serving in an interim capacity should be clearly identified in the documentation of proceedings and a suitable permanent replacement be sought at the earliest opportunity.