

**British Dietetic Association (BDA) Country Board
Constitution**

Comprising:

**England Board, Scotland Board, Wales Board (Bwrdd
Cymru) and Northern Ireland Board**

July 2019



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AIMS (Terms of Reference)

In accordance with the BDA Articles of Association and the By-Laws the overall aim of the country boards is:-

to lead the profession in each respective country by:

1. Representing the profession, the BDA and BDA policy in that country.
2. Promoting the BDA to dietitians, other professional groups, Government, etc.
3. Being the expert voice of the BDA, the dietetic profession and nutrition and dietetics in the country
4. Leading the BDA and the profession and influencing relevant public policy or national strategies on health and social care
5. Engaging with external stakeholders and cross-border organisations, lobbying parliament / assembly / government where appropriate, responding to relevant public consultations.
6. Identifying areas of policy or care pathways where dietitians can make a difference and actively influencing decision makers and promoting the role of the dietitian and the dietetic profession
7. Assisting (with interpretation relevant to each Country) in the implementation of UK-wide BDA strategies and other key policies, such as the Chair's theme.
8. To communicate effectively with BDA members in each respective Country

In order to achieve the above all four BDA Country Boards will:

- A. Effectively liaise with key stakeholders in the country
- B. Ensure that there is BDA representation on, at and in key stakeholder committees, events and meetings
- C. Promote the dietetic profession to stakeholders within the country
- D. Develop and deliver a work plan each year for the following year that states the 3 main objectives for work by each respective Country Board. The work plan must be in line with the BDA Strategic Plan and other four country BDA activities
- E. Report on achievements and outcomes from the workplan
- F. Keep abreast of changes that have an actual or potential impact on the profession and its workforce in that country e.g..
 - a. The national, political environment and parliamentary/assembly activity
 - b. Government policy and legislation
 - c. The way in which health and social care are provided
 - d. NHS Strategic direction and key policy drivers
 - e. Developments in dietetic practice
 - f. The requirements for dietitians and dietetic support workers
 - g. The provision of higher education and developments in the ways in which it is possible to qualify as a dietitian
 - h. The provision of medical nutrition products
 - i. Developments in food and drink policy, its provision and its manufacture
 - j. Activity in the media including social media
 - k. Interactions with external stakeholders
 - l. Food, nutrition and dietetic policy activities of the other three UK nations

Updates and amends to the Terms of Reference shall be considered on a four country basis and approved at a Board of Directors meeting.

Members:

Each Board will comprise of the following Core Members:

- A Chair
- A Deputy Chair (who shall be appointed from amongst the other members)
- A BDA Director
- A BDA Trade Union Representative who is a member of the Employment Relations Committee for the Country, and

Other members as appropriate from the list below:

- At least one Allied Healthcare Professional Federation representative (or equivalent) where appropriate
- Other members:
 - Further members with a specific portfolio or with specific expertise/experience as agreed by each Country Board against its skills mix or ability to deliver its workplan, and/or
 - Representatives of categories of membership (e.g. students or support workers), Branches or managers groups within that country.

The total number of Members for each Country Board shall be no less than six and no more than ten.

Co-opted Members

In addition to Core Members or other defined member roles, each Country Board may co-opt non-voting members who will be identified according to the current work priorities of that Country Board. The remit and purpose of a Co-opted Member shall be agreed by the Membership prior to co-option. Co-opted Members can play a full part in a Country Board's proceedings, but shall not be able to vote. There shall be no more than 2 Co-opted Members on a Country Board. They shall be appointed for one year and may be re-appointed for an additional year, after which they shall stand down from the Board.

Co-opted members will be appointed by simple majority of a Country Board's Membership, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

The BDA Director

A Director from the BDA Board of Directors (BoD) will be allocated a seat on each Country Board. This Director will act as a conduit through whom information about what the Country Board is doing (its activities and any concerns) will be represented at BDA Board and also information about relevant decisions, taken at the BoD, is reported back to the Country Board.

The Chair and the Director will work closely together to ensure that BDA strategy and work is consistent across all four nations yet allows flexibility of each nation.



Terms of office:

The term of office for the Board Chair shall be three years and they may apply to be reappointed for a maximum of a further three years.

The terms of office for a Member shall be for two years. Appointments will be 'staggered' to ensure that not all posts are changed at the same time.

The limit to the number of the terms of office that a Member or may serve shall be three consecutive terms of office.

Appointing the Chair:

Details about being a Country Board Chair can be found on the BDA website along with a job description and Person Specification for the role.

For an informal discussion about the role potential candidates can contact either the Chair (chair@bda.uk.com) or the Chief Executive.

Application is via a CV and a covering letter (no more than 2 sides of A4 each), explaining how and why the potential Chair believes they meet the criteria and what they would add to the role of Country Board Chair.

Candidates' CVs are reviewed and a shortlist of candidates are interviewed by the BDA Selection Committee. The successful candidate is selected based on their ability to meet the requirements on the Job Description and Person specification and their performance at interview.

Training and support for the role will be provided. An honorarium/fee for their role as Country Board Chair may be available.

Becoming a member of the Country Board:

The Trade Union Representative, will be appointed by the Country's BDA Employment Relations Committee.

The Deputy Chair and all other Members will have their appointment approved by the BDA Board of Directors, following selection by a Country Board. The process for selection should be as follows:

1. The Country Board identifies that a vacancy exists and outlines the skills/experience (if applicable) required.
2. The vacancy is promoted to BDA members through official channels (website, email newsletters, Dietetics Today, BDA social media etc) for not less than 4 weeks. A closing date should also be identified.
3. Applicants should be asked to submit a brief CV and supporting paragraph to the Country Board as to why they should be appointed.
4. The Country Board will then consider all applications and make recommendation(s) to the BDA Board of Directors

5. Successful applicants are notified of the approval by the BDA Board of Directors by the Country Board Chair.

Equal opportunities:

The BDA in all four countries abides by the principle that there be no discrimination based on the protected characteristics when selecting any BDA member for any of the roles on the Country Boards. All Board members will abide by the BDA's codes of conduct, guidelines and policy positions. Any breaches of these or behaviour which may bring the reputation of the BDA, the country board or others, into disrepute, may be referred to the BDA's Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee.

Country Board Policy Function

Each Country will have a BDA office support which shall support the Board to:-

- engage with key stakeholders on behalf of the Country Board either on their own or alongside selected Board members or expert members from the general BDA membership in the country
- provide a conduit for the two-way flow of relevant information between the Board of Directors, BDA office staff and the Country Board i.e. keeping the BDA office staff up to date with Country Board activities and concerns as well as keeping the Country Board up to date about relevant news, activity and policy information from the BDA office.
- liaise with BDA Office staff to secure support from the experts in the office for any relevant Country Board activity
- provide secretariat for the Country Board i.e. take minutes of meetings, organise the agenda of meetings (along with the support of the Country Board Chair) and make practical arrangements for the meetings

The amount any Policy Officer time allocated to the Country Board shall be determined by the BDA Office and BDA Board of Directors.

Procedures

Country Board Work Plans:

Each year in July the Country Boards should begin to develop their work plan for the year ahead. This is then submitted to the BDA Board of Directors for approval in September along with any budgetary request to support the work of the Board.

An Annual Report of the Country Board's work is written by the Chair and submitted to the BDA Board of Directors in time for subsequent presentation at the annual general meeting of the BDA.

All minutes from any Country Board meetings are submitted to BDA Board of Directors for information at their next meeting.

Chairing a meeting:

The Chair will chair each meeting. In her/his absence, the Deputy Chair will chair the meeting. In the event that both are absent from a meeting, the Members present will nominate a chair for that meeting.

Number of Meetings

A Country Board shall meet at least 3 times per year, with at least one meeting in person (face to face). All Boards shall make effective use of virtual meeting services such as video or telephone conferencing.

Quorum

The presence of at least 50% of voting members is required to establish a quorum. One of these Members should be the Chair or Deputy Chair or where both have given apologies, by the nominated chair as outlined above.

Organisation of the meetings:

- Date of meetings are agreed at the previous meetings.
- The BDA office will send out a meeting date reminder prior to the next meeting requesting apologies in order to make catering arrangements.
- The agenda must be drafted two weeks before the scheduled meeting. The Policy Officer (where available) will liaise with Country the Board Chair to agree agenda content.
- The BDA office will then send out to Board members a week ahead of the meeting and facilitate the meeting.
- Minutes of meetings will normally be taken by Policy Officer or another BDA staff member.

The person taking minutes will send the draft minutes to the Country Board Chair for agreement and then forward to Business Support for formatting/DRAFT watermark added etc. before sending out to the Board members.

- Minutes will not be finalised 'as a true record' until they are agreed at the next Board meeting at which point the DRAFT can be removed.
- The BDA office will add the approved minutes to the Country Board website page.
- Significant Board activities to be summarised and posted on the specific Country Board webpage on the BDA website by the BDA office.
- All records, minutes, papers, etc. will be saved in the Country Board folder on the BDA system.

Expenses for attending meetings

Expenses for Board members are covered by the BDA. Expenses forms can be accessed from the BDA website. Board members should complete these as soon as possible after a Board meeting. Completed expense forms should be sent to the BDA office, usually c/o the Policy Officer. The relevant finance code should be assigned and forms passed on to BDA Business Support to process. All Board members will comply with the relevant policies and guidelines for submitting claims e.g. to submit claims before the end of the financial year.

Identifying key priorities/action/agenda items for the board

Boards should focus their work and meetings on achieving the agreed workplan. This may involve the convening of task and finish groups or work that needs to be done between Board meetings by Board members or the Policy Officer.

Other pieces of work may come up which are not on the work plan.

These might come from:

- Items raised at BDA Board of Directors
- The Chair
- Board Members
- BDA Strategic Plan
- NHS Strategic Direction/Key Policy Drivers
- Parliamentary activity
- Horizon Scanning which highlights a number of advancing issues
- Meetings attended and/or approaches seeking Board involvement

When deciding whether pieces of work are a priority or whether there is a role for the Board the following points should be considered:

- The Boards should work at a strategic level
- Promotion of the BDA, its members and the profession is the primary focus of all Country Boards
- A defined piece of work could be delegated to a 'Task and Finish' group overseen by the board
- What are the current big issues for the profession, how relevant is the subject /issue to the profession?
- What contribution/influence/impact can the Board have?
- What capacity is there to get involved?
- What is the risk if the Board is not involved?

Board Budgets

The Country Boards have budgets for the running of Board meetings. However, there is money available for specific programmes of work/activity and requests for an allocation to the budget can be made as part of the budget cycle when budgets are being set. Funds will not normally be given outside of the budget setting process.

Boards may write a business case for larger amounts of money. The business case paperwork is available via the BDA office. The detailed bid is then submitted to the BDA Finance and Risk Committee for review/approval.

The Budget year runs from the beginning of March to the end of Feb-.

A BDA Head of Department is responsible for the management of the Board budget

Budget setting for the next year begins in August/September time. The Policy Officer will ask the Country Board to detail planned activity requiring to be accounted for and included in the

next year's budget. If the activity requires more than £1000 a business case is required to be written by the Chair and the Policy Officer which should be submitted in September / October.

BDA Website Web pages

Each Country Board has a web page. This is an important source of information for members and as such a valuable place to put information about the Boards. The up keep of the Country Board web page is the responsibility of the BDA office. The pages will contain:

- An up-to-date list of the members of the Country Board
- The latest minutes of the Country Board meetings
- Updates of the Country Board activities
- Relevant information for BDA members in that Country

Changes to the Constitution

Any changes to the Constitution must be approved by the BDA Board of Directors.

Version - September 2019

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