



The ROYAL
COLLEGE *of*
SURGEONS *of*
EDINBURGH

OPERATING AS ONE

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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SC005317
Royal Charter Number
RC000466
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Senior Leadership Team
Chief Executive: Mr M Egan Director of Exams, Education & Faculties: Mr I Forster–Smith Director of Resources: Ms P Tovey Director of Membership, Marketing & Communications: Ms J Cutting Director of Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagement: Ms M Naud–Betteridge Managing Director of Surgeons Quarter: Mr S Mitchell Director of Heritage and Estates: Ms C St Clair Inglis
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From here, health

Translated from the College motto, hinc sanitas



Our Vision:

To be the most welcoming, inclusive and innovative royal medical college in the world.

Our Mission:

To be a strong voice for our family of members, developing their careers, upholding standards, and ensuring patient safety across the world.

Our Charitable Purposes:

- The advancement of education
- The advancement of health
- The advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science

Our Values:



Inclusivity



Professionalism



Innovation



Respect



Integrity

“In a rapidly evolving healthcare environment and wider world, the need for a unified commitment to professionalism and ethical conduct becomes ever more crucial.”

Professor Rowan Parks

Welcome

In 2024, we warmly welcomed a record number of new members to our family.

Total membership now stands at over 33,000, spanning over 110 countries around the world.

This geographical diversity provides us with enormous insight into the evolution of our profession, new surgical innovations, and key areas where we as a College can establish best practice.

Our global reach allows us to learn from our members and fellows, to devise activities tailored to their professional needs, regardless of location. In 2024, we delivered 315 educational courses, seminars, and webinars, attracting 15,750 delegates. Our skills centre hosted 52 educational courses, and I was delighted we were again able to organise Surgical and Dental Skills competitions for medical students in the UK, Egypt, and Malaysia.

Over 100 surgical and dental examination diets were completed across 34 locations worldwide. We delivered seven Fellowship-level examinations with partner organisations in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia, through the Joint Specialty Fellowships (JSF) Examinations. We're delighted to report that the 100 successful candidates have progressed into independent practice.

Closer to home, our Development team launched several new grants in 2024 and disbursed around £700,000 of research funds including £500,000 awarded in previous years. We are grateful for the continued support of our commercial partners and individual donors in supporting these initiatives to happen.

After marking its fifth anniversary, our International Postgraduate Deanery helped place 97 international medical graduates into otherwise unfilled NHS training posts, developing skills and expertise that our international surgeons can apply in their home settings.

Our SupportED package of support will be further developed in 2025. Important components carried out in 2024 included:



- The work of the IPD
 - Three invited reviews conducted
 - The launch of a campaign against workplace misogyny
 - The development of a RCSEd mentoring scheme
- The significant changes to healthcare policy announced by the new UK government will require us to do more to demonstrate the value and worth of our activity going forward, to ensure the College has the visibility and influence it deserves.
- Finally, both our Heritage and Commercial arms go from strength to strength. For the second consecutive year, Surgeons' Hall Museums welcomed over 110,000 visitors, with more than 3,000 people participating in events. Surgeons Quarter achieved a record-breaking revenue total of £12.7million, enabling them to contribute almost £3 million to RCSEd. This represents an increase of almost 20% on the previous year.
- I would like to formally thank our volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the College. None of our work would be possible without your support, and we recognise and appreciate the many competing demands on our members' and fellows' time.
- As we strive to encourage more members to get involved and enhance our work even further, we hope the range of activities contained in this report will encourage and entice you to get involved.

Professor Rowan Parks
President of The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

CEO Message

This annual report reflects a strong year of growth and achievement for the College.



The facts and figures speak for themselves. Our membership is buoyant and now exceeds 33,000, with growth in the UK and internationally. Our examination diets and educational activities continue to thrive, underpinning our mission to uphold patient safety and champion the highest professional standards in surgery and dental surgery.

We have engaged with our Members at a variety of events in the UK and elsewhere. Our diploma ceremonies remain the jewel in our crown, celebrating the dedication and hard work of the clinicians who undertake our exams. This year, we held a ceremony in Egypt for the first time, a truly impressive occasion in the new Grand Egyptian Museum.

Our financial position is strengthening, driven by increased income and effective cost control. Our trading subsidiary, Surgeons Quarter Ltd, has contributed to this with another record-breaking year of revenue and profitability. We are building effective partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, particularly our work with the David Nott Foundation on hostile environment surgical training.

We are also proud to hold one of the world's most significant surgical collections and archives, with our museum continuing to attract over 110,000 visitors a year. Our offices in Birmingham and Malaysia moved to new premises during the year, enabling us to enhance how we support our Members in the UK and Southeast Asia. Our new website launched in 2024, and we are now transforming our digital systems.

We have a new EDI strategy and continue to make progress in embedding our wellness strategy.

Our long-running programme to modernise our governance took further steps towards completion during the year. In November, revised College Laws were approved at our Annual General Meeting and are now being considered by the Privy Council. A trustee board was established in shadow form, with four lay Members joining the College Office Bearers and two other Council Members as 'shadow' trustees. I expect the governance changes to come into effect formally during 2025.

In securing these achievements, and planning for more to come, we work as a team: from the President and Office Bearers, College Council, the Dental Council, the many hundreds of clinicians who take on volunteer roles within the College, to my Senior Leadership Team, and the staff of the College and Surgeons Quarter. I am grateful to everyone for their superb contribution in 2024.

Mark Egan
CEO of The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Structure & Governance

Trustees

The governing body of the College is the Council. It is made up of 23 members, as follows:

Fifteen Council Members
Members are elected by the full Fellowship and Membership of the College. They hold office for a five-year period and are eligible for a further five-year term of office.

Office-Bearers
There are three principal Office-Bearers of the College: The President and two Vice-Presidents. They are elected by Council and must be/have been elected Members of Council. They hold office for a three-year period. The other office-bearers are the Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer of the College, who must both be Fellows of the College. They are appointed by Council for an initial three-year period and are eligible for re-appointment for a further one-year term.

Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery
This role is a past or present Member of the College's Dental Council, elected by the Dental Council for a three-year period.

Representative Members of Council

There are two further members of Council who are not considered trustees for the purposes of charity law:

A Trainees' Member of Council
A Trainee is chosen from and elected by the surgical trainees of the College.

A Staff Associate Specialist (SAS)
A Member of Council, elected from and by SAS members of the College.

Two Representative Members of Council

Incoming Members of Council are provided with a programme of induction. This includes details of their duties and other relevant information, such as:

- The Laws of the College
- Information about the duties and obligations of Charity Trustees
- Minutes of previous Council meetings
- The latest annual report and financial statements
- The strategic risk register

All Trustees must complete a register of interest form, which is held centrally and reviewed annually as a minimum. They are also subject to a 'Fit and Proper Persons' test, as required by HMRC for individuals involved in the management of charitable organisations. Members of Council receive at least one yearly update on matters of governance, which includes their duties and responsibilities as Trustees.

Remuneration of College Trustees

During the year, the President received remuneration for his role and work for the College. This remuneration was permitted under the terms of a written agreement of Council, and no other Trustees are remunerated. Council members are reimbursed for directly incurred travel and subsistence expenses.

Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team

The College employs a Chief Executive, who attends Council and Dental Council meetings and is responsible to Council through the President, for the day-to-day management of the College.

In 2024, the Chief Executive was supported by a Senior Leadership Team, each of whom brought relevant experience in their field of expertise as listed below:

- Examinations, Education and Faculties
- Resources (Finance, HR, Digital Services and Strategic Change)
- Membership, Marketing and Communications
- Heritage and Estates
- Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

In addition, the Managing Director of the College's commercial subsidiary, Surgeons Quarter, is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Surgical Specialty Boards

There are 11 Surgical Specialty Boards (SSBs), which ensure that the College stays informed of current interests and issues across the surgical profession. They also provide a voice within the College for the membership's specialist professional interests.

The Surgical Specialty Boards are:

- Cardiothoracic Surgery SSB
- General Surgery SSB
- Neurosurgery SSB
- Ophthalmology SSB
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery SSB
- Otolaryngology Surgery SSB
- Paediatric Surgery SSB
- Plastic Surgery SSB
- Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery SSB
- Urology SSB
- Vascular Surgery SSB

The activities of these Boards are coordinated by a committee made up of the Chairperson of each SSB and chaired by a member of Council.

Intercollegiate Activity

Where appropriate, the College works to fulfil its purpose through collaboration with other sector partners:

The Royal College of Surgeons of England

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Some activities relating to examinations are coordinated through intercollegiate committees, made up of membership from the four surgical Colleges of the UK and Ireland.

The College collaborates towards patient safety with other medical Royal Colleges through the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and the Scottish Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. The College works with a wide range of other partners and stakeholders in the delivery of its activities, including charitable ones.

Decision-Making Processes & Delegation

Strategic Decisions

Council agreed on its Strategic Plan for 2022–2027 and an operational plan for 2024–2025.

All strategic-level decisions are made by majority agreement at Council. More detailed work and monitoring are carried out by the sub-committees of Council, which can include external experts advising Council. In addition, Council uses professional advice where appropriate, to ensure due diligence in decision-making. Matters requiring significant discussion are handled initially through regular Council Development Sessions. Actions are then agreed upon at formal Council meetings or dedicated Council strategy days.

Key Management Personnel Remuneration

A Remuneration, People, and Workforce Culture Committee, chaired by an independent Chairperson, is responsible for considering the remuneration of the Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

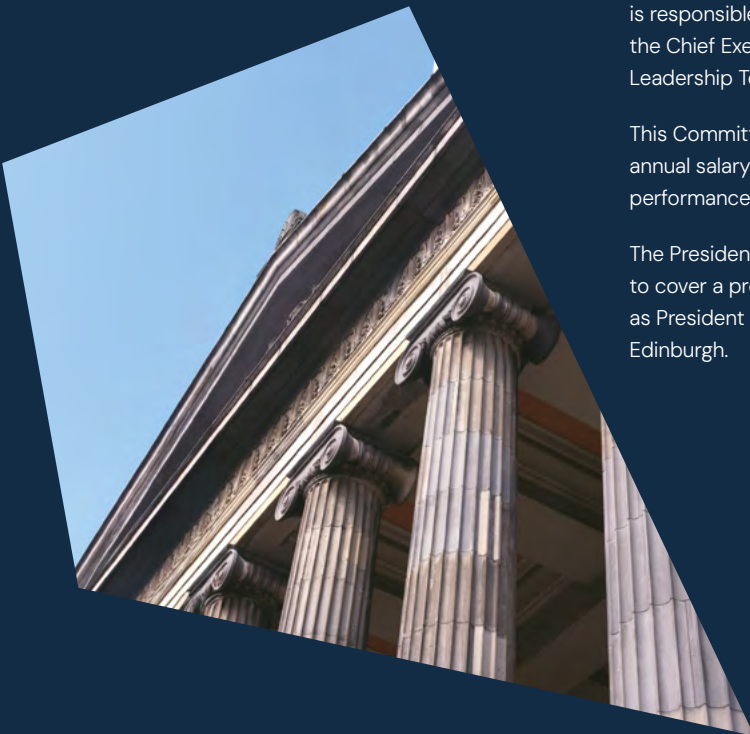
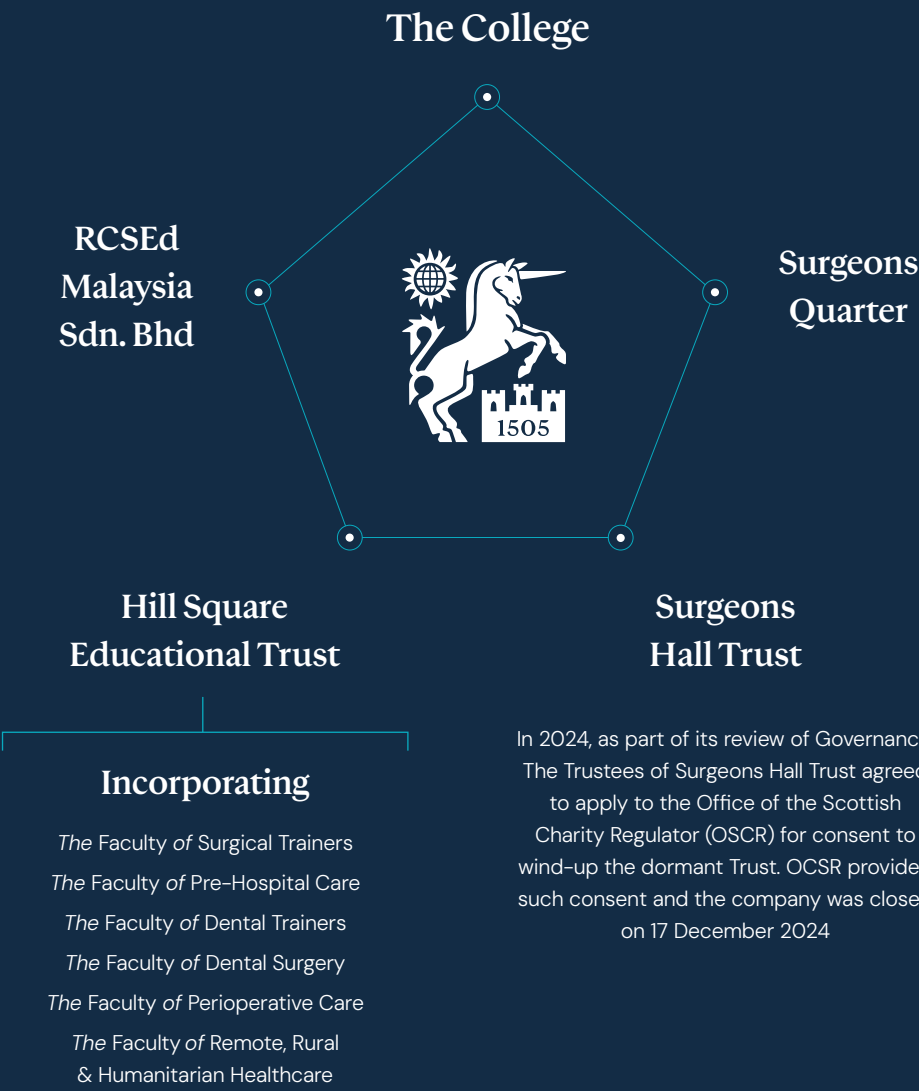
This Committee is also responsible for approving any annual salary uplift for College staff and any College performance-related bonus.

The President's remuneration was agreed by Council to cover a proportion of his salary during his tenure as President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.

In 2024, as part of its review of Governance, the Trustees of HSET agreed to apply to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) for consent to wind-up HSET and transfer its assets to the RCSEd. OSCR provided such consent in June 2024 and the RCSEd and the HSET Trustees are working together to conclude this process, which is expected to complete in the 2025/26 financial year. The activities of HSET remain unaffected by this change, which is driven by the need to avoid the duplication of effort and provide administrative and operational efficiencies for the RCSEd and HSET and is supported by our professional advisors.

The Group Structure

The group is made up of a number of limited companies:



The College



Education & Examinations

Throughout 2024, the College continued to enhance its courses, webinars, and accreditation offerings with several new and impactful initiatives.

We successfully launched the new Mentoring Scheme, aimed at fostering professional growth and support within the College community. The introduction of the Foundations in Leadership course provided a valuable resource for developing essential leadership skills among our Members.

RCSEd Accreditation is a quality mark awarded by the College to external courses, programmes and conferences that meet the high standards in surgical and healthcare education. It provides independent validation of their educational design, delivery, and relevance to professional practice. Open to a wide range of providers, the process involves expert review and typically grants accreditation for three years. Successful accreditation activities gain the right to use the RCSEd Accreditation logo, signalling credibility and educational excellence.

Our accreditation activities saw the innovative addition of Portfolio Accreditation, offering institutions the opportunity to gain recognition for a suite of educational programmes. This complements our current rigorous accreditation processes, reflecting our commitment to quality assurance. We also established new Pathways to Accreditation, streamlining processes and broadening access to high-quality educational standards.

These developments have contributed to a vibrant and diverse education programme, underpinned by rigorous quality assurance and consistently high participant feedback.

The table below shows a comparison of the number of educational events delivered by the Department in 2024 to the previous year:

	2024		2023	
	Courses/Seminars	Delegates	Courses/Seminars	Delegates
UK	166	2,949	162	2,836
International	53	1,573	57	1,561
Webinars	96	11,226	92	7,710
Total	315	15,748	311	12,107

Examinations & Quality Assurance

In 2024, our Examinations team continued to demonstrate excellence and agility in delivering a wide array of examinations in the UK and internationally. A particular highlight was the expansion of examination delivery in Egypt, now including both dental and surgical assessments. We also reached a significant milestone by delivering our first dental examination in Orthodontics in Hong Kong.

The demand for our surgical examinations, particularly the MRCS, saw continual growth (33% growth since 2023), highlighting our international reputation for excellence in surgical assessment. This growth reflects our ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards of examination integrity and candidate support through rigorous psychometric analysis, examiner training, and quality assurance processes.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on building upon this momentum to ensure our education and examination activities continue to meet the evolving needs of healthcare professionals worldwide.

The College’s examination results all undergo strict psychometric analysis, a key step in ensuring the integrity and equity of our examinations.

Our dedicated team works together meticulously to ensure the highest standards are delivered across the examination process. Best practice is strictly followed throughout, from the crucial standard-setting phase to the checking of final results.

In addition to their pivotal role in psychometric analysis, the College’s psychometricians, question bank and research team collaborate closely with our educationalists on examination design. They also play a crucial role in:

Providing and facilitating examiner training question writing sessions

Standard setting sessions

Ensuring the continuous enhancement of examination quality and reliability

Candidate application numbers:

	Dental	Surgical
Candidates applied	1,598	7,061
UK	709	1,896
Overseas	889	5,156
Different exam types	17	17
Diets delivered	47	55
UK	29	22
Overseas	18	33
Locations	11	23
UK	4	8
Overseas	7	15



Skills Centre

Our Skills Centre showcased excellence in the delivery of 52 dynamic lab-based (or supported) Education courses.

Other highlights included:

Five inspiring on-site examinations

In-person support of a further three off-site examinations (one Senior Technician per exam)

An immersive examiner’s anatomy training session

Hosting 12 external Surgeons Quarter events

Our Skills Centre team additionally lent their expertise to support the prestigious Dental Skills and Surgical Skills Competition finals.

Edinburgh Surgery Online (ESO)

This area of the College’s work is delivered in partnership with Edinburgh University, which manages and delivers online Master’s Programmes in Surgery.

These activities include:

MSc in Surgical Sciences

ChM in General Surgery

ChM in Trauma & Orthopaedics

ChM in Urology

ChM in Vascular & Endovascular

MSc in Primary Care Ophthalmology

ChM in Clinical Ophthalmology

MSc in Patient Safety and Clinical Human Factors

Since 2007, 3,246 students from 109 countries have registered for the programmes.

Joint Specialty Fellowship (JSF) Examinations

The College delivers and quality assures Fellowship-level examinations with partner organisations in Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. Successful candidates can then progress into independent practice.

In 2024, nine examinations were delivered in seven surgical specialties, reaching a total of 100 candidates.

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE)

The JCIE oversees the supervision of the standards, policies, regulations, and professional conduct of the Intercollegiate Specialty Board Examination. As an integral part of the Surgical Royal Colleges, it is the JCIE’s job to ensure an accurate and professional system is in place to assess and report on whether a candidate has the required standard of core knowledge and the necessary practical abilities in the diagnosis and planning of care.

In 2024, JCIE delivered 22 Section One examinations and 23 Section Two examinations, reaching a total of 2850 candidates. In September, an additional Trauma & Orthopedic Surgery Section Two examination was conducted to mitigate the waitlist.

	Section	
	One	Two
Cardiothoracic Surgery	77	47
General Surgery	442	370
Neurosurgery	62	45
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery	30	20
Otolaryngology	122	108
Paediatric Surgery	37	32
Plastic Surgery	99	99
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	399	402
Urology	156	150
Vascular Surgery	91	62
Total	1,515	1,335

Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examinations (JSCFE)

The College partners with the other three Surgical Royal Colleges to deliver an intercollegiate fellowship exam, designed for international candidates to take overseas.

In 2024, JSCFE delivered 12 Section One examinations and five Section Two examinations, reaching a total of 363 candidates.

	Section	
	One	Two
Cardiothoracic Surgery	10	0
General Surgery	57	19
Neurosurgery	27	52
Otolaryngology	11	8
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	55	53
Urology	35	36
Total	195	168

Volunteers

RCSEd is an independent membership organisation dedicated to the global education, training and advancement of surgeons, dentists, and healthcare individuals.

Since 1505, we have achieved great things thanks to the invaluable support and expertise of our global community of volunteers. Their knowledge, skills, and commitment provide a critical contribution to our work.

The variety of volunteering options available includes:

Serving as a Council Member

Serving as an examiner

Joining our global network of surgical and dental ambassadors

Contributing to the work of committees

Serving on the Surgical Specialty Boards

Our members regularly give their time to support working groups, campaigns, and projects.

We are grateful to our volunteers for their commitment to the College, to the professions they represent, and to improving patient care.



Everything we do at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh depends on our volunteers – surgeons, dental surgeons, and other clinicians who give up their time to support their professions. From setting high professional standards in surgery and dental surgery, educating the next generation of medics, creating and administering crucial professional exams, and advocating for their professions, to the vital governance work which maintains the College, volunteers are the heart of what we do. Thank you!



Membership

With a rise in total membership to approximately 33,000 Members in 2024, spanning across over 110 countries across the world, we can truly call our membership global.

In 2024, we welcomed more Members and Fellows than ever before. Our new Career Creator and Fellows First subscription packages proved popular in supporting the transition to membership.

We expanded our membership engagement activities to include a first-ever diploma ceremony in Egypt, celebrating with 110 new Members and Fellows and their families at the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

Over 1,300 diplomates from over 100 countries were celebrated as they walked across stages in Edinburgh, Cairo, Kuala Lumpur, and Hong Kong.

Several special awards were presented throughout the year across surgical and dental specialties, along with numerous medals.

A total of 1,543 guests visited the College for diploma ceremonies, joined by almost 500 children.

Category Breakdown:

Surgical Fellows	12,326
Surgical Members	7,375
Surgical Affiliates	4,161
Dental Fellows	1,525
Dental Members	5,221
Dental Affiliates	556
Other Faculty Memberships	1,856



Marketing & Communications

Highlights in 2024 included an update to our brand look and feel, and the launch of the new RCSEd website.







Our Marketing and Communications Team connects with Members and prospective Members around the world. The Team promotes the College’s achievements and services and provides valuable content to support the careers of our Members.

We continuously explore new ways to innovate and engage to help grow our membership.

We also continued to share news and updates through our established marketing channels below:

Our new brand look gives our team a toolkit to produce better, more consistently designed content.

We were delighted to launch our new College website in November. Our key priorities were to improve the design and usability of the site. The launch of the new website was well received and achieved a significant milestone in our commitment to improve services for members.

- Public relations
- Social media channels
- Our popular Weekly News Digest
- Mobile app
- Email campaigns and reports
- Surgeons’ News

Events

- The College sponsored and presented at several conferences and events, where we had the opportunity to meet world experts and learn about pioneering techniques:
- The Association of Surgeons in Training Annual Conference, **Bournemouth**
- The British Society of Prosthodontics Annual Conference, **Cardiff**
- International Congress Innovation in Global Surgery Annual Conference, **Cape Town**
- The Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland Annual Congress, **Belfast**
- Combined Services Orthopaedic Society Conference, **London**
- The Association of Surgeons in Training Robotics Conference, **Edinburgh**
- UKCCIIS Conference, **Edinburgh**
- UKCCIIS IOC Research Centre Conference Injury and Illness Prevention in Sport, **Edinburgh**
- Association of Perioperative Practice Annual National Conference, **Warwick**
- Core Surgical Trainees Conference, **Birmingham**
- College of Surgeons Academy of Medicine of Malaysia, **Kuala Lumpur**
- Urgent Care Conference, **Milton Keynes**
- British Society of Paediatric Dentistry, **Cardiff**
- British Orthopaedic Association Annual Congress, **Birmingham**
- Future Surgery, **London**
- British Association of Black Surgeons Annual Conference, **London**
- British Orthopaedic Association Trainee Association Annual Congress, **Manchester**
- Global Anaesthesia, Surgery and Obstetric Collaboration Conference, **Manchester**
- Foundation Trainees Societies Conference, **Edinburgh**
- The Edinburgh School of Surgery Undergraduate Student Research Symposium, **Edinburgh**

President’s Forums

In 2024, President’s Forums took place in:

Cardiff

Manchester

Birmingham

Newcastle

London

Oxford

The Forums are open to Members and non-Members of all grades. The programme for each event has varied. Relevant topics are typically presented either by local surgeons or on themes that the College has an interest in. Feedback has been extremely positive, with attendees showcasing how the College works for them and how they can get involved. The contemporary issues and challenges affecting healthcare are also explored.

The Grand Final of the **2023/24 RCSEd and Medtronic Surgical Skills Competition** took place in March at the College. A total of 40 medical students from universities across the UK took part in a series of ten surgical skill challenges over a two-hour period, including suturing, laparoscopy, and combat tourniquet application. Tom Adamson (Newcastle University) secured first place, with Eric Dos Santos (Liverpool University) and Natalia Mojica (Birmingham University) finishing in second and third place, respectively.

The Grand Final of the **RCSEd Dental Clinical Skills Competition** was successfully held on Thursday, 21st March. Now in its ninth year, the competition brought together 16 finalists, each competing in a range of dental challenges to secure a top-three position. The College also successfully delivered two **RCSEd International Dental Clinical Skills Competitions** in **Kuala Lumpur** and **Cairo**.

Campaigns & Media

To recognise the invaluable contributions of our global community of volunteers, the department developed and launched a dedicated social media campaign to highlight their efforts as part of Volunteers Week 2024. The campaign showcased the contributions of various volunteer groups, including:

Examiners

Regional Surgical Advisers (RSAs)

International Surgical Advisers (ISAs)

Council Members

Committee Members

The initiative aimed to enhance volunteer appreciation, encourage continued engagement, and highlight opportunities for further involvement with the College.

Emma Stapleton, Consultant Otolaryngologist, took over the role of Editor of **Surgeons’ News**, starting with the September edition. Emma brings a fresh vision for the magazine, strengthening connections with members and volunteers by encouraging article submissions and expanding digital content.

In September, the College launched a seven-day campaign to mark **World Patient Safety Day**, aligning with the 2024 theme, "Improving Diagnosis for Patient Safety." Key campaign outcomes included:

A total combined reach of **37,994** across social media channels

7,643 individuals engaged with the digital mailer which summarised the event

261 visits to the dedicated World Patient Safety Day website pages during the campaign

The College remains committed to raising awareness of patient safety and will continue its efforts to engage with the medical community on this critical topic.

International

In 2024, the College continued to support its international membership.

With well over 40% of College Fellows and Members based outside the UK, it is more important than ever to continue our engagement and acknowledge the true diversity of our membership.

The largest concentrations of non-UK members are found in:

Hong Kong

Singapore

Malaysia

India

Pakistan

Egypt

Each of these countries was the subject of particular focus for our College teams.

Hong Kong & Singapore

In Hong Kong and Singapore, the long-standing partnerships with our local sister Colleges continued to flourish, through our participation in the MHKICBSC examination in Hong Kong, and the collective running of the Joint Specialty Fellowship examinations in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia. In Hong Kong, these examinations allow successful candidates to gain a joint fellowship of their local college and RCSEd, culminating in a joint ceremony held in November. Our ongoing schedule of training programme accreditation ensures that exam candidates have achieved the necessary standards for their qualification.



Malaysia

2024 was an exciting and pivotal year for our international office and international team in Kuala Lumpur. Just over five years since opening our first office in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), we expanded our team by welcoming a second colleague and moving to new premises in Putrajaya, the administrative capital of Putrajaya. This marks an important step in the development of our international presence in the SEA region and in the College's history.

Our support for dental members, who form the majority of our membership in Malaysia, continued to grow. We ran our second and successful International Dental Skills Competition at the International Medical University in August and introduced the Dental Non-Technical Skills in SEA region dentists. Additionally, we continued to conduct examinations in various dental specialties.

The activities supporting the surgical fraternity remained strong throughout the year. We organised a series of international webinars and continued expanding the NOTSS course across Indonesia and other parts of SEA region, in collaboration with the College of Surgeons Malaysia.

The significance of Malaysia as a preferred centre was evident with the third Kuala Lumpur diploma ceremony drawing a congregation of diplomats from around the region. The Tuanku Muhriz Travelling Fellowship entered its fourth year, offering UK specialists the opportunity to gain valuable experience in rural surgery in Malaysia. New agreements with the Malaysian Association of Paediatric Dentistry and the Malaysian Students' Surgical Society were also signed, expanding the partnership.

In 2024, we also launched the Malaysia-UK Travelling Fellowship initiative. This pilot programme offers the successful trainee from a partnership university a grant to undertake an observership in the UK. If successful, we plan to expand this program in 2025.

We look forward to another productive year in Kuala Lumpur and are excited about the continued growth and development of our international presence in the region.

India & Pakistan

India and Pakistan saw a considerable development in the number of exam diets held in each country. These were supported by dedicated events to meet candidates and the wider membership, helping us to make sure we hear and understand their concerns and needs. We held a networking event for our Members in Pakistan and 3 surgical and 2 dental events in India.

Egypt

In Egypt, our fruitful partnership with the MoHESR culminated in the signing of a formal Memorandum of Agreement in September. This agreement cements the College's position as a key partner for the Ministry and an advisor on matters of training and curriculum. We were delighted to welcome His Excellency, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research to the signings.

Funded by the British Council Egypt, our ongoing programme will conclude in 2025. It will leave a legacy of being instrumental in shaping the training of medical trainees in years to come. Our first-ever diploma ceremony in Cairo, our largest ceremony ever, was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the amazing achievements of our new young new Members and welcome them to the College.

We continue to work tirelessly to ensure our Members are supported wherever they are. A growing programme of engagement in the Middle East aims to ensure the qualifications of our Members are recognised, allowing them to practice in the region.

As we look towards 2025, we will continue our programme of activities to engage our Members and develop strong partnerships in key countries. We will also ensure that the College expands on its mission to support surgical and dental training and addresses inequalities of access to surgical care around the world. Our new initiative, RCSEd Global CARE, will be launched in the first quarter of 2025.

International Postgraduate Deanery (IPD)

The International Postgraduate Deanery (IPD) is part of the College's new SupportEd initiative.

Its goals are:

- To enhance the skills of individual international doctors
- To elevate global surgical practice
- To boost the international training reputation of NHS Trusts/Health Boards

The aim of IPD is to enable IMGs to refine their skills under NHS educational supervisors for 12-24 months, before they return to their home countries to implement their training.

After marking its 5th anniversary, the IPD training program can boast addressing over 2,000 enquiries and the sponsorship of 450 surgeons for their GMC registrations and/or MTI Temporary Worker visa applications. In 2024, the IPD added 97 doctors to its programme.



Heritage

At the heart of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh lies a commitment to preserving, interpreting, and sharing its remarkable heritage.

Through its world-renowned Surgeons’ Hall Museums, historic Library and Archive collections, and innovative public engagement, the College safeguards centuries of surgical history and medical advancement. These collections not only chronicle the evolution of surgery and healthcare but also serve as an active and growing resource for our members and fellows as well as researchers, educators, and the wider public. In 2024, the College continued to invest in its heritage through acquisitions, conservation, digital innovation, and inclusive programming, ensuring that its legacy remains dynamic, accessible, and relevant for future generations.

For the second consecutive year, Surgeons’ Hall Museums welcomed over 110,000 visitors. The heritage events, learning, and engagement programme offered a diverse range of activities, including workshops, school visits, walking tours, online/hybrid lectures, and Museum Lates. In total, more than 3,000 people participated in the events programme, and over 6,000 attended for learning visits, including schools, colleges, universities, and community groups.

Expanding its digital reach, Surgeons’ Hall Museums launched on Bloomberg Connects, a free digital guide which allows on-site visitors and remote audiences worldwide to explore the Museum’s content. The app features the Museum’s permanent galleries, temporary exhibitions, and highlight content, all available in over 40 languages for greater accessibility and engagement. Since its launch in July 2024, the guide has welcomed over 4,000 active users, accessing it in 30 languages.

Throughout the year, the Library and Archive team handled over 4,500 information inquiries from:

- Our membership
- Academics
- Genealogists
- Fiction authors and playwrights
- The media
- The wider public

The demand for clinical request services continues to grow, and the Library continuously expands its knowledge resources, including an ever-growing collection of online journals. The Archive managed a wide range of historical inquiries on diverse topics, from the more routine relating to the history of our membership, to the more unusual, such as the history of sinus anatomy and the embalming of the Great Lafayette’s dog.

The collections were further developed in 2024 with a range of acquisitions including:

A rare copy of 'Elements of practical midwifery; or companion to the lying-in room' by Charles Waller (1829), accessioned to the Library special collections.

Additionally, the Library completed accessioning a 40-book collection from The British Association of Paediatric Surgeons, including several items owned by Sir Denis Browne (1892 – 1967), widely regarded as the father of paediatric surgery in the UK. Several of the texts are signed by Sir Denis and by the books' authors.

The Archive acquired a ward casebook from the Eye Pavilion at the Royal Infirmary (1930s) and the large WW2 archive collection of Dr Jack Ennis, Head of Pathology Services in the Prisoner of War hospitals in Changi, Selerang, and Kranj. The collection includes diaries he wrote as a Prisoner of War in Singapore and his complete medical notes of autopsies and investigations (1942–1945).

Additionally, the Museum acquired a PillCam™ COLON 2 capsule by Medtronic for display in the Body Voyager galleries.

Multiple conservation projects were successfully completed in 2024, including the preservation of human remains collections through fluid replacement for 56 wet preparations, and cleaning 14 skulls from the Wohl Pathology Gallery. Popular public engagement events allowed visitors to see and engage with the careful cleaning of bone collections on display.

A range of research was undertaken across the Heritage collections, including several collaborative projects as well as multiple academic contributions. For example, Cat Irving, a Human Remains Conservator, is working with Trinity College Dublin and the Duckworth Museum, University of Cambridge on a research project exploring early body donation practices. Cat also partnered with the Morgagni Museum (Padua) and Trinity College Dublin to present research on Argyria cases across museum collections at the European Paleopathology Conference in Leiden, and contributed a chapter to the book, 'Scotland’s Contribution to Military and Naval Medicine' on Charles Bell. Outside of academic outputs, Surgeons’ Hall Museums was included in a documentary by Ethan Hill on the preservation of tattooed skin.

In 2024, significant groundwork was laid for the Women in Surgery heritage initiative, a two-year project launching in April 2025. This initiative celebrates the contributions of female surgeons through a commissioned painting, a temporary exhibition, and a permanent display. Generous grants from Art Fund, the National Fund for Acquisitions, and Museums Galleries Scotland were secured to support the project’s delivery and long-term impact. This fundraising initiative will continue in 2025 with donations from the College’s community and heritage supporters.

Work also began on a dedicated collections development programme, aiming to preserve the voices and experiences of living female surgeons. This effort includes gathering oral histories and expanding the archive to reflect the evolving role of women in surgery. With these critical plans in place, Women in Surgery is poised to become a landmark project, highlighting the achievements of women in the field and expanding representation within the College’s heritage collections.

Development & Partnerships

The Development team raises funds and establishes partnerships to deliver the strategic priorities of the College through multiple sources of support.

The team manages:

Individual donations

Corporate support

Sponsorship

Legacy giving

Trusts and Foundations

High-level capital fundraising for the College’s major developments

The department looks at Development in a holistic way, from securing supplementary income for agreed strategic priorities to managing the disbursement of the funds. In 2024, Council approved the following areas as being of strategic importance:

Heritage and Estates

Research

International Development

The Development team worked closely with our Heritage Department to support their efforts in attracting funding for our exciting 2025 programme of exhibition. The theme is ‘Women in Surgery’ and an appeal was made to College membership to contribute to the groundbreaking programme. This marks the beginning of a multi-year programme of work that will see our Heritage and Development departments work closely together to protect and develop our Heritage and Estates for many generations to come.

In 2024, the team completed a complete review of the portfolio of grants, fellowships and other awards. This involved a review of the restricted and designated funds which support our awards, and an overall improvement of governance and processes underpinning this work.

The College awarded 36 different grants towards research projects, disbursing around £700,000 including £500,000 awarded in previous years’ to recipients around the world. This programme is an essential part of our members’ benefits packages, and we are grateful to all donors and partners who allow us to support our membership.

We launched exciting new grants in 2024, including:

The Chennai Scholarships and Exams prize, funded through the generosity of our court of donors in Chennai

The RCSEd-GUTS UK grant, awarded jointly with Guts-UK

The Vascutek Cardiothoracic student placement

The Dr Li Shu Fan International Professorship funded by the Hong Kong Sanatorium

We would like to thank all our partners whose support and funding allow these grants to be awarded, including, amongst others:

Guts-UK

OR-UK

Vascutek

The Hong Kong Sanatorium

The Jane Goodman Charitable Trust

The James Weir Foundation

The Pilmuir Trust

Individual donations continue to support the College in many ways, including the launch of new important strategic initiatives. A generous donation from Stephen McLeod allowed the College to offer its first-ever medal in Patient Safety, which will be awarded in 2025 at the College Triennial Conference.

The College was fortunate and grateful to receive a significant legacy from Dr Winston MacNab, which will be used to support core activities. A new fund, the Winston McNab Fund in Global Surgery is to be established, dedicated to supporting international projects which invest in the education and training of surgeons and dentists in their home country. The fund will form a cornerstone of our new RCSEd Global CARE initiative, to be launched in 2025 to help address inequalities in access to surgical care around the world.

Partnership work continues to be essential to the work of the College. Over the years, we have developed many projects with other charities, foundations, and industry. These are key to the College’s ethos of supporting medical professionals jointly with expert partners. In 2024, we initiated discussions with academic organisations such as the University of Birmingham, which we hope to see flourish in 2025. We also worked towards formalising a partnership with the Primary Trauma Care Foundation (PTCF), which will see our two organisations cooperate to deliver pre-hospital care training.

Finally, in 2024, we partnered with the David Nott Foundation (DNF) to prepare surgeons deployed in conflict zones or disaster zones. We hosted and supported the running of two Hostile Environment Surgical Training UK (HEST-UK) courses, designed to train volunteer doctors and improve their emergency trauma surgery skills. This was made possible by the generous support of the Russell Trust and the Sylvia Aitken Charitable Trust. Following the success of this one-year pilot, we intend to cement this partnership and sign a further three-year agreement, ensuring we contribute to the improvement of surgical skills around the world.



Policy & Public Affairs

The NHS was a central feature of the 2024 General Election and there are several long-standing systemic issues which place stress on our Members and Fellows, such as:

- Unprecedented waiting lists and waiting times
- Recruitment and retention
- Access to training
- The declining state of many NHS building
- Bed blocking caused by problems in social care

These were therefore the focus of our engagement with policymakers and influencers across all four nations.

For the General Election, we produced surgical and dental Manifestos that outlined our expectations of the new government. As the UK government's primary healthcare focus is on NHS services in England, most of our engagement was with policymakers and influencers in Westminster and Whitehall. We also engaged with governments and healthcare bodies in each home nation to stress the importance of workforce planning, training, and support, and multi-disciplinary working on staff morale and productivity.

The UK government has since embarked on a Ten-Year Health Plan for health, to reform the health system in England. This is structured around three shifts:

- From a service treating sickness to one focused on preventing illness from occurring in the first place
- From delivering care in hospitals to delivering care closer to home, in communities and in primary care
- Digital transformation of service delivery

We met with policymakers to shape thinking during the plan's development, making the case for a further roll-out of surgical hubs. We also emphasised the importance of a long-term capital programme to ensure sufficient operating theatres, beds, and other related infrastructure. We continued to press for the Ten-Year Health Plan to be underpinned by robust workforce planning.

The government ordered a review of physicians and anaesthesia associates in England, following mounting concerns about their use in the NHS. With legitimate concerns over transparency for patients, scope of practice, and the substituting of doctors, further work is ongoing at an intercollegiate level to better understand the presence of associate roles in surgical teams and their scope of practice.

The Policy Team delivered three invited reviews in 2024, conducting extensive research and providing expert opinion on clinical practice and service configuration. Important ways that the College can directly assist NHS Trusts and Health Boards to improve surgical services and fill vacant training posts include:

Invited Reviews

Placements made through the International Postgraduate Deanery

The new SupportED initiative will provide further assistance as it develops, demonstrating the College's commitment to finding solutions to some of the problems NHS bodies face.

The College launched a campaign in 2017 to combat bullying and undermining across the surgical workforce, our campaign entered its second phase in 2024 with a renewed focus on addressing sexual misconduct within the profession.

Findings from the Working Party on Sexual Misconduct in Surgery (WPSMS) and the Surviving in Scrubs group highlighted the prevalence of harassment and sexual abuse faced by colleagues in surgery. In response, we committed additional resources and leveraged our platform to drive meaningful change and eradicate sexual misconduct from the profession.

This UK-wide campaign aimed to raise awareness of sexual harassment and reinforce a zero-tolerance approach to misconduct in healthcare. We encouraged clinicians to 'Call it Out' when they witnessed inappropriate behaviour, reinforcing our collective responsibility to foster a safer professional environment.

Key initiatives supporting this campaign included:

- A comprehensive library of resources, guidance, and signposting for support.
- A high-impact poster and billboard campaign across UK hospitals.
- An updated Code of Conduct, reaffirming professional standards.

The updated Code of Conduct was distributed to all Members, new and existing, with a requirement to commit to its principles. This document underscores the professional behaviours expected within the surgical community, setting a clear example for the wider profession.

Additionally, our guidance on navigating issues related to sexual misconduct provided essential support to multiple key groups:

- Individuals affected by misconduct
- Those accused
- Healthcare organisations that are responsible for oversight

Our resources aimed to ensure a safe environment for reporting, alongside a robust framework for addressing and preventing such behaviour.

The 'Let's Remove It' campaign launched to significant success, receiving positive feedback from our membership and the broader healthcare community. Throughout 2024, the campaign remained a central topic at our conferences, ensuring sustained awareness and engagement. As we move forward, we remain committed to reinforcing this message and continuing our efforts to eradicate sexual misconduct within the profession.

Estates

Strengthening the College’s Estate Management

In 2024, the College strengthened its leadership in estate and property management with two appointments:

Chanté St Clair Inglis as Director of Heritage and Estates

Lyndon Parkhouse as Head of Property

The College’s Property Department now oversees operations across the Edinburgh and Birmingham sites, managing building compliance, maintenance, security, health and safety, and facilities operations.

A key priority in 2024 was evaluating the Property Department structure to establish that the right skills, experience, and systems are in place to meet the College’s operational, compliance, and sustainability needs. In parallel, the Licence to Occupy with Surgeons Quarter was reviewed to consider our current partnership, which seeks to effectively generate income while ensuring the ongoing care and stewardship of College property. This work will shape further improvements in 2025.

Additionally, groundwork began on a comprehensive Estates Strategy to inform and guide long-term investment, supporting the estate’s ability to meet the evolving needs of Members, staff, and visitors. Together, these developments mark 2024 as a transformative year in modernising the College’s estate management.

Birmingham Regional Centre

2024 was a significant year for the RCSEd Birmingham Regional Centre, marking its tenth anniversary. The Birmingham Centre continued to facilitate the needs of College Members by hosting courses, examinations, meetings, and events. Existing partnerships with external stakeholders and new relationships were maintained through the delivery of event services.

In total, the Centre delivered 135 events, including the longstanding Training the Trainers course, the ever-popular RAPID Course, and had the pleasure of hosting a President’s Forum. The Birmingham Centre hosted a training event for the British Association of Black Surgeons (BABS), with whom the College has built a relationship and supported in previous years.

After ten years based in the business district, the Birmingham office relocated to new premises in Digbeth, the city’s vibrant creative hub in October. With its enhanced facilities, the new centre can now host more courses, exams, and conferences than ever before. The team was proud to host their first event at the new premises in the same month – the SAS/ LED Surgeons & Dentists’ Conference, the largest event the Birmingham office has ever hosted.

RCSEd International Office

In Malaysia, our International Office started an exciting new stage by moving to new premises. After five years in the Skills Centre of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (one of our key partners in Kuala Lumpur for the hosting of MRCS diets), we moved to a newly built facility in the administrative capital Putrajaya. This building, located close to Ministries, hosts a range of medical associations, including the Academy of Medicine Malaysia. The move ensures that the College remains at the heart of the surgical and medical fraternity.

The majority of our membership in Malaysia is made up of dental Members, and this year we increased the level of support we provide to them. In addition to the examinations in dental specialties, we successfully ran our second Dental Skills Competition at IMU University in August, along with a range of courses. We piloted a new initiative, the Malaysia-UK Travelling Fellowship, which will see a successful trainee from a partner University offered a grant to take part in an observership in the UK. If successful, this pilot will be expanded on in 2025.

People & Culture

Staff Investment

During 2024, the College completed an ambitious pay and grading project to move all staff onto a single pay and grading structure, live from 1st April 2024. Every job was bench marked to ensure the College could compete in the current job market. The new structure evaluated jobs within job families and across the College for consistency and relativity. This saw salaries increase by an average of 7.8%, delivering our biggest investment in staff for many years.

The College also launched a cash health benefits scheme and a discount scheme, covering thousands of retailers across the UK. These staff benefits helped to increase staff retention by 2.5% by reducing staff turnover from 22.6% (2023) to 20.1% (2024).

The College also recognises the importance of staff at all levels and at all times in their careers by:

- Paying above the Real Living Wage
- Provided long-service recognition programmes
- Recognition of individuals and teams with our Golden unicorn awards
- Investing in staff and manager training
- Having a comprehensive resource & support hub

A review of the pension scheme was also started, with a number of providers being considered for the future scheme. This will be implemented in early 2025, again adding to the rewards package offer to attract and retain staff.

Wellbeing & EDI

Created in 2023, the Wellness strategy, was launched with a three-year implementation plan, outlining manager training to keep wellness at the heart of everything we do. During the year, a wealth of resources were made available to staff to allow them to embrace and manage their own workplace wellness.


Work began on our first Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy, with action plans set to be launched and implemented in early 2025.

Sustainability

Surgery is the most resource-intensive aspect of healthcare. The Lancet estimates that operating theatres use up to six times more energy than other equivalently sized hospital areas, because of their heating, ventilation, and air conditioning requirements. The study found that one NHS operating theatre suite had a comparable annual carbon footprint to over 2000 homes.

RCSEd wants to encourage our Members and Fellows to reflect on the environmental impact of their work and engage in a more general debate about how surgery can adopt and promote more sustainable practices.

Our Sustainability Group, co-chaired by Katie Hurst and Jasmine Winter Beatty, is leading efforts to promote practical changes in their operating departments. In 2024, they updated the intercollegiate Green Theatre Checklist and its accompanying compendium of peer-reviewed evidence. They also succeeded in welcoming several new partners on board to collaborate on this critical issue, such as the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA), the Association of Anaesthetists (AoA) and the Association for Perioperative Practice (AfPP).



Since 1505, The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, has not only grown in size but in spirit. We are committed to mentoring each other. We train and upskill together. We pass on expertise that was born from the pioneers who practiced and perfected their skills before us, continually improving standards and advancing our collective knowledge. And we may be the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, but our reach is all over the world. And no matter what, whoever we are, whatever our skills, however long we've been practicing; the thing that makes us who we are, the thing that keeps us together, and make us better at what we do, is that we operate, together, as one.

OPERATING
AS ONE

Faculties

2024 has been a year of growth, achievement, and strategic progress across all Faculties.

2024 has been a year of growth, achievement, and strategic progress across all Faculties. From expanding membership and launching new educational initiatives, to strengthening partnerships and enhancing global engagement, the Faculties continue to make a significant impact in their respective fields and in extending the global reach of the College. Their ongoing commitment to excellence in training, professional development, and policy influence remains at the heart of their work.

One of the key developments this year has been the Faculties' Governance and Strategic Review. This was a comprehensive evaluation aiming to ensure the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of Faculty structures. Approved by Council in early 2025, the review provided critical insights into governance processes, succession planning, and membership engagement, leading to key recommendations for standardisation and improvement.

Implementation of these recommendations is now underway, focusing on:

Refining governance documents

Clarifying roles and responsibilities

Enhancing strategic alignment across all Faculties

These changes will strengthen the Faculties' ability to support Members and reinforce their position as leaders in their respective disciplines. As the work continues into 2025, the Faculties are well-placed to build on their successes and continue shaping the future of healthcare education and practice.



Faculty of Dental Surgery (FDS)

The Faculty of Dental Surgery has experienced a year of growth and innovation, with a 3% increase in membership and strong exam candidate numbers across multiple specialties.

The launch of Diplomas in Restorative and Paediatric Dentistry, alongside the introduction of the pilot International Postgraduate Deanery for dentistry, marks a significant step forward. The Faculty has also joined the Tri-Collegiate model for MFDS and the Intercollegiate model for Dental Specialty Fellowships, ensuring long-term sustainability for these examinations.

There has been a consistent rise in applications for accreditation of Dental Short Courses and Academic Training Programmes, with the majority originating from Egypt. This growing interest in accreditation is highly encouraging. However, the increasing volume of applications has led to a shortage of trained dental reviewers to meet the demand. In response, the Faculties and Accreditation Teams are actively working to encourage more professionals to undertake reviewer training.

To further enhance accreditation efforts, RCSEd is piloting Portfolio Accreditation in collaboration with two institutions:

The Crown Prince Centre for Training and Medical Research in Bahrain

The Faculty of Dentistry at Alexandria University in Egypt

Both pilots are progressing well, with dedicated reviewers appointed to support this crucial initiative, as we expand our accreditation capacity.

Engagement remains a priority, with Dental Skills Competitions held in Edinburgh, Kuala Lumpur, Cairo, and Ajman, and the introduction of the Foundations in Dental Leadership course. The Faculty also hosted the inaugural Lost in Space Online Dental Symposium, which will now be an annual event.

A series of exam information sessions and joint webinars with dental specialty societies have provided additional learning opportunities. Global engagement efforts saw events held in the UK, Kuala Lumpur, Colombo, and Delhi. Policy contributions included supporting public health initiatives such as the 'smoke-free generation' campaign and advocating for a Dental Manifesto in the 2024 UK general election.

Faculty of Pre-Hospital Care (FPHC)

The Faculty of Pre-Hospital Care continues to lead in setting professional standards, with key consensus and position statements issued on topics such as:

Exertional heat illness

Extrication following motor vehicle collisions

Pre-hospital management of cardiac arrest

The Faculty has played a critical role in supporting external initiatives, including the IMPACT project for post-collision research and a British Medical Association (BMA) initiative on reducing harm caused by driving under the influence. In addition, the Faculty takeover of the Intercollegiate Board for Training of Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine (IBTPHEM) marks a significant step in strengthening the governance, development and visibility of pre-hospital emergency medicine, ensuring continued excellence and strategic alignment across training and standards in this vital field.

Education remains a strong focus, with the FPHC Level Eight Accreditation updated to align with the GMC-approved curriculum. Webinars continue to attract a wide audience, with six delivered in 2024, drawing 1,328 registrations. Significant progress has been made in reviewing, refreshing, and updating the Diploma in Remote and Offshore Medicine, and the Crowd Doctor and Practitioner Courses remain in high demand. The Faculty also played a vital role in the Manchester Arena Inquiry response, contributing to the NHSE Strategic Oversight Group and launching the Diploma in Major Incident Management in July 2024.

In 2024, a working group was established to revitalise the psychosocial report authored by Professor Richard Williams and commissioned by the Faculty. This initiative, funded by the Hillsborough Fund, played a crucial role in the Clinical Response to Major Incidents (CRMI) conference. The report was designed to provide organisations with a reference document offering guidance and support on staff wellbeing. This need was further underscored by the findings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Led by Sarah Morton, the working group will establish focus groups to assess how organisations are currently supported in promoting staff wellbeing. The data collected will inform future steps and recommendations, delivering a comprehensive and effective approach to wellbeing in major incident response.

Internationally, the Faculty’s reach has grown, delivering pre-hospital trauma care courses in Nepal and Chennai, and training 90 candidates and 19 instructors. Recognition efforts continue, with Dr Simon Lewis and Dr Juergen Klein awarded the FPHC Medal, to be formally presented at the 2025 conference.

Faculty of Dental Trainers (FDT)

The Faculty of Dental Trainers has experienced a year of significant growth and increased recognition, with an 8% rise in membership now spanning 27 countries, a total membership of 369. Training initiatives have flourished, particularly with the successful delivery of DeNTS Masterclasses in the UK, Belgium, and Kuala Lumpur.

The Faculty has strengthening its international presence by actively engaging with the global dental education community, with representatives speaking at prestigious conferences such as ADEE and SEAADE.

Enhancing accessibility is a priority, with greater inclusivity ensured thanks to the introduction of discounted membership fees, based on country income status, resulting in increasing faculty numbers.. Furthering its commitment to professional development, the Faculty launched the Dental Nurse Online Training (DNOT) tool in May 2024. This initiative, introduced via a well-attended webinar, has provided valuable new learning opportunities for dental nurses worldwide.

Faculty of Surgical Trainers (FST)

The Faculty of Surgical Trainers has experienced steady growth, with membership increasing by 4.5%, bringing the total membership of the Faculty to 768. Webinars remain a key resource, consistently drawing over 100 attendees, with more than 80% reporting positive impact on their clinical practice.

The Faculty Chair further strengthened FST’s reputation as a leader in surgical training by representing the Faculty at the prestigious International Association for Health Professional Education (AMEE) Conference in Basel. This engagement highlights the Faculty’s commitment to shaping the future of surgical education.

Our virtual conference, Enhancing Training Effectiveness Through Evidence-Based Practices, was a major milestone this year. It brought together participants from 13 countries, including FY1 trainees and senior consultants. Research remains at the heart of the Faculty’s work, with an ASME Grant awarded to Joe Norton for his systematic review on preoperative educational briefing. This research includes the development of an evidence-based framework to enhance surgical briefing protocols, further advancing best practices in surgical training.

Faculty of Perioperative Care (FPC)

The Faculty of Perioperative Care continues to build its influence within the profession. It now sponsors the Outstanding Academic Achievement award for the MSc in Surgical Care Practice at Edge Hill University, with Maria Toledano Serrano as the first recipient.

Accessibility remains a key priority. The introduction of regionalised delivery of the Perioperative Care Practitioners Intraoperative Non-Technical Skills (PINTS) Course, starting at The Health Academy, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, ensures more practitioners can benefit from the training at a lower cost. Several future sessions have been scheduled, with ongoing discussions in other regions to further support the development of this essential skill.

The Faculty also undertook a review of its membership structure to strengthen engagement and has expanded the Executive Committee. Partnerships with institutions such as Edge Hill University, Anglia Ruskin University, Association of Surgical Care Practitioners (AoSCP), and Association of Cardio Thoracic Surgical Care Practitioners (ACTSCP) have been reinforced. Membership of the Faculty currently stands at 111 members.

The Faculty has contributed to the Intercollegiate Extended Surgical Team (IEST) Board, while supporting the Intercollegiate Managed Voluntary Register (MVR) for Surgical Care Practitioners to enhance professional recognition.

Faculty of Remote, Rural & Humanitarian Healthcare (FRRHH)

This year, FRRHH has remained committed to recognising excellence and setting standards in remote, rural, and humanitarian healthcare, with a second membership intake welcoming 60 new Fellows and 35 new Members. These Members will play a vital role in supporting the Faculty’s ongoing work and development, contributing their expertise to shape future initiatives and strengthen the impact of the Faculty. The Faculty membership has grown to nearly 300 members with representation from over 75 countries.

The Introduction to Humanitarian Healthcare Course has seen impressive global engagement, with 2,534 registrations from 105 countries. Over 665 applicants from 70 countries completed the course.

New strategic partnerships have been forged, including collaborations with the International Maritime Health Association and the David Nott Foundation for the HEST Course, ensuring greater support for healthcare professionals operating in challenging environments.

The Faculty remains committed to broadening its reach and providing support, recognition, and professional development for those delivering healthcare in some of the most remote and high-risk settings globally.

Surgeons Quarter

Since its inception, SQ has established a reputation for high levels of customer service, alongside an innovative business approach.

Commercial activity

Surgeons Quarter (SQ) manages Ten Hill Place Hotel (THP), as well as the events business at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) and has gone from strength to strength during its 18-year existence. Since its inception, SQ has established a reputation for high levels of customer service, alongside an innovative business approach.

This approach has allowed the organisation to achieve a record-breaking revenue total of £12.7million in 2024.

As well as revenue performance delivering excellent figures, profit results were also the highest on record, enabling Surgeons Quarter to contribute almost £3 million to RCSEd. This represents an increase on the previous year.

The objectives set for SQ in 2024 were challenging, but encouragingly, the team made major progress, recording many successes across the business. Notable highlights during the year included:

Ten Hill Place Hotel (THP) – Edinburgh’s largest independent four-star hotel, which caters to business and leisure travellers alike, continued to outperform its competitors in terms of occupancy throughout 2024, recording 97% occupancy for the year and total room night sales of 45,810.

Surgeons Quarter Travel (SQ Travel) arranges business travel and holidays for College staff, Members, Fellows, and the general public. Surgeons Quarter Travel finished 2024 with revenue for the year totalling £1.69 million, a growth of nearly 24% for the year. In total, 2,058 bookings were made for RCSEd in 2024, with savings to the public rate for College reservations made via Surgeons Quarter Travel totalling £142k.

Café 1505 on Nicholson Street serves ‘Equal Exchange’s Grown by Women’ coffee, supporting female farmers in Peru and Mexico. In 2024, Café 1505 achieved its highest-ever revenue total of £289k. The introduction of the OrderPay App, which allows audience-goers to order from their table for delivery to their seats, helped drive increased sales.

Surgeon Quarter Events Venues – Surgeons Quarter is regarded as one of the premier event venues in Edinburgh. In 2024, Surgeons Quarter Events delivered the highest total revenue in the company’s history for the 24 versatile event spaces across the RCSEd campus it manages and sells for global conferences, corporate events, and private functions.

During August, Surgeons Quarter becomes one of the city’s most vibrant cultural hubs, providing one of the largest performing spaces for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Working with partners, theSpaceUK, 2024 saw the venue increase its outdoor seating across the courtyard and College gardens. The introduction of the OrderPay App contributed to exceptional trading numbers for Surgeons Quarter, with the highest-ever Festival Fringe revenue of £350k recorded.

Launch of Hill Square Suites – The first suite welcomed guests from April 2024. Accommodating eight people in four spacious rooms and providing the perfect location to relax close to all of Edinburgh’s major tourist attractions, the suite recorded a revenue total of £73.8k in its first eight months of trading.

In addition to operational successes in 2024, one of the marketing highlights of the year was the contra arrangement agreed between STV and Surgeons Quarter, allowing Surgeons Quarter to produce two new TV adverts. One advert focused on social and life events, the other business and corporate events. The TV advertising campaign focused on driving event sales during 2025 and raising brand awareness of Surgeons Quarter’s event facilities.

Filming for the adverts took place at the end of 2024, using Surgeons Quarter staff as actors. This approach not only substantially reduced production costs, it also fostered a sense of organisational pride amongst participating team members, boosting their sense of work satisfaction and motivation. The TV advertising campaign will be aired on STV’s Central Transmitter during the first quarter of 2025.

Sustainability

Commitment to being ethically responsible and advancing sustainability has always been at the forefront of Surgeon Quarter’s management policy. Regarded as a leader in hospitality sustainability, 2024 was another impressive year in terms of continued green initiatives introduced by the organisation.

In 2024, Surgeons Quarter unveiled new staff uniforms designed by Gresham Blake. The uniforms represented a £60k investment for Surgeons Quarter’s staff members. The uniforms were made from recycled plastic bottles, each uniform preventing 45 bottles from reaching landfills or oceans.

In addition to the uniforms, Ten Hill Place Hotel maintained its Green Tourism Gold Award for a 16th consecutive year, proving its commitment to acting on its sustainability goals.

During 2024, Ten Hill Place Hotel also chose Temple Spa to supply cruelty-free and vegan-friendly amenities to all guests and treated guests to 100% biodegradable bamboo toilet paper.

Surgeons Quarter dramatically reduced its use of single-use plastic cups, swapping 42,000 single-use plastic cups in 2023 for 6,580 reusable cups in 2024.

In addition, and through its partnership with Ecologi, Surgeons Quarter prevented over 401 tonnes of CO2e from being emitted in 2024 – equivalent to 308 long-haul flights – by supporting carbon avoidance projects across the world.

Central to Surgeons Quarter’s community engagement, 2024 saw the development of its partnership with the charity Cyrenians. The Cyrenians support those affected by homelessness, providing employment pathways and food sustainability projects. Ongoing initiatives such as supplying Cyrenians vegetable boxes via Café 1505 will be further developed during 2025.

It is acknowledged that achievements attained during 2024 would not have been possible without committed and skilled staff. The development, well-being, and value of its staff have always been of paramount importance to Surgeons Quarter, to ensure the stability and growth of the organisation. In 2024, Surgeons Quarter:

Continued to offer above-industry standard wages exceeding the real living wage

Provided long-service recognition programmes

Provided career progression opportunities

Offered staff benefits, including 50% discount at Best Western Hotels and travel perks through Surgeons Quarter Travel.

As Surgeons Quarter looks towards 2025, the team will continue to approach its task with the highest levels of professionalism and innovation, in what is likely to be a more testing year given the challenging economic backdrop. Every challenge will be tackled with energy and considered an opportunity for future growth and potential to augment Surgeons Quarter’s overall portfolio.

Financial Review

Financial Outlook

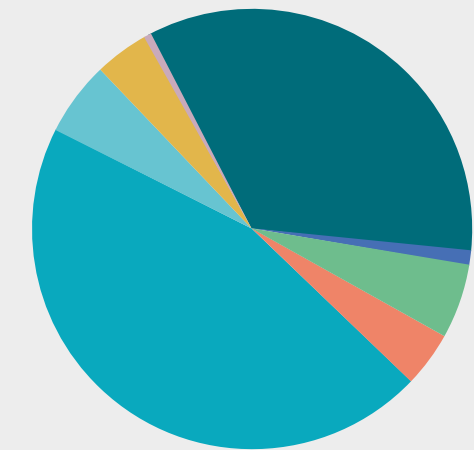
With the close of this year, the College is in the middle of its longer-term transformations, both in terms of structure and IT networks, to modernise the way that the College functions and to support its long-term viability. Overall, the Group financials produced a net deficit of £250k while the College had a net deficit of £316k. The College originally had a surplus of £26k, before accounting provisions and adjustments, however, due to a series of unexpected costs that came to light after the year end, this was significantly impacted, resulting in the year’s deficit.

As economic uncertainty remains, the College looks towards financial sustainability and longer-term growth. Breaking even in 2025 will be the first stepping stone in a long-term financial plan.

However, higher support costs in its charitable activities are expected, as the College is currently in the middle of a modernisation and restructuring effort which will help contribute to the long-term sustainability and future growth of the College but have costs during the effort.

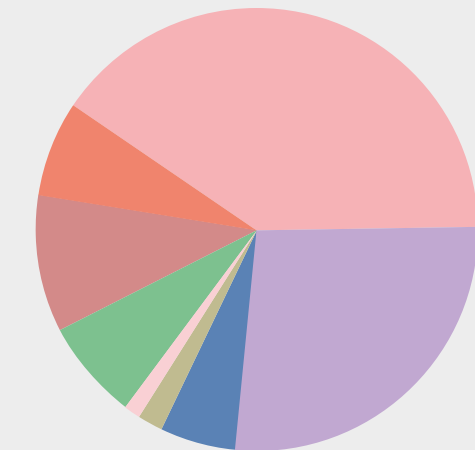
Overall, the Group spent 6% more on charitable activities of £20.1m (2023: £19.1m), which reflects the ongoing transformation, but is also driven by the improving provision of examinations, course and its faculties as part of the charity’s core purpose. This increase in cost has produced 12% higher income for the charitable activities which rose to £18.3m (2023: £16.4m) as the College continues to undertake work to reach an equilibrium and eventually a surplus between the income and expenditure of its charitable activities so that these functions can be self-sustaining going forward.

Charitable activities - Income



- Examinations **46%**
- Subscriptions **35%**
- Library & Museums **5%**
- Courses **5%**
- Faculties **4%**
- Other Support Function **4%**
- Publications **1%**
- Outreach **0%**

Charitable activities - Expenditure



- Other Support Function **41%**
- Examinations **27%**
- Publications **10%**
- Subscriptions **7%**
- Courses **7%**
- Library & Museums **5%**
- Faculties **2%**
- Outreach **1%**

As can be seen from the distribution of charitable expenditure, a large portion relates to the support functions provided by the College which includes the property costs, legal, HR and finance support required for the College to function. Fortunately, the College has invested in property and funds over its lifetime which generated £2.5m (2023: £2.6m) in investment income to help offset the difference between charitable income and expenditure.

The College is also fortunate to receive legacies and bequests from Members and Fellows alongside the support of medically focused entities. These contributions provided for a strong 2023 position, with significant receipts of the Mr John McNab legacy and the Dr Li Shu Fan International Professorship grants. However, 2024 was a slower year where only ongoing grants and donations continue to be received. The Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement department team have plans in place to develop fundraising to improve the outlook going forward in this area.

Additionally, the trading arm of the Group, Surgeons Quarter (SQ), had a very strong year where the income from its trading activities of £10.4m rose from the £9.4m produced in 2023. This has allowed SQ to continue making gift aid distributions to the College with £618k committed in 2024 (2023: £925k) against budgeted £900k. However, based on the current conditions in the Edinburgh tourist market and Surgeons Quarter’s forecasts, the outlook predicts a fall in gift aid distributions, meaning the College will need to find other means to support its ongoing costs in 2025.

Balance Sheet

Although the College reported a net deficit, it only had a minor decrease in cash reserves of £36k between the current and prior year ends. This also reflects the College taking advantage of improved treasury management practices and making effective use of cash balances, to produce higher returns when possible.

The prior year saw some changes in the balance sheet with the revaluation of Ten Hill Place Hotel and other investment properties held by the College contributing to an increase in the College’s fixed assets. For 2024, however, the College’s fixed assets remained relatively consistent with only a net decrease of £144k after accounting for investment gains, depreciations, additions and reclassifications. However, our Heritage assets saw

increase with the capitalisation of our ‘Your Next Breath’ statues that can now be found in front of our museum entrance.

This does not mean the College is resting on its laurels, as ongoing work is being performed with a review of the estate to better manage the property. The College sold a house where the property no longer aligned with the College strategy and the College is working with SQ to better utilise some of the other flats in the estate where better potential exists to match the College’s long-term strategy.

The College also undertook a full review of all its funds, identifying where funds had been used up in line with their purpose, or had insufficient funds remaining that needed to be combined with other funds of the same restrictions to complete their use. The College also took this opportunity to specifically split out the fixed asset funds given their specific nature funding the College’s fixed assets and as we have a significant amount of our funds tied up in properties due to our long-standing presence in Edinburgh.

In addition, the College had endowment funds that were received as far back as the late 1800s. While the capital provided to create these endowments was likely significant at the time, in 2024 their value had been eroded by inflation and use. As part of the College’s review, these funds were amalgamated into a new Surgeons of the Future fund providing the Trustees with a new endowment that could be used in furtherance of the College purpose to promote and support the heritage of medicine and medical education.

Amalgamation of Hill Square Educational Trust

In 2024, the College and Hill Square Educational Trust (HSET, the examination-based subsidiary of the College) obtained permission from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) for the College to acquire and amalgamate the assets and liabilities of HSET into the College. While preparations were made in 2024, the final transfer is expected in 2025.

As HSET utilises College staff and resources, there will be minimal impact to the operational activities with examinations, faculties processes and College courses continuing as per normal. However, from a reporting and legal perspective, all HSET operations would now reside with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and will be reported as part of the College in 2025.

1. Reserves and Reserves Policy

The College finished the 2024 financial year with non-designated unrestricted general reserves of £27.0m (2023: £28.5m).

Reserves are required to meet the working capital requirements of the College and to allow for the development of new services and fundraising initiatives and to provide a buffer against a significant drop in funding. As we are operating in a period of economic uncertainty and the cost-of-living crisis, the College has faced unexpected costs and events which has contributed to the College's net deficit of £316k in 2024.

While the College expects that it will be able to continue to meet its operational requirements for the next financial period, the College is looking to improve its free reserve levels in the medium term as well. The current reserve levels are adequate for at least the next 12 months of operation and will allow the College to continue meeting its obligations to both suppliers and staff, the majority of the College's non-designated unrestricted funds are held as physical buildings such as the Ten Hill Place Hotel managed by Surgeons Quarter Limited for the Group and the Playfair building that houses our museum and heritage.

While these physical assets return cash to the College each year, with the current reserve policy it is the Trustee's intention to improve the liquid funds held such that the College is prepared for future unexpected financial shocks. The College intends to achieve this by looking to hold cash such that after accounting for its membership, examinations and charitable activities, a surplus is held that can be used for capital improvements of the College each year which has a self-servicing purpose of reducing the cost of maintenance and repair on our estate.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes (See note 22).

Fixed asset funds are both designated and restricted fund that have been used to finance a portion of the College's fixed assets that the trustees consider essential to the operation of the College's activities.

Restricted funds are funds which are required to be used in accordance with specific aims imposed by donors, or which have been raised by the College for a specific purpose.

2. Investment Policy and Heritage

Under the laws of the College, funds not required immediately for the ordinary purposes of the College may be invested by the Council. Investments are held by the College to fund any future shortfall in income to ensure that it can continue to meet its charitable objectives.

2.1. Investment in subsidiary company

The College has invested in Surgeons Quarter Limited (SQ), a trading subsidiary operating as a hotel, Cafe, conferencing facility and travel agent. This investment returns income to the College by way of lease payments, rental income, contributing to group services and gift aid. The funds generated by this have been utilised by the College to support its charitable activities.

2.2. Investment in property

The College owns Ten Hill Place Hotel, which is leased to Surgeons Quarter Limited (SQ), together with other commercial and residential property which it rents to external customers. The investment returns to the College are by way of rental income and have been utilised by the College for charitable purposes.

2.3 Investment in listed securities and unit trusts

The College has invested in listed securities and unit trusts, which are managed on the College's behalf by Rathbones Investment Management. The overall portfolio objectives are to maintain a medium risk profile and to generate an annual income to be utilised by the College for charitable purposes. The College policy is that it will not hold any investment in stocks related to defence and tobacco.

2.4 Investments in wine

The College is currently the owner of a selection of wine investments that were built up over the previous decade. However, it is the opinion of the Trustees that this investment in alcohol is no longer in line with the College's health objective and so the College is undertaking to divest this investment in a manner that ensures a return is still produced.

3. Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity, and are satisfied that actions are on-going, and systems are in place to mitigate the exposure to the major risks. The major risks identified for the group are detailed below.

3.1 A reduction in the College membership

To mitigate the risk of falling membership numbers we continue to develop strategies for increased acquisition and greater retention of our members and with a new approach to retention with increased membership engagement on subjects more relevant to their needs delivered by the Business Transformation Project. In addition, we have taken a more customer friendly approach to subscription renewal whereby we engage more about the benefits of the College and take time to understand why someone may have concerns about renewal which has led to reduced attrition.

3.2. Loss of income and market share

The College is heavily dependent on examination income. Efforts have been made to sustain the level of marketing of these examinations to potential candidates. Examination candidate numbers are continually monitored in order that any changes can be responded to in a timely manner. Additionally, courses are regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain viable.

3.3. A downturn in the commercial subsidiary's performance

This risk has been mitigated through the ongoing development of Surgeons Quarter Limited (SQ) under the supervision of the SQ Board. There has also been a significant investment by the College in the assets used by SQ, under its licence to occupy, to generate income. These include the re-development of the Prince Philip Building as a multi-purpose events space and the use of a previously rented commercial unit as Café 1505. For 2024, SQ continues to distribute gift aid to the College.

3.4 Cybersecurity

With the ongoing issues noted across the UK with regards to IT security, the College also faces cybersecurity risks that could compromise our operations, funding, and reputation. Cybercriminals often target nonprofit organisations due to their reliance on donor information, financial transactions, and volunteer databases, which may not always be secured to the same standards as corporate entities.

The College and Group has continued to improve the training and testing that staff undergo to mitigate the risk of phishing and hacking attempts. In addition, ongoing work is being performed to ensure we are compliant with security recommendations and regulations so that we can continue protecting our data and online presence.



Financial Summaries

Financial Activity:	Group Total 2024	Group Total 2023	Charity Total 2024	Charity Total 2023
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Income				
Donations, grants and legacies	858	2,833	858	2,833
Charitable activities	18,372	16,437	8,648	7,873
Trading activities	10,428	9,368	-	-
Investments	585	497	2,547	2,594
Total income	30,243	29,135	12,053	13,300
Expenditure				
Charitable activities	20,303	19,263	12,344	11,730
Trading activities	10,330	9,192	165	146
Investment costs	22	20	22	20
Total expenditure	30,655	28,475	12,531	11,896
Gains/(losses) on investments	155	535	155	4,848
Gain on revaluations	7	4,254	7	4,254
Divestment of funds	-	(246)	-	-
Net income	(250)	5,203	(316)	10,506

Fund distribution of net income:	Group Total 2024	Group Total 2023	Charity Total 2024	Charity Total 2023
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Distribution of net income				
Unrestricted funds	(662)	4,192	(790)	9,281
Restricted funds	340	1,217	402	1,431
Endowment funds	72	(206)	72	(206)
Total net income	(250)	5,203	(316)	10,506

Reconciliation of Funds:	Group Total 2024	Group Total 2023	Charity Total 2024	Charity Total 2023
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Reconciliation of funds				
Opening funds balance	47,431	42,228	57,464	46,958
Net movement in funds	(250)	5,203	(316)	10,506
Closing funds balance	47,181	47,431	57,148	57,464

Balance Sheet	Group Total 2024	Group Total 2023	Charity Total 2024	Charity Total 2023
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Fixed Assets				
Intangible fixed assets	1,171	1,011	1,171	1,011
Tangible fixed assets	32,071	32,165	13,342	13,486
Heritage assets	8,958	8,700	8,958	8,700
Investments	4,391	4,169	6,391	6,169
Investment property	5,527	6,206	33,410	33,686
	52,118	52,251	63,272	63,052
Current assets				
Stocks	136	153	22	28
Debtors	4,605	3,878	3,050	4,089
Cash at bank and in hand	9,046	8,134	4,334	4,370
	13,787	12,165	7,406	8,487
Creditors				
Due within one year	(10,250)	(8,385)	(5,746)	(6,050)
Due after one year	(8,474)	(8,600)	(7,784)	(8,025)
	(18,724)	(16,985)	(13,530)	(14,075)
Total net assets	47,181	47,431	57,148	57,464

The funds of the charity:				
General funds	24,235	25,528	26,994	28,452
Revaluation reserve	5,299	5,523	13,389	13,613
Designated funds	2,061	1,182	1,270	354
Designated fixed asset funds	1,585	1,609	1,585	1,609
Restricted fixed asset funds	6,255	6,782	6,255	6,782
Restricted funds	5,670	4,803	5,579	4,650
Endowment funds	2,076	2,004	2,076	2,004
Total Funds	47,181	47,431	57,148	57,464

Cash flows	Group Total 2024	Group Total 2023	Charity Total 2024	Charity Total 2023
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Net cash flows from:				
Operating activities	2,254	(481)	(1,093)	(582)
Investing activities	94	1,403	2,104	1,870
Financing activities	(1,436)	(1,496)	(1,047)	(951)
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	912	(574)	(36)	337
Opening cash and cash equivalents	8,134	8,708	4,370	4,033
Closing cash and cash equivalents	9,046	8,134	4,334	4,370

Statement of Council Responsibilities

Council is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Scotland requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Council is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS102) (second edition – October 2019);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

Council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and group and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the Trust Deed and Royal Charter of Incorporation. Council is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Council is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the Charity and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement of Disclosure to Auditors

So far as Council is aware, there is no relevant information of which the Charity's auditors are unaware. Additionally, Council has taken all the necessary steps that they ought to have taken in order to make itself aware of all relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Signed on behalf of the Council
17 September 2025



Professor Rowan Parks
President



Mr Siong Liao
Honorary Treasurer

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