

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BREAST SURGERY

Aims:

In accordance with the articles of the Association of Breast Surgery, the vision of the Academic and Research Committee is to:

Enhance care and outcome for patients with breast disease through promotion and support of (surgical) research and innovation.

Objectives:

- To identify relevant and important topics for research through broad consultation with both professionals, and patient and public representatives
- To develop methods to promote the development, funding and implementation of surgical research in breast disease
- To support and encourage the participation of surgeons in all aspects of trial design, development, implementation and recruitment
- To identify, train and support future surgical researchers' career through all career stages
- To promote collaboration and cooperation in the development and implementation of research and clinical trials
- Identify and participate in relevant research initiatives e.g. RCS Surgical Trials initiative
- To raise the profile of breast surgery through publication of new and existing data
- To encourage and facilitate patient and public participation in all stages of research development and implementation.
- To promote engagement and interaction of surgeons in national and international research organisations
- To work with iBRA-NET to promote and further its ethos of 'no innovation without evaluation'
- To run workshops and other relevant events for the network and ABS members

Main Responsibilities and tasks include:

- The committee will meet four times per year (twice face to face and twice virtually)
- Ensure the Research section of the ABS website is regularly updated and appropriate social media postings are made
- Promote liaison with other ABS Committees, ABS Research Network, ABS Membership, and relevant external bodies including National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) breast research groups and charitable and funding bodies.
- Oversee the application and award processes for the ABS Research Development Grants and ensure that regular updates are obtained from the recipients of these grants
- Provide input into the identification and selection of suitable and feasible topics for research and feedback on proposed trial design to support principle investigators (PIs) developing new studies

- Participate in online surveys indicating willingness to participate in trial recruitment and likely numbers of patients recruited. This information is essential for PIs seeking trial funding
- Assess clinical trials for ABS Badging and Endorsement, including those developed by ABS principal investigators but also trials developed by collaborative organisations requesting ABS support
- Identify and encourage ABS research active members to join relevant funding bodies e.g. Breast Cancer Clinical Studies Group, Clinical Trials Awards Advisory Group, National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), Breast Cancer Now, etc
- Promote the dissemination of ABS supported research activity through sessions at relevant ABS meetings and publication.
- Consider the development of research fellowships (including partnerships) and training opportunities for early career surgeons to enhance their research skills with the aim of increasing the number of research active surgeons in both academic and NHS roles
- Ensure regular bulletin e-mails are sent to ABS Research Network members and that the Research Network is promoted to ABS members.
- To ensure and enhance the involvement of public and patients in all research activities through the identification of representatives and collaboration with established networks of Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)
- Actively collaborate with the Trustees and other Committees of ABS in promoting the delivery of the objects of the articles of the Association

Membership

Chair

Secretary

Up to 8 members

Mammary Fold Representative

Patient Representative

Trials Nurse Representative

Nursing Representative

ABS President/ Vice President

ABS Trustees

RCS SSLs and Associate SSLs

iBRA-NET Representative

Other members may be co-opted if considered necessary by the Chair.

When the ICPV patient representative wishes to step down, they need to let ICPV know, and they will find a replacement. There is an option for both representatives to overlap for 1 meeting. The patient representative will have an initial 2-year term with a 3-year extension, with a possibility to stay longer if needed. The patient representative can nominate a fellow representative if they are unable to attend a meeting.

The Secretary and member posts will be appointed following a call for expressions of interest to ABS members. The committee members will assess the applications and make recommendations to the Executive Board for approval by the Trustees.

Committee members will sit on the committee for 2 years with an extension of 3 years if appropriate and approved by the committee and Trustees.

Committee members need to attend at least two out of the four annual meetings, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The new Chair may be elected up to a year in advance to allow a handover with the current Chair.

May 2025