

RCOT Fellowship awards

Guidance for nominations 2025

A Fellowship award is the highest honour the Royal College of Occupational Therapists can give its professional members to recognise their exceptional service and outstanding contribution to the profession during their career.

1. Who can you nominate?

- a) You can only nominate a current RCOT member of at least ten years for a Fellowship award.
- b) Both the nominators and nominee must be in a position of good professional standing.
- c) The nominee will have made a significant and outstanding contribution to the profession.
- d) The nominee will have demonstrated exceptional practice over a significant and sustained period of time, including impact outside their primary job role. The nominee will have gone above and beyond their day job in terms of their achievements.
- e) The nominee will be working or using their skills as an occupational therapist in practice, education and/or research, or other scholarly activities in a **national and UK wide capacity or international capacity**.
- f) The nominee should have **contributed to support the work of RCOT**, through various roles, such as volunteering, serving on the Council, committees, or boards, acting as a representative, engaging with communities, or having historical involvement in a RCOT Specialist Section.
- g) The nominee has made important and significant contribution(s) in their role; and demonstrates their commitment to the [RCOT's mission and vision](#) and its strategic priorities.

2. Before you start your nomination:

- Make sure that your nominee meets the above criteria (part 1).
- Identify two members who will support this nomination.
- Nominators should not be a spouse/ partner, or close relatives of the individual being nominated.
- We'll only communicate with you as the main nominator, so we will need your details.
- Provide contact details for the nominee and two supporting nominators.
- You will need to provide a copy of the nominee's CV with your nomination form (see item 5.8) and, if applicable, a publications list (see item 5.9).
- Your nomination will benefit from up to two letters of support or testimonials. These don't have to be from individuals within the profession (see item 5.7).
- Read section 5 of this guidance for detailed advice to nominators.

3. Filling out the form:

Question 1. We need a 500-word summary about the outstanding contribution the nominee has made to the profession.

Question 2. Share how they've worked to support RCOT? You have a 500-word limit and can

use sentences or bullet format.

Question 3. The nomination form includes a table where you can provide evidence of the nominee’s impact on the profession in specific areas.

In your nomination, you should show how the nominee has made a consistent and outstanding contribution to the profession that has made a significant impact on occupational therapy practice, education and/or research. Areas could include:

1. Improved service delivery that has benefited people accessing services and carers.
2. Advanced the way that occupational therapists are educated.
3. Supported the professional workforce through initiatives such as equity, diversity and belonging.
4. Conducted research that has influenced the practice of occupational therapy at a national and UK-wide and/or international level.
5. Raised the profile of the profession with a range of stakeholders.
6. Through outstanding leadership. The nominee may also have influenced the perception of occupational therapy in a national or international context. For example, the nominee may be working in a national leadership role or an international occupational therapy organisation such as the World Federation of Occupational Therapists, Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC) or European Network of Occupational Therapists in Higher Education (ENOTHE).
7. Outstanding contribution in another area not listed.

If your example covers more than one of these areas, do include these different areas

For example:

What has the nominee done to influence the occupational therapy profession nationally and UK-wide and/or internationally?	Explain why this was needed/relevant.	Describe the impact that this had. What is different?
Your answer might focus on how they have raised the profile of the profession.	Your answer should show why this was important, what gap this was filling.	Answer the ‘so what’ question. Be specific about how this has made a difference to the profession across the UK or internationally? Facts and data may help illustrate this if relevant.

Add new rows to show additional examples of your nominee’s outstanding impact on the profession.

It is essential to include the impact of the nominee’s activities and the difference they have made. This will help the Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee to identify that the nominee’s activities are above and beyond their usual role.

There is no word limit – but think about sharing this information succinctly and impactfully.

Question 4. Tell us if the nominee received recognition or an award from any other relevant body including RCOT. This is so we can better understand the context and reach of the

nominee's work.

Question 5. Provide us with a short paragraph – three or four sentences – that we can use in our communications and celebration event brochure if the nomination is successful.

4. Equity and Diversity

RCOT is keen to increase and promote diversity within the profession and actively encourages people from a range of backgrounds to nominate and be nominated for Fellowship and Merit Awards.

5. The process for the RCOT Fellowship awards

Make sure you share all the key information to show the nominee's contribution and impact. This will help the committee check that the nominee meets the criteria and to avoid unnecessary disappointment.

- 5.1 Once you decide to nominate an individual for an award, as the main nominator you will need to ask two other RCOT members to support the nomination and sign the nomination form.
- 5.2 You should work with the other nominators to decide who will lead on the different parts of the nomination so you're not repeating information.
- 5.3 You should assume that the Fellowships and Merit Awards Committee knows nothing about the nominee. Make sure you include all relevant information and evidence so that the committee can make an objective decision.
- 5.4 All information submitted must be typed and in electronic format.
- 5.6 If acronyms are being used throughout the nomination form, they need to be initially explained in full
- 5.7 When the nomination form is complete, please ask the nominee to sign parts 1 and 2 of the nomination form. This is to confirm that the provided information is correct and to give their consent for sharing this information, as the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) requires](#). The nominee can add details to ensure facts are correct. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- 5.8 Please ask the nominee to write a 500-word max statement about themselves and their achievements. This helps ensure valuable information isn't missed out in the nomination.
- 5.9 Include two letters of support or testimonials.
 - Individuals with first-hand knowledge of the nominee should write these. They can support their contribution or give additional information.
 - They can be written by non-RCOT members, occupational therapy colleagues; people accessing occupational therapy services and/or their carers; other health professionals, senior managers in other organisations or other senior individuals, preferably outside the nominee's own service or by the other nominators.
 - Think about who is writing the letters of supports or testimonials as their position/role will influence the committee's decision.
 - These statements confirm the impact and contribution the nominee has made to the occupational therapy profession.
 - These statements are confidential – so please don't share them with the nominee.

- Provide these statements as separate documents on appropriate letterhead and make sure they're not longer than 500 words.
 - If you send more than two letters of support or testimonials, the committee won't consider the additional ones.
 - Please remember that individuals cannot be the same people as the nominators and should not be a spouse/ partner or close relatives of the nominee.
- 5.10 An accompanying CV for the nominee is optional and should be no longer than four sides of A4.
- 5.11 If you're including a list of publications, please make sure it's not longer than two sides of A4. It should be listed in date order, with the most recent publications first.
- 5.12 Supporting materials must not include promotional material and personal data for example, data that may identify a patient.
- 5.13 Once you're finished the nomination form and supporting materials, please send it to RCOT by emailing us at Fellowship.Awards@rcot.co.uk. Make sure it includes the following supporting materials:
- i) Completed nomination form with all the key information and signatures from the main and other nominators and nominee.
 - ii) Two letters of support or testimonials
 - iii) A statement by the nominee.
 - iv) A CV (optional).
 - v) A publications list (if appropriate).
- When we receive your nomination, we will email you (as the main nominator) to confirm receipt.
- 5.14 Group nominations will not be accepted. All nominees should be nominated on a separate nomination form by the nominators, as the committee needs to assess the unique contribution of each individual when assessing their suitability for both Fellowship and Merit Awards.
- 5.15 If you have any questions about the nomination process or form, or would like to discuss your nomination, please contact RCOT by emailing us at Fellowship.Awards@rcot.co.uk

6. The Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee's role

The Fellowship and Merits Awards Committee will consider all nominations.

- 6.1 The Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee will decide if the nominee meets the criteria to the required standards. RCOT will collect feedback from the committee members to support discussions at their meeting.
- 6.2. The Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee will give final recommendations for the BAOT/RCOT Council to consider. They will share these recommendations and the reasons for approval and non-approval in a report.
- 6.3 We will destroy all personal information about the nominee and the nominators, as

GDPR requires and in line with our [privacy notice](#).

7. BAOT/RCOT Council's role

- 7.1 Council read and take note of the report with the recommendations from the Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee. Council's role is to approve or reject each recommendation. They will have access to nomination forms, letters of support and testimonials, as required. Council's decision is final.
- 7.2 The Chair of Council will then contact all nominees and the main nominators to let them know the outcome.

We won't be able to share information or reasons about why a nomination was or wasn't approved.

RCOT is the administrator for the Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee.

8. Help and guidance

If you experience or anticipate any barriers within the nomination process or require help to access information, please email Fellowship.Awards@rcot.co.uk. Requesting advice, guidance and/or support will not affect the assessment of your nomination.

Dated: November 2024