

RCOT Honorary Fellowship awards

Guidance for nomination 2025

The award of an Honorary Fellowship is a rare award made to individuals who are not occupational therapists or associate members but who have made an exceptional contribution to the work of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) or have supported the profession in a significant way. A Fellowship is the highest honour RCOT can bestow.

1. Who can you nominate?

If you wish to nominate someone for an Honorary Fellowship Award, consider how this person has supported the profession and the impact their support has had.

- a) The nominee will have contributed their exceptional service to RCOT for a sustained period of time.
- b) 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.
- c) The nominee will have made a **consistent and outstanding contribution** to the profession that has led to either a significant impact on occupational therapy practice, education and/or research; or has led to high level influencing or raising the profile of RCOT or the profession of occupational therapy. Consideration could be given to an individual who has:
 - Been influential in supporting the work of RCOT
 - Facilitated high level introductions to participate in meetings that have provided opportunities for RCOT
 - Raised the profile of the work of RCOT over a considerable period of time
 - Identified and developed/progressed new ways of working/service development/enhancement that benefit the users of occupational therapy services
 - Actively supported and promoted RCOT campaigns
 - Supported the professional workforce through initiatives such as inclusion and diversity
 - Raised the profile of the profession with a range of stakeholders
 - Supported learning and development opportunities for occupational therapists
 - Acted as a champion for the occupational therapy workforce at high level meetings
 - Repeatedly supported RCOT and endorsed RCOT key messages via social media
 - Offers their time freely to participate in RCOT governance structures or other significant meetings
 - Ensured the involvement of occupational therapy researchers in high profile research
 - Conducted research that has influenced the practice of occupational therapy at national (in this context national can mean UK-wide or within one of the four UK nations), or international level
 - The nominee may also have influenced the perception of occupational therapy in an international context.

2. Before you start your nomination:

- Make sure that your nominee meets the criteria (part 1)
- Identify another RCOT member who supports this nomination
- Colleagues at RCOT can also submit nominations.
- 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 of the nominee and a second nominator
- 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. They should preferably 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 – a summary:

Question 1. Firstly, we need an overview of the nominee's profile and standing. You have 500 words to do this.

This should explain the uniqueness of the nominee and how their exceptional contribution to the work of RCOT or support for the profession can be demonstrated. What has been special about their contribution; how have they gone beyond the bounds of their job or 'gone the extra mile' for the organisation or the profession. What is the outstanding achievement that has had an impact nationally and UK-wide or internationally?

Question 2. We need to see how they have worked to support RCOT, the professional body. You have a 500-word limit and can use sentences or bullet format.

This could include raising the profile of the profession; or helping to advance the profession in their areas of practice, education and/or research. This could also include where the nominee has inspired and supported occupational therapists on a national or UK-wide or international scale (max 500 words).

Question 3. Please provide details of the nominee's historical involvement either with RCOT or the profession including facts and relevant dates (max 500 words).

Question 4. The nomination form includes a table where you can provide evidence of the impact on the profession that the nominee has made in specific areas.

Your nomination should show how the nominee has influenced on behalf of the occupational therapy profession nationally and UK-wide or internationally; or has made an exceptional contribution to the work of RCOT. This could include:

- Being influential in supporting the work of RCOT
- Facilitated high level introductions to participate in meetings that have provided opportunities for RCOT
- Raised the profile of the work of RCOT over a considerable period of time
- Identified and developed/progressed new ways of working/service development/enhancement that benefit the users of occupational therapy services
- Actively supported and promoted RCOT campaigns
- Raised the profile of the profession with a range of stakeholders.
- Supported learning and development opportunities for occupational therapists
- Acted as a champion for the occupational therapy workforce at high level meetings

- Repeatedly supported RCOT and endorsed RCOT key messages via social media
- Offered their time freely to participate in RCOT governance structures or other significant meetings
- Ensured the involvement of occupational therapy researchers in high profile research.
- Conducted research that has influenced the practice of occupational therapy at national (in this context national can mean UK-wide or within one of the four UK nations), or international level
- The nominee may also have influenced the perception of occupational therapy in an international context.

You may feel that your example spans one or more areas, so do include the ones which you see as relevant.

For example:

What has the nominee done to influence the occupational therapy profession nationally and UK-wide or internationally?	Explain why this was needed/relevant.	Describe the impact that this had. What is different?
e.g. your answer might address how they have raised the profile of the profession	Your answer should show why this was important, what gap this was filling.	Your answer should answer the 'So What' question? How specifically has this made a difference to the profession across the UK or internationally? Facts and data may help to illustrate this point if relevant.

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

It is essential to include information on the impact of the activities undertaken by the nominee and the difference this had made. This will help the Fellowship and Merit Awards Committee to identify the nominee's activities that are above and beyond their usual role.

There is no word limit, however, do consider how you are able to relay important information succinctly and impactfully.

Question 5. 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 6. Provide us with a short paragraph, 3 or 4 sentences that we can in our communications and celebration event brochure use 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 the Fellowship and Merit Awards.

5. The process for the RCOT Honorary Fellowship award

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 avoid unnecessary

disappointment.

- 5.1 Once you decide to nominate an individual for an award, as the main nominator you will need to ask one other RCOT member to support the nomination and sign the nomination form.
- 5.2 If you are a member of staff from RCOT, you need to ask a non RCOT staff member to support the nomination and sign the nomination form.
- 5.2 You should work with the other nominator 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 to enable the committee to make an objective decision.
- 5.4 All information submitted must be typed and in electronic format. Please note that if acronyms are being used throughout the nomination form, they need to be initially explained in full.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 Include two letters of support/ or testimonials.
 - Individuals with first-hand knowledge of the nominee should write these. They can endorse their contribution or supply additional information.
 - They should preferably be written by RCOT members, occupational therapy colleagues, senior managers, other senior individuals, or by the other nominator.
 - Consider who is writing the letters of support or testimonials as their position/role will influence the decision of the committee.
 - These statements should confirm the impact and contribution the nominee has made to the occupational therapy profession.
 - They 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 no 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 that have nominated you and should not be a spouse/ partner or close relatives.
- 5.8 An accompanying CV for the nominee is optional and should be no longer than four sides of A4.
- 5.9 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.

- 5.10 Supporting materials must not include promotional material and personal data for example, data that may identify a patient.
- 5.10 Once you're finished with 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 key information and signatures from main and other nominator and nominee
 - ii) Two letters of support or testimonials
 - iii) A statement from the nominee
 - iv) CV (optional)
 - v) Publications list if appropriate

When we receive your nomination, we will email you (as the main nominator) to confirm receipt.

- 5.11 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.
- 5.12 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 Fellowships 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 collate 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 approve. 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, after the Awards event.

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 contact all nominees and the chief nominators to inform them of 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