

# RCOT Board: Research and Development

Terms of Reference (2022)

## **Purpose of all RCOT Boards:** (Agreed at Council in January 2011)

- All Boards are advisory in nature and do not directly manage operations as this is the responsibility of the RCOT Assistant Directors
- RCOT Boards provide a forum whereby members can influence and inform the work of the College i.e. they provide a place where experts come together to inform the College
- RCOT Boards are useful “sounding boards” for the organisation
- Boards help to identify key individuals to assist with specialist items of work or represent the College
- Boards help develop core team business plans
- Board members provide an opportunity for two-way communication back to the membership
- All Boards should encourage RCOT membership recruitment

**Accountable to: BAOT/RCOT Council**

## **1. Roles**

### **1.1 Strategic**

- To support the delivery of the RCOT Research and Development Strategy in partnership with the Education and Research Team.
- To support the work of RCOT and encourage the identification, development and uptake of research career pathways by occupational therapists.
- To identify gaps in research evidence relevant to the profession together with funding opportunities to facilitate research to address these gaps.

### **1.2 Advisory**

- To support the Education and Research team in the delivery of the Education and Research Core Business Plan and RCOT Annual Workplan as identified and appropriate.
- To contribute each business year to two or three items of work from either the Annual Workplan or Education and Research Core Business Plan as agreed by Assistant Director - Education and Research and Chair of RCOT Board: Research and Development. (Council April 18)

- To highlight key stakeholders with whom it may be appropriate and relevant for RCOT to develop partnerships in relation to promoting and supporting occupational therapy research and development.
- To advise on strategies to promote the uptake by the membership of emerging evidence underpinning and informing occupational therapy practice.

## **2. Responsibilities**

- 2.1 To be aware of and advise on research policy that influences and impacts on initiatives related to research and development, outcome measures, and research governance.
- 2.2 To support and be involved in activities that promote clinical academic and other research career pathways and building research capacity within the profession.
- 2.3 To promote funding opportunities for occupational therapy research through partnership working and the development of strategic alliances. This may include membership of, and links with, other national organisations.
- 2.4 To provide leadership to encourage members to use research and evidence based practice to inform the development of high quality occupational therapy services.
- 2.5 To act as ambassadors for the organisation, the profession and the RCOT Research Foundation.
- 2.6 To promote the importance of robust evidence of clinical and cost effectiveness, and the availability of the knowledge base of the profession via local, regional and national networks and to identify research that is potentially 'newsworthy'.
- 2.7 To provide a steer to the work of the RCOT Awards Panel and the management of the College's Annual Awards.
- 2.8 To identify reviewers and suggest expert members to inform the work of the RCOT Research Foundation.
- 2.9 To promote the value of membership of RCOT to potential new and existing members.

## **3. Membership**

- 3.1 Board membership will not exceed eight members (Co-opted members are in addition).
- 3.2 Although a representative model does not apply, membership of the Board will be drawn from RCOT members with as wide a variety of working and geographical backgrounds as possible and based on the business needs of the Board.
- 3.3 Board vacancies will be advertised, and the Board will select the successful applicants from nominees using the agreed criteria set to ensure the appropriate skill mix of Board members. The Board administrator and RCOT staff will help support this process.
- 3.4 The Board has the power to co-opt up to two members for one year to support the business

of the organisation within the agreed budget. These members will not have voting power. (Further details on the process for appointment can be found in the Induction Handbook).

- 3.5 The Board will include within the eight members a BAOT/UNISON regional steward, who will be elected by their country and/or BAOT/UNISON OT regional fora. (Country Boards only)
- 3.6 Board members must be working and / or resident within the geographical remit of the board. (Country Boards only)
- 3.7 The Board should ensure attention is paid to effective succession planning with this as a standard agenda item at the first two meetings of the RCOT year.

## 4. Rules

- 4.1 All Board members must be members of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists.
- 4.2 The Board Chair will be elected by Council.
- 4.3 A Vice-Chair will be elected annually by Board members.
- 4.4 Full attendance at the board is expected. Any member who fails to attend two consecutive meetings in any one board year without providing a good reason prior to the meeting will be deemed to have resigned. The Chair reserves the right to request further explanation or resignation where absence affects the business of the Board.
- 4.5 Board members will normally serve for a period of three years, however if needed in exceptional circumstances, a member of the Board may have their membership extended by one year (this would apply in those circumstances for example where the Board has failed to recruit a Board member or as part of succession planning).
- 4.6 When any member completes a term of office, at least one year should normally lapse before the member is eligible to apply and be considered for a further term of office.
- 4.7 If a board member is elected as Chair, they will serve a term of office in that role for three years but will not be eligible to apply for board membership – either as chair or board member for at least one year.
- 4.8 The membership year for boards and committees commences from the date of the BAOT/RCOT AGM, in line with the Council Year. When a member joins a board or committee at another point in the year, say when a resignation occurs, the member's term of office will commence from the following AGM.
- 4.9 The Boards are budgeted to only support the funding and staffing for three meetings per year. However, an additional topic-specific virtual meeting can take place if required.
- 4.10 A quorum shall be four members, one of whom must be the Chair or Vice-Chair. If the meeting is not quorate, no decisions can be made at the meeting.
- 4.11 RCOT members may request to observe a meeting of the Board through the Board administrator. Reference should be made by the Board to the 'Policy on observers at Council meetings' and the Induction Handbook when confirming attendance.

## **5. Administration and support**

- 5.1 The Board Chair will be responsible for preparing an annual report on their Board's activity for Council's June meeting.
- 5.2 The administration of the Board will be supported by the Board Administrator and RCOT Staff.
- 5.3 In preparing the agenda for Board meetings, the Board Administrator will ask Board members and relevant RCOT staff for agenda items (normally about 6 weeks) before the meeting. The agenda will be finalised with the Chair and the relevant Assistant Director and those presenting papers advised. The agenda and papers will be sent out two weeks before the meeting.
- 5.4 The draft minutes will normally be checked by the relevant Assistant Director (AD) before passing to the Board Chair for approval. Unconfirmed minutes should normally be with Board members three weeks post Board meeting.
- 5.5 The Board Administrator will keep the Board web page up to date in the agreed format.
- 5.6 The AD will be responsible for an annual budget for the Board. This budget will normally cover running costs including members' travel expenses in accordance with the RCOT expenses policy.
- 5.7 Board members' expenses will be submitted to the Board Administrator for counter signing by relevant RCOT staff within three months from the date of expenditure. An expense claim will normally be paid within two weeks of receipt.
- 5.8 The Board Administrator will need to ensure a copy of the confirmed Board minutes is retained for archiving. Copies of Board minutes will be sent to Board members with the papers for the subsequent meeting. Copies should be made available to BAOT members on request.

## **6. Review date**

- 6.1 Terms of Reference to be reviewed every 5 years. This version was revised in 2022 and approved by Council on 7 February 2022.