

UK Policy and Public Affairs Manager

Role profile

About us

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) is the UK's professional membership body for occupational therapy. We lead, uphold and advance excellence within the profession through research, the development and delivery of evidence-based standards and guidance, the provision of professional development, and the accreditation and enhancement of education. We champion and advocate for the professional standing of occupational therapists and position the profession to have maximum impact in improving people's health, wellbeing, participation through occupations, and quality of life now and for future generations.

Our values

We Impact	We make meaningful differences with all our work. We prioritise work that achieves our shared purpose and strategy. We go above and beyond for the people who need us.
We Challenge	We find new and better ways to make things happen. We are brave and bold in our ideas and actions. We challenge ourselves, each other and the status quo.
We Elevate	We lift up and support others to be and do their best. We are accessible and collaborative. We are united and move forward together, even if we sometimes disagree.
We Respect	We value each other and celebrate our differences. We are approachable, genuine and trustworthy. We listen to others and believe everyone's views should be heard.

Practice, Innovation and Advocacy Directorate

In Practice, Innovation and Advocacy, our goal is to ensure that we, and the profession, have a strong voice nationally and an international presence. We work with members, external stakeholders, and partners to strengthen the evidence base that shows the impact of occupational therapy including through the development of guidelines, standards and other evidence-based resources. We champion a culture of research and service innovation; and drive forward and support pre-registration education pathways to build a resilient and sustainable workforce. We support and promote the development of all occupational therapy practitioners, especially those from historically marginalised and under-represented communities, to be where they want to be, at each stage in their career.

The purpose of your role

As UK Policy and Public Affairs Manager, you'll lead RCOT's engagement with UK Parliament, government officials, health and social care arm's length bodies and other key stakeholders. You'll help shape national health and social care legislation, policy and professional standards and practice guidance, ensuring the voice and expertise of occupational therapy is represented in the decisions that affect the profession and the people it supports.

You'll build RCOT's reputation as the recognised authority on occupational therapy and its impact on health and wellbeing, championing the contribution of occupational therapy across health, social care, education, employment, housing and the independent, voluntary and social enterprise sectors.

Working within the External Affairs team, as part of the wider Advocacy and Communications function, you'll play a central role in coordinating RCOT's influencing, advocacy and public affairs activity. You will work across policy, campaigns, media, social media and professional practice teams to ensure our messages, stakeholder engagement and influencing activity are clear, consistent and impactful.

You'll lead external stakeholder engagement for our new campaign programme, working closely with the Head of External Affairs, Professional Advisors, campaigns, media and social media colleagues. You will also line manage a dynamic and supportive team of Policy and Public Affairs Leads in each nation, supporting a coordinated UK-wide approach to influencing and advocacy.

This is an opportunity to help shape the next phase of RCOT's advocacy work, bringing your experience and ideas to a team that is ambitious about the difference it can make.

This is an important and exciting period of growth for RCOT's policy and public affairs work. We have launched a new corporate strategy, which sets out a clear ambition to strengthen our influence and raise the profile of occupational therapy across the UK.

Our members are ambitious for RCOT's role in shaping the future of occupational therapy and want to see us build on our strong foundations to have an even greater voice in policy and public debate. We are responding by investing in our advocacy and public affairs capacity, creating new opportunities to extend our reach and influence.

This role is ideal for someone with strong policy and public affairs experience who is ready to take their next step. You'll bring your existing expertise while having the opportunity to develop your leadership, try new approaches and help shape how we work. You'll be joining a welcoming and collaborative team where there is genuine scope to make your mark.

Your main responsibilities	What you bring to the role
Operational delivery • Work closely with the Associate Director of Advocacy and Communications, Head of External Affairs, Profession Practice Manager and other colleagues on the development and delivery of influencing strategies including campaigns on behalf of the profession. • Work with the Membership Engagement team to engage and mobilise members in RCOT's influencing activity, developing their advocacy skills and supporting them to represent occupational therapy effectively with political, policy and system decision makers. • Provide strategic political and policy intelligence to senior leaders and colleagues, enabling timely decision making and positioning RCOT to respond proactively to emerging opportunities, risks and developments. • Line manage and direct three Policy and Public Affairs Leads. • Translate political and policy intelligence into strategic insight, identifying opportunities to advance RCOT's influencing priorities and strengthen the profession's voice in decision making. • Analyse the monitoring received from the public affairs agencies and other sources and keep key	• Experience of line managing others and managing relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders. • Ability to innovatively and creatively apply influencing techniques and tactics to promote the profession • Good understanding of health and social care policy and knowledge of structures and processes in the UK political system. • Excellent networking skills with experience managing and working within networks and coalitions for lobbying and advocacy purposes. • Project management skills, evidence of planning, developing, delivering, and evaluating a project. • Experience of analysing and synthesising data from a variety of sources to produce accurate written reports/ information. • Proactive attitude to work, willingness to learn and ability to take ownership and prioritise own workload to meet deadlines. • Developed written and verbal communication skills including presentation and report-writing skills.

RCOT staff abreast of policy developments, related to the profession. • Working closely with the Head of External Affairs and Associate Director of Communication and Advocacy to ensure that RCOT messages and UK campaigning and advocacy are integrated and consistent. • Position occupational therapy and RCOT as influential and trusted voices in health and social care policy by building strategic relationships with key political influencers, decision makers and system leaders across the UK. • Identify and secure strategic lobbying opportunities, ensuring that the RCOT maximises such opportunities through policy and public affairs engagement. • Capitalise on opportunities to strengthen RCOT's influence and advance occupational therapy priorities through strategic engagement with key stakeholders and decision makers. • Develop and provide written or oral briefings to MPs, Peers, and others including government officials, and other key decision makers on RCOT key policies and campaigns. • Lead on policy work including consultation responses, select committee inquiries etc. • Build alliances and relationships with a range of organisations key stakeholders and influencers to build support for campaigning priorities: • Utilise identified stakeholders to carry out Parliamentary activity, including raising parliamentary questions, debates, contributions, etc. • Maintain a database of political contacts and an advocacy calendar for accurate targeting, ensuring all political contact is recorded systematically. • Translate occupational therapy evidence from members into influencing materials i.e. using narratives from members.	• An inquisitive approach to trialling, testing and innovating, in order to do more, better. • Comfortable using metrics to measure success of initiatives, and to ensure continuous improvement and development. • Confident and proficient in using digital technologies to work collaboratively and productively in a hybrid working model, championing and promoting new ways of working. • Confident interpersonal skills, with the ability to talk to colleagues at all levels and provide advice to different audiences. • High levels of self-motivation, enthusiasm and passion for the professional field you represent. • An enthusiasm to live and model RCOT values across all areas of work. • A passion for embedding environmental sustainability principles across all areas of work. • High levels of self-motivation, enthusiasm and passion for the professional field you represent. • A passion for including equity, diversity and belonging principles across all areas of work. • Work collaboratively and communicate clearly, demonstrating our values and ways of working
Values, culture and leadership • Live our values in all that you do; celebrate it when colleagues live our values and raise it, respectfully, when they don't. • Manage and empower your team to deliver impact for our members and colleagues • Have regular conversations about objectives, wellbeing and performance (data, impact and outcomes). • Coach colleagues to take ownership of their career development, offering support and guidance as needed.	

This role profile outlines the main responsibilities of the role but is not exhaustive. You may also be asked to take on other reasonable duties appropriate to the role.

Your main relationship will be with:

- Associate Director of Advocacy and Communications
- Head of External Affairs
- Professional Practice Manager

A bit more about the role

- **You will report to:** Head of External Affairs
- **Your contract will be:** Permanent
- **You'll work:** Full-time 35 hours per week
- **You'll be based:** London Bridge but is a hybrid role, working flexibly between home and other environments
- **You'll be paid:** Circa £59,000 per annum

What we will offer you

- **Holiday entitlement** – 25 days
- **Christmas closure** – we're closed over the Christmas period. Additional time will be given to all employees to cover any working days during this period.
- **Pension scheme** – RCOT operates a contributory pension scheme, you are eligible to join this scheme from your date of commencement. Contributions are made on a salary exchange basis and are 6% of gross salary from the employee and 9% from the employer.
- **Life cover** – four times annual salary.
- Free **eyesight testing**.
- Free **Health and wellbeing app**.
- **Flexibility** through a hybrid working model, which offers a blend of home and office-based working, with a minimum of one office day a week.
- **Supportive networks and inclusive team** - we have several colleague networks to support colleagues and provide a space for discussion and reflection, as well as promote allyship.

Equity, Diversity & Belonging

As a membership organisation, a professional body, and an employer, RCOT is committed to leading innovative change to promote equity and social justice and build a sense of belonging for all our staff, members, and the populations we serve. Our ambition is to have a diverse workforce that is representative of the communities we serve. We don't only embrace diversity, we celebrate it, nurture it and support our staff in realising their true potential. We are passionate about creating an environment free from discrimination and harassment where people can be their authentic self and recognise that each of us is unique. Therefore, our definition of diversity goes beyond those defined in equality legislation and we will afford the same standards and principles to those with lived experiences.

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and are keen to see applications from people with lived experience of disability or long-term health conditions, from minoritised ethnic and LGBTQI+ communities.