

Our Equity, Diversity and Belonging Strategy

2024 to 2027

Easy read booklet



Who we are and what we do



We are the **Royal College of Occupational Therapists**. We are the **membership body** for **occupational therapists** in the UK.



The **membership body** means we are the organisation occupational therapists can pay money to belong to. We give our members advice, training and support, so they give people good care.



Occupational therapists help people who find daily tasks and activities difficult. This might be because they are ill or have a disability.



They help people find new ways to do daily tasks and activities, so they can be more **independent**. This means they can do things for themselves.

About this booklet



This booklet is our **Equity, Diversity and Belonging Strategy**. We call this our **EDB Strategy** for short.



Our **EDB Strategy** is our plan to stop **racism, discrimination and injustice** in our organisation and in occupational therapy.



Racism is when you are treated unfairly because of your background or skin colour.



Discrimination is when you are treated unfairly because of things like your age, gender, religion, background or a disability you have.



Injustice is when you are treated unfairly.

What Equity, Diversity and Belonging mean to us



We thought a lot about the name of our **EDB Strategy**. We chose the words **Equity, Diversity** and **Belonging** because



- **Equity** means we will help people in the right way for them, so everyone can have what they need to make the most of their life.



- People have lots of different needs, backgrounds and **experience**. **Diversity** means we will **recognise, respect, value** and **celebrate** everyone.



Experience is when you have done something before and become good at it, or when you have learnt from things in the past.



Recognise means we know about you and your needs.



Respect means we will think about how you feel and treat you in the right way.



Value means we know you are important.



Celebrate means we will show you are important.



- **Belonging** means we all feel welcome and can be ourselves.

Why we wrote our EDB Strategy



Occupational therapists help lots of different types of people. For example, people of different of ages, **genders**, **religions** and backgrounds.



Your **gender** is whether you are male, female or any other identity.



Your **religion** is your faith or what you believe in, for example you might be Christian or Muslim.



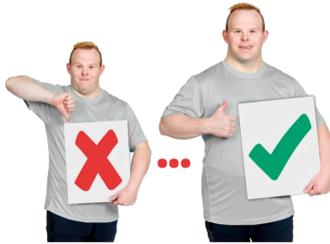
But there are not as many different types of people in our organisation or working as occupational therapists.



The **Royal College of Occupational Therapists** have done things wrong. For example, sometimes we did not listen when people told us about discrimination. We did not help them quickly enough or give them the right support.



This is bad for our members, the people they help, and the people who are learning to be occupational therapists.



We want to change. We want to work with our members and other people to make our equity, diversity and belonging better.



We want to stop racism and discrimination.



We want our organisation and the people who are occupational therapists to be more diverse too.



We need to do some things in our **EDB Strategy** because it is the **law**. But we want to do more than the law says. **Laws** are rules that protect people and make sure everyone is treated in a good and fair way.

About our EDB Strategy



To write our **EDB Strategy** we listened to our members, our **staff** and other people involved with occupational therapy.



Staff are the people who work for us.

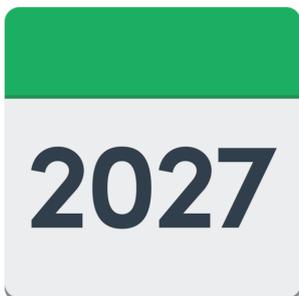
We will work with our staff, members, **volunteers**, **partners**, and other organisations to make sure our **EDB Strategy** works.



Volunteers are people who work for free.



Our **partners** are organisations we work closely with.



By 2027, we want everyone to know we work hard to have equity and **justice**.

Justice is when you are treated fairly.

About our EDB Strategy

Our priorities



We have **6 priorities**. Our **priorities** are the things that are most important to us and that we will do first.

1 Be responsible



We will be **responsible** for equity, diversity and belonging in our organisation and for occupational therapists.



Responsible means we will make sure we do all the things we are meant to.



We will show everyone that equity, diversity and belonging are a part of everything we do.

2 Have good leaders



We want to have good **leaders**.
Leaders are the people who manage our organisation and make important choices.



Good leaders

- behave in the right way to stop racism and discrimination.
- support people who are treated in an unfair way because of racism or discrimination.



We will make the kind of changes in our organisation that we want other people to make too.

3 Be diverse



We want our organisation and people who are occupational therapists to match the diversity of people in the UK.



To be more diverse, we will make it easier for people from different backgrounds to join our organisation and be occupational therapists.



We will talk about and do work on equity, diversity and belonging with our partners.



We will work with **community groups** to try make sure people from **under-represented backgrounds** can get help from occupational therapists.

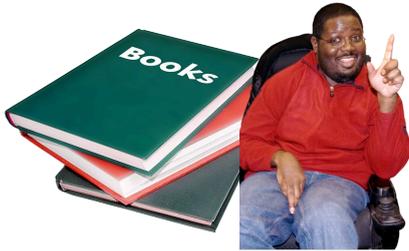


Community groups are groups of people in your local area who work together to help with a certain problem.



Under-represented backgrounds means there are not as many people from these backgrounds compared to people from other backgrounds.

4 Be knowledgeable



Knowledgeable means you know lots about something.



We will make sure everyone who works for us knows lots about equity, diversity and belonging, so they can support others.



We will work with and learn from other organisations and groups that also care about equity, diversity and belonging.

5 Be safe and inclusive



We want our staff and occupational therapists to feel safe, included and to be healthy.



We will always think about how important diversity is when we talk to other people and other organisations.



We will help occupational therapists from under-represented backgrounds to do their job well.

6 Be honest



We will be honest and tell everyone about our **EDB Strategy** and the changes we make.



We will think about the changes that work well and the ones that do not work well.



We will understand that everyone needs different things to do well at their job.



We will find out the best way to support our staff by looking at what has helped before and what has not.

Our action plan



We have an **action plan** to make sure we do our 6 priorities.



An **action plan** tells you all the things we will do to make our 6 priorities happen.



Our action plan will be on our website in January 2024. You can find it at rcot.co.uk/EDBstrategy



We will share the work we do to make our 6 priorities happen, each year.

The full version of this document is called
'Equity, Diversity and Belonging Strategy'
and can be found on our website at
rcot.co.uk/EDBstrategy