

Make your vote count – 2026 BAOT Council Member elections

About Council

Council is the policymaking forum and governing body for the organisation. Council members form the Board of Directors of BAOT. They are also members of the Board of Directors and Board of Trustees of RCOT, the charitable company that is BAOT's subsidiary. They are responsible for controlling the management and administration of both the organisations, their aims and direction, property and finances.

Council members work closely with the Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the business and professional objectives of both organisations are met. The collective responsibilities of Council are:

- Support and provide advice on BAOT and RCOT's purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Set the strategic direction of the organisation and monitor progress against agreed strategic priorities.
- Approve operational strategies and policies, and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee BAOT and RCOT's financial plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of both organisations.
- Ensure that key risks are being identified, monitored and controlled effectively.
- Review and approve BAOT and RCOT's financial statements.
- Provide support and constructive challenge to the Chief Executive in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in BAOT and RCOT's operating environment.
- Ensure that the organisation's governance arrangements are effective, well implemented and monitored and regularly reviewed.
- Promote and support effective communications with the membership.
- Promote the organisation to a wider audience and contribute to the future development of the profession and the organisation.

The Council member elections are democratic and run according to Trade Union law. Find out more about the Council Member role on our website <https://www.rcot.co.uk/council-elections-2026>. Here you will find:

- Videos of candidates
- Council member role descriptions

We encourage all members to view the above information before voting so that you can fully understand the requirements of the role before selecting your preferred candidate.

Duties of trustees of a charity under the Charities Act 2011

Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of their charity, ensuring that it is solvent and well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it was set up. Before you vote, we recommend reading the information on the Charity Commission website about the 6 main charity trustee duties

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved>

Roles for election

Please read the candidate statements that follow before voting on the following vacancies:

- Council member, Research and Development
- Council member, Industrial relations

Industrial Relations Council Member

Metian Parsanka



I am an Advanced Clinical Practice Occupational Therapist working in emergency care, specialising in frailty services and supporting system-wide patient flow within a high-pressure NHS environment. My experience at both clinical and strategic levels equips me to contribute effectively to the governance and oversight of the British Association of Occupational Therapists and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

I have a strong track record of championing occupational therapists and the wider workforce. Through my involvement with Unison, I have represented and advocated for staff, supporting fair outcomes and strengthening the voice of the profession. I am also actively engaged with RCOT at a national level, contributing to workforce planning discussions and consultations that shape the future of occupational therapy.

My commitment to the profession extends to education and development. I have designed and delivered programmes to support career progression, led professional forums, and contributed to initiatives that strengthen workforce capability and retention. These experiences align closely with the strategic vision and priorities of BAOT and RCOT, particularly in developing a resilient, skilled, and supported workforce.

I bring strong leadership, sound judgement, and the ability to analyse complex challenges and translate them into practical solutions. I build effective relationships across disciplines and foster collaborative environments where diverse perspectives are valued.

What sets me apart is my combination of frontline insight, national engagement, and a clear commitment to advocacy and improvement. I am passionate about strengthening industrial relations, supporting members, and ensuring occupational therapists are empowered, represented, and heard.

I will bring a focused, collaborative, and strategic approach to this role, working to advance the profession and deliver meaningful change for our members.

Dawn Ward



I am a Senior Occupational Therapist with over twenty years of experience across health and social care, specialising in integrated community care, and eighteen years as an accredited trade union representative. I am standing for the Council Member Industrial Relations seat for BAOT and the Royal College of Occupational Therapy (RCOT), seeking to contribute my clinical credibility, governance experience, and strategic leadership to advancing the profession.

My practice background spans a range of services, providing a clear understanding of the challenges facing occupational therapists, including workforce sustainability, service redesign, and evidence impact within integrated care systems. I hold an MSc in Advanced Practice, alongside postgraduate qualifications in mentoring and professional research, supporting RCOT's strategic priorities around professional excellence, leadership development, and research-informed practice.

I bring substantial experience in governance and strategic oversight. As an independent trade union member on a Health Board, I have operated within corporate governance frameworks, contributing to assurance, risk management and collective decision-making. I am a Branch Secretary, have

chaired the Regional Health Committee for eight years, and sit on the Health Service Group Executive, influencing workforce strategy and policy at regional and national levels. These roles have strengthened my ability to balance membership with organisational responsibility. Championing occupational therapists and the wider profession has been central to my career. Through long-standing representative leadership, I have advocated for professional recognition, safe practice, equality, and workforce wellbeing, aligning closely with RCOT's role as a strong professional and industrial voice.

I have supported BAOT and RCOT's strategic vision by promoting professional standards, engaging with guidance and consultations, and supporting implementation at service level. My vision is for a confident, influential profession embedded within integrated care, prevention, and population health.

I offer a grounded, value-driven perspective combining senior practice, industrial relations leadership, and governance for BAOT and RCOT.

Research and Development Council Member

Kim Griffin



Hi everyone, my name is Kim Griffin and I'm an independent paediatric OT based in London. I'm applying to be the R&D Trustee as I am passionate about making research accessible to clinicians.

With nearly 25 years of experience working across social care, schools, hospitals, and independent practice, I will bring significant clinical expertise to the RCOT Board. Additionally, I supervise OTs, deliver training, and teach on undergraduate courses, which provides me with insights into the challenges facing students, newly qualified practitioners, and experienced clinicians alike.

Alongside my clinical work, I am undertaking my PhD, exploring how OTs and teachers support students' self-regulation skills in schools. This gives me insight into both worlds. As R&D trustee, one of my key priorities will be ensuring research evidence is accessible to clinicians. I am committed to translating research into practical tools that strengthen both evidence-based practice and our professional credibility. One way I do this is through my podcast.

My nearly 20-year RCOT membership includes serving as Treasurer for the CYPF Specialist Section, giving me valuable insight into the organisation's history. I recognise there has been a gap during the transition to the Communities model. As R&D trustee, I want to help shape this new structure, so it genuinely supports clinicians with practical evidence-based guidance that enhances their day-to-day work.

One thing that distinguishes me as a candidate is my dual perspective. I maintain direct clinical practice 1-2 days weekly in schools whilst undertaking PhD research. This keeps me grounded in practitioners' daily realities. My early-stage research journey allows me to identify barriers to research engagement with a "beginner's mind". I see this as a strength that positions me to bridge the research-to-practice gap, making research meaningful to clinicians and ensuring clinicians can actively participate in research.

Rosie Hughes



Thank you for taking the time to read my election statement. I am standing for the role of Council Member, Research and Development and hope that the information below provides a snapshot of my experience and suitability for the role. I came to occupational therapy via a less traditional route, starting in marketing management before transitioning from private industry to allied health. I have since worked in community mental health, run clinical trials in respiratory medicine, completed my PhD in Health Services Research and moved into strategic programme management, initially in cardiovascular disease and now neurology and neurosurgery.

My current role involves supporting colleagues to increase their research confidence and involvement, alongside coordinating research grant applications and managing digital transformation projects to enhance access to research-ready data for applied health research. I am partially seconded to an intergenerational charity pioneering creative approaches to age-friendly community care, bringing together individuals of all ages to promote increased citizenship, local pride and tailored support through shared learning and wellbeing initiatives.

I champion our profession widely and am unafraid to challenge engrained views and processes in pursuit of positive change. I would welcome the opportunity to apply my understanding of research and innovation, corporate governance and system change initiatives to represent our membership in line with BAOT and RCOT's strategic ambitions. Current pressure on our health and care services necessitates nimble, innovative approaches and we must continue to promote our profession as a key player in implementing the government's three shifts (hospital to community; analogue to digital; sickness to prevention) through our creative, solution-focused approach to care, underpinned by research-driven, evidence-based practice. I hope that I am able to represent you during the coming term and help our profession continue to push boundaries and maximise our impact in a changing health and care landscape.

Blaine Robin



I would like you to cast your vote for me as a vocal advocate for social equity in all aspects of the research process. Since qualifying in 1994 I achieved clinical experience across diverse settings, including inpatient Medical Assessment Units, Orthopaedics, Surgery, Medicine for the Elderly, and Local Authority Children's and Adult Services. I am proud to have held pioneering role-emerging positions as an elected politician in Southend-on-Sea (2008–2012) and as a Board Member of South Essex Homes (2008–2012).

I am currently involved in key projects exploring health screening among Black populations (Teesside University) and epistemic patient safety among minoritised communities (King's College London). I am deeply committed to supporting Occupational Therapists and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT). From 2022 to 2025, I served on the RCOT Research Expert Advisory Group, helping to advance RCOT's strategic vision by supporting the award of grants to Occupational Therapists leading research bids. I also played a role in influencing the British Journal of Occupational Therapy to produce its first-ever Special Issue series on Race, Culture and Occupational Therapy, due in 2026.

In addition, I serve as a trustee of the charity GOLD, which raises awareness of kidney donation within the Black community. I contribute to the profession as an external examiner and PhD supervisor at several UK universities. I am Associate Editor for two academic journals – Groupwork and The Human Occupation & Wellbeing Journal – and co-editor of the Caribbean Perspectives of Occupational Therapy in the United Kingdom, due for publication in 2026.

This body of work directly supports RCOT's core strategic priority Rise Up: to be bold, progressive advocates and champions, raising the profile and voice of occupational therapy so that more people understand its transformative power. I would be honoured to represent you and advance these vital priorities.

Derek Sleater



As an occupational therapist and leader of a care organisation, I work every day at the intersection of workforce pressures, service delivery, and the realities facing the people and communities we serve.

I've worked across the NHS, social services, and independent practice for over 20 years, and I understand both the value our profession brings - and the barriers that can limit our impact.

Too often, occupational therapy is under-recognised, under-utilised, or not fully represented in strategic decision-making. I want to help change that.

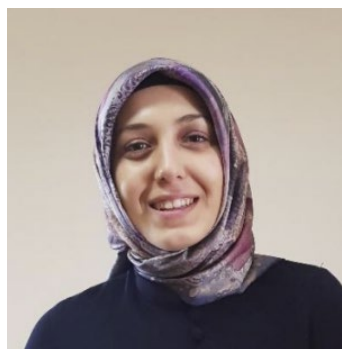
I'm particularly interested in how research, innovation, and emerging areas of practice can

strengthen the profession - ensuring occupational therapy continues to evolve and demonstrate its impact. Alongside this, I am developing new models of practice and exploring the use of AI to better support service delivery and outcomes.

I believe Council needs members who can connect frontline realities with governance, strategy, and the development of the profession.

If elected, I will contribute constructively, challenge where needed, and support the continued growth, visibility, and impact of occupational therapy.

Zeynep Celik Turan



I am an occupational therapist, Lecturer in Occupational Therapy at Brunel University London, and a research active academic with a strong track record in advancing occupational therapy knowledge and practice. My work spans over nine peer-reviewed publications, two edited books, more than fifteen book chapters, and international conference presentations, alongside leading a funded international research project as Principal Investigator.

My experience across research, education, and international collaboration has given me a clear understanding of the structural challenges facing research engagement within occupational therapy. I have worked across the UK and Europe, contributing to interdisciplinary and multi-country projects, and I am particularly committed to strengthening research capacity across the profession. My focus is on making research more accessible, practice relevant, and embedded within everyday clinical and educational contexts.

I am particularly passionate about supporting the development of sustainable research pathways, enabling wider participation across career stages, and ensuring that evidence is meaningfully translated into practice. These priorities align closely with RCOT's Research and Innovation Strategy, particularly in building workforce capacity, capability, and a culture where research is seen as integral to professional practice rather than an additional expectation.

As a trustee, I would bring a strategic and systems-level perspective, informed by my leadership roles in higher education and my active involvement in research, publication, and international collaboration. I would contribute to strengthening RCOT's research and development agenda by supporting inclusive research opportunities, promoting evidence-informed decision-making, and enhancing the visibility and impact of occupational therapy research across the UK.

I am committed to representing the diversity of the occupational therapy workforce and to supporting RCOT in advancing a strong, visible, and sustainable research culture that benefits practitioners, services, and the communities we serve.