

UKCP Chair and Trustee Elections 2025 – Questions for written responses
Bill Adlard– trustee candidate

- 1) Should the government introduce statutory regulation, to what extent do you think that it will protect the public, boost the perception of psychotherapy as a robust discipline, and lead to more opportunities for psychotherapeutic professionals?

a) Protection of the public

The main difference this will make is that it will be illegal to refer to yourself as a psychotherapist unless you are registered with the government's statutory registration body. That could provide protection to the public from anyone who is not properly trained or qualified. The danger is that the introduction of statutory regulation will lead to a dilution of standards in order to create a tick-box type of framework which can be administered by civil servants.

b) Boosting the perception of psychotherapy as a robust discipline

That rather depends on whether standards in a statutory regime can be maintained as they are at present. It also depends on whether all the modalities of psychotherapy that can be registered with UKCP at present are able to be registered with the statutory body. One reason for the creation of UKCP was that certain kinds of psychotherapy such as body psychotherapy could not be fitted into a statutory framework.

c) More opportunities for psychotherapeutic professionals

If standards are effectively lowered or diluted, then there is a chance that more people will become registered and that would lead to more competition for the available opportunities for psychotherapists. I think that the creation of more opportunities for psychotherapists depends mostly upon how much priority is given to psychotherapy in the NHS.

- 2) How will candidates ensure UKCP has the diversity necessary for good therapy to exist?

Diversity is a very wide ranging concept, and includes:

Race

Ethnicity

Gender: a person's gender identity, can include transgender, gender queer, and gender fluid

Sexual orientation

Age

Disability

Religious background

Socioeconomic background

Cultural diversity

Neurodiversity

Geographic location

This is a huge and vital issue, affecting every aspect of how UKCP operates. In outline, I think the goal must be to ensure that members of the public, whatever aspects of diversity or belief they may have, can find a therapist who meets their needs in every respect. That, in turn, means ensuring that trainees and qualified therapists of every type of diversity are not held back or discouraged from training or practising within UKCP, but are included, listened to and properly supported. That will mean UKCP and all the training and accreditation bodies within UKCP in thoroughly auditing their policies and practices.

- 3) The board presented the UKCP three-year strategy to members at the end of last year. How do you propose to support the organisation to deliver on that strategy?

Thankfully, that task will not fall to me alone. All the colleges of UKCP will be actively involved in delivering the strategy and UKCP must help them all along the way. I particularly want to be available to my former colleagues in the management committee of my own college, HIPC, in any way I can to help with this. My understanding is that the strategic plan for the next three years sets out the longer term goals for the organisation. As well as this three-year vision, each year UKCP will be formulating an action plan for the 12 months ahead within the overall compass of the strategic plan. Both the three-year and the 12 month plan set out a framework which will be monitored and which provides a benchmark against which UKCP's actual performance can be measured.

4) What would be your strategy for raising the profile of UKCP?

UKCP needs to identify and promote its core strength, which is that it is a unique collaboration between practitioners and teaching organisations to establish and uphold the highest standards both in the practice of psychotherapy and in psychotherapy training. I think that more could be done to promote the excellence and diversity of the wide variety of teaching institutions which are part of UKCP. UKCP is working on developing closer contacts with key partners in the media, and on other opportunities which are set out in the strategy for 2024-2027.

5) What is your view of SCoPEd and its impact on the psychotherapy profession?

Concerns have been expressed about ScoPEd, for example that the framework may oversimplify. Alternatively, it has been argued that the system will help maintain standards. This dilemma has existed since the initial discussions which led to the founding of UKCP. UKCP was a solution to this dilemma which recognised different modalities of psychotherapy and allowed standards in those modalities to be set by the practitioners themselves. That approach is embedded in UKCP. As a partner in ScoPEd, UKCP will not allow these standards to be diluted.

6) How would you ensure the safety, wellbeing and rights of trans and other gender non-conforming UKCP members and members of the public?

Under the Equality Act 2010, organisations must not discriminate against anyone in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It has been established in decided cases that non-binary and gender-fluid identities are entitled to protection under the Act under the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. However, gender-critical beliefs are also protected as a "philosophical belief" within the meaning of section 10 of the Act. So it's potentially tricky.

Neither side can prevent the other from freely expressing their protected beliefs. The courts have stated that both beliefs may well be profoundly offensive and even distressing to many others, but they are beliefs that are and must be tolerated in a pluralist society.

However, this is not an absolute freedom. It depends also on the manner in which they are expressed. If they are expressed in a threatening, derogatory or dismissive manner, or in some other hostile manner, that may turn the expression of a protected belief from a lawful act into an unlawful act. The challenge for UKCP is to develop a clear policy on EDI-BIIDE which is respectful to all sides, and upholds fair ethical values for all.

Will Daniel-Braham is the UKCP lead on this and I have every confidence that under his guidance, UKCP will do everything possible to create a safe and inclusive environment for all.

7) How can training environments (teaching and placement settings) in psychotherapy foster a multi-partisan approach that encourages diverse perspectives, critical thinking, and open exploration without fear of judgement or exclusion while balancing the need for psychological safety and mutual respect?

Fostering a multi-partisan approach, encouraging diverse perspectives, critical thinking and open exploration without fear of judgement or exclusion should be at the heart of training in UKCP. These values are set out prominently in the introduction to the strategy for 2024-2027. Every teaching organisation within UKCP has to undergo regular review in which these criteria will be closely monitored.

- 8) How would the candidates balance their own views on social and other issues with the pluralistic stance of UKCP?

As a trustee, my job will be to enhance the pluralism and diversity of UKCP in every possible way. Recognising diversity is at the heart of UKCP. That is why it has 10 colleges each embracing different modalities of psychotherapy. My own voice and my own views will be one voice among many.

- 9) What's your strategy for growing the membership and income for UKCP?

In my view, UKCP needs to make a major effort to promote the advantages of UKCP membership for trainees entering training and for recently qualified therapists. It needs to bring in new members at this early stage in their professional life. We need to establish what people at this stage in their career see as the major challenges ahead, and do our best to provide resources to help. UKCP also needs to retain the members it already has by improving member resources in order to be able to provide ongoing help and support for members throughout their careers.

- 10) Strategy Pillar 1: 'addressing any identified disparities for those who are being trained, those who complete training and those who access training'. The major disparity lies in the massive personal cost of training, which excludes a lot of people. What kind of action do you envisage to address this disparity?

UKCP should see if it is possible to work with regional or national government, or other sources of funding to create a deferred payment system similar to the grant system for universities.