



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Honours – How to prepare a Public Nomination



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DCLG

September 2016

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Text taken from a variety of sources, including guidance from the Cabinet Office; compiled and edited by Jennifer Ryan

The purpose of this guide is to supplement the information and advice available at www.gov.uk/honours

Background:

The aim of the Honours system is to ensure that the large numbers of people not in the public eye who give valuable service to the United Kingdom are recognized for their achievements and the Impact that they have had.

An Honour is a unique form of national recognition. It is a distinctive way of acknowledging someone's impact on UK life, whether they fundraise for a local cause or volunteer at the local school; promote the economy or support one of the Government's particular priorities. There is considerable competition for Honours: each nomination faces rigorous evaluation and decisions are based on the information contained on the nomination form. It is very important that your nomination gives the Government Department and the Independent Sector Committees which make the final decisions the information they need to consider the case fully and in context.

How is a nomination form used?

Within Government Departments, public nomination forms are used to decide which nominations should go forward to be considered further by an Independent Sector Committee. You can view the membership of the Sector Committees at <https://www.gov.uk/honours-committees>.

Once final decisions have been made by the Committees, the nomination forms are used to prepare a briefing for the Prime Minister and Her Majesty the Queen, and to the press when the final Honours list is announced.

Who are we looking for?

Anyone can make a nomination and anyone can be considered; bear in mind that the Honours process is competitive, so not everyone can be successful

We are looking for people who have made a significant contribution and have added extra value to their roles. They are people who are:

- Exceeding the expectations of their role.
- Engaging with their colleagues, peers and the community, and making a positive impact.
- Making a contribution that can be described and recorded on paper.
- Going 'the extra mile' in whatever field they are active.

Identifying suitable candidates can be a challenge; we are looking for people whose community or organisation thinks that they are doing something extraordinary. It is important to consider how the candidate's community or their peers would react to the person receiving an Honour.

What makes a good nomination?

Successful nominations tell an interesting story about the person's achievements and the impact that they have had.

The nomination form and supporting letters are the only evidence that people involved in the Honours process will see about your candidate; so the key to success is the quality of the information on the form.

In most cases your candidate won't be personally known to those making the decisions about them so it is important that you tell an interesting and compelling story on their behalf. The nomination must cover your candidate's impact on their community or organisation and focus on their recent achievements. Think about why your candidate should receive an Honour and remain focused on that; going off on a tangent will reduce the chances of success.

A nomination should not be an extended CV; a list of educational achievements, appointments, awards or posts; or a job description showing what the person has done. This is one of the most common reasons for a nomination to be unsuccessful.

Honours Committees actively look for the impact an individual has had on their community or profession and evidence that the candidate has gone above and beyond what is expected of their usual role. This is particularly the case for business people. Committees regularly reject nominations which do not demonstrate such wider commitment. Competition for Honours is so strong that this is often the dividing line between a successful and unsuccessful nomination. You must make it clear if someone's activities are part of their paid job or additional to it; if the Committee is unsure, they will assume that what is being described is paid activity.

Remember that you are trying to explain why your candidate is being nominated and why they should receive an Honour.

Why should your candidate receive an Honour?

What distinguishes your candidate from other people in a similar role?

You need to set out clearly why your candidate should receive an Honour; follow up with achievements and supporting facts and figures. Make it clear in the first few lines why a nomination is being made; the rest of the text should provide evidence to substantiate this. The nomination should highlight how your candidate's contribution has affected the organisation or community and the outcomes of their activity.

Timing:

Timing is important; many nominations are rejected because they are out of time.

Selection committees are looking for recent achievements and impact, consider what your candidate has done over the last five years.

Candidates should still be active in, or only recently retired from, the work for which they have been nominated.

Once someone has been retired for more than 6-12 months, they are less likely to be successful. The earlier you can make your nomination, the better.

When completing the nomination form you should consider why you are making it now; bear in mind the Public Nomination process can take around 18 months to two years before there is an outcome, so consider the timing of your nomination.

We are looking for candidates with recent achievements and impact; consider what they have achieved in the last five years. Candidates who have significant achievement more than five years ago are frequently unsuccessful because of the high level of competition for an Honour.

Nominations commonly fail if the work happened too long ago. Look for examples of work and achievement from the last five years or the nomination will seem dated.

Timing may be also an issue if your candidate has reached the end of a project or contract or is approaching retirement. Make the nomination as soon as you can and at least 2 years before retirement; try and ensure that your candidate is nominated at least 2 years before retirement to ensure that they are not out of time.

Confidentiality:

As long as you don't tell your candidate, and nor does anyone else, you can talk to anyone you wish in order to get the information you need to draft your nomination. Just explain why you are asking and explain that your conversation or correspondence is in confidence.

It is a myth that Honours nominations cannot be discussed. In fact you can (and should) contact people who know your candidate, such as people at their workplace or their previous managers. As long as you stress that your conversation is confidential and that nothing can be guaranteed regarding an award, feel free to speak to whoever is required to get the relevant information to enable you to present the strongest possible case for the person you are nominating. The only person you shouldn't talk to is the person that you are nominating.

Establish the facts about your candidate

What do they actually do?

Identify what you are nominating your candidate for; this may be an enhanced version of their paid role, it may be their voluntary or charitable work, or it may be in another field entirely. Look for specific achievements. Ensure that you remain focused on current and recent achievements.

Why have they done this work?

Think about their motivation and whether they have taken the initiative to implement a project or piece of work. This could turn a good nomination into an excellent one. Consider:

- Did they volunteer?
- Were they asked to carry out the work?
- Do all their peers undertake this kind of activity?
- Did their predecessor do similar work and what is the candidate doing differently?

You are trying to identify what makes this person different from others in the same or a similar field.

How wide an impact does their work have?

You are not asked to suggest a level of award for your candidate, but it is useful to understand how the awards are made so that you can focus the information you include in your nomination form.

A Knight or Dame candidate will have had a national impact.

Someone receiving a CBE will have had a national impact, but to a lesser extent than someone who has been nominated for a Knighthood or Damehood.

The recipient of an OBE will have had a regional impact.

MBE recipients will be making an impact on a County level.

People who are awarded a BEM (British Empire Medal) will have had an impact on their local community.

When did they do the work?

Nominations commonly fail if the work happened too long ago. Look for examples of work and achievement from the last five years or the nomination will seem dated.

Letters of Support:

You are asked to provide at least two letters of support, make sure you request specific information such as:

Is the nomination supported by the community?

What impact has your candidate had?

What are their most recent (less than five years old) significant achievements?

Remember that quality is better than quantity: you are better off with two or three letters that strongly support your nomination and tell a compelling story about your candidate than 20 letters that say how wonderful your candidate is without saying why.

The quality of information in the letters of support is more important than the quantity; it is preferable to have 2 letters of support that tell a compelling story about your candidate.

Target who you ask and request specific information; lots of letters that merely state how pleasant or deserving the candidate is add little weight to the nomination.

Consider asking for letters of support from:

- A senior person in the organisation or community that your candidate works with.
- High profile members of the community such as MP's or Councillors.
- Someone who regularly works with your candidate.

Ask for letters that:

- Confirm that the person is doing what they are being nominated for and that they are known to the organisation they are associated with.
- Confirm that an Honour would be supported by the community.
- Include significant, recent achievements that the person has made (achievements should be from the last five years).
- Describe the impact that the person has had on their organisation or community. One of the easiest ways to think about impact is to consider what wouldn't exist or happen without your candidate's input.

What information should I include in the Nomination Form?

The most important thing is to provide evidence of what the candidate has done and how they've improved matters for others. Every nomination is different, but it must tell the story of what your candidate has done and put it into context for a reader who won't necessarily have detailed knowledge of the subject.

Evidence can be in the form of facts and figures, turnover, a description of what has changed, but it must directly support your candidate. A nomination without evidence is just assertion and is unlikely to be successful.

Give examples of how they have demonstrated outstanding quality. If you have several good examples, use no more than two or three of the most recent and most relevant to ensure that you don't inadvertently dilute your message and write a CV.

A good nomination should also vividly and precisely describe the difference your candidate's contribution has made. Try to answer the following questions:

- What was the situation before they began?
- What is it now and why is it better?
- What makes your candidate different from others occupying the same role?
- What has their impact been?
- When did they carry out their work?
- Why should they be recognised now? If there's a time factor - an anniversary, a launch, a closure of the organisation, a particular target reached or some other success - mention it in your nomination.

As long as they are accurate, do not be afraid of using superlatives in nominations. Honours exist specifically to recognise superlative achievement, but remember that superlatives without an explanation are just hot air. Take care always to support all assertions with hard evidence. Do not just say that an achievement has had a widespread effect: describe the effect and why it has been important.

Remember to write about what your candidate personally achieved rather than their organisation or team: like a job application, you're trying to show that this is the right person to choose from many. The successes of the candidate's organisation or team might be relevant, particularly if your candidate has had a leading role; but the nomination should be about the individual not the group effort. What have they, as an individual, done?

Only include information about your candidate's education or early life if it's strictly relevant to the nomination. It's fine to talk about their earlier career or activities if this gives context or demonstrates sustained contribution, but the Committee doesn't need to know what school someone attended or their early career history.

Top Tips:

Nominate! Make as many strong nominations as you can. The Committees want to see lots of examples of people who have made a significant contribution to and impact on the country, society or their community.

Ensure your nomination is as well written as possible. While nominations won't be marked down for writing style, a clear, well-expressed nomination form is much easier to read and judge. Be concise.

Evidence proves the case! Provide relevant facts and figures to show the impact your candidate has had.

Highlight what your candidate has done differently. The Committees are excited to hear about innovative projects and new approaches; don't be afraid to emphasise how the candidate has challenged the status quo.

Be direct, say what you mean and mean what you say. Always talk about your candidate's achievements rather than those of their organisation.

Write as one human being to another, as nominations are considered by people who make decisions based on what you have written.

Write like a normal person. The people who read nominations do not necessarily know the person or what they do, so you need to be clear about why they should receive an Honour. Archaic and pompous language won't do your candidate any favours.

Don't assume that people know everything about what your candidate does. Put what you say in context and use real life examples and facts and figures that people can relate to.

Be transparent: would someone who doesn't work with your candidate understand what you are trying to say? Would you see that word or phrase in a newspaper? If not, change it.

Spell out acronyms and avoid jargon. Where you need to use technical terms, you can - they're not jargon. You should explain what they mean the first time you use them and do so in plain English.

Be clear about what you want to say and do your research so you know what you want to say. If you have a clear idea about why you are nominating someone for an Honour before you start to write the citation, it will be much easier to put it down on paper.

Keep your sentences short, as most experts agree that clear sentences are no more than 15 to 20 words.

An example of the form is below, hints and tips have been added in red in each section to help you complete the form, please download a clean version from www.gov.uk/honours to submit a nomination.



Nomination for a UK National Honour

Thank you for making the effort to nominate someone for an honour. We know that forms can be daunting. These guidance notes are intended to make it a bit simpler, but if you're not sure about any part of the process, please don't be discouraged: just give us a ring on 020 7276 2777 and we'll do our best to help.

GUIDANCE NOTES

1. WHO MAY MAKE A NOMINATION

Anyone may nominate anyone else by completing this form and forwarding it to the Honours and Appointments Secretariat at the address given below. It is not possible to nominate yourself

2. COMPLETING THE NOMINATION FORM

Please complete the nomination form completely and accurately, following the instructions in each section. It is important that you provide as much information as possible about your nominee. Don't just list jobs or posts held: try instead to explain what their actual contribution or impact has been.

You can use additional sheets of paper, but please make sure that you make clear which section you are completing. Please do not send in examples of the nominee's work (e.g. videos, photographs, books) as nomination information is scanned into an electronic system and such evidence cannot be kept.

You may find it useful to refer to our guidance How to Write a Nomination, which can be found on our website at www.gov.uk/honours.

3. NUMBER AND TYPE OF HONOURS

Honours are given to people from all walks of life and all sections of society who have made a difference to their community. The number of honours available is strictly limited and therefore, however valuable their service, unfortunately not everyone can receive recognition in this way. It is important to realise that an honour will not automatically follow a submission. You do not need to suggest the type and level of award – these will be determined when the nomination is assessed. Most awards are made in the Order of the British Empire at Member (MBE) level or for a British Empire Medal (BEM).

4. TIMING OF NOMINATIONS

Honours lists are published at New Year and on the occasion of The Sovereign's Birthday. There are no deadlines for the receipt of nomination forms, but their consideration is likely to take at least 12 to 18 months. This is because of the background work needed to assess a nomination. So you should not try to nominate a person for a specific honours list. Nominators will need to check published lists (in the *London Gazette*, national newspapers or at www.gov.uk) to see if their nominee is successful. Nominations should be made while the nominee is still active and, if possible, at least 12 months before he/she is expected to retire or stand down, because of the time needed to assess their contribution.

5. UNSUCCESSFUL NOMINATIONS AND RE-NOMINATIONS

If, after two years, your nominee has not been successful you can assume the nomination has lapsed. You may re-nominate them, but a different outcome is unlikely unless your nominee has had additional achievements.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

All nominations for honours are treated in the strictest confidence. The nominee should **not** be told that they have been nominated, as it is not fair to raise their expectations.

7. SUPPORT LETTERS

Letters of support should be provided from people with first-hand knowledge of the nominee who can endorse their contribution or supply additional information. At least two letters of support are required to support a nomination.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PROGRESS OF NOMINATIONS

We will acknowledge receipt of your nomination. We regret that we cannot enter into correspondence on the merits of a particular nomination.

9. CHANGES TO INFORMATION SUBMITTED

You may send additional information to support the nomination at any time. We will ensure that it is considered with the existing papers. The Honours and Appointments Secretariat should also be advised if there has been any important change to the information supplied on the nomination form, such as the home address of the nominee. You can ring or email the Honours and Appointments Secretariat at any time for an update on your nomination. You must notify the Honours and Appointments Secretariat immediately if your nominee dies, as it is not possible to award an honour posthumously.

10. NON-UK CITIZENS

People who are not UK citizens or citizens of Commonwealth countries of which The Queen is Head of State are eligible to be considered for awards, but the award may be an honorary one.

11. THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Honours can only be given to individuals. If you wish to nominate a group, the QAVS recognises outstanding achievement by groups in the community. Further information and a nomination form can be obtained at www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service or by calling 020 7271 6206.

12. EQUALITY MONITORING

Please help us to assess the effectiveness of the honours system by filling in the monitoring form. One part is about you and the other is about the nominee. This information will help us to improve the coverage of the honours system by ensuring that all areas of society are aware of the nomination process and are nominated for honours. Monitoring helps us to identify gaps. This information will be used only in aggregate for monitoring purposes and is not part of the assessment of the nominee. There are no quotas in the honours system for particular groups.

13. ENQUIRIES

Further enquiries relating to the UK honours system may be answered on our website which can be found at: www.gov.uk/honours or by writing to:

Honours and Appointments Secretariat
Cabinet Office
Ground Floor
1 Horseguards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

Telephone number: (020) 7276 2777
Facsimile number: (020) 7276 2766

Email: honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

NOMINATION FOR A UK HONOUR

Please read the accompanying guidance notes before completing this form.

NOMINEE

Please clearly print or type the following details about the person you are nominating. You must ensure that all sections of this form are completed or we will be unable to consider your nominee.

I nominate the following person for a UK national honour:

Surname:	_____	<i>It is most important that the name given is accurate and that the spelling is correct.</i>
Forenames:	_____	
Known as:	_____	<i>If different from above.</i>
Title:	_____	<i>E.g. Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr, Rev etc.</i>
Address:	_____	<i>Please include as full an address as possible.</i>

County:	_____	
Post Code:	_____	
Date of Birth:	_____	<i>Or approximate age if date of birth is not known.</i>

Telephone no:	_____	<i>If known. (Incl. area code if land line number.)</i>

Nationality: British
 Other (please specify)

Please tick.

We need to know the nationality of your nominee in order to decide the appropriate type of award. Certain non-UK citizens may only receive honorary awards.

The information contained in this nomination is strictly confidential and will not be communicated to any person other than those involved in the administration of the honours system with the exception of background information provided, which may be used in association with the announcement of any honour granted.

THE RECOMMENDATION

Please tell us how your nominee has made a significant contribution in their area of activity.

We are looking for people with exemplary service, who:

- have changed things, with an emphasis on practical achievement;
- have demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship;
- are examples of the best sustained and selfless voluntary service;
- have delivered in a way that has brought distinction to UK life.

It is important that you give as much detail as possible about what your nominee has achieved which makes them stand out against others and make it clear if the achievement is in one area or in a number of different areas.

Please state in not more than 20 words the service for which you consider that the nominee should receive an honour (for example, services to disabled people in Rochdale or service to the community in Aberporth).

This is the short citation; it is used for the press release when the honours announcement is made, as such it should be accurate and to the point. It is usually: Job title, organisation. For services to....

If there is no recognisable organisation use "For services to...."

Please list the post(s), with start and end dates, in which the nominee has excelled.

- **If you do not know exact dates, please estimate the period of time.**
- **Please state if the post was paid or unpaid or you do not know.**

Concentrate on the last five years, older information is dated and usually irrelevant

Please describe the benefits resulting from the nominee's service to a particular field, area, group, community or humanity at large.

- **What has their impact been?**
- **How wide is their influence?**
- **What are their achievements?**

The easiest way to think about impact is to think about what would be missing if your candidate wasn't doing what they do; try to tell the story of what has changed for the better. It is very important to include some contextual evidence, give clear and recent examples. Think about things like:

- How long have they been doing their activity?
- Why have they done it?
- What supporting information is there?
- Are there figures that can demonstrate improvement? (footfall, turnover, membership increases)

Are there others giving a similar service to that of the nominee? (Please delete as appropriate.)

Yes/No.

If YES, please tell us what makes the nominee and their contribution stand out from such people?

Think about what sets your candidate apart from others in a similar role

Please list any other ways in which the nominee's contribution been recognised elsewhere (for example, in the media, by awards, by professional/interest groups or through local government).

Please attach any documents which provide evidence of that recognition (for example, newspaper clippings or letters).

Only include articles that are directly relevant, press cutting are rarely helpful and often don't describe an individual's achievements, they often focus on a group or organisation.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Please obtain two or more letters which endorse the nominee's contribution from people who are familiar with his or her services. Ideally these should be attached to this form, but they may be sent separately. Please list below the names of the supporters and **tick the box if their letter is to follow**.

Only supply letters of support that directly relate to the nomination and contain information about your candidate's achievements and the impact that they have had. Letters that say how nice someone is do not add any weight to the nomination. Don't use generic or campaign letters, lots of letters that all say the same thing do not add any weight or new information to the application.

Supporter's name	Role in which the supporter has known the nominee (for example, colleague, friend).	Dates of knowledge (if known)	Please tick the box if their letter of support is to follow.

DETAILS OF PERSON MAKING THE NOMINATION

My name and address:

Surname:

*(Incl. title
e.g. Mr, Mrs,
Miss, Ms,
Dr, Rev etc)*

Forenames:

Address:

*This
address will
be used for
an
acknowledg
ement and
any future
corresponde
nce.*

Post code:

Telephone no:

*(Incl. area
code if land
line
number.)*

Email address:

Relationship to nominee:

*Please state
your
relationship
to the
nominee
(e.g. son,
colleague,
friend).*

Honours cannot be bought: they are available to all. Nominations are assessed on an equal and transparent basis. The Cabinet Office does not endorse the use of fee-charging drafting services when completing this form. Please tell us if you have made use of such a service by ticking here.



By submitting this nomination you declare that the information you have provided is – to the best of your knowledge – accurate and complete. Providing false information may lead to your nominee being removed from consideration for an honour.

Signature

Date

Please send this form and any enclosures to:

**Honours and Appointments Secretariat
Cabinet Office
Ground Floor
1 Horseguards Road
London SW1A 2HQ**

Telephone no: 020 7276 2777

Facsimile no: 020 7276 2766

Email:

honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

EQUALITY MONITORING

The information provided in this section is used for monitoring purposes only, to allow us to compile information about who nominates and is nominated for honours. It is not used to assess nominations and has no bearing on the outcome of the nomination. You do not have to provide this information, but it helps the monitoring of the honours system if you do.

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-today activities.

Do you consider that you have a disability? (Please delete as appropriate.)
Yes/No/Prefer not to say.

Do you consider that the nominee has a disability? (Please delete as appropriate.)
Yes/No/Prefer not to say.

Ethnic Origin

Which group do you identify with? Please tick one box. The options are listed alphabetically.

Asian	Black
<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> African
<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Black Background (specify if you wish)
<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Asian Background (specify if you wish)
.....	Mixed Ethnic Background
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian and White
<input type="checkbox"/> Any Chinese Background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/> Black African and White
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean and White
.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Mixed Ethnic Background (specify if you wish)
White	
.....	
<input type="checkbox"/> White background (specify if you wish)	Any Other Ethnic Background
	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Ethnic Background (specify if you wish)

.....
.....

And which group does your candidate for an honour identify with? Please tick one box

Asian	Black
<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> African
<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani (specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Black Background if you wish)
<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Asian Background (specify if you wish)	Mixed Ethnic Background
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian and White
<input type="checkbox"/> Any Chinese Background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/> Black African and White
Background	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean and White
White	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Mixed Ethnic (specify if you wish)
.....	Any Other Ethnic Background
<input type="checkbox"/> White background (specify if you wish) (specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Ethnic Background if you wish)
.....	