



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# Honouring Outstanding People

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A guide to completing a nomination form  
and writing a Citation

The Queen's Honours system is a way for ordinary people to be recognized for the outstanding work they do, whether it's paid or voluntary.

# Honouring Outstanding People

In Wales, there are business owners, entrepreneurs, public services and community volunteers who are making a real and significant difference to their communities, and the people who live in them.

The Honours Unit of the Welsh Government seeks nominations in order to recognise and reward those people who are acting as role models, leading by example and bringing distinction to Wales.

## **Honours are given to people involved in fields including:**

- community and voluntary services
- arts and media
- health and social care
- sport
- education
- science and technology
- business and the economy
- civil or political service
- public services

Nominating someone for an Honour can be done at any time in their career or when active in a voluntary capacity but preferably at a time when they have delivered a significant piece of work rather than towards the end of their working life. Honours will only be considered for up to a year following the individual's retirement from their role (but ideally 6 months prior to retiring).

Some potential nominees may have already received recognition at a local or national level and have received awards for their achievements, but to receive one Honour or another award does not preclude anyone from receiving an Honour at a higher level for further achievements later in their career (at least 5 years).

Women and people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds have been historically under-represented in the honours process, so we are particularly keen to receive nominations for people from these groups.

We also try to achieve a geographical balance, so we seek nominations from all over Wales.

If someone in your organisation deserves to be recognised with an Honour, we want you to nominate them. This guidance will help you write a nomination and citation that will showcase your candidate's achievements.

Although the Welsh Government Honours Unit sends out invitations for Honours nominations twice a year (June and December), there's no need to wait for this if you know of a deserving candidate. We would like to encourage you to send your nominations in at any time of the year. Details of how to submit your nomination are at the end of this guidance.

## Who deserves an Honour?

Honours recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements. There are always fewer honours than people who deserve them and because they are rare, they should be reserved for people:

- Who have changed things especially by solid, practical achievement;
- Whose work has brought distinction to British life or enhanced the reputation of Wales/the UK in their area or activity.

Honours are specifically designed to recognise those members of society who have gone over and above that which is expected of them in paid employment or voluntary; it is not simply a recognition of long service.

If you think your nominee demonstrates one or both of these accomplishments and that their contribution stands out from other people's, please consider nominating them for an Honour.

## How do I write a nomination?

You can either complete a nomination form or citation form. The nomination form can be obtained by contacting the Honours Unit of Welsh Government at [HonoursPN@gov.wales](mailto:HonoursPN@gov.wales) or [honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:honours@cabinetoffice.gov.uk). Once the nomination form is submitted the information is transferred to a citation form. Alternatively you can complete the citation form which can be obtained from the Welsh Government Honours Unit.

The most important thing is to provide evidence of what they've done, the outcome of their work, and how they've made things better for others.

There isn't a right way or a wrong way to write a nomination and it doesn't need to be particularly formal. An example of how to complete this is in Annex 1. Please limit the length of the "Long Citation" section so that as far as possible the form fits on one side of A4, with the Equality Monitoring information on the other side of the page.

Every nomination is different, but your nomination must tell the story of what your candidate has done. You should give your citation a strong opening paragraph to grab the reader's attention and demonstrate what makes them special; give examples of how they have demonstrated outstanding quality.

### **Show how your candidate has:**

- Contributed in a distinctive way to improving the lot of those less able to help themselves;
- Devoted themselves to sustained and selfless voluntary service;
- Shown innovation or creativity in delivering lasting results.

A good nomination or citation should also describe as vividly and precisely as possible the difference their contribution has made.

### **Try to answer the following questions:**

- How were things before they began?
- How are they now?
- What makes your candidate different from others doing the same thing?

### **Give details to support these claims. Show how your candidate has:**

- Earned the respect of their peers and become a role model in their field;
- Produced, perhaps against the odds, sustained achievement which has required moral courage, vision, the ability to make tough choices or determined application and hard work.

Remember, though, to always support any assertions with hard evidence. Do not just say that an achievement has had a widespread effect: describe what that effect has been and show why it has been important.

## How do I find the right words?

When writing a nomination or citation, the following words are ideal, but they must be backed up with evidence of the situation and outcome so that your candidate clearly stands out among their peers.

### **Effective nominations often include nouns such as:**

- Determination
- Commitment
- Respect
- Drive
- Sustainability
- Recognition
- Impact
- Performance
- Ambassador

### **Adjectives such as:**

- Trusted
- Unstinting
- Conscientious
- Persuasive
- Passionate
- Exemplary

Your nomination/citation will be reviewed and edited by Honours Unit and we may come back to you for more information to clarify or update your nominee's achievements.

## What shouldn't I do?

As we've said, there's no wrong way to write a nomination or citation. But remember that honours committees consider merits on the information provided to them. A good nomination and citation is the foundation for that. Only the strongest nominations or citations will result in an Honour.

There must be enough information to make a good case. So your nomination or citation shouldn't be:

- an extended CV;
- a list of educational achievements;
- a list of appointments, committee memberships, awards or posts;
- a job description showing what the person is meant to do.

Because poor nominations or citations often list these things, a frequent complaint from committees is that the person recommended is "doing no more than their job" or "doing nothing that stands out".

Instead, you should describe what is special about your candidate's achievements and show memorably and persuasively how and where they have made a difference.

You should also ensure that letters written to support your nomination or citation form are written by people who know the nominee personally. It doesn't matter who the supporters are, but they must be able to talk about the nominee from first-hand experience and the supporters must be listed on the form.

**Please send your completed nominations to:**

**Honours Unit  
Welsh Government  
Crown Buildings, Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ**

If you have any queries, please contact the Honours team on:

[HonoursPN@gov.wales](mailto:HonoursPN@gov.wales)



## Annex 1 - Honours Citation Form

Department			
Surname	Forename(s)		Title
Post Noms	Preferred name		AKA
Voluntary	Public	Gender	
Nationality	Foreign	Nominator's Origin	
List	Award	Rating	
Date of Birth	Approx DoB		Age
Committee		Category	
Total length of service	In current post	In Grade	Leaving post
Previous Honours and dates		Previous Recs and dates	
Short citation			
Long citation			
Voluntary and Charitable Services			
Supported from other Departments			
Address			
Secure address			
Recommended			
Supported by			
Comments (Honours and Appointments Secretariat only)			

The examples below will help you craft an eye-catching and informative citation for your nominee. Each is an extract from a longer citation for a candidate who was successful in the Honours process.

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### A world-class contribution to healthcare research – Knighthood

This candidate is known internationally as a leader in his field and has put Wales on the world stage.

“He has made outstanding contributions to the scientific and public understanding of psychiatric and neurological diseases, and has greatly enhanced the academic environment in Wales, attracting leading researchers from around the world. He has been an outstanding leader in Academic Psychiatry over the last two decades and has built a centre of excellence that is internationally recognised and truly world class.

His major contributions include the identification of novel genes and pathways associated with disease susceptibility for both Schizophrenia and Alzheimer’s disease.

These findings carry potential to direct future therapeutic strategies in serious diseases that have been historically under-served. The work has direct impact on the health and care of the people of Wales, the UK and worldwide. He leads the research agenda, focusing on exploiting new genetic associations in neuropsychiatric diseases to identify underlying causes, enabling an evidence based approach to the design of diagnostic tests and therapies. He has single-handedly built a highly focused team working on the genetics of neuropsychiatric disease, consistently won major grant funding from the Medical Research Council (MRC), Wellcome Trust and other funders. He has published over 500 papers and reviews, many in journals of the highest impact.”

#### **What makes it a great nomination?**

- The importance of his personal contribution is clear. He is a leader and not just one of a team.
  - The impact of his work has been felt at the highest international levels.
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## A world leader in a scientific breakthrough – CBE

This candidate has transformed chemical processes worldwide.

“Among the world’s most cited and influential Chemists, he has many ground-breaking discoveries to his name, in industry and as an academic, over 40 years in catalysis. Catalysis is the increased rate of chemical reaction from participation by another substance – a catalyst. His discoveries transformed chemical engineering processes worldwide, saving billions of pounds yearly and brought huge societal and environmental contributions by this work and particularly by his greatest scientific breakthrough; catalysis by gold.”

### What makes it a great nomination?

- He is internally recognised as an expert.
  - He is demonstrably a pioneer in his field.
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## Leading and pioneering – OBE

“He has dedicated over 25 years to the college before retiring in 2010 from his full-time post as Director of Hospitality and Director of Skills Development. He continues to make a noteworthy contribution to the College as a consultant on World Skills for approximately 1 day a week. His dedication and contribution has impacted on the Hospitality and Tourism Industry, specifically the training and personal development of young people and those employed by the industry, including young people with special needs.

His contribution to the college has been outstanding. He has helped to shape the careers and aspirations of many thousands of young people in the area who trained under his philosophy of excellence in education. He has helped the college to achieve a global reputation as a centre of excellence in the hospitality area, regularly winning national and international awards symbolising quality, and bringing home gold medals for the college and its learners. He led the team for a competition sponsored by Euro-Toques Chefs Association in Brussels and out of a field of 17 countries won the accolade of The Best Hotel School in Europe.

The College was honoured in the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Awards for delivering world-class excellence in hospitality at every level in November 2011.”

### **What makes it a great nomination?**

- His contribution leaves a legacy that will continue to benefit staff and students alike.
  - Previous awards and medals for his achievements have been highlighted
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### **Creating an organisation through supporting and advocating - MBE**

“Her organisation is committed to strengthening families within Muslim communities. For over a decade, despite threats of violence she has offered advice, support, sign-posting and advocacy for vulnerable individuals and families that are faced with social pressures including isolation and the difficulties and challenges of family and community life. She has also spent a significant amount of time managing complex casework; supporting and seeking assistance to protect victims of Honour Based Violence (HBV), abuse and crimes, including cases of forced marriages and abandoned wives and children.

Her knowledge-base and experience in this field has established her as a national and international HBV expert and she is frequently instructed to independently undertake specialist HBV risk assessments, oversee case management and provide advice to assess and identify HBV risk factors or concerns. In the main, casework is undertaken in collaboration with Police, local authorities, appointed Social Workers and relevant third sector agencies. In 2010, She developed the UK’s first on-line Honour Based Violence & Forced Marriage Directory & Knowledge Centre.”

### **What makes it a great nomination?**

- Her experience and knowledge has established her at an international level in her field of work.
  - It highlights her Centre was the first of its kind in the UK.
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## Beyond the call of duty – BEM

This Home Carer offers support far beyond the expectations of his role.

“He is a Home Carer working in the local community with elderly and vulnerable people, many of whom have no relatives locally to rely on for support. He is constantly and voluntarily on call 24 hours a day and always works beyond what is considered to be a carer’s role. He is now beyond retirement age and still continues to assist people as he always has, by providing food from his own kitchen, by collecting prescriptions, shopping and taking people to the doctor’s or hospital and always with a smile and a joke along the way.

He also collects newspapers for his clients, seven days a week. Early in the morning he collects papers and magazines from the newsagents together with bread and milk, and distributes them.

He does not restrict the hours he works, he simply does everything that is necessary for each individual when it is needed. He is always reluctant to take a holiday away from home for fear of letting down those who rely on him for his help. Every day, including Christmas, he is there for them.

His contribution in his home community has become a fantastic lifeline for the infirm and housebound anxious to remain living in their own homes. Without his support they would have to rely on the more limited service offered by the local council, and without his care would have had to have been placed in care homes.”

### **What makes it a great nomination?**

- The nominee provides a service found nowhere else and goes beyond what is available via statutory services.
  - The outcomes of his work is felt on a practical level in a local community; this is characteristic of a BEM candidate.
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### KBE/DBE – Knight/Dame of the British Empire

A pre-eminent contribution in any field of activity (usually, but not exclusively, at national level), or in a capacity which will be recognised by peer groups as inspirational and significant nationally, and demonstrates sustained commitment.

#### Key factors:

- Pre-eminent and sustained contribution.
  - Recognised by peer groups as inspirational.
  - Impact of contribution felt at a national level.
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### CBE – Commander of the British Empire

A prominent national role of a lesser degree, a conspicuous leading role in regional affairs through achievement or service to the community, or a highly distinguished, innovative contribution in his or her area of activity.

#### Key factors:

- Achievement or service in a leading role at a regional level.
  - Highly distinguished and innovative contribution of wide impact.
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### OBE – Order of the British Empire

Distinguished regional or county-wide role in any field, through achievement or service to the community including notable practitioners known nationally.

#### Key factors:

- Regional or county-wide role.
  - Impact of contribution felt by a significant number of people or across a broad geographical area.
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## MBE – Member of the British Empire

Achievement or service in and to the community which is outstanding in its field and has delivered sustained and real impact which stands out as an example to others.

### **Key factors:**

- Outstanding achievement or service
  - Sustained contribution
  - Real impact
  - Local role model.
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## BEM – British Empire Medal

Achievement or contribution of a very “hands-on” service to the community in a local geographical area. This might take the form of sustained commitment in support of very local charitable and/ or voluntary activity; or innovative work that has delivered real impact but that is relatively short (three to four years) in duration.

### **Key factors:**

- Sustained, local contribution, or
  - Innovative, high impact work of a relatively short duration.
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At all levels, awards illuminate  
areas of dedicated service  
which merit public recognition.

