

[Honorary Queen's Counsel nominations: deadline Monday 29 August 2022](#)

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is inviting nominations for the award of Queen's Counsel Honoris Causa.

Nomination forms must be completed and returned to MOJ by 12pm on 29 August 2022.

To make a nomination, please [submit your nomination here](#)

QC Honoris Causa or Honorary QC

This is an honorary award unique to the legal profession. It is a dedicated opportunity, made by royal prerogative, to recognise those in the profession who have made a major contribution to, and impact on, the law of England and Wales outside the courtroom.

The award is not a working rank, and is separate to substantive QC appointments administered by Queen's Counsel Appointments. Where someone is eligible to apply for substantive QC in their role, we would not normally consider them for an Honorary QC award.

Please note that anyone nominated may be subject to criminal record checks with ACRO Criminal Records Office.

What is the award for?

The award is for:

A significant, positive impact either on the shape of the law of England and Wales, or on the profession. This is for work outside the courtroom.

This criterion can be interpreted broadly, either as:

- a major contribution to the development of the law of England and Wales (for example, by dedicated research, influencing case law/ legislation and promoting initiatives), or,
- to how it is advanced (for example, by positively impacting the shape of the profession).

What is most important is that nominations clearly evidence the significant, positive impact an individual's efforts have had.

It is not a long-service award. Honours may be awarded for a significant impact over a long period of time, but they may equally be awarded for such

an impact over a shorter period – it is the scale of impact that is important.

We are keen to recognise diversity within the profession, with awards that reflect the range of different legal careers that make up the profession. You can see examples of previous successful nominees by viewing their [case studies](#).

Examples of what these different contributions may look like

Influencing legislation

- Making an impact on the law by influencing legislation or case law (e.g. through outcome of research, creating awareness or campaigning, pro bono work or other advocacy outside the courtroom).

Social mobility and Diversity

- Making a considerable impact on the legal profession (e.g. through initiatives that have an impact on social mobility or diversity, and increase the competitiveness of the sector).

Innovation

- Making an impact through a standout achievement or through innovation (e.g. by breaking through into new territory, such as making an impact through work on Lawtech, innovation in legal education, or that promote UK legal services overseas).

Academic work

- Making an impact through outstanding academic work that makes a positive contribution to the law and/or legal system

Who is eligible?

- To be eligible for the award, the individual must be a qualified lawyer or legal academic.
- The nomination must be for achievement outside practice in the courts. In other words, an award would be made for non-advocacy work.
- The award is open to foreign qualified professionals. There is no residency requirement.

Examples of those eligible may include (but are not limited to):

- Solicitors without higher rights of audience
- Legal executives
- In-house lawyers, including Counsel
- Non-practising lawyers
- Legal academics

Holding a fee-paid judicial office in addition to normal practice would not exclude lawyers who meet the eligibility criteria above.

How are awards made?

The process is administered by Ministry of Justice (MOJ). Nominations are considered against the criterion by a panel of representatives from the legal profession, civil service, judiciary, and academia, which is chaired by MOJ.

The panel of representatives provide the Lord Chancellor with recommendations of appointable nominees. The Lord Chancellor, whose role is to ensure that the process has been carried out in a fair, open and transparent way, will then consider and decide the final recommendations. The recommendations are then referred to the Queen for agreement, who grants the awards under the royal prerogative.

How is the information about nominees used?

In order to assess suitability for the award and as part of the selection process, information about the nominees will be used to carry out:

- Cross-Whitehall checks to confirm whether the individual or their work may be known by, or of interest to, another government department
- Checks against nominees on the main honours system as per the eligibility criteria
- Evaluation by the selection panel of the individual's legal qualifications and evidence of their contribution and impact on the law of England and Wales
- Shortlisted nominees will undergo a criminal record check

Nominees from outside the legal profession

Where someone from outside the legal profession has made a significant impact on the law of England and Wales, or how it is advanced, they would not qualify for this award. We would welcome those nominations as part of the [main honours system](#).

Scotland and Northern Ireland

There is no exact equivalent in Scotland or Northern Ireland. However, this does not mean that achievements of a similar nature cannot be recognised in those jurisdictions. If you would like to nominate someone for an honour whose work is in Scotland or Northern Ireland, you can contact the [Scottish Government](#) or the [Honours Secretariat for Northern Ireland](#).

Nominees and recipients of national honours

Someone who has been honoured in the main honours system within the last two years, or who has been nominated for such an honour this year, would not be eligible to receive an Honorary QC award. Where someone was awarded an honour more than two years ago, the panel will consider the individual's contribution to and impact on the law since that honour was awarded.

How to make a nomination

Please [submit your nomination form](#) using our digital form.

If you are unable to use our digital form, or have any other questions, please get in touch on HonoraryQC@justice.gov.uk.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1. What is the process and timelines ?

These dates are provisional and subject to change:

- 27 June 2022: applications open
- 29 August 2022: applications close
- October 2022: Panel meet and shortlist nominees
- Early November 2022: ACRO criminal checks are conducted
- Late November 2022: Lord Chancellor makes final recommendations to the Her Majesty The Queen
- December 2022: successful nominees are informed
- March 2023: Ceremony awarding the appointment of new Honorary Queen's Counsel

2. Who can make a nomination?

Anyone can make a nomination. You do not need to have a legal background or reside in the UK.

3. Do I need to be a practising barrister or solicitor to be nominated?

No. You do not need to be practising, although you do need to be a qualified lawyer or legal academic to be eligible. The award is for achievements outside the court room

4. Can I make more than one nomination?

Yes. You may nominate as many people as you like, but please ensure that you submit separate nomination forms.

5. Is there a limit to the number of nominations for an individual?

No. An individual can be nominated by many people

6. Can I nominate a foreign national?

Yes. There are no nationality or residence requirements for the award.

7. In order to be considered for the award, do I need multiple nominations?

No. The scoring is not based on how many nominations an individual has received.

8. What happens if I miss the deadline to apply?

Unfortunately, we cannot consider any nomination past the deadline. We encourage you to submit your application when the next round of nominations open.