

Clinical Excellence Awards 2019

Introduction

This page contains information about the RCP's role in making recommendations for Clinical Excellence (previously known as Distinction) Awards. The process described here covers awards at Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels, in England and Wales. Separate procedures apply to Northern Ireland, Scotland, and the Defence Medical Services.

If you have a national award already and are submitting a 5-yearly review application, the RCP can assist by providing a citation. You must apply the same attention to this as you would to a new application and complete the RCP support form (on the RCP website). If you are applying for renewal, treat your application as seriously as a new application. To be successful you must score at least as highly as the lowest-scoring newly-granted award at that level in the year.

The RCP as a Nominating Body

Under the national arrangements, as a National Nominating Body, the RCP can submit each year a list of nominations to the national Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards (ACCEA). This list is drawn up after self-nomination by candidates and a wide range of consultation, which includes marking (scoring) of the self-nominations by representatives of the specialist societies, RCP's regional advisers and members of RCP council. The following basic principles guide the process;

- To nominate the maximum number of candidates allowed for each category of Award.
- To give equal opportunity to each eligible consultant.
- To use a consistent assessment process to reach priority decisions, throughout the process.
- To involve local and specialty advice in priority rankings.
- To rank according to objective and transparent criteria.
- To provide the best support to each potential candidate in terms of what they need to know to succeed in the process.
- To provide the best support to each nominated candidate, through provision of an effective citation. Consideration of candidates based on the RCP support forms that they have provided.

The RCP believes that equality of opportunity is fundamental in whatever way individuals become involved with its work. All nominations will be considered on the basis of the criteria set down by ACCEA, regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin, disability, age, sex and sexual orientation.

In determining the final priority list of nominations the president will be advised by a scoring mechanism, which is made up in such a way that as far as practicable each region and specialty is involved. Awards at Platinum level are recommended under a different procedure, via the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, but once again involving an advisory group at the RCP.

Number of nominations

ACCEA welcomes self-nomination, and all eligible candidates are able to do this directly by registering through the national ACCEA website (details below).

It should be noted, though, that whilst the RCP would very much like to support all physicians who are eligible for an award, there is a limit to the number of nominations we can support directly. This is expressed in the form of a maximum number, a quota, of candidates who can be proposed by the RCP in any one year, because there is a financial limit to the scheme, which is funded by the Department of Health. The process is very competitive, and all national awards are subject to renewal after 5 years. It is possible that awards might not be renewed, which can have financial consequences for the individual award holder.

Unfortunately, it is not possible for the RCP, or anyone writing in their capacity as an RCP officer, to provide a supporting citation for an individual who is not being put forward as part of the RCP's overall nomination list; to do so may appear to be trying to extend our quota. This number we can nominate varies each year, but in recent years it has been about 50 nominations for level 10 and 11 awards combined, and 60 for level 9 nominations, although it could be more (or less). The number of names considered initially is always well in excess of the number of nominations that the ACCEA recommend, and so some selection has to take place. The judgements are made on the basis of total contribution, which include contribution to the service (including through RCP activity) as well as academic, research, and management excellence, as described in the five Domains listed on the online support form.

Self-Nomination

The starting point for the RCP's procedure is self-nomination. **To be considered for RCP support, you must complete and submit the RCP's online support form by :**

- **5pm Wednesday 20 February for Platinum applicants**
- **Midnight Sunday 24 February for Gold, Silver and Bronze applicants**

No extension will be allowed.

Applying for a support for a higher award

The sections of this online support form have a character limit to restrict the amount of text – this is the same as the national ACCEA form, so that we base our assessment on the same information. In case of any confusion, the date above is the deadline for the RCP process – the national ACCEA application system will close later, but we have further assessment stages to complete before then.

This support form includes sections equivalent to the additional forms for Research and Innovation (form D) Teaching and Training (Form E) and Medical Leadership and Management (Form F). ACCEA's process states that candidates for a Bronze or Silver award may choose to submit one of the forms, Gold applicants may choose up to two, and Platinum candidates may choose to submit up to all three. As the RCP uses the same scoring criteria as the national scheme, please observe this guidance when completing the RCP form and limit completion of the supplementary sections to the number appropriate to the level

of award you are applying for. If you complete more than the recommended quota, some sections might not be scored within the RCP process.

Just as ACCEA's timetable is strict, we are constrained by a tight timetable and so will have to close the application website and will not be able to accept applications after our deadline.

Guidance on completing and submitting the form and its content are on the RCP website

If your specialist society invites you to self-nominate as part of its process, you should do so, and you can also nominate yourself directly to ACCEA, which you are recommended to do if you feel eligible. The important point is that you **MUST** self-nominate to the RCP if you want to be considered for nomination by the RCP. Although there are different forms to complete for different bodies in this process, the information you need to provide is generally the same.

The form you submit to the RCP is based on that used by ACCEA, with a few slight changes to inform the RCP process. Its content should be based on your current contribution, and ACCEA will only consider progression to the next level of award if there is clear evidence of further achievement since your last award. Therefore if you already have a national award, you must demonstrate and emphasise the way in which your work has developed since then. The time since you received that award can also be a factor, since they will expect sufficient time to have passed for new development to take place. This is not clearly defined, but the general guide is 4 years since the previous award. If you are selected for nomination by the RCP, you will be informed by email before the closing date of the national process and you will need to complete and submit the official ACCEA form via their website. This will give you the chance to bring your ACCEA form right up to date for final submission.

Given the background described above, of course the RCP cannot promise that your name will make it to the final list of nominations, but we can make sure that it is considered within the RCP process.

Timing of Awards

The central guidance on making nominations implies that a period should pass between the granting of awards, to demonstrate a significant development in contribution since the previous award. Except in very exceptional circumstances, the period expected to demonstrate such development is about four or five years. The national guidance is awaited, but previously we have been advised that consultants who hold level 1-8 Clinical Excellence Awards (CEA) can only be considered for a local or national Level 9 (Bronze) CEA. Put another way, candidates without a national award (i.e. without a Level 9, Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum award) can apply at Bronze level. We also understand that except in exceptional circumstances a candidate will need to hold a local Level 4 award or equivalent to make the jump to Bronze. Bronze award holders can apply at Silver level; Silver award holders can apply at Gold level; and Gold award holders can apply at Platinum level. B Distinction Award holders from the previous system can apply at SILVER level only. However all this is subject to confirmation. We realise that local points are no longer awarded in Wales and we take this into account when scoring applications.

Further information

Further ACCEA information on the national criteria and methods of application, along with details of how to register and the Guide to the NHS Consultants' Clinical Excellence Award Scheme (England And Wales), published by the ACCEA Secretariat, can be obtained from their website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/advisory-committee-on-clinical-excellence-awards>