

Writing Citations for National Honours

Who deserves an honour?

Honours exist to recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements. Bearing this in mind we ask that your nominees are those:

- Who have changed things – especially by solid, practical achievement;
- Whose work has brought distinction to British life or enhanced the UK's reputation in Health and Social Care settings.

Please be aware that nominations focussed solely on long and loyal service; carrying out work for which the nominee is paid; personality; or disability (unless that disability has resulted in some innovative activity, such as setting up a research programme, charity or support group) are unlikely to be successful.

How to write a citation

A citation should tell the story of what your nominee has accomplished. Give examples of how this outstanding quality has been demonstrated and show how your candidate has, for example:

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

A good citation should also describe as vividly and precisely as possible, the difference their contribution made. You should cover:

- How things were before they began; and
- How they are now.

Give details that support these claims and show how your nominee has:

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



Style

It is important that you DO NOT use italics, underline or bold text to make your point. These stylistic tools are removed and replaced with plain text in final submissions so using them to emphasise aspects of the citation may be detrimental.

How should a citation sound?

Honours Selection Committees judge candidates' merits on the citations you write for them.

A citation should not simply be an extended CV; a list of educational achievements, appointments or posts; or a job description. A citation should describe what is special about your nominee's achievements and show memorably and persuasively how and where they made a difference. Tell the story and focus on the highest achievements/best points in the first paragraph.

For example:

"She has transformed the agency from an organisation troubled by high profile technical operational challenges into a highly effective body with 96% of customers satisfied with the services her staff provide. The IT system is user friendly and a model of good practice."

"He found that the charity was wasting over a £1m a year on time-consuming inefficient administration and had no effective PR. He altered procedures, cut staff and adopted a 'can do' approach by putting the people the organisation was supposed to be helping at the top of his priority list, rather than at the bottom."

"He lived on an estate with high numbers of single mothers and disaffected young people but, instead of moaning about the youth of today, he started to listen to them and, as a result, started a club with sporting activities and facilities for mothers and their children. This is now used by 500 local teenagers. He had to work hard to gain the support of police and other agencies but was determined to succeed. Now, a once crime-ridden, hugely unpopular estate, is thriving with a real sense of purpose and achievement and crime rates have plummeted."

"When she took over the company it was running at an annual loss of £4.2m and it took her five years to produce a healthy profit of £2.5m. She has maintained a steady increase in profits since 2001 with a £.7.2m profit in year ended March 2006. Employees have increased from 356 to 870 in her time, in an area of high unemployment following the closure of the local car plant"

"She has devoted most of her spare time to running a social club for elderly people with learning difficulties. She says such people are sadly neglected in society and, although she is in fulltime employment in a Tesco store, she runs this club with two helpers, a small budget and a lot of hard graft. Over the past five years, more than



200 people have benefited from the facilities, as well as their carers who have been given valuable respite from their responsibilities.”

“She is unusual because she is a black woman farmer in a rural county but she is keen to rid the world of stereotypes and uses her status to promote diversity and encourage women from non-British ethnic backgrounds to try different careers, particularly in male dominated industries like agriculture.”

“Although in fulltime employment in local government, he gives up two evenings a week and all day Sunday to helping in the hospice. He has managed their very complex finances and is prepared to help behind the scenes or on the frontline, wherever he is most needed. He has contributed his services consistently for the last 32 years.”

“Under his expert financial guidance, the branch has grown from a small organisation with nine counsellors and a turnover of £10,000 to one of the largest centres in the South East with 44 counsellors and a turnover of £350,000”

Honours exist specifically to recognise superlative achievement so, as long they are accurate and can be supported with hard evidence, don't be afraid of using superlatives in citations.

For example:

“The hospital was notorious with many cases of MRSA, dirty wards and an attitude that patients were a nuisance. She arrived and worked hard to improve standards over a two year period by instilling pride in her staff, and giving bonuses for those staff with clean wards where efficiency and a helpful attitude were the norm, not the exception. The rates of MRSA are now amongst the lowest in the country and staff turnover has been halved.”

It is achievements of this kind and scale that deserve an honour and will convince the Committee to endorse your nomination.

How to find the right words

Take care to 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 why it has been important.

Effective citations often include nouns such as:

<i>determination</i>	<i>commitment</i>	<i>respect</i>	<i>drive</i>
<i>sustainability</i>	<i>recognition</i>	<i>innovation</i>	<i>creativity</i>
<i>creativity</i>	<i>selflessness</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>zeal</i>
<i>performance</i>	<i>ambassador</i>		



Adjectives such as:

<i>trusted</i>	<i>unstinting</i>	<i>conscientious</i>	<i>wise</i>
<i>inspirational</i>	<i>peerless</i>	<i>persuasive</i>	<i>passionate</i>
<i>exemplary</i>	<i>resourceful</i>	<i>enthusiastic</i>	<i>fair</i>
<i>tenacious</i>	<i>supportive</i>	<i>vibrant</i>	<i>dogged</i>
<i>articulate</i>	<i>diligent</i>	<i>dedicated</i>	

And phrases such as:

making a difference going the extra mile
role model overcoming obstacles
head and shoulders above the rest

How long should the citation be?

The maximum length of a citation is 3000 characters which works out as roughly 28 lines. Please do not use quotation marks; published material, performances, names etc should instead, be written in title case (e.g. The Wind in the Willows).

Understanding Honours Levels

In descending order of seniority:

KBE/DBE (Knight/Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire) and Kt (Knight)

Awarded to those at the top of their profession e.g. Director Generals, Chief Nursing Officers etc. KBE or DBE will be awarded if the person has an existing higher post nominal (e.g. Lord, Duke etc) in which case their title will remain the same and KBE/OBE will be included after their surname (for example: Lord Sebastian Coe KBE).

CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire)

Awarded to those who operate at national level candidates for CBE may also have some international input. There is some border at CBE/OBE level (e.g. Chief Execs, Directors of Social Services, Consultants, Vice Presidents etc).

OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire)

Awarded to those who operate at a local level but have national input (e.g. Deputy Chairs, Chief Execs, Directors of Social Services, Chief Ambulance Officers etc).

MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire)

Awarded to those who operate at a local level with responsibility (e.g. Founders, Chairs, GPs, Dentists, Managers, Carers, Home Helps etc). Also awarded to those who work at local level (e.g. Voluntary Workers, Porters, Fundraisers, Auxiliary Workers etc).



MBEX (Member of the Order of the British Empire)

This level of MBE is awarded to those who operate at a local level, providing outstanding, “hands-on”, dedicated service to the community.

Specific criteria for awards to Healthcare Scientists

KT/DBE LEVEL	ELEGIBILITY	CONTRIBUTION
Pre-eminate contribution in any field, usually but not exclusively at national level, or in a capacity which will be recognised by peer groups as inspirational and significant nationally and which demonstrates sustained commitment	Heads of Professions in the NHS or Academia	A healthcare scientist who meets all the criteria for CBE or who has a personal, national and or international eminence that merits a higher level award and who may be involved in the development of national policy.
CBE LEVEL		
A prominent national role of a less degree, or a conspicuous leading role, recognised by their peers in regional affairs or making a highly distinguished, innovative contribution in his or her area of activity	Heads of Professions, in the NHS or Academia	A healthcare scientist who meets all the criteria for OBE or who has a personal, national eminence that merits a higher level award and who may be involved in the development of national policy.
OBE LEVEL		
A distinguished national role, recognised by peers.	Heads of Professions, in the NHS, Voluntary sector or Academia	A healthcare scientist who meets all the criteria for MBE or who have a personal, national eminence that merits a higher level award and who may be involved in the development of national policy.
MBE LEVEL		
Service in and to the community of a responsible kind, which is outstanding in its field, or very local "hands-on" or dedicated service, which stands out as an example to others and merits public recognition.	Directors of major scientific services (eg pathology, medical physics, regional audiology services) Consultant scientists Frontline Healthcare Scientists at all levels and in all disciplines Managers of scientific services	A healthcare scientist who's outstanding contribution is recognised by their peers at a local level.
MBEX LEVEL		
Service in and to the community of a responsible kind, which is outstanding in its field, or very local "hands-on" or dedicated service, which stands out as an example to others and merits public recognition.	Assistants in scientific services (eg medical laboratory assistants) Other support staff working in scientific services (eg administrative and clerical staff)	Staff working in a health care setting whose outstanding contribution is recognised by their peers at a local level.