

# RCN Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship

## RCN Fellowship

### 1. Introduction

The Royal College recognises outstanding Registered Nurses who are outstanding leaders that share our commitment to advancing the art and science of nursing.

Fellowship is the Royal College of Nursing's highest award. It is a mark of achievement to which all nurse members can aspire. College Fellowship is a recognition of a member's experience, accomplishments and commitment to the profession.

Fellowships are awarded to Registered Nurse members of the College in good standing, with a history of membership of the College and who have demonstrated an exceptional contribution to the profession and practice of nursing.

While a Fellowship is a life-long award, it is not a lifetime 'achievement' award meaning Fellowships are not solely awarded based on designed long and faithful service by nurses in the practice of their profession or to the RCN.

It is awarded to Registered Nurse members active across the four pillars of nursing practice:

- Clinical practice: the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to provide high quality healthcare that is safe, effective and person-centred.
- Facilitating learning: the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to enable effective learning in the workplace.
- Leadership: the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead and to fulfil management responsibilities (for example influencing the wider professional agenda).
- Evidence, research and development.

*Honorary Fellowships* are awarded to nurses who are not members of the Royal College of Nursing and individuals who are not eligible for College membership but have demonstrated significant evidence of an extraordinary contribution to the profession of nursing

### 2. Who can be nominated

A nominee for Fellowship must have been a member of the RCN for at least five continuous years before the date of nomination and, in the judgement of the Awards Committee, meet the criteria set out in this guidance.

Current members of RCN Council and RCN staff are not eligible for consideration for the RCN Fellowship.

RCN Fellowships are not awarded posthumously.

Members are not able to self-nominate for the Award.

A nominee for an Honorary Fellowship must not be eligible for RCN membership i.e. they are not a nurse, or they are a nurse registered outside of the UK but recognised as having had a significant impact on nursing or health care and, in the opinion of the Awards Committee, meet the criteria set out in this guidance. Current members of RCN Council and RCN staff are not eligible for consideration for the Honorary Fellowship, and they are not awarded posthumously.

### 3. Criteria

The criteria for RCN Fellowship are:

1. **Impact:** Is there evidence of outstanding impact within the nomination to demonstrate a significant contribution to nursing knowledge, innovative nursing practices or techniques, or novel ways of working (including clinical practice, education, management, leadership or research)?  

The impact of the innovation/unique contribution should be, as far as possible, supported by evidence or detailed examples. Impact may also take the form of using established practices in new contexts or applied in a new way. The impact of the nominee's innovations and unique contributions should be based on evidence as far as possible. This can include detailed examples of the impact being claimed. It is recognised that there may also be some time lapse between the innovation/unique contribution and its lasting impact on nursing. Once again evidence-based claims are expected.
2. **Originality:** To what extent is the innovation/unique contribution totally original in context/application or derived from the work of others?
3. **Evaluation:** Has the innovation/unique contribution (new knowledge, new practice, new way of working) been rigorously tested? (e.g. peer reviewed, published etc.)
4. **Dissemination:** How has the new knowledge/practice/way of working been shared with the rest of the profession, not only in the academic press, but in the national nursing press, conferences, workshops, seminars, radio/TV interviews, personal networking, national/international media outside of nursing?
5. **Transferability:** To what extent has the innovation/unique contribution been incorporated more widely into nursing or used as a model in other fields of nursing? Sustainability of the innovation/unique contribution could also be considered as an element of this criteria.
6. **Recognition:** To what extent is the work recognised by others working in the same field?
7. **Sustained contribution to the RCN:** How has the individual supported and engaged with the RCN over a number of years.
8. **Equity, diversity and inclusion:** How has the individual demonstrated an active commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Advanced studies in nursing and the possession of a higher university degree are neither sufficient in themselves for the award of a Fellowship, nor a prerequisite for a Fellowship.

#### **4. How to nominate**

RCN members, from all RCN membership categories, can submit nominations for the RCN Fellowship at any point during the year using the nomination form. Nominations are considered annually by the Awards Committee. A deadline is published for nominations to be considered at that given years presentation.

Members of the RCN, except employees of the RCN, or current members of RCN Council are able to submit award nominations. A person can only nominate or support one nomination per year.

Nominations can be submitted using the nomination form which is available on this webpage: [rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-awards/rcn-fellowship-and-honorary-fellowship-awards](https://rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-awards/rcn-fellowship-and-honorary-fellowship-awards). Receipt of a nomination will be acknowledged. The nominator must recruit three additional supporters and obtain their testimonials to enclose with the nomination form. The nominator should send the supporters a copy of this guidance and ask them to address the award criteria in their testimonials.

The nominator should clearly evidence the impact of the nominee on the art and science of nursing and provide detailed examples wherever possible. The Awards Committee welcome receiving the nominee's CV, but recognise that it is not always possible to obtain. A CV alone will not be considered as a nomination.

The nominator must provide their contact details as they are the main point of contact for the Awards Committee. The nominator will receive acknowledgement of receipt of the nomination, and will be advised if the nomination has been successful or not, following the decision of Council.

The whole process of RCN awards is confidential. Nominees should not be made aware that they are being put forward for an RCN Award to avoid the risk of disappointment should the nomination be unsuccessful. Nominators will need to get the nominee's CV without alerting them to the nomination. Successful nominees will be informed of the award after Council has made their decision.

#### **5. The process**

The nominations process for RCN Awards is as follows:

- Awards Open - A call for nominations is made each year in the nursing press and in the internal RCN publications and on the RCN website
- Awards Close - A closing date for receipt of nominations is included in the publicity, and it is vital that nominators get the fully completed form submitted in time as late entries will not be considered by the Awards Committee.
- Verification – an internal process to determine that an individual is eligible for an Award (against the eligibility criteria mentioned in section 2).

- Judging - All eligible nominations will be submitted to the RCN Awards Committee, which will make recommendations for Awardees to the RCN Council.
- Awarding - RCN awardees, conferred by RCN Council, are presented with their award at the next awards ceremony.

The dates for opening and closing of nominations as well as any Awards ceremony will be found on the RCN website [www.rcn.org.uk/awards](http://www.rcn.org.uk/awards)

## 6. The Judging Panel

The Awards Committee comprises of the President, Deputy President, Chair of Council, Vice-Chair of Council, the Fellows Convenor, the Chief Executive & General Secretary, the RCN Chief Nurse, Representatives from the Professional Nursing and Trade Union Committees. The Committee makes its recommendations no later than the April meeting of Council.

## 7. The prize

The prize for the award winners is the 'Fellowship medal'.

Winners will also be included on a roll of honour published on the RCN website, and included in RCN communications publicising RCN Award winners. Winners also gain the rights and privileges in section 8, below.

## 8. Rights and Privileges

Fellowship of the RCN shall not of itself confer any rights and privileges over and above those which derive from membership of the RCN as laid down in the Charter. Fellows are expected to possess and to maintain a positive commitment to the aims and ideals of the RCN as a criterion for the retention of their award.

A person admitted as a Fellow shall have the right to be styled "a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing" and such style may be indicated by the use of the letters "FRCN" after the Fellow's name and statutory qualifications.

Fellows of the RCN may, following retirement from the practice of the profession, and on notifying Membership Records, continue to enjoy the rights and privileges of membership of the RCN on the payment of the retired subscription.

Honorary Fellows shall not acquire any of the rights and privileges of membership of the RCN.

Fellows and Honorary Fellows may be called upon to advise RCN Council or national forums with the RCN on matters pertaining to the advancement of nursing.

The Fellows and Honorary Fellows will from time to time meet together for the purpose of considering matters relating to issues in nursing. Any recommendations arising from such meetings will be submitted to RCN Council.

Fellows and Honorary Fellows will receive a distinctive insignia which may be worn at functions of the RCN when badges of office are worn, and at such other nursing functions and on such other occasions as shall be deemed

appropriate by the Fellow or Honorary Fellow. In addition they will receive a scroll which shall indicate whether they have been awarded a Fellowship or Honorary Fellowship, and their names will be inscribed in the Register of Fellows which, together with a volume of citations, will be held in the RCN Library.

**9. Revocation of Fellowship**

[note: to be update with the revised revocation process once approved]