



Royal College  
of Nursing  
Scotland



RCN Scotland  
**Nurse of  
the Year**  
Awards 2026

# A guide to nominating in the **RCN Scotland Nurse of the Year Awards 2026**

#BestOfNursing

## Categories

We are delighted to invite applications in the following categories :

- Adult Nursing
- Care Home Nursing
- Children's Nursing and Midwifery
- Clinical Leadership
- Inspiring Excellence - Nursing Innovation and Research
- Learning Disability Nursing
- Learning in Practice
- Mental Health Nursing
- Nursing Student of the Year
- Nursing Support Worker of the Year
- Nursing Team of the Year
- People's Choice



## Who can nominate and be nominated?

Entries are accepted from nursing staff or midwives nominating themselves or their own teams, or can be submitted on behalf of a colleague or nursing/midwifery team.

Non-nursing colleagues such as managers, medical consultants, AHPs may also nominate their nursing/midwifery colleagues.

Nominees do not need to be a member of the RCN.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the awards, please get in touch by emailing [scotlandnurseawards@rcn.org.uk](mailto:scotlandnurseawards@rcn.org.uk)



## How to nominate

Online nomination forms, along with criteria for each award category, are available on the RCN website at [rcn.org.uk/ScotAwards](https://rcn.org.uk/ScotAwards)

You will need to complete the nomination form process in one go; you will not be able to save the form. We recommend setting out your nomination in a word document before copying and pasting your entry into the online form. This also means you will have a copy for other uses.

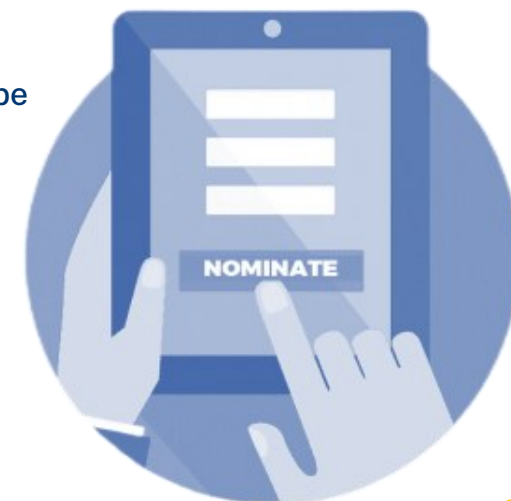
You will be asked to give your entry a title – try and capture the essence of the work. You will then be asked to complete three sections providing detail on your nominee and the work they are being nominated for. Please note the word limit on each of these sections:

- **Reason for entering:** explain why you are entering your nominee (200 word limit).
- **Key aims and innovation:** explain what your nominee set out to achieve and why; how they used an evidence base to support; the key roles and collaboration – who was involved, contribution and how others were engaged to achieve success; include the challenges they faced and how these were overcome (500 word limit).
- **Impact and evaluation:** explain how your nominee measured and demonstrated a positive impact for patients, clients, families and colleagues; provide information on steps to share learning and how the work contributes to national health and care policy and strategy (500 word limit).

Please ensure you have the contact details for the nominee/team before completing the form.

The closing date for nominations is **31 October 2025**. Nominations received after this date will not be considered.

Three finalists will be selected in each category by a panel of judges. Shortlisted nominees will be required to attend a virtual interview in February 2026. Attendance at the interview is mandatory. Inability to attend will disqualify candidates from the 2026 judging process. However, candidates will be able to resubmit their nomination in the following year. The RCN reserves the right to disqualify any candidate at any stage of the selection process if it is considered to be in the best interest of the nursing and midwifery profession.



## What makes a winning entry? Make your nomination stand out from the rest and demonstrate the #BestOfNursing

- 1) Give us sufficient information to enable the judges to understand the reason for the nomination and the work at its centre. Some great nominees and initiatives do not make the shortlist as the nominator has simply not given the judges enough information. Don't be afraid to use bullet points to set out the information clearly. Remember, the finalists are chosen purely on the information you provide in this entry – no one will contact you for further information.
- 2) Start with the nominee's success: What's the headline? What are you proud of? Make use of the attention-grabbing success to hook the judges immediately.
- 3) Demonstrate that the people they care for and support have been at the centre of their work.
- 4) Describe the role the nominee has played. Explain how they engaged with others in their work or won over managers for resources.
- 5) Don't be too modest – describe their role in designing innovations and overcoming challenges in difficult environments.
- 6) Describing the impact is crucial. What difference has their work made to the people being cared for or to nursing practice? This might be feedback from people whose care has improved, savings, audit results or better nurse retention rates from training initiatives.
- 7) Try to include how they are sharing best practice with others. Examples of this could be working with colleagues in other areas, presentations, writing articles for internal use or for external organisations, or highlighting work on social media.
- 8) When writing your nomination, please refer to the award criteria for the category you are nominating for and make sure each point is covered by solid evidence. That way, you'll increase your chances of your nomination being shortlisted.
- 9) A final paragraph that summarises the key points in the nomination could be helpful.
- 10) Last but not least, check your spelling and grammar. Spell out any acronyms, be as clear to the judges as possible, don't make any assumptions that they know what you're talking about.





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**We look forward to  
receiving your nomination  
– good luck!**

**#BestOfNursing**