



**The Queen's Ambulance  
Service Medal for  
Distinguished Service (QAM)  
Guidance for NHS Trust  
Ambulance Services in  
England**



**The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal for Distinguished Service (QAM) Guidance for NHS Ambulance Services in England**

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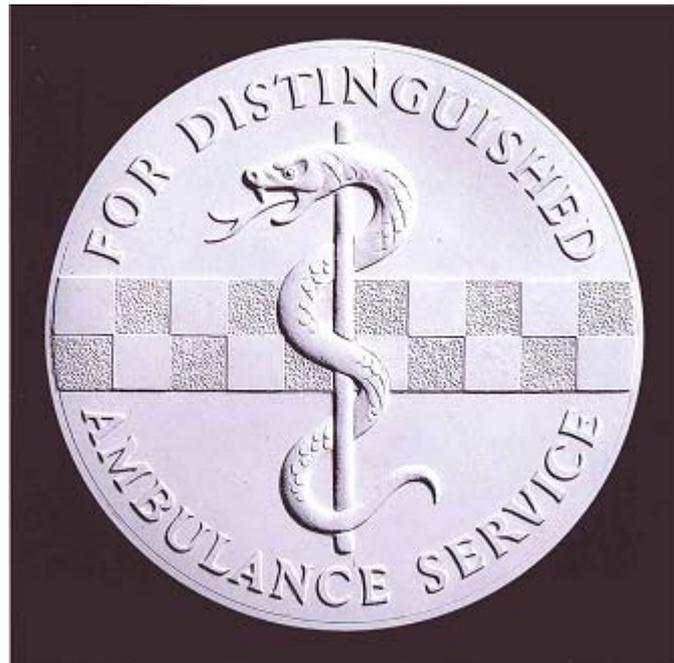
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# The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal for Distinguished Service (QAM) Guidance for NHS Trust Ambulance Services in England



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## Introduction

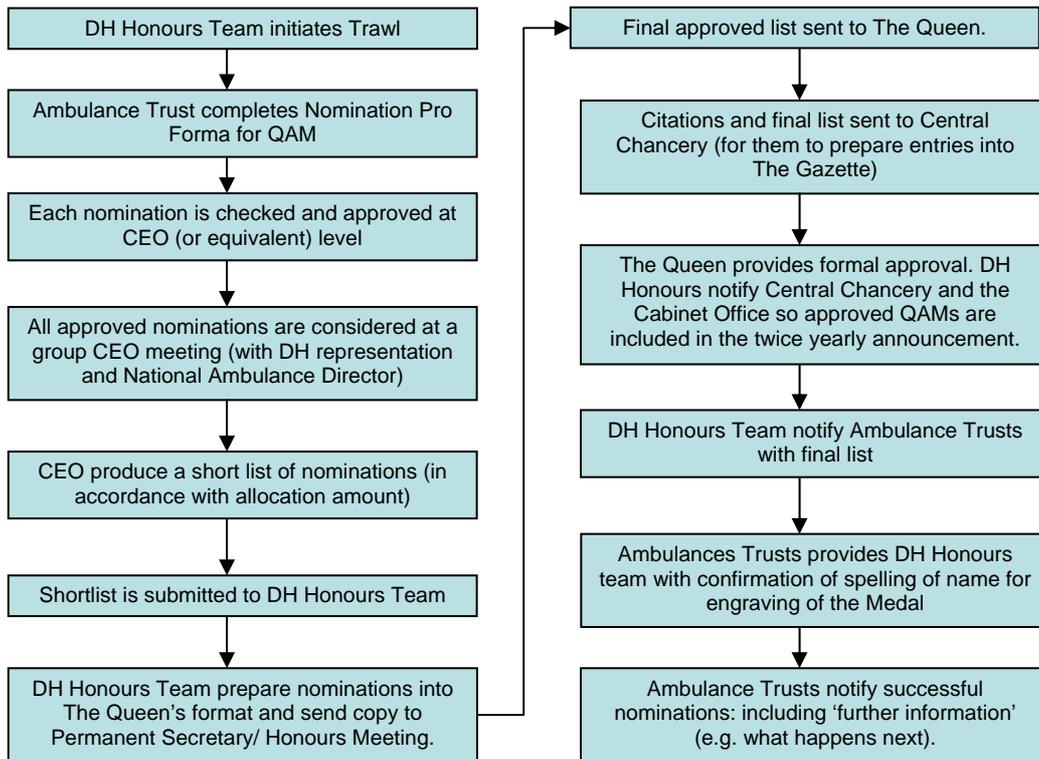
1. Please note that this document has been drafted for and issued to NHS Ambulance Services within England only.
2. Twice a year the British Honours system recognises people for their hard work and exceptional dedication at the Queen's Birthday and at New Year.
3. There are a number of awards that can be given depending on the level of contribution the nominee has made and the area in which their achievements are being recognised. From the summer of 2012, ambulance service staff will be considered for a new award, The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal for Distinguished Service. The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal is synonymous with The Queen's Fire Medal and The Queen's Police Medal.
4. When considering an individual for an award it is important to choose the most appropriate type of recognition and award level. Through the Honours system, there are well established awards available for recognising individuals, and whilst these are not specific to the ambulance service, they should not be overlooked. Under the Queen's Ambulance Service Medal, ambulance staff are now able to officially receive an award for distinguished service to the public or profession in their operational role. The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal (QAM) has therefore been intentionally designed to place the ambulance staff on a par with uniformed staff in both the police and the fire and rescue services.
5. The Medal will be available to all NHS ambulance services (and equivalent in the other Realms and Territories of The Queen within the United Kingdom).
6. Private/independent and voluntary ambulance services will not be eligible.
7. The QAM will recognise individuals working in the ambulance service for distinguished/meritorious service. This means service, which is characterised by exceptional devotion to duty, including service marked by outstanding ability, merit and exemplary conduct. Examples of the type of service that might be recognised are included in the Regulations detailed further in this guidance document (see Annex C, page 12).

## Honours Process

8. Similar to the Honours process, we are seeking high quality, concise nominations with up to date personal information which highlight the nominee's eligibility for the QAM. A separate nomination form for the QAM has been enclosed (see Annex A, page 9), which is based on the same principles as the Honours Nomination forms.
9. The arrangements for awarding honours run to a precise set of timetables and rules managed by the Cabinet Office. In this Department, we consider the nominations for the QAM as part of the Honours process.
10. Unlike the Honours process whereby nominations can be received in a number of ways, the QAM can only be made via the relevant nomination pro forma. (See Annex A, page 9).

11. The following provides a step-by-step process of how the QAM nomination process should be managed.

### Step-by-step process: QAM



Note: The QAM nominations are commissioned, discussed and agreed at the same time as the Empire awards.

## Eligibility/Service Required

12. The QAM award will be eligible to full-time and part-time serving staff of all NHS Ambulance Services (or state equivalent) of the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.
13. The Medal will not be awarded retrospectively to retired staff. It will, however, be made available to all eligible staff who were in service on or after the date of the Medal's introduction and have since retired.
14. Private, independent and voluntary ambulance services are not eligible for this Medal.
15. The number of recommendations for award of the Medal which may be submitted for Her Majesty's approval in any one year (New Year and Birthday Honours List) shall not exceed 10 (ten). This has been allocated across all ambulance services within the United Kingdom as follows:

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- Up to 4 (four) Medals for England
  - Up to 2 (two) Medals for Wales
  - Up to 2 (two) Medals for Scotland
  - Up to 1 (one) Medal for Northern Ireland, and
  - Up to 1 (one) Medal for the Channel Islands
16. Recommendations for award of the Medal are to be submitted on the appropriate nomination form in accordance with individual Service instructions.
17. It will be usual that members of the ambulance service shall have completed 10 years good conduct and exemplary service before being recommended for award of the Medal. Only in exceptional circumstance shall recommendations be considered for those with less than 10 years service.
18. Individuals considered for this award will have shown distinguished or meritorious service in the Ambulance Service. This means service that is characterised by devotion to duty, including service marked by exceptional ability, merit and exemplary conduct over a prolonged period.
19. Exemplary personal performance in the following aspects of the Ambulance Service will be particularly important when considering recommendations for award of the medal:
- I. Very high levels of sustained performance while temporary filling posts that would normally attract a higher rank or grade;
  - II. Prolonged service, but only when accompanied by exceptional achievement and merit;
  - III. Completion of a significant piece of work or project that results in substantial improvements for patients and/or staff;
  - IV. Taking on additional roles or responsibilities (in addition to their core role) that results in significant improvements for patients and/or staff;
  - V. Taking a leading role in developing IT systems to improve performance and efficiency of the Ambulance Service;
  - VI. Taking a significant and prolonged leading role in training and development to promote staff knowledge and skills;
  - VII. Success in organising ambulance services under special difficulties, for example, managing major, serious or dangerous operational incidents, which make exceptional demands on personnel;
  - VIII. Special services to Royalty or Heads of State.
20. Time spent on maternity leave, up to a maximum period for statutory maternity pay in respect of each pregnancy, shall be treated as counting towards length of service (if considered exemplary).
21. Any period of part-time service will be treated as qualifying service provided that the weekly conditioned hours are at least 20.

## Certificate of Efficiency

22. The award shall be made on the recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer (or Chair as an equivalent) who shall certify that the individual's service is demonstrably distinguished. Where the individual concerned is a Chief Executive Officer, the

recommendation and certification shall be made by the Chairperson of the appropriate service. It will be for the Chief Executive Officer or Chairperson to satisfy themselves of the individual's fitness for the award, with reference to the individual's personal records and appraisal reports.

23. When individuals are being assessed for an award of this Medal, their character throughout the whole period of qualifying service should be considered. Staff should not be debarred from receiving this Medal solely on account of a trivial breach of discipline if it has been followed by many years of praiseworthy conduct or exceptional conduct as illustrated within the accompanying Regulations.

## Registration

24. The names of all those to whom the Medal is awarded shall be recorded in a central Register kept in the Department of Health (or equivalent representative State Departments for Health in the United Kingdom, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands).

## Delegated Powers

25. Delegated powers to make awards shall be vested in the Secretary of State for Health, Scottish Ministers, Secretary of State for Wales, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Secretary of State for Justice, as the case may be.

## Post Nominal Letters

26. Individuals awarded the Medal will be entitled, on all occasions when the use of such letters is customary, to have placed the letters "QAM" after his or her name.

## Other Awards

27. The grant of any unofficial or local medal for distinguished service for wear by staff in the Ambulance Service shall be discontinued, and any unofficial or local medal for distinguished service, if already granted, shall not be worn by recipients of The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal.

## Making a Recommendation/Completing a Citation

28. Recommendations for the grant of the QAM should come from Chief Executive Officers (or Chairs) of the Ambulance Service, who will need to ensure that all final nominations are signed off at their level.
29. The QAM is awarded to all ranks/tiers of service who have rendered exceptionally distinguished service. For example, exemplary personal performance may be demonstrated

by successfully taking a lead role to improve efficiency and performance of the ambulance service, special services to Royalty or Heads of State or success in organising ambulance services under special or difficult circumstances e.g. managing major operational incidents.

30. The number of recommendations for award of the QAM should not exceed ten in any one year period i.e. ten nominations will be considered for the New Year and Birthday Honours List in total (this breaks down as four for England).
31. To ensure that those recommended are awarded a QAM, it is expected that Chief Executive Officers of the ambulance service collectively agree nominations prior to them being submitted to the Department of Health. This will, in effect, establish the initial sifting/selection process. The advantage of this process ensures that nominations are based on the quality of the service rendered and relative merit and that they also seek to achieve a fair geographical distribution within the allocated nomination limit for England.
32. It is essential that robust evidence to support the recommendation is held locally and used when drafting the required citation as part of the nomination. As there is limited space to complete the citation section, it is important that only the strongest and most concise evidence is used to show the scale of someone's achievements.

## Selection Procedure for Recommendations

33. The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal was instituted by Royal Warrant in 2011 to place the ambulance staff on a par with uniformed staff in both the police and the fire and rescue services (i.e. to sit alongside The Queen's Police Medal and The Queen's Fire and Rescue Service Medal).
34. Recommendations for the grant of The Queen's Ambulance Service Medal for Distinguished Service come initially from Chief Executive Officers of the ambulance service. The QAM is awarded to officers of all grades/ positions who have rendered exceptionally distinguished service. Community First Responders are not eligible for the award – this is in alignment with other community service support that provide assistance to the other two emergency services. Recommendations for QAMs are made on the basis of distinguished ambulance service; recommendations for Empire awards usually reflect service beyond the local ambulance service, for example service to the community such as voluntary work.
35. In England, the group of ambulance service Chief Executive's will collectively discuss potential candidates prior to nominations being submitted on a biannual basis (i.e. in accordance with the New Year and Birthday Honours timescale). This meeting should include DH and National Ambulance Director representation to consider all recommendations for the QAM, ensuring they are based on the quality of service rendered. The outcome from this collective group will be the production of a shortlist of final nominations.
36. Only those nominees who have been shortlisted will be considered by the Department of Health's Honours Committee chaired by the Department's Permanent Secretary.
37. A similar process is expected to be in place for all other realms eligible to receive the QAM.

## Financial Considerations

38. As with the Queen's Ambulance Service (Emergency Duties) Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, the cost of the Medal shall be met by the ambulance service to whom the nominee is accountable to and employed by.
39. Costs incurred as a result of the Investiture will also be met in full by the nominating NHS ambulance trust; this can and may include travel and overnight costs.

## Annexes

Annex A – Nomination Pro Forma (see separate attachment)

Annex B – Guidance for Completion of QAM nomination pro forma

Annex C – Queen's Ambulance Service Medal Regulations

Annex A – Nomination Pro Forma (please see separate attachment)

## Annex B – Guidance for Completion of QAM nomination pro forma

### Important information:

1. All parts of the QAM nomination form should be completed and returned in the first instance to each respective NHS ambulance service Human Resources Department. All completed nominations should then be presented to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the ambulance service for approval.
2. CEO approved nominations will be considered on a bi-annual basis at a collective meeting of all ambulance service Chief Executive Officers in England (befitting the timescales/ in accordance with the Department of Health's and the Cabinet Office's Honours Process). Consideration by all CEOs must result in a short-list of final nominations that does not exceed the allocated number of Medals for each calendar year. DH and National Ambulance Director representation must be present at each bi-annual review of nominations as part of this collective Chief Executive Officer meeting.
3. The final list of approved nominations must then be submitted to the Department of Health's Honours Team in order for the nomination to be considered. Uncompleted nomination forms will be returned, and therefore may not be considered as part of that Honours round.

### PART 1: NOMINEE

Please select whether you wish the nominee to be considered for the Birthday or New Year Honours. Details of closing dates for Honours nominations can be found as part of the DH Honours biannual trawl. It is important that you factor in plenty of time for all stages of the nomination process as arrangements for awarding the QAM as part of the Honours process run to a precise set of timetables and rules managed by the Cabinet Office. Failure to do so may result in your nomination not being considered in time.

Personal details: enter all details requested for the nominee at the time of completion.

### PART 2: RECOMMENDATION

Please annotate whether the nomination is: 'recommended', 'strongly recommended' or 'very strongly recommended'. This should be based on the strength of the supporting citation.

Use the citation section to clearly explain in no more than 300 words why the nominee is suitable for nomination. Please use the recommended criteria set out in paragraph 18, and in Annex C, on which to base the citation.

### PART 3: CEO APPROVAL

Please completed the 'Nominated by' box by entering your name, grade and contact details.

The Nomination pro forma should then be submitted to your Human Resources Department to ensure that the nominee details are correct and so that your nomination can be supported and

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countersigned by your NHS Ambulance Service Chief Executive Officer. Nominations which are not supported at CEO level (or equivalent) will not be considered by the Department of Health.

## Annex C – Queen's Ambulance Service Medal Regulations:

1. The number of recommendations for award of the Medal which may be submitted for Her Majesty's approval (across the UK) in any one year (New Year and Birthday Honours List) shall not exceed 10 (ten).
2. Recommendations for award of the Medal are to be submitted on the appropriate nomination form in accordance with individual Service instructions.
3. It will be usual that members of the ambulance service shall have completed 10 years good conduct and exemplary service before being recommended for award of the Medal. Only in exceptional circumstance shall recommendations be considered for those with less than 10 years service.
4. Exemplary personal performance in the following aspects of the ambulance service will be particularly important when considering recommendations for award of the Medal:
  - Very high levels of sustained performance while temporarily filling posts that would normally attract a higher rank/ grade;
  - Prolonged service, but only when accompanied by exceptional achievement and merit;
  - Completion of a significant piece of work or project that results in substantial improvements for patients and/or for staff;
  - Taking on additional roles or responsibilities (in addition to their core role) that results in significant improvements for patients or staff;
  - Taking a leading role in developing IT systems to improve performance and efficiency of the ambulance service;
  - Taking a significant and prolonged leading role in training and development to promote staff knowledge and skills;
  - Success in organising ambulance services under special difficulties, for example, managing major, serious or dangerous operational incidents, which make exceptional demands on personnel;
  - Special services to Royalty or Heads of State.