

Top tips for completing Clinical Excellence Awards forms 2021

The Royal College of Ophthalmologist is invited to nominate a number of ophthalmologists to the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards (ACCEA). The number of bronze, silver and gold nominations permitted is calculated with reference to a formula set down by ACCEA. Each year there are more applications than possible nominations. Declan Flanagan, Vice President and member of the College's Clinical Excellence Committee sets out tips below to help members with their applications.

1. Start each section with "in the last five years I have..." and insert dates. If you omit dates, the assumption is that the event is time-expired.
2. If you have local, regional, national and international achievements, always put the international achievements first and the local ones last, but don't forget your local input.
3. Think carefully which achievements you put in each domain. Some achievements do not clearly fit into one domain as there can be overlap between management, research and developing new services. You do not need to score highly in every Domain to get an award but you do need to have some achievements in every Domain. If you led or were part of a successful team acknowledge this and do not claim all the credit.
4. Consider carefully the words you use to ensure that your achievements are clearly expressed within the word limit. Do not include the same achievements in different domains. Assessors will spot this.
5. **Domain 1 – delivering a high quality service** Include any audits you have performed. Stress practice change and demonstrable improvement preferably against national or international benchmarks. An audit coordinator role will impress. National audits, especially if practice changing or where the cycle has been closed will score highly. You should demonstrate that you are critically reviewing your personal current practice and that of your multidisciplinary team and seeking to improve it. Compare your personal audits (e.g. cataract figures) compare against published national and international standards. Include formal feedback from patients
6. **Domain 2 – developing a high quality service** Include innovations and service/technique development (introduction of new services, techniques and ways of working, especially if these have been replicated elsewhere). Include contributions you have made to the development of services which can include new buildings, team building and recruitment as well as new satellite services. Achievements in this Domain can sometimes overlap with achievements in Domain 3.
7. **Domain 3 – leadership activities and management.** This includes participation in the administration of the local, regional or national NHS. Demonstrating with evidence that you have been particularly active and effective as a member or Chairperson of major hospital committees such as Clinical Governance will attract a high score. Include formal colleague appraisal feedback.
8. **Domain 4 – research and Innovation.** Include grants awarded, supervision of trainees taking higher degrees (PhD, MD) and papers in peer reviewed journals. You will get a higher score if you have evidence of significant editorial work, particularly if it is international. Large numbers of publications in peer-reviewed journals will attract a higher score if you are a district general hospital consultant with major clinical commitments than if you are in a consultant post with dedicated research sessions where the bar is set higher. Your job plan should state clearly how many funded research sessions you have. If you have no research sessions you should state this as assessors will take this into account. If you have a reasonably high scoring "H" factor you should mention it.
9. **Domain 5 relates to teaching and training.** It is important to state whether you have educational sessions funded by your hospital, the School of Ophthalmology or any other

body. Delivering change in education will score highly. Supervision of your juniors and the odd ad hoc teaching session is part of your job and will score very little. If you are timetabled to teach medical students or present regularly (give the number in last 5 years) at regional postgraduate teaching sessions, this will score. Taking a leading role in teaching, writing textbooks or chapters or designing online courses particularly if they are demonstrably successful, completing a higher degree in teaching, and teaching teachers is likely to score well. If you are an examiner, state the body you examine for and the number of times since your last award that you have examined. If you have been an examiner in the past and have not done so for several years it is not worth mentioning.

10. If your hospital, division or department has been rated Good or Outstanding by the CQC or another external inspectorate and you can demonstrate with evidence that you personally contributed to this you should state it.

How to ensure that you will NOT get College support!

1. **Omit dates.** All undated entries will be assumed to be time-expired and will score ZERO.
2. **Fill a box with flowery prose and allow the limiter to stop you in full flow to suggest to the assessor that you have so much more to report, but there was not the space.** No credit will be given.
3. **Omit a domain altogether.** You will either not be scored at all, or will score so low as to not be considered.
4. **Put good achievements in the wrong domains.** ACCEA will NOT give you credit for items in the wrong domains.
5. **Presume that your reputation will ensure an automatic high recommendation by the College.** You will only be scored on what is contained in your form.
6. **Presume that you will score for modesty.** You must sell yourself in factual and utterly truthful language.
7. **Exaggerate to give yourself the edge.** Do not embroider the truth or the GMC might take an interest. Your region has a representative on the College's Excellence Awards Committee chosen for his/her probity who will be able to confirm or refute claims.
8. **Use as many abbreviations as you can and spell none of them out.** You must give the full text of abbreviations the first time you use it. The ACCEA uses lay members who have great difficulty with our abbreviations, so you should consider using the full name rather than an abbreviation in each box.

Scoring

Members of the College's Clinical Excellence Committee score each domain using the following ratings:

- Has made no assessable commitment **(0)**
- Meets contractual commitment **(2)**
- Over and above contractual commitment **(6)**
- Excellent **(10)**
- Not applicable to this applicant **(U)**