



**The Queen's Awards for Enterprise**

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# The Queen's Awards for Enterprise

## Background Note: Business Awards

### BACKGROUND

**1** The Award Scheme, originally known as The Queen's Award to Industry, was instituted by Royal Warrant in 1965 following the recommendations of a Committee chaired by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

The Scheme was reviewed in 1970 by a Committee chaired by Lord McFadzean and in 1975 by one again chaired by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, as a result of which **The Queen's Award to Industry** was replaced in 1976 by two separate Awards – **The Queen's Award for Export Achievement** and **The Queen's Award for Technological Achievement**.

In 1993 a third Award, **The Queen's Award for Environmental Achievement**, was instituted by Royal Warrant. The Scheme continued until 1999 when a Committee chaired by HRH The Prince of Wales carried out a comprehensive review. They recommended that the Awards be collectively known in future as **The Queen's Awards for Enterprise** with three categories of Award for outstanding achievement in International Trade, Innovation and Environmental Achievement. The last was to be replaced as soon as possible by a category for outstanding achievement in Sustainable Development. The first Queen's Awards for Enterprise were made in 2000 and the Sustainable Development category introduced in 2001. The Review Committees' recommendations form the basic rules under which the Scheme operates.

**2** The criteria for the Awards for International Trade, Innovation and Sustainable Development are given below. Details of the number of Awards granted and applications received are given in **Annexes B and C**.

**3** HM The Queen makes the Awards on the advice of the Prime Minister, who is assisted by an Advisory Committee that includes representatives of Government, industry and commerce, and the trade unions. They are announced annually on 21 April, The Queen's birthday.

**4** The Advisory Committee is served by three Panels of Judges to examine applications, one for each category of Award. Each Panel is chaired by a Permanent Secretary: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Innovation), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Sustainable Development), and the Chief Executive of United Kingdom Trade and Investment (International Trade). There are no set numbers of Awards, the nature of the Scheme is competitive and the Advisory Committee is charged with maintaining a high standard. The membership of the Advisory Committee is given in **Annex A**.

**5** Since the applications are judged solely on merit, there is no allocation of Awards for particular industries or regions, although there is usually at least one winner in each of the English regions, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**6** All organisations – large, medium or small – which operate regularly as a ‘business unit’ in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man and which can meet the criteria, are eligible to apply; they do not need to be sponsored or nominated. Unlike personal Honours, these Awards are given to a business unit as a whole; applications are not accepted from individuals, but sole proprietorships with at least 2 full time employees are eligible. Applications are accepted from ‘divisions’ within organisations if they have sufficient separate identity.

**7** Applications will first be appraised by contracted technical assessors. Those which pass this stage will then be considered by Committees which appraise the relative merits and commercial success of the application units concerned.

**8** Unsuccessful applicants receive feedback on the assessment of their application. This highlights their perceived strengths and weaknesses, indicating whether the application has failed to match the competitive standard when judged by one of the key criteria or has been unsuccessful for some other reason. It may also indicate the assessors’ view of their underlying performance and provide guidance about how they might improve their application, should they decide to reapply.

## **INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**9** Business units may apply under either of the following:

**Outstanding achievement in international trade, resulting in substantial growth in overseas earnings and in commercial success, sustained over not less than three years, to levels which are outstanding for the goods or services concerned and for the size of the applicant’s operations.**

or:

**Continuous achievement in international trade, resulting in substantial overseas earnings with growth and commercial success, sustained over not less than six years, to levels which are outstanding for**

**the goods or services concerned and for the size of the applicant’s operations.**

**10** Applicants should provide a written outline of the achievements which are the subject of the application. They will need to provide information about their international marketing strategy and its implementation, as well as trading results.

**11** The applicant will need to show that the pattern of growth of earnings amounts to “commercial success”, by reference to such indicators as the applicant sees fit. These may include details of profitability, turnover, market share, performance in relation to business plan targets, and others. Estimates of earnings are acceptable as evidence of commercial success, provided that these estimates are auditable and their accuracy is confirmed by an auditor’s certificate. If estimates are provided, particulars of the methodology used in preparing the estimates must be given. In all cases, the applicant must show that total earnings including overseas earnings are consistent with (or exceed) an international marketing strategy for the goods or services concerned. Overseas earnings may include business done in the UK with overseas customers. The term “UK” includes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

**12** Figures are required over either three or six consecutive 12-monthly periods with the last year ending between prescribed dates (31 December and 31 October). Applicants can choose any year-ending in this ten month period. It is not necessary for the year-endings to coincide with the applicant’s financial or account year endings, but it is preferable for the last year to be as close to the 31 October as the applicant’s accounting system permits.

**13** Applicants should explain how the increase in overseas earnings has been achieved (for example, through improved export sales, marketing organisation or new export market initiatives), and to describe any special market factors.

**14** Generally indirect exporters of goods are ineligible, except in special cases of major components, (e.g. marine engines) where

the producer clearly demonstrates that they have undertaken the selling effort overseas.

**15** Assessors will examine the figures supplied in the application to see how far overseas earnings have increased, and the extent to which the increased business has been sustained over the period. Each year of the application period must show growth in overseas earnings over the preceding year. They will compare the level of overseas earnings and the rate of increase with those of others trading in similar goods and/or services, and the general trend in international trade. The size of the applicant unit's operations will also be taken into account. In addition the assessors will consider the overall performance of the unit, taking into account:

- the level of overseas sales achieved (a figure below £100,000 in any year will be considered insufficient by the assessors);
- the proportion of goods and/or services sold overseas;
- special measures taken to stimulate overseas sales;
- the information provided on markets and marketing.

## **INNOVATION**

**16** Business units may apply under either of the following:

**Outstanding innovation, resulting in substantial improvement in business performance and commercial success, sustained over not less than two years, to levels which are outstanding for the goods or services concerned and for the size of the applicant's operations, and arising in the fields listed below.**

or:

**Continuous innovation and development, resulting in substantial improvement in business performance and commercial success, sustained over not less than five years, to levels which are outstanding for the goods or services**

**concerned and for the size of the applicant's operations, and arising in the fields listed below.**

Achievements under either criterion may be assessed in **any** of the following fields:

**the invention, design, production** (in respect of goods), **performance** (in respect of services, including advice), **marketing, distribution, after sale support, of goods or services.**

**17** Applicants should provide a written outline of the achievements which are the subject of the application. Applicants will need to be able to show that their achievement has been truly innovative. This may include novel applications of established techniques, but not simply bringing activities into line with established best practice.

**18** The applicant will need to show that the pattern of growth of earnings amounts to "commercial success", by reference to such indicators as the applicant sees fit. These may include details of profitability, turnover, market share, performance in relation to business plan targets, and others.

**19** Estimates of earnings are acceptable as evidence of commercial success, provided that these estimates are auditable and their accuracy is confirmed by an auditor's certificate. If estimates are provided, particulars of the methodology used in preparing the estimates must be given.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**20** Business units may apply under either of the following:

**An outstanding advance in sustainable development contributing to a substantial improvement in business performance and commercial success, sustained over not less than two years, to levels which are outstanding for the goods or services concerned and for the size of the applicant's operations, and arising in the fields listed below.**

or:

**Continuous achievement in sustainable development contributing to a substantial improvement in business performance and commercial success, sustained over not less than five years, to levels which are outstanding for the goods or services concerned and for the size of the applicant's operations, and arising in the fields listed below.**

Achievements under either criterion may be assessed in **any** of the following fields:

**the invention, design, production** (in respect of goods), **performance** (in respect of services, including advice), **marketing, distribution, after sale support, of goods or services; and/or the management of resources** (including natural, manufactured and human resources) **and relationships** (with people and organisations).

**20** Applicants should provide a written outline of the achievements which are the subject of the application. Applicants need to demonstrate how the activities in the application make a positive contribution to sustainable development, based on the applicant's response to the four dimensions of sustainable development (Environmental, Social, Economic and Leadership & Management). Applicants are encouraged to use suitable indicators such as energy use per unit of production, percentage of waste recycled, percentage of materials sourced from fair trade sources to demonstrate improvement over time or high performance relative to comparable organisations.

**21** Applicants will need to show that the pattern of growth of earnings amounts to "commercial success", based on suitable indicators such as profitability, turnover, market share and performance in relation to business plan targets.

**22** Estimates of commercial performance may be acceptable, depending on the reliability of the estimates, and the circumstances preventing the submission of more accurate figures and that these estimates are auditable and their accuracy is confirmed by an auditor's certificate.

**23** Applicants are encouraged to describe and provide evidence for the commercial, reputational and other business benefits associated with the high and/or improved environmental and social performance.

## **STANDARDS OF PROPRIETY**

**24** The Queen's Awards Office is charged with ensuring that the Awards are only granted to business units that maintain the highest standards of propriety. All applicants are therefore required to give their consent on the application form to all necessary enquiries being carried out by The Queen's Awards Office.

**25** In addition to the above, but only if requested by The Queen's Awards Office, applicants will be required to provide an independent qualified accountant's or auditor's certificate confirming their commercial performance figures or estimates, and that the applicant has complied with the applicable accounting standards in preparing the application.

**26** They will also be required to provide assurances of responsible conduct in managing the impact on society and the environment, in the selection and control of suppliers, management of the production process and of human resources, and customer service. They will be invited to provide evidence of success in these fields, including any specific initiatives. Such evidence will count in the applicant's favour.

## **GENERAL**

**27** Applications must be made on the appropriate form(s), which can be completed on-line and submitted electronically from the Queen's Awards website  
[www.businesslink.gov.uk/queensawards](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/queensawards)

**28** Forms are usually available from end-April to October. The closing date for applications is 2pm on the last working day in October.

**29** Details of Awards winners are announced on 21 April the following year and are published as a supplement to the

London Gazette, and are also listed on The Queen's Awards Website.

**30** The presentation ceremony is conducted at the winners' premises by the Lord-Lieutenant of the County as HM The Queen's representative. The Awards consist of a Grant of Appointment and a presentational item bearing the Emblem.

**31** An Award is valid for five years. Successful organizations may fly the Queen's Award flag at their principal premises and are entitled to use The Queen's Award Emblem on their stationery, advertising and goods. Commemorative articles can be given to employees.

**32** Additionally, HM The Queen hosts a reception at Buckingham Palace for representatives of the winning units.

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## **ANNEX A**

### **The Queen's Awards for Enterprise The Prime Minister's Advisory Committee (March 2011)**

Sir Gus O'Donnell KCB (Chairman)  
Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service

Mr Martin Donnelly  
Permanent Secretary  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Ms Susan Haird  
Acting Chief Executive  
UK Trade and Investment

Mr Peter Unwin  
Acting Permanent Secretary  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Mr Brendan Barber  
General Secretary  
Trades Union Congress

Stuart Popham  
Chairman  
TheCityUK

Professor Kel Fidler FREng  
Chairman  
The Engineering Council UK

Helen Alexander  
Confederation of British Industry

Ms Rosemary Radcliffe CBE\*  
Independent Member

(The members, except those asterisked, are appointed *ex-officio*)

## ANNEX B: NUMBER OF AWARDS

Year	International Trade (Export)	Innovation (Technology)	Export & Technology (combined)	Sustainable Development (Environmental Achievement)	Total
2011	102	44		10	156
2010	95	38		10	143
2009	135	49		10	194
2008	85	42		12	139
2007	71	40		8	119
2006	90	48		7	145
2005	88	41		8	137
2004	66	39		7	112
2003	62	51		10	123
2002	85	37		9	131
2001	76	42		15 ▲	133
2000 ●	77	32		7	116
1999	82	14		5	101
1998	115	14		4	133
1997	110	16		8	134
1996	107	16		6	129
1995	140	17		6	163
1994	139	18		8	165
1993	118	25		12#	155
1992	127	38			165
1991	118	40			158
1990	126	49			175
1989	116	40			156
1988	102	43			145
1987	120	34			154
1986	114	27			141
1985	90	29			119
1984	88	23			111
1983	90	20			110
1982	91	19			110
1981	92	17			109
1980	87	17			104
1979	102	19			121
1978	107	17			124
1977	106	19			125
1976	95	20	*		115
1975	76	17	2		95
1974	59	19	-		78
1973	66	15	2		83
1972	72	17	1		90
1971	93	13	4		110
1970	74	25	5		104
1969	69	24	6		99
1968	60	17	8		85
1967	48	28	9		85
1966	86	11	18		115
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,317</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>5,814</b>

\* Combined Awards discontinued. Since 1976, applicants have been able to win Awards in each category in the same year.

# First year of the Environment Award. Since 1993 applicants have been able to win Export, Technology and Environmental Awards in the same year.

● First year of The Queen's Awards for Enterprise: International Trade, Innovation and Environmental Achievement.

▲ First year of The Queen's Awards for Enterprise: Sustainable Development (replaced the Environmental Achievement Award).

## ANNEX C: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE AWARDS

Year	International Trade (Export)	Innovation (Technology)	Sustainable Development (Environmental Achievement)	Total
2011	387	273	121	781
2010	565	414	190	1169
2009	503	405	170	1078
2008	354	305	143	802
2007	307	260	116	683
2006	351	344	144	839
2005	337	298	154	789
2004	280	295	162	737
2003	362	421	225	1008
2002	418	320	165	903
2001	385	306	202 *	893
2000 •	477	285	104	866
1999	520	163	82	765
1998	864	207	143	1214
1997	1300	278	146	1724
1996	1191	254	116	1561
1995	1315	253	137	1705
1994	1246	303	133	1682
1993	1230	352	240 #	1822
1992	1181	384		1565
1991	849	293		1142
1990	969	386		1355
1989	801	286		1087
1988	724	261		985
1987	813	258		1071
1986	1015	266		1281
1985	789	306		1095
1984	709	253		962
1983	749	236		985
1982	818	261		1079
1981	963	259		1222
1980	941	231		1172
1979	1390	250		1640
1978	1601	259		1860
1977	1500	309		1809
1976	1401	320		1721
1975	1070	262		1332
1974	692	206		898
1973	740	279		1019
1972	921	226		1147
1971	1102	348		1450
1970	1042	332		1374
1969	811	304		1115
1968	839	361		1200
1967	1185	436		1621
1966	734	274		1008
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,741</b>	<b>13,582</b>	<b>2,893</b>	<b>55,216</b>

# First year of the Environment Award.

• First year of The Queen's Awards for Enterprise: International Trade, Innovation and Environmental Achievement.

\* First year of The Queen's Awards for Enterprise: Sustainable Development (replaced the Environmental Achievement Award).