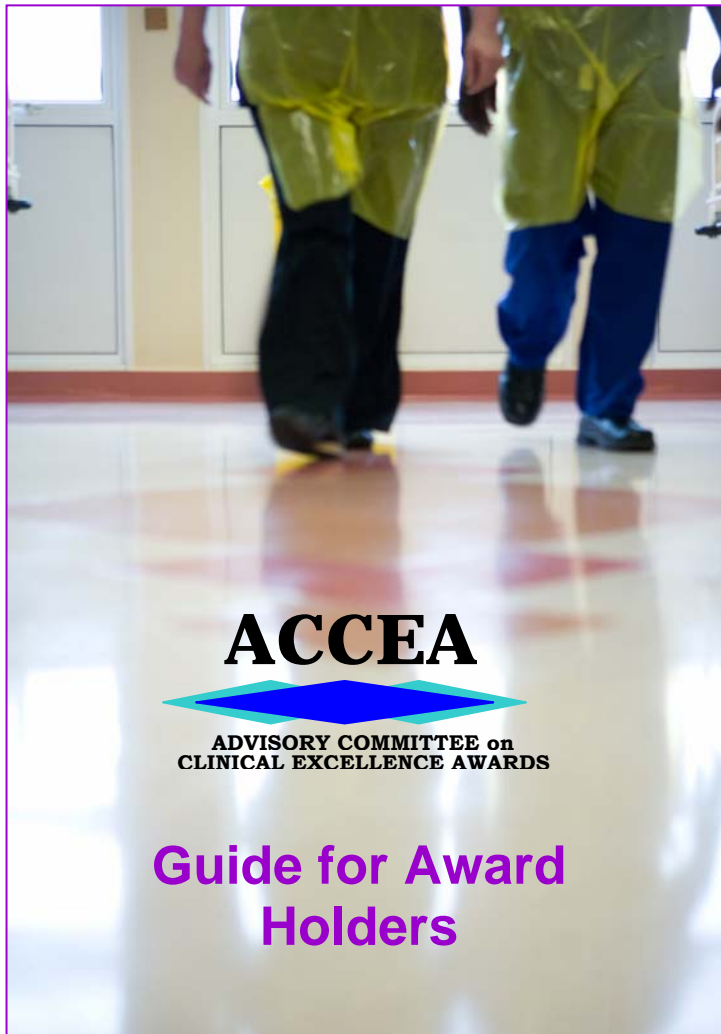


NHS Consultants' Clinical Excellence Awards Scheme

2010 Awards Round



This guide is available online at the ACCEA website
www.dh.gov.uk/ab/ACCEA/index.htm

The online national awards application system is available at
www.nhsaccea.dh.gov.uk

Published September 2009

Please note: All applications for national awards must be submitted by 17:00 on 11 December 2009

Preface: What does this Guide cover?

This Guide is for NHS consultants or academic GPs who already hold a National Award either a Clinical Excellence Award, or a Distinction Award.

Holders of Employer Based Awards, should refer to the “Guide to Employer Based Awards”.

The Guide contains a short introduction, to remind you of the aims of the Scheme and how it works. It then covers how a change in your circumstances can affect your award and how it is reviewed, and what the guidelines are for applying for higher awards.

Please use it as background information and as a reference guide if you apply for another award

You can find a set of frequently asked questions about the Scheme, along with annual reports of previous award rounds, at www.dh.gov.uk/ab/ACCEA/Publications/index.htm

You can also find a Code of Practice at www.dh.gov.uk/ab/ACCEA/Committees/index.htm

Contents

Part I: Introduction

- > The Clinical Excellence Awards Scheme 4
- > How does the Scheme work? 4
- > What does the Scheme reward? 5
- > How are applications assessed? 6
- > About the ACCEA and supporting committees 6

Part 2: Change in circumstances

- > Change in speciality 8
- > Working in general management 8
- > Unpaid leave 8
- > Secondments 8
- > Prolonged absence from the NHS 8
- > Leaving the NHS during an award round 9
- > Effect of retirement 9
- > Part-time employment 9

Part 3: Applying for higher level awards

- > Guidelines for applying for a higher award 10
- > How to apply 10

Part 4: Award reviews

- > Timing of reviews 11
- > How will the review work? 11
- > What part does your employer play in the review? 12
- > What happens if your award is withdrawn or downgraded 12
- > How will the withdrawal of an award affect your salary 12
- > What if you are soon to retire? 13

Part 1: Introduction

The Clinical Excellence Awards Scheme

1.1 Clinical Excellence Awards recognise and reward NHS consultants and academic GPs who perform 'over and above' the standard expected of their role. Awards are given for quality and excellence, acknowledging exceptional personal contributions.

1.2 To be considered for an award, consultants and academic GPs will have to demonstrate a commitment to delivering high quality patient care, and commitment to the continuous improvement of the NHS.

1.3 The Scheme is administered by the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards (ACCEA). It is managed on the Committee's behalf by a full time Secretariat in the Department of Health.

1.4 The Clinical Excellence Awards Scheme continues to take account of the good practice developed by the Distinction Awards and Discretionary Points schemes that preceded it. If you already hold either of these, you can still apply for a Clinical Excellence Award - see section 3.2 for more details.

How does the Scheme work?

1.5 There are 12 levels of award. In England Levels 1-8 are awarded locally and Levels 10-12 (Silver, Gold and Platinum hereafter) are awarded nationally in England and Wales. Level 9 Awards in England can be awarded locally as Employer Based Awards or nationally. To avoid confusion, this guide will always refer to the National Level 9 Award as Bronze. In Wales, Local Awards have been replaced by Commitment Awards and Bronze Awards are rewarded nationally for excellence at National Level. The principles in this Guide apply equally to both Local and National Awards.

1.6 Applicants may apply for both a national Bronze and an Employer Based Level 9 in the same year. If an applicant finds out they have been successful at the Employer Based level, before the national recommendations are made, they must let the Secretariat know, to avoid duplication. There is no difference to the applicant, financially or otherwise, between the two awards.

1.7 ACCEA and its regional sub-committees recommend individuals for Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum awards. Applicants for Levels 1-9 are recommended by Employer Based Awards Committees.

1.8 ACCEA monitors the Employer Based Scheme and publishes an annual report on the awards that includes information on their distribution.

1.9 There is a core application form for all the awards, which means everyone who applies has the same opportunity to highlight their contributions.

1.10 For National Awards in England, applications must be completed online. Anyone applying for an Employer Based Award will need to download and complete the form, and then submit it through their employer's processes. For applications in Wales please see Section 3.5 of the Guide for Applicants.

What does the Scheme reward?

1.11 The Scheme rewards individuals who achieve over and above the standard expected of a consultant or academic GP in their post, and who locally, nationally or internationally, provide many of the following characteristics (**applicants are not expected to possess them all**).

- > Demonstrate sustained commitment to patient care and wellbeing, or improving public health
- > Sustain high standards of both technical and clinical aspects of service whilst providing patient focused care
- > Make an outstanding contribution to professional leadership
- > In their day to day practice demonstrate a sustained commitment to the values and goals of the NHS, by participating actively in annual job planning, observing the Private Practice Code of Conduct and showing a commitment to achieving agreed service objectives
- > Through active participation in clinical governance contribute to continuous improvement in service organisation and delivery
- > Embrace the principles of evidence based practice
- > Contribute to knowledge base through research and participate actively in research governance
- > Are recognised as excellent teachers and/or trainers and/or managers
- > Contribute to policy making and planning in health and health care

1.12 ACCEA invites consultants to provide evidence about their performance in five domains enabling them to demonstrate that they:

- > Deliver patient services which are safe, have measurably effective clinical outcomes and provide a good experience for patients
- > Have significantly improved quality of care and the clinical effectiveness of their local service or related clinical service broadly within the NHS
- > Have made an outstanding leadership contribution, including within the profession

- > Have made innovations or contributed to research, or the evidence/evaluative base for quality
- > Have delivered high quality teaching and training which may include the introduction of innovative ideas

1.13 The Scheme aims to be completely open, and offer every applicant an equal opportunity. Individual applications are considered on merit and the process is competitive. Awards are also monitored to ensure that the Scheme is implemented fairly. The Annual Report of ACCEA records the conclusions of this monitoring.

How are applications assessed?

1.14 Standard guidelines are used when recommending applicants for every level, and all awards are assessed against the same strict criteria. These criteria can be viewed at www.dh.gov.uk/ab/ACCEA/Awardsround/index.htm

The criteria apply to all levels of award, but take account of achievements possible at different stages of a consultant or academic GP's career.

1.15 The sub-committees and Employer Based Awards Committees measure achievement within the parameters of an individual's employment, and recognise excellent service over and above the normal delivery of job plans including the quality of delivery of contractual duties.

1.16 ACCEA receives additional advice from specialist societies and 'national nominating bodies' on the quality of applicants' work. A separate guide has been produced for these 'nominators'. They produce ranked lists indicating their views of the relative merits of those applicants who have asked to be considered by them.

These rankings are one of the pieces of evidence used by sub-committees to help evaluate applications. The lists are also considered by the Chair and Medical Director when preparing the recommendations to go to the main Committee.

About the ACCEA and supporting committees

1.17 The Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards (ACCEA) is a non-departmental public body. It issues guides to the Scheme (such as this document) setting out the detailed criteria against which applicants will be assessed. The ACCEA Secretariat administers the application and assessment process for national awards.

1.18 The Committee advises Ministers on award nominations proposed by the Chair and Medical Director, and based on recommendations from sub-committees and national bodies.

Regional Sub-Committees

1.19 There are thirteen regional ACCEA sub-committees. They are based on the boundaries of the Strategic Health Authorities for the different regions. London is split into

three, while the North West is subdivided into two to make these areas manageable. There is also a committee covering Wales and a DH Committee considering those who are seconded to the Department of Health or who work for Arms Length Bodies.

1.20 The sub-committees consider all applications from consultants and academic GPs in their area, and produce a shortlist for the Chair and Medical Director to consider for submission to the main Committee.

Committee members come from a wide range of backgrounds, with experience and expertise in numerous areas. They will come to a collective decision on who to shortlist for awards.

National nominating bodies

1.21 The Chair and Medical Director also consider the applications of all those consultants who have been nominated by accredited national bodies, such as the Medical Royal Colleges, Universities UK, the British Medical Association, the Medical Women's Federation and the British International Doctors Association. There is a Guide for Nominators and a list of National Nominating Bodies on the ACCEA website. Those bodies are invited to submit a ranked 'shortlist' in a similar way to that produced by the sub-committees. They are then considered, in consultation with the relevant sub-committee, for submission to the main Committee.

Employer Based Awards committees

1.22 For details on the composition and operation of these committees, please see the "Guide to Employer Based Awards".

Part 2: Change in circumstances

The following changes to your circumstances may affect the payment of your Clinical Excellence Award or Distinction Award:

Change in specialty

2.1 If you stop practising in the area for which your award was granted you should inform ACCEA, who will consider your case.

Working in general management

2.2 If you stop practising in the area for which your award was granted, and move into a full or part-time general management post, you will need to speak to your employer and consult ACCEA about whether you can continue to receive the full monetary value of your award. You would not normally receive payment of your award if you cease to meet the eligibility criteria set out in Part 2 of the Guide for Applicants.

2.3 If you return to clinical work after a period in full-time general management, your award may be reinstated after a review.

Unpaid leave

2.4 Awards are not paid during any period of unpaid leave. If you take leave for longer than a year, the question of reinstating your award will be subject to review by ACCEA.

Secondments

2.5 If you are on full-time secondment to a post with a non-qualifying employer, your award will be suspended.

2.6 You should speak to your employer before you begin your secondment to make arrangements for protecting the award, and continuing to collect it after your secondment has finished.

2.7 If the secondment is longer than a year, the question of whether to reinstate the award will be subject to review by ACCEA. ACCEA will consider reinstating the award subject to the consultant returning to awardable work. Consultants who are away for between 1 and 5 years can apply to have the award reinstated. Consultants who are away five years or more must apply at Bronze level. ACCEA considers each case on its merits.

2.8 If you are on secondment to the Independent Sector Treatment programme, whilst retaining your contract as an NHS consultant, you are still eligible to receive your award and apply for progression in the national part of the Scheme.

Prolonged absence from the NHS

2.9 Where consultants, for any reason, have not practised their specialty in the NHS for more than a year, ACCEA will review whether the award should be reinstated.

Leaving the NHS during an award round

2.10 Payment for awards is backdated to 1 April of that awards year.

2.11 In order to qualify for an award, you must be employed as a consultant in the NHS on the 1 April. We cannot grant an increased award in the 2010 round if you leave the NHS before 1 April 2010.

2.12 Consultants sometimes leave the NHS before the awards round is completed. If you submit a completed application by the closing date and are still in your NHS post on 1 April, the application will be followed through to the conclusion of the process. If successful your award will be backdated to 1 April and payable until you leave the NHS.

Effect of retirement

2.13 Clinical Excellence Awards cease on retirement and are consolidated into pension. If you are re-employed, you will not continue to receive award payment.

2.14 If you hold a Distinction Award and return to work within 12 months of retirement, and continue in the same post or one substantially the same as that held when the Distinction Award was granted or last renewed, you should submit an application to ACCEA for re-instatement of your award. This is the same as the review form, and is available in Word format from the ACCEA Secretariat.

2.15 Your application should demonstrate that you will continue to work over and above contractual requirements, to the level of your existing award.

2.16 ACCEA will then decide whether the existing award can be continued for a specified period of time. This is subject to annual review. Each case is judged on its merits.

Part-time employment

2.17 If you are working part-time, your award will be paid pro-rata.

Part 3: Applying for higher level awards

Guidelines for applying for a higher award

3.1 If you already hold a Distinction Award or Discretionary Points and successfully apply for a Clinical Excellence Award, you will no longer receive payment from any previous Points or Award.

3.2 The Guidelines for applying for a higher level award are as follows

You already hold:	You can apply for:
Discretionary Points or Level 1-8 Award or commitment awards in Wales or exceptionally no award	Bronze Award through the national process and/or Level 9 from your employer if you work in England
Bronze Award or Level 9 Award or B Distinction Award	Silver Award
Silver Award	Gold Award
Gold Award or an A Distinction Award	Platinum Award

How to apply

3.3 When applying for a new award, please refer to the *Guide for Applicants*, to ensure you follow the correct process. You can download this from the website at www.dh.gov.uk/ab/ACCEA/Awardsround/index.htm.

Part 4: Award reviews

Timing of reviews

4.1 National Clinical Excellence Awards and Distinction Awards granted from the 1989 awards round onwards are subject to five yearly reviews. It is your responsibility to ensure that your award is reviewed at the correct time.

The ACCEA Secretariat will endeavour to notify you and your Chief Executive to remind you when your review is due, however, there may be occasions when we are unable to contact you. The onus is on the Award Holder to ensure the award is reviewed at the correct time.

4.2 The five year review ensures that ACCEA only rewards consultants who continue to meet the standards required. In reaching a view on renewals, we also consider any adverse findings from complaints, disciplinary or professional proceedings.

Awards can be reviewed at any other time. If your employer feels there is good reason to do so, they have a duty to inform the Chair and Medical Director of ACCEA

How will the review work?

4.3 As part of the review, you will need to complete an application form, setting out how you continue to meet the criteria for holding an award at the appropriate level. When applying for renewal you should demonstrate, by reference to any achievements since the original award or last review, how you continue to meet the criteria for the Scheme.

4.4 You should focus on activity within the five year period leading up to the review. You should only include information on earlier activity to demonstrate how your contributions have evolved.

4.5 Applicants who submit a successful application in the 2010 Round will usually be given a five year renewal period until 2015. Review papers would need to be submitted in Autumn 2014 for the 2015 Round. The next review would then be due in Autumn 2019 for review in the 2020 Round.

4.6 Applicants who submit an inadequate application in the 2010 Round, will not have their awards renewed and must submit an adequate application the following year (2011), if they do not want their Award to expire. If that application for review is successful, the award will be renewed. However, in order to maintain the original review period, the award will be renewed for four years (i.e. 2015).

4.7 In cases where the evidence supplied is unclear, the Chair and Medical Director can also recommend to ACCEA that an award be renewed for less than five years, giving

applicants a chance to demonstrate they still meet the relevant criteria for their award level.

4.8 Applicants, who were due to submit an application to review their award in the 2009 Round and did not do so or whose application was inadequate, must submit review papers in the 2010 Round or their Award will expire on the 31 March 2010. If they do so successfully, they will be put on a four year review, to keep them in line with their five yearly review cycle. If they fail to submit in the 2010 Round, a recommendation will be made to ACCEA that the award is terminated. Consultants to whom this applies will be warned that this recommendation is being made and they will be given the opportunity to make any further relevant submission, which will be presented to the main committee.

What part does your employer play in your review?

4.9 The Chief Executive of the organisation where you work will need to complete **Part 2** of the review form, and indicate whether:

- > They support the continuation of the award
- > You continue to work to the standards of professional and personal conduct required by the General Medical/Dental Council (GMC/GDC)
- > You have had a formal appraisal, agreed a job plan, fulfilled contractual obligations and complied with the Private Practice Code of Conduct in the last 12 months
- > There has been any disciplinary action by your employer or the GMC/GDC, arising from a complaint that directly concerns you

What happens if your award is withdrawn or downgraded?

4.10 If, following a review, it is considered that you no longer merit your award, the Chair and Medical Director will recommend to ACCEA that it is withdrawn or downgraded.

4.11 Before referring such cases, the ACCEA Secretariat will contact you, explaining the reasons. You then have the opportunity to make a written submission to ACCEA before the final decision.

How will the withdrawal of an award affect your salary?

4.12 There is a system of salary protection for awards that are downgraded or withdrawn.

4.13 The financial value of your former award will be frozen until your basic pay (plus the value of any lower award if the original award was downgraded) has caught up with your mark time earnings.

4.14 However, in exceptional circumstances ACCEA may completely withdraw an award and its financial component.

What if you are soon to retire?

4.15 If your expected retirement date follows the review limit by only a short period (up to six months) ACCEA may use its discretion to renew the award until that date, without the need for submission of a renewal application, even if this results in an extension slightly beyond the limit.