



the british
psychological society
promoting excellence in psychology

Fellowship - FBPsS

Application or nomination for a Fellowship of the Society

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1 Introduction

This document describes the criteria and process for the award of Fellowship of the British Psychological Society. Society members may either apply or be nominated for a Fellowship. Fellows of the Society may also nominate Society members for the award.

2 Criteria for the award of Fellowships

A Fellowship is recognition of a significant contribution and has always been regarded as an individual honour. It follows, therefore, the criteria for Fellowship cannot be as closely prescribed as those for the Society's membership grades. The Society's Trustees have approved these criteria and the Society's Membership and Standards Board (MSB) oversees the processes leading to award of a Fellowship.

The criteria are set out in the Society's statutes as follows:

"No person shall be eligible for election as a Fellow unless he or she shall:

- a) *either be an Associate Fellow or satisfy the Board of Trustees that he or she possesses the requirements for Associate Fellowship; and*
- b) *satisfy the Board of Trustees that he or she has the following additional higher qualifications as may be provided in the Rules:*
 - i) *has been engaged in work of a psychological nature (other than undergraduate training) for a total period of at least ten years; and*
 - ii) *possesses an advanced knowledge of psychology in at least one of its fields; and*
 - iii) *has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement or dissemination of psychological knowledge or practice either by his or her own research, teaching, publications or public service, or by organising and developing the work of others*

The Board of Trustees may award the title Fellow to such eligible candidates as it thinks fit."

Election to a Fellowship involves an element of peer review (by other Fellows) using criteria that are to be viewed as general guidelines rather than a checklist of achievements. Given that judgements are involved, the Society is concerned that as much guidance as possible is available to those who may be considering whether to apply and to those who might nominate them.

Who should apply

The Society welcomes applications from psychologists who work within all settings including the NHS, prison services, social care, education, business, sport those who work in independent practice settings or within academic institutions

What constitutes an outstanding contribution?

To help the Society in arriving at a decision, applicants or nominators are asked to make a case for how they believe the criterion of an 'outstanding contribution' has been met. Referees are similarly asked to present a case for the applicant. The Society may, in addition, consult further independent Assessors nominated by the Society, who have experience in the same area of psychology as the applicant.

The following points may help applicants or nominators to decide whether the criteria for Fellowship are satisfied. This information should help in presenting the case as strongly as possible.

An '*outstanding contribution*' is to be construed as a contribution significant enough to be recognised by those working in the same branch of psychology. Certainly the work of the applicant will have to be known about, and held in esteem, beyond his or her local environment, department or service.

The expectation that the contribution will have had an impact on psychology generally applies equally to applications from members living and working abroad. The Society will be looking for evidence of its **influence on science or practice** when considering the award.

For a contribution to be of appropriate significance, it should have been communicated widely. Often this is achieved by publishing the key aspects of the work in refereed journals, but other forms of publication and dissemination can be equally appropriate. This could include e.g. conferences, presentations, workshops, substantial non-refereed journals, or commissioned reports etc.

Applicants should also note that in addition, a Fellowship may be achieved through one of the awards made by the Society. These are listed in this document.

Applicants may find the following examples helpful in determining whether they meet the criteria. A significant contribution might involve the development of a new procedure, which has shown to be valid, effective, and of broad application. By definition, the new procedure will be known and accepted as important in the relevant area of psychology. Elaborating an existing technique or method and applying it to new problems or client groups may also be considered an appropriate contribution. Similarly, advanced casework employing innovative strategies would be considered applicable. A contribution through *public service* would involve, for example chairpersonship or membership of national committees constituted to set up guidelines for the development or application of psychological knowledge in a particular area - for example, education, teaching, clinical practice or industry. It may involve significant and sustained work with voluntary bodies to introduce psychological principles or practice within their services.

A contribution through organising and developing the work of others could involve leading, representing and supporting psychologists including setting standards and promoting excellence in psychology. For example, a significant contribution can be demonstrated through developing a psychological service that has become a model for the delivery of professional services, which others have followed.

It is important to point out, though, that only the development, application or elaboration of **psychological knowledge and practice** can be considered relevant to the award of a Fellowship. Increasingly, people with degrees in psychology are making substantial and original contributions in other fields of endeavour (e.g. publishing, entertainment, marketing, administration and management to name but a few) but these contributions do not always involve a distinctive application of psychology. Bringing psychological theory, knowledge and practice to influence institutions, organisations or activities where there had been no such influence would, however, constitute an original contribution.

It is intended that the criteria will be interpreted broadly and might include any of the following:

- evidence of peer-recognised innovation and originality in the applicant's research/ teaching/ practice/ public service/organisation and development of the work of others
- evidence of a significant contribution to one major area of knowledge or practice evidence of specific and significant ways in which the applicant has taken forward the knowledge or practice base in psychology

- evidence that the applicant has acquired a national or international reputation through making a major impact on a particular area of psychology
- evidence of the influence of an applicant's expertise in psychology on the development of national or international policy
- evidence of the applicant's expertise in psychology influencing another discipline or profession (e.g. the legal process, medicine, human resource management, etc)
- membership of a national or international committee (e.g. a central government advisory or task group, or international working party/ advisory group)
- leadership of an initiative which has resulted in policy relating to services such as education, employee selection, decisions on parole, or care of the elderly becoming based on sound psychological principles
- a pioneering and sustained contribution to the development of a local psychological service which has delivered improved outcomes for clients or provided a model for best practice
- evidence of significant work with clients, carers and their organisations to improve services and deliver psychological care
- evidence of effective dissemination of knowledge/practice with discernible outcomes in the public domain
- winners of the following Society awards: the President's Award, the Spearman Medal, Distinguished Contribution to Professional Psychology, Professional Practice Board Lifetime Achievement Award
- election to Fellowship of the Royal Society or the British Academy
- conferment of a senior public honour for services to psychology (e.g. a knighthood, DBE, CBE)
- service to the Society through completing a full term as an Honorary Officer (as defined in the Society's Statutes and Rules) or chair of a policy board
- significant support to a Society function, for example work undertaken as part of the Society's accreditation process.

It should be noted that there is neither an expectation nor a requirement that all of these indicators should be achieved. The key issue is whether the criteria are met. This list of indicators sets out some of the ways that they might be met; other equivalent ways of meeting them are not excluded. Decisions about the award of a Fellowship are taken with proper regard to the Society's equality and diversity policy and strategy.

For all the reasons elaborated above, the Society will be highly dependent on the information provided by applicants, referees or nominations. Every application will have unique features and any arguments in support of the award that candidates can make will be given full weight by the Society.

How to apply

Please submit:

- Fellowship application form
- Personal statement - 'Your case for a Fellowship'

'Your case for a Fellowship' is your opportunity to outline how you meet the criteria. It should detail your qualifications, experience, appointments, achievements, professional development, and, most importantly, how you have made a significant contribution to the Society directly or to the advancement or dissemination of psychological knowledge or practice.

3 Procedures

The following section describes the procedure for nominating a member or for an individual applying for a Fellowship. The documentation for both routes is the same.

Referees

Candidates whether applying or being nominated for a Fellowship must be supported by two Fellows who will serve as **referees**. They will make a case for election, by stating how the candidate meets the criteria detailed in this booklet. No application can be processed until both referees' reports are received. Applicants should hand each referee a copy of their application and a copy of the *Advice to referees* (see *Appendix one*). Where applicants cannot name Fellows who know them well enough to act as referees, actively endorsing their candidature, they should still give the names of two Fellows to serve as referees but in addition they may ask a third psychologist who is not a Fellow or even a Member of the Society to sponsor their application.

A list of Fellows for those who are unable to find a Fellow to act as a referee is kept on the Society's website in the Members section (you'll need to log in to the website to access the list).

Candidates must send a copy of their application to each of their referees in order that they may see how the candidate has chosen to present their own case for a Fellowship. Referees will be expected to comment on the case made by the applicant and to add their supporting evidence. They will also be asked to confirm that they have read the application and that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, the information given by the applicant is correct.

How is my application assessed?

Following receipt of your application/nomination and both referees reports the Society's Fellowship Community (a panel of Society Fellows from across the practice domains) will examine the application and one of the following outcomes will result:

- The application makes a very strong case, is unequivocally supported by referees and the Society – an award is confirmed; or,
- The application is not judged to have met the criteria and is declined.

Decisions

The decision of the Society will be final. Successful candidates receive a letter and certificate signed by the President of the Society.

Unsuccessful candidates will either be sent a standard letter informing them that their application has been rejected, or one encouraging them to make a re-application at a later date. In both cases the candidate may re-apply. The letters notifying candidates that their application has been unsuccessful do not provide feedback, as this would violate the confidentiality of the referees' and Fellowship Community.

Newly elected Fellows will be announced in *The Psychologist*.

If you have any queries please contact us by email - applications@bps.org.uk.

Appendix 1 - Advice for referees

To be sent to your two nominated referees



**The British
Psychological Society**
Promoting excellence in psychology

The British Psychological Society
St Andrews House
48 Princess Road East
Leicester
LE1 7DR

t: +44(0)116 252 9591
e: applications@bps.org.uk

You have been cited as a referee willing, as far as you feel able, actively to support an applicant for a Fellowship of the Society. You are asked to read the following notes and then, within four weeks, to send a report on the candidate to the Leicester office of the Society for the attention of the Membership team.

The criteria for election as a Fellow as given in the Statutes can be summarised as follows:

- (1) Associate Fellow status has already been achieved (a simultaneous application for Associate Fellowship may have been made but election to Fellowship cannot take place until Associate Fellowship has been granted); and
- (2) A period of work of a psychological nature has been completed (other than undergraduate training) for a total of at least ten years; and
- (3) The candidate possesses an advanced knowledge of psychology in a least one of its fields; and
- (4) Has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement or dissemination of psychological knowledge or practice either by their own research, teaching, publications or public service, or by organising and developing the work of others.

In terms of this section there is an expectation that the criteria will be interpreted broadly and may include any of the examples described in the notes for applicants.

The candidate has been asked to send you a copy of their application. The original will have been sent to the Society's Leicester office.

Having read the enclosed case for election to Fellowship prepared by the candidate, please send your report to the Society commenting on the case made by the applicant, adding your own supporting evidence and drawing attention to any significant factors that you believe should be considered.

Candidates have been encouraged to give as referees Fellows of the Society whom they anticipate will serve as active sponsors of their application.

Many referees will be close associates of the candidates, for example, senior colleagues or co-authors of papers.

The candidate is looking for your support and the Society will find it most helpful if your reference is as full as possible, arguing the case and stating why you feel able to support the candidate's application and how the applicant meets the four criteria for election to a Fellowship.

Please note that the candidate's application cannot be assessed until both referees have sent their reports to the Leicester Office. You are therefore requested to respond to this request for a report taking into account the matters referred to above.

When you post your report it would be helpful if you could end your letter with the following declaration:

"I confirm that I have read this application and to the best of my knowledge and belief the information the applicant has given is correct. I am prepared to support the case made by the candidate for election to Fellowship as recorded in the attached report I have prepared".

The Society is very grateful for your advice and may we thank you in advance for your reference.

Appendix 2 - Application form

Please complete and send this form along with your personal statement outlining your case for a Fellowship to:

membership@bps.org.uk

Personal details - Please complete using BLOCK CAPITALS and black ink

Title (please circle)	Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Professor No Title Other		
Surname		Forenames	
Date of birth		Membership No.	
Contact address			
Postcode			

If elected, I agree to the contact address shown above being available to **Society Members** on the Society's 'List of Fellows'

Yes No

(please tick appropriate box)

Are you an Associate Fellow of the Society:

Yes

No

Referees - Referees for Fellowship must be Fellows of the Society.

I, the undersigned, propose this applicant for election to Fellowship. I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information the applicant has given is correct.

First referee

Second referee

Name	
Membership No.	
Signature	
Date	

Name	
Membership No.	
Signature	
Date	

If you do not know your membership number, please provide additional information to identify you with, such as date of birth or address and postcode. In signing the form, referees are certifying that the information given is correct, not that the applicant is definitely eligible for Fellowship.

Declaration

I declare that the information given in this form and any supporting documentation is true and accurate

Signed: _____ Date: ___/___/_____

Transfer fee (£56)

Payment can be made via:

Cheque:
Made payable to *The British Psychological Society*.

Invoice:
If you don't pay by cheque we'll invoice you for the payment.

If you have any queries regarding the application:

e: membership@bps.org.uk or t: +44(0)116 252 9591