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# Honorary Degrees & Fellowships - Criteria and Processes for Awards

The awarding of an honorary degree or Fellowship of King's College London is an important event in the life of the College. These awards are conferred on those whose achievements are of such excellence that they provide, through example, inspiration and aspiration to our graduates. They recognise service or contributions that are or have been transformative.

These are our highest honours recognising distinct groups and types of accomplishment over a wide range of fields of endeavour.

## Honorary Degrees

An honorary degree is the highest honour that King's bestows and is reserved for exceptional and eminent individuals who are recognised nationally or internationally for their achievements and whose actions reflect and reinforce King's values and aspirations. While a prior association with King's is not a requirement, it will certainly strengthen a claim. For those who do not have a prior association, it is an expectation that Degree ceremony will provide an opportunity to foster a connection with the College community in an apposite way. Recipients of a King's honorary doctorate become alumni of the College.

The number of awards is limited normally to five in any one year.

Honorary degrees are conferred at graduation ceremonies and normally will not be awarded *in absentia*.

King's awards the following honorary degrees:

- Doctor of Laws (LLD)
- Doctor of Arts & Letters (DLitt)
- Doctor of Science (DSc)
- Doctor of Divinity (DD).

## Fellowship of King's College (FKC)

The Fellowship of King's College is awarded to individuals who have or have had a transformative impact on the College through the quality of their work or activities. They may be individuals who have a direct relationship with King's (e.g., alumni, governors, staff, academic or community partners); or, they may be individuals who do not have a current relationship with King's but who have engaged with King's in the past; and, occasionally they may be individuals whose activities and accomplishments align with our activities, aspirations and values and with whom a fostering a future relationship would be welcome.

In all cases, it is expected that the individual's accomplishments will have gone above and beyond the expectations of their regular role and have had an exceptional impact on King's or on the society beyond. For those who do have an existing relationship with King's, while long service may be an element of the award it will not be the primary criterion for the award. As an example, Professors at King's are appointed for having "international reputations" and "outstanding contributions", therefore those nominating an academic for the Fellowship must demonstrate how the contributions of the particular individual are above and beyond and have had a unique transformative impact on King's, the discipline or society. For those nominees not currently engaged with King's, the application process will give attention and consideration to the degree and depth of any prior association and the implications of the award for future association.

Fellows are acknowledged at graduation ceremonies and recipients are invited to attend.

## Processes

1. Any member of the College may nominate or second a Fellow.
2. Honorary degree nominations should be associated with a Faculty or senior directorate and should be supported by the relevant Executive Dean/Vice Principal/SVP in addition to the nominators.
3. All nominations will be provided to the Fellowships & Honorary Degrees Committee, however, in considering the nominations, the FHDC will receive advice from a subcommittee established by the President & Principal.
4. Fellowships and Honorary Degrees are normally mutually exclusive. It would be unusual, though not impossible, for an individual to hold both an Honorary Degree and an FKC.
5. The FHDC may determine that an award other than that for which a candidate has been nominated is more appropriate.
6. Recommended nominees must be approved by Council.
7. No more than five honorary degrees will normally be conferred in a given year.
8. Honorary degree recipients must attend a graduation ceremony in order to receive the honour.
9. Up to ten Fellows may be awarded in a given year. The title is considered effective with written acceptance of the honour.
10. Fellows will be recognised at graduation ceremonies and may attend a ceremony if they wish.
11. When an honorary degree candidate has been offered and accepted an honorary degree, they should be invited to engage with the College as appropriate. This would ideally coincide with their visit to the College to have the degree conferred and might take the form, for example, of a meeting with faculty and students in the relevant department(s), giving a graduate seminar or a public lecture, etc. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Dean/relevant senior leader to engage with the recipients to make any arrangements and to foster any further engagement which they and the candidate might agree. There is of course, no requirement for the candidate to engage in return for the honour.
12. Nominations remain confidential and candidates should not be informed that they have been nominated.
13. Only the names of those who have been offered and have accepted an award will be announced. The timing of the announcement will be determined once the award has been approved by Council.
14. Honours are not normally awarded posthumously. In exceptional circumstances the Committee may recommend posthumous awards under the following conditions:
  - The candidate has had a close or significant relationship with the College;
  - The nomination was submitted prior to the candidate's death; and
  - The candidate's family is willing to accept the proposed award on the candidate's behalf.
15. Removal of an honour – Council may determine that an honour should be rescinded on the recommendation of FHDC and in accordance with the Council's protocol.

Approved by Council, 22 November 2022