



The Queen's Award for Enterprise Eligibility Checker

Am I eligible? Should I apply? This document will help you find out.

The Queen's Award for Enterprise is (in our view) "the Mother of all Awards" - the highest UK official business award. One that not only brings unparalleled prestige, exposure and credibility to your company, but also pride and inspiration to your employees.

It is a multi-winner scheme, where the number of awards given is not limited, and over 200 are awarded every year across the four categories described here — Innovation, International Trade, Sustainable Development and Promoting Opportunity (Through Social Mobility). If you win you can use the emblem on your marketing materials for five years, fly the flag at your office, and attend a Royal reception at Buckingham Palace.

If you think you have a chance, it would be madness not to have a go. There is no entry fee, and all that stands between you and the recognition you deserve is a large form to complete.

The Queens Award for Enterprise is promoted by the Lieutenancy on behalf of Her Majesty and is supported in Warwickshire and Coventry by both the Chamber of Commerce and LEP.

Before you invest time completing the application, we strongly recommend that you first use this easy-to-follow form, co-developed with award entry experts **Boost Awards** to help you ascertain whether you are eligible to enter or not. Complete the Eligibility check for all categories, then the checks for each specific category. If you meet the criteria laid out here then it does not guarantee a win, but it does mean it is worthwhile seriously considering entering. If you wish, you can seek advice on how best to tackle the many open-ended questions and prove what you have achieved is truly "impressive" and "market leading" (see end of the document).



Remember, if you don't quite meet the criteria yet, please do treat the award itself as something to which you aspire in the future. It is not uncommon for businesses to have to wait a year or even two before they apply and win, but having this long-term vision will be of great for both your team and the company itself in both the short and long term.

Johnnie Arkwright, Deputy Lieutenant, on behalf of The Warwickshire Lieutenancy

Eligibility check for all categories

Are you a private sector business based in the UK (including the Channel Islands and Isle of Man)? i.e. you have a Companies House registration number	Yes/No
Do you file Tax Returns with HMRC?	Yes/No
Have you had at least 2 employees for the last 3 years?	Yes/No

If you selected "no" for any of the above, then you are not eligible to enter.

Financials

Have you had any dips in turnover and/or net profit over the past two years?	Yes/No
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If you selected "yes" here you may still be eligible, but we would recommend a full sense check of your figures to ensure you have a strong story.

Have you received a Queen's Award for Enterprise in the same category that you are interested in this year?

No	Please continue
Yes, but five or more years will have passed before I hope to win again	Please continue
Yes, and the awarding date was within the past five years before the date of this award	Unfortunately, you are not eligible to win in a category you won less than five years earlier

Two other considerations:

- You will need your accountants to certify the financial information you submit in support of your application.
- You will need to be able to demonstrate strong corporate social responsibility, and the organisers will do background checks to validate this.

If it sounds good so far, then we recommend you now review the specific eligibility checkers for the individual categories that sound most appropriate to your business. Do not worry at this stage about how you substantiate your application; for now, base your decisions on what you believe to be true. If you need help translating this belief into firm evidence that the assessors will believe, then please make contact.

Eligibility check for the Innovation category

This category recognises companies that have successfully taken a truly innovative product or service to market, and this innovation has seen at least two years of "impressive" sales while achieving a good net return on investment. You can enter multiple innovations into this category in any one year.

When entering, you have to choose a timeframe. The choice here is as follows:

- **Two years:** The innovation has had an "outstanding" two years (for your sector and circumstances).
- **Five years:** The innovation has had a strong and steady "continuous" commercial success over five years.

The challenge here lies in the word "innovation". Here it means:

- It has not been sold before.
- It is innovative in its entirety – not an incremental enhancement to something that existed before.

Please select 'yes' or 'no' for the following questions.

NB: if you select 'no' for any of these questions you are not eligible to enter this category

Do you have one or more innovative products, services or a business model? One that is a true innovation (not just an enhancement to something that already existed)?	Yes/No
Has the innovation been on the market for at least two years?	Yes/No
Has the innovation had a positive impact on your commercial success (i.e. turnover and/or profitability) over at least the last two years?	Yes/No
Can you prove that your innovation's commercial success has been "impressive"? By this we mean significantly outperforming other innovations within the same marketplace*	Yes/No
Have you recovered all the investments made in your innovation or can you demonstrate that the innovation will recover its full costs in the future?	Yes/No

***IMPORTANT:** It is often hard to prove you are entering a true "innovation", but there are acceptable methods here. To discuss, please make contact.

Eligibility check for the International Trade category

This category is the most popular of the four and delivers more winners by far. A company can only put in one entry per year because it recognises the entire business' international trade achievements.

When you apply for this award, you must make a decision about the timeframe:

- **Three years:** "Steep" year-on-year growth (without dips) in overseas sales over this period of time.
- **Six years:** "Continuous" steady year-on-year growth (without dips) over six years.

Please select 'yes' or 'no' for the following questions.

NB: if you select 'no' for any of these questions you are not eligible to enter this category.

Have you made a minimum of £100,000 in overseas sales in each year of your entry (i.e. in the last three or six years)?	Yes/No
Have you had significant growth in overseas earnings over the period of your entry (i.e. in the last three or six years)?	Yes/No
Can you prove that your international trade has been "impressive"? By this we mean significantly outperforming other UK exporters of the same size within the same marketplace*	Yes/No
Have you had NO dips in your overseas sales over the period of your entry (i.e. in the last three or six years)?	Yes/No

***IMPORTANT:** It is often hard to prove you are ahead of competitors, and truly market leading, but there are lots of proven tactics to do so to the standard necessary. To discuss further, please make contact.

Eligibility check for the Sustainable Development Category

This category is aimed at companies where there is a deliberate attempt to make a difference in the community and/or the environment and this has delivered “commercial success”*. In other words, it is not just about doing the right thing, they want to see a win-win: good for business, and good for society.

Examples of the sorts of “interventions” they welcome are:

- Innovations which benefit the environment.
- Services which benefit well-being.
- Management of employee relationships or other organisation which reduces inequality.

This category used to be very much focused on environmental sustainability, but the organisers have broadened it out to allow applications to focus on any of 17 different possible themes (as laid out by the United Nations in their 17 Sustainable Development Goals, right).

IMPORTANT: You do not need to show impact in each of the 17 goals, only those most applicable to your submission. The goals most relevant to UK businesses are shown on the right.

When you apply for this award, you must make a decision about the timeframe:

- **Two years:** There has been an “outstanding” ramping up of interventions and their impact over two years.
- **Five years:** There have been “continuous” sustainable development practices which have steadily delivered impact.

Please select ‘yes’ or ‘no’ for the following questions

NB: if you select ‘no’ for any of these questions you are not eligible to enter this category

Have you had a substantial sustainable development initiative or company-wide strategy for at least the last two years?	Yes/No
Can you prove that your initiative or strategy is “exemplary”? In other words, you are leading rather than following in your marketplace (you can define this how you wish)*	Yes/No
Are your activities relating to sustainable development truly led from the top?	Yes/No
Is there proactive activity to embed social/environmental responsibility into your whole company culture?	Yes/No
Does any part of your sustainable development activity align with the UN Sustainable Development (SD) Goals?	Yes/No
Has your sustainable development activity had a measurable and demonstrable positive impact on your commercial success (i.e. turnover and/or profitability) over the past three years?*	Yes/No

***IMPORTANT:** It is often hard to measure the impact of community and environmental activities on “commercial success” but there are lots of proven tactics to do so to the standard necessary. To discuss further, please make contact.

Examples of relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include:

GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being

GOAL 4: Quality Education

GOAL 5: Gender Equality

GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality

GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption & Production

GOAL 13: Climate Action

Eligibility check for the Promoting Opportunity (Through Social Mobility) category

This scheme recognises companies that have successfully launched social mobility programmes, activities or policies, and can demonstrate that these have benefited not just staff, but also the organisation.

The programme should be in one of the following areas:

- Work experience, careers advice or mentoring for young people.
- Offering non-graduate routes such as traineeships or changing recruitment practices.
- Giving equal support and progression opportunities to all employees.

It could be skills advice or mentoring that help those from lower socio-economic backgrounds to access work experience; providing training, apprenticeships or internships; or giving equal support and progression opportunities to all employees.

Please select 'yes' or 'no' for the following questions

NB: if you select 'no' for any of these questions you are not eligible to enter this category

Do you have one or more social mobility programmes?	Yes/No
Has the programme(s) been operational for at least the last two years?	Yes/No
Has the programme(s) measurably benefited your organisation? Either financially or through reputation.	Yes/No
Has the programme(s) measurably benefited socially-disadvantaged individuals or groups?	Yes/No
Has the programme(s) had a positive impact on your commercial success (i.e. turnover and/or profitability) over the last three years?	Yes/No

***IMPORTANT:** It is often hard to measure the business and social impact of social mobility programmes, but there are evaluation tactics to do so to the standard necessary. To discuss further, please make contact.

Next steps

This form doesn't assess if the story is strong; only that, based on your answers, you are eligible to enter. For a thorough assessment of your chances of success, advice on key decisions relating to your submission, or if you would like help with further validation or writing your actual entry, please email our guest experts at **Boost Awards**, directly: info@boost-awards.co.uk or **01273 258703**. Alternatively, please do get in touch with your contact at the LEP or the Chamber of Commerce.

One final point of note. The criteria for The Queen's Awards for Enterprise are strict, so if you are not eligible to enter this year, this doesn't mean you can't enter and win other business awards. See www.awards-list.co.uk for a list of all UK national and regional awards you can choose from.

About the authors

The foreword was written by Johnnie Arkwright DL, jarkwright@hattonworld.com and the guide was written by Rebecca Carpenter, a Managing Consultant at **Boost Awards**, rebecca.carpenter@boost-awards.co.uk and the company's founder, Chris Robinson. Boost are the largest award entry consultancy in the world and have over a decade of experience of helping businesses enter the Queen's Award for Enterprise. As such they can offer truly impartial expert advice.

