

Healthcare Infection Society Higher Awards Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The Higher Awards Committee (HAC) is a standing committee of the Healthcare Infection Society (HIS) and is responsible for encouraging and considering nominations for the Society's awards in keeping with the strategic aims of the society. In this context, its role is to support the Society's goal of recognising and encouraging outstanding contributions to the field of IPC and/or the Society.

The awards portfolio, considered by the HAC, aims to encourage, recognise, support, and promote the application of best practice in the management of healthcare-associated infections, advocacy of patient safety and education of the public via their own practice or by supporting the activities of the Society.

2. Activities

- i. To examine, discuss and evaluate nominations for Society awards, medals and honours and make a recommendation to HIS Council.

The primary evaluation criteria should be the qualifications of the candidate for the award, but additional evaluation criteria should include the history of past winners and whether the selected candidate will contribute to broadening the diversity of the award winners in terms of the Society's EDI objectives, region and/or topic.

The HAC may also consider whether a nominee has received previous honours from professional bodies that have been awarded for similar accomplishments. Preference should be given to nominees who have not received previous awards, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

- ii. To propose and recommend candidate(s) for approval by HIS Council for the following awards and honours:
 - Early Career Award (consider nominations received and make recommendations to Council annually)
 - Lowbury Lecturer (propose candidates and make recommendations to Council annually)
 - Honorary Membership (propose candidates and make recommendations to Council biennially)
 - Gary French Lecture (propose candidates and make recommendations to Council quadrennially)

3. Responsible to

The Council of the Healthcare Infection Society

4. Membership

i. Composition

Chair: Honorary Secretary

The Chair is responsible for ensuring that no restrictions have been, or will be, violated. Further, the Chair is responsible for distributing the nominations to the committee and for leading discussion and calling for committee votes.

Vice Chair: Appointed by Council for a three-year term, which can be extended by Council by up to a further two years. Represents the committee at Council if the Chair is unable to attend. The Vice Chair may succeed the Chair, if approved by HIS Council.

The Committee will be composed as below:

- Honorary Secretary (The Chair of the Higher Awards Committee)
- The President, Chair and Treasurer of the Healthcare Infection Society
- At least two members appointed by HIS Council, which should include:
 - A member of the Professional Development Committee
 - Specialist co-opted members as required by the nature of awards programme
- Individual members must be Full or Associate members of HIS, who have been members of the Society for at least five years
- The Committee will have at least six (6) members, including the Chair and President.

Meetings of the Committee will be attended by members of Society staff as appropriate.

HIS staff do not have voting rights and will support the Chair administratively.

The Chair and HIS staff team lead will initially review all nominations to identify potential conflicts of interest.

ii. Terms of membership

Individual members will be recommended to Council by the Chair of the HAC for an agreed time period of up to three years, which can be extended by two further terms of two years on the Chair's recommendation, if agreed by Council.

5. Meetings

i. Frequency of meetings

The HAC will meet at least once a year (either in person or virtually) or twice (if the timing of the award round dictates), with additional business carried out electronically as far as possible. The Chair may convene additional meetings as they deem necessary. Members who are absent from two meetings in a row, may be asked by the Chair to reconsider their availability to serve on the Committee. Members who are absent from three meetings in a row, may be asked by the Chair to resign their position.

Expenses incurred by Committee members will be reimbursed in line with the Society's expenses policy.

ii. Quorum

A quorum shall be four (4) members.

iii. Agenda and papers

An agenda, along with documentation/information/reports supporting the items under discussion will be circulated to members of the Committee, by email, a minimum of two (2) calendar weeks before a meeting. In the absence of return communication outlining errors in the delivery of email, the agenda and

papers will be considered received by all parties unless otherwise notified. It is essential that all papers are read and considered in advance of the meeting. The Society's staff team lead will assess all nominations for eligibility before circulating to the HAC.

iv. Minutes

Formal minutes, recording the proceedings of these meetings, will be taken by Society staff, and distributed to the Chair for review within seven (7) days of the meeting taking place. Final minutes will be circulated to all Committee members, and others in attendance, as close to three (3) calendar weeks after the meeting takes place as is practicable.

Minutes of the Awards Committee will be circulated by the HIS staff team lead for HAC.

v. Decision Making

Where possible a general consensus identified by the Chair of the Committee will be sufficient to consider a matter passed, rejected or deferred. Where consensus is not possible, all decisions will be made by a vote, with each Committee member holding one (1) vote. Where an equity of votes occurs, the Chair may cast an additional vote to finalise the decision, or may defer the decision for later action.

vi. Confidentiality

All committee deliberations should remain confidential.

6. Conflicts of interest

Committee members are asked to adhere to the HIS Conflicts of Interest Policy and submit a conflicts of interest form each year during their membership of the committee.

All members of the HAC will be asked to declare potential conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting.

Awards Committee members are not eligible to vote on a nominee if there is a conflict of interest such as:

- Being a current member of the same institution (hospital, university, or other place of work) as the nominee
- Having been or being a dissertation supervisor or student of the nominee
- Having close familial ties or a personal relationship with the nominee
- Other conflicts or restrictions as determined by HIS Council

In essence, where a vested interest is identified by a Committee member, they must withdraw from the consideration of that nomination. On the occasions where the Chair declares an interest, the chair of the committee will absent themselves from the decision making and vice-chair will chair the meeting.

7. Further restrictions

- Where a HAC member is a nominator or nominee of a HIS award, they should inform the staff team lead in advance of the nomination submission
- Members of the HAC who are nominated for an award will be suspended from membership of the committee for the 6-month period when nominations are being considered
- Members of the HAC may submit nominations, but will be suspended from membership of the committee for the 6-month period when nominations are being considered

- Members of the HAC are not permitted to write letters of support for awards that are under consideration

8. Decision making

Where possible, a general consensus identified by the Chair of the Committee will be sufficient to consider a matter passed, rejected or deferred. Where consensus is not possible, all decisions will be made by a vote. Where an equity of votes occurs, the Chair may cast an additional vote to finalise the decision or may defer the decision for later action.

9. Reporting

i. Council of Trustees

This Committee is required to report to the Council of Trustees, both through its Chair and related Staff.

The Chair should liaise with Society staff to prepare a report for HIS Council including a brief description of the number of nominations considered, the mechanism employed for reaching a decision (conference call, email only, voting - how it was done, how many rounds of voting to reach a decision), and a short paragraph describing why the person selected deserves the award.

ii. Annual General Meeting

The Chair of the Committee is to attend the Annual General Meeting held in November of each year to represent this Committee. If this is not possible, a further member of the Committee may be nominated to attend in their stead.

10. Ownership of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are owned by the Council of Trustees. Any changes must be authorised by the Trustees.

The terms of reference will be reviewed every two years.

Created: February 2023

Adopted: 8 March 2023

Revised: 4 March 2026

Due for revision: March 2028