

Types of Bravery Award

George Cross

This award is granted for acts of bravery of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger. It may be granted posthumously but is restricted to British subjects. Holders may use the post nominal letters 'GC' after their names.

George Medal

This award is granted for gallantry of an extremely high order. It may be granted posthumously and is not restricted to British subjects. Holders may use the post nominal letters 'GM' after their name.

The Queen's Gallantry Medal

This award is granted for gallantry of a high order. It may be granted posthumously and is not restricted to British subjects. Holders may use the post nominal letters 'QGM' after their name.

The Queen's Commendation for Bravery, and The Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air

These awards are granted for gallantry not up to the foregoing standards but entailing risk to life and meriting national recognition. Both awards may be granted posthumously and are not restricted to British subjects. These awards do not give rise to post nominal letters.

Further awards

All the awards above may be awarded more than once if further acts of gallantry are performed and are considered worthy of recognition. For multiple awards, a bar is added to the ribbon of the GC, GM and QGM. Recipients of a Queen's Commendation may receive further commendations.

Nominating for gallantry awards

Nominations usually originate with one of the emergency services (usually the police), but may also come from members of the public. These nominations are passed to the relevant government department and considered before being submitted to the Ceremonial Secretariat of the Cabinet Office.

The assessment process

The Ceremonial Secretariat will put the cases for awards to the George Cross Committee (GCC) for consideration. If the Committee approves the awards a formal submission is made by the GCC, through the Prime Minister, to The Sovereign for approval.

Publication

The Ceremonial Secretariat arranges for publication of the awards in The London Gazette. It is usual for a citation to be published giving broad details of the act of gallantry.