



Bille Ghradam an Uachtaráin, 2015
Gradam an Uachtaráin Bill 2015

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated



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BILLE GHRADAM AN UACHTARÁIN, 2015
GRADAM AN UACHTARÁIN BILL 2015

Bill

entitled

An Act to facilitate the conferral by the State of an honour to be known as Gradam an Uachtaráin to recognise the exceptional achievements of its citizens and the outstanding contributions of others and to provide for related matters. 5

WHEREAS the Constitution does not preclude the conferral by the State of honours or awards on its citizens or other persons; 10

AND WHEREAS it is desirable that the State recognise and honour the exceptional achievements of its citizens and also the outstanding contributions of others to the betterment of the nation; 15

AND WHEREAS the State has no arrangements whereby such achievements are recognised and honoured;

AND WHEREAS the outstanding achievements of citizens of the State have been afforded recognition and honour by other nations; 20

AND WHEREAS it is right and proper that the State should be enabled to recognise and honour the exceptional achievements of its citizens and the outstanding contributions of others to the State—

Be it therefore enacted by the Oireachtas as follows: 25

PART 1

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL

Short title and commencement

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the Gradam an Uachtaráin Act 2015.
- (2) This Act shall come into operation three months after the date of its passing. 30

Interpretation

2. In this Act—

“Awarding Council” means the Gradam an Uachtaráin Awarding Council;

“Minister” means a Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach.

Regulations

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3. (1) The Minister may make regulations—

(a) prescribing any matter which is referred to in this Act as prescribed or to be prescribed, or

(b) for the purposes of enabling any provision of this Act to have full effect.

(2) Every regulation or order made by the Minister shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas as soon as practicable after they are made and, if a resolution annulling the regulation, order or rules is passed by either House within the next subsequent 21 days on which that House has sat after the regulation, order or rules are laid before it, the regulation, order or rules shall be annulled accordingly, but without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done thereunder. 10

(3) Regulations made under this Act may—

(a) include such consequential, incidental, transitional or supplementary provisions as may be considered by the Minister, as the case may be, to be necessary or appropriate for the purposes of this Act, and

(b) apply, either generally or by reference, to a specified class or classes of persons or category or categories of licensees or to any other matter as may be considered by the Minister to be appropriate. 20

PART 2

HONOURS SYSTEM

Establishment of Gradam an Uachtaráin

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4. There is hereby established an honours system, to be known as Gradam an Uachtaráin, pursuant to which recognition will be afforded in respect of exceptional achievements of citizens of the State and also the outstanding contributions of others to the State.

Form of the honour

5. (1) The awarding of the honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin shall be marked by the presentation by the President of Ireland of— 30

(a) a medal which may be worn on formal occasions, and

(b) a lapel button.

(2) A person who has been awarded the honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin may use the post-nominal letters “G.U.” indicating the honour which has been conferred upon him 35

or her.

- (3) (a) The medal referred to in *subsection (1)(a)* and the lapel button referred to in *subsection (1)(b)* shall each be of the design and form prescribed by the Minister.
- (b) Before prescribing a medal or a lapel button under this section, the Minister shall arrange for the holding of one or more public design competitions in respect of the design and form of the medal and the lapel button referred to in this section. 5

Restriction on number of awards to be made

6. (1) The honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin shall only be conferred upon a maximum of 12 people per year.
- (2) In a calendar year, not more than 4 of the awards may be conferred upon persons of a nationality other than Irish. 10

Criteria

7. The honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin may be conferred in recognition of outstanding achievement within and outside the State in the following areas—
- (a) social and community affairs, 15
 - (b) education and healthcare,
 - (c) arts, literature and music,
 - (d) science and technology,
 - (e) sport, and
 - (f) leadership and business. 20

Awarding of Gradam an Uachtaráin

8. The decision to award the honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin shall be solely at the discretion of the Awarding Council.

PART 3

GRADAM AN UACHTARÁIN AWARDING COUNCIL 25

Composition of Gradam an Uachtaráin Awarding Council

9. (1) The Awarding Council shall consist of seven persons.
- (2) The President shall appoint the following persons to serve as members of the Awarding Council—
- (a) the Secretary General to the President, 30
 - (b) two current serving lay members of the Council of State who have been nominated by the President of Ireland to serve on the Awarding Council,

- (c) the serving President of the National University of Ireland,
 - (d) the serving President of the Royal Irish Academy,
 - (e) the serving President of IBEC, and
 - (f) the serving president of the ICA.
- (3) All meetings of the Awarding Council shall be chaired by the Secretary General to the President. 5
- (4) (a) The Awarding Council shall meet on at least two occasions each year.
- (b) The quorum for each meeting of the Awarding Council shall be 6.
- (5) If any of the persons or officeholders referred to in *subsection (2)* are unable or unwilling to serve as members of the Awarding Council, the President may appoint a replacement candidate from the same organisation to serve for a period which is coterminous with that of the person who was initially requested to serve. 10

Nomination of candidates

10. (1) The nomination of a candidate to receive the honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin may be made by— 15
- (a) members of the public by using the prescribed form with supporting information, and
 - (b) members of the Awarding Council.
- (2) The person being nominated should not be advised of their nomination.
- (3) (a) A serving member of either House of the Oireachtas shall not engage with any member of the Awarding Council with the intention of influencing the making of a decision in relation to the performance of the functions of the Council. 20
- (b) A person who fails to comply with *paragraph (a)* commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a Class A fine.

Consideration of nominations

11. (1) The Awarding Council shall consider all nominations received and before deciding to award the honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin, the Council shall be satisfied that a nominee for the honour of Gradam an Uachtaráin has in one or more of the categories referred to in *section 7*— 25
- (a) demonstrated exceptional achievement at a high level, or 30
 - (b) made a valued contribution and above what might be reasonably expected.
- (2) (a) A list of the proposed candidates who have been selected by the Awarding Council to receive the award of Gradam an Uachtaráin shall be submitted to the Government for approval.
- (b) Having received a list of proposed candidates under *paragraph (a)* the Government may either— 35
- (i) accept in full the list of proposed candidates, or

(ii) reject in full the list of proposed candidates.

Conferral of Gradam an Uachtaráin

- 12.** The award of Gradam an Uachtaráin shall be conferred in January each year, beginning in January 2016, by the President of Ireland on the candidates who have been selected by the Awarding Council and approved by the Government pursuant to *section 11(2)(b)(i)*. 5

Bille Ghradam an Uachtaráin, 2015

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht d'éascú don Stát onóir a bhronnadh ar a dtabharfar Gradam an Uachtaráin chun éachtaí eisceachtúla a saoránach agus cion oibre suntasach daoine eile, a aithint agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe gaolmhara.

*Na Seanadóirí Feargal Quinn, Sean D. Barrett agus
Mary Ann O'Brien a thug isteach,*

19 Samhain, 2015

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(as initiated)

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An Act to facilitate the conferral by the State of an honour to be known as Gradam an Uachtaráin to recognise the exceptional achievements of its citizens and the outstanding contributions of others and to provide for related matters.

*Introduced by Senators Feargal Quinn, Sean D.
Barrett and Mary Ann O'Brien,*

19th November, 2015

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