

THE ORDER *of* ST. GEORGE

Grand Priory of the United Kingdom
BM The Order of St. George, London WC1N 3XX

Membership Policy

Contents

1. Background
2. The associated Charitable Trust
3. The United Kingdom Grand Priory of the International Knightly Order Valiant of St George.
4. Who can become a member.
5. The membership process.
6. The General Data Protection Regulations.
7. Conditions of membership and continuing membership
8. Promotion and Advancement.
9. Re-joining after a lapsed membership 10. Notes.
11. Associated policies

Appendix

- i. Award of the Medal of Merit and the Knight Medal of Merit.
- ii. Declaration of criminal offences committed during membership.

This policy supersedes any other policies, protocols, procedures or actions written or otherwise that the Order has used, applied or adopted in relation to membership of the Order prior to the approval date.

Author – The Deputy Grand Prior – Membership, Protocols and Procedures.

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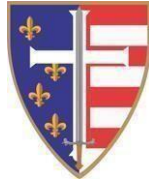
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The United Kingdom Grand Prior is charged with the responsibility of running the United Kingdom Grand Priory. The Grand Prior reserve the right to act on behalf of the Grand Priory in a considered and reasonable manner on all matters pertaining to the Grand Priory, upholding all policies, protocols and procedures in doing so.



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1. Background.

- 1.1 The Order. *The International Knightly Order Valiant of St George* 'The Order' is an international chivalric association of men and women that takes its inspiration from the very first order of knighthood, the Order of St. George founded in 1326 by King Károly Róbert of Hungary.
- 1.2 The United Kingdom Grand Priory is a Grand Priory within the Order managed and let by the UK Grand Prior through the UK Grand Council.
- 1.3 The Order is a lay order dedicated to the name of the Blessed Trinity under the Patronage of St George, Saint and Martyr.
- 1.4 The current Order of St George is a commemorative confraternity with a separate but associated Charitable Trust.
- 1.5 The charitable work of the United Kingdom Grand Priory is managed through The Board of Trustees of the associated Charitable Trust Registered as – The United Kingdom Grand Priory of the International Knightly Order Valiant of St George.

The charity is registered with the Charities Commission within England – Charity Number – 1137397.

- 1.6 Since 2015 the International Order has held Special Consultative Status as an NGO with The United Nations Economic & Social Council. This is managed through the work of the Grand Magistery - the international body of which the United Kingdom Grand Priory is part.

(The Grand Magistery does not run the United Kingdom Grand Priory. It is made up of elected senior officers from each Grand Priory and is there to develop and co-ordinate the Order internationally and for advice and support when needed.)

- 1.7 The Order is also registered as a non-profit organisation under 501(c) 3 of the United States of America International Revenue Code. This is managed through the Grand Priory of the Americas.
- 1.8 St. George is the patron saint of soldiers, and also holds a special place in the affections of Christians in Africa and the Middle East. True to this heritage, the Charity focuses on raising money by holding events and donating the proceeds to various charities in the United Kingdom and Overseas. This includes:-
- a) The advancement of health or saving of lives
 - b) The prevention or relief of poverty
 - c) Overseas aid/famine relief
 - d) Religious activities
 - e) Other charitable purposes.

(There are some details of the charitable causes on the Order's website).

- 1.9 Wherever the Order works, it strives to promote and pursue the timeless traditions of chivalry by compassion and charity.

2. The associated Charitable Trust

- 2.1 Charitable work of the United Kingdom Grand Priory is managed through the Board of Trustees who are registered with the Charities Commission.
- 2.2 The trustees are responsible for, and accountable for, maintaining the charity and upholding the statements within its Governing Document and in meeting the charity's legal obligations as set by the Charities Commission.
- 2.3 Each trustee has an individual legal obligation to carry out the work allotted to them.
- 2.4 The Board of Trustees are charged with running the charitable work of the Grand Priory. They are collectively and individually accountable to the Charity Commission and the law and also accountable to the UK Grand Priory.
- 2.5 The work of the charity and the trustees is closely monitored by the UK Grand Priory, to ensure compliance and that the trustees do not act in any way that is against its charitable status and aspirations or wishes of the Grand Priory.
- 2.6 A close partnership is crucially important between the Board of Trustees and the Grand Council of the Grand Priory, to ensure honesty and openness

and that the good name of the Order internationally and the UK Grand Priory is not compromised in anyway.

3. The United Kingdom Grand Priory of The International Knightly Order Valiant of St George (The Order)

- 3.1 The United Kingdom Grand Priory of The International Knightly Order Valiant of St George ("the Order") exists to uphold the Chivalric values and patronages represented by George, Saint and Martyr; to provide good Christian fellowship; to promote in prayer and deed the relief of suffering and to raise funds for the associated charitable trust of the United Kingdom Grand Priory.
- 3.2 The 'Order' is also known as 'The Order of St George', 'The Knightly Order of St George'.
- 3.3 In the Constitutional Statutes the members are the United Kingdom Grand Priory of the International Knightly Order Valiant of St George.
- 3.4 The responsibilities of the Grand Priory are set out in the Constitutional Statutes of the Order which are further developed through its policies, protocols and procedures.
- 3.5 The Grand Magistery is there to develop and coordinate the affairs of the Order internationally. It is responsible for international members but not those elected to be part of the UK Grand Priory or those of the Grand Priory of the Americas. It does not manage or direct the affairs of the UK Grand Priory or any other Grand Priory of the Order. It is a consultative body represented by the Magisterium Officium as an x-officio member of the Grand Council of the UK Grand Priory. (Further details can be found in the Statutes)
- 3.6 The trustees of the Charitable Trust work with the Order to identify areas of immediate or imminent need, consistent with the aims of the registered Charity. The trustees will work collaboratively with the Grand Council of the Grand Priory to devise campaigns, activities and events that will enable funds to be raised for charitable work; not in isolation.
- 3.7 The trustees will ensure that the funds raised by the Order are promptly applied to such specific charitable purposes that have been agreed with the Grand Priory. (See the Fundraising Policy and the Finance Policy)
- 3.8 The United Kingdom Grand Priory consists of its members and is managed on their behalf through the Grand Council led by the Grand Prior.

4. Who can become a member?

- 4.1 The Order is open to ladies and gentlemen of good character and sound mind who have shown their concern for, and contribution to, the world around them who have attained the age of 21 years (save for esquires and demoiselles)
- 4.2 The Order is open to individuals from The United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories and individuals from other countries of the world who wish to join the UK Grand Priory.
- 4.3 The Grand Priory of the Americas is open to individuals living in the Americas and Internationally.
- 4.4 Those who petition or are nominated for membership of the Order can choose which Grand Priory they wish to belong. In doing so they must agree to abide by that Grand Priory's rules, policies, protocols and procedures and be prepared to attend their chosen Grand Priory's induction of investitures ceremonies; without which they cannot be a member.

Whilst any member can ask or be invited to attend events and activities of another Grand Priory, they will not be a member of that Grand Priory but a guest. They cannot take part in any election, management or leadership decisions or have any responsibility or role within that Grand Priory or use any rank they may have been granted by their chosen Grand Priory to do so.

- 4.5 The Order is a Christian association, but entirely independent of any particular denomination.
- 4.6 The Order accepts admission from those of different faiths and those without a religious faith who will contribute to and meet the Order's aims and objectives and/or are actively engaged in proven significant charitable work within their local or wider community.
- 4.7 Membership is sought through personal petition or through nomination.
- 4.8 In the UK Grand Priory, new members enter at the rank of Officer, unless there are very special circumstances and the Grand Prior, after consultation with the Grand Council, decrees otherwise.

The Grand Priory of the Americas does not have the rank of Officer. Any applicant joining another Grand Priory to obtain a rank higher than Officer to circumvent the UK Grand Priory entry policy and then asks to transfer to the UK Grand Priory, will need to petition the UK Grand Priory and expect to enter with the rank of Officer, unless there are special circumstances suggesting otherwise, including rejection of the application.

- 4.9 The Order has a Squire/Demoiselle grade for young people between the ages of 16 to 21 years.
- 4.10 The Grand Prior can invite worthy people to join the Order, who have not petitioned or been nominated; granting honours and ranks appropriate to the invitation after consultation with the Grand Council.
- 4.11 Membership is not offered or granted to any person who has committed a criminal offence such as an Indictable Offence which had resulted in a custodial sentence. This will also apply where the court has seen fit to award a suspended sentence. Membership will be revoked by the Grand Prior if a current member commits an Indictable Offence or had done so prior to becoming a member.
- 4.12 In the case of Summary Offences, membership may be granted and maintained, although offences such as disorderly conduct, theft and assault, for example, might preclude membership or cause the Grand Prior to revoke a membership if the conduct is deemed to bring or will have brought the Order into disrepute.
- 4.13 In all cases, involving Summary Offences, the Grand Prior of the Order will make a careful and documented decision based on the best interests of the Order and the impact granting or maintaining a membership might have on the good name of the Order.
- 4.14 The Grand Prior's decision to withhold or revoke membership will be final.

5. The Membership Process.

- 5.1 Any person wishing to be considered or nominated for membership of the UK Grand Priory must apply using the on-line process accessed through the Order's website. The Order uses Webcollect to process and securely store membership information.
- 5.2 An individual can petition the Order in their own right.
- 5.3 A nomination can be made by a current member of the Order who proposes a person for membership. They are responsible for supporting the nominee at each stage of the process through to acceptance (if that is granted).
- 5.4 A nomination can be made by a person not in the Order. Full details of the nominee and the nominator must first be made via email to membership@orderofstgeorge.co.uk.
- 5.5 All required information on the on-line application form must be complete before being processed through the Office of the Deputy Grand Prior

responsible for membership matters. Incomplete petitions or nominations will not be processed and guidance will be given.

- 5.6 On receipt of a petition or nomination, the Order may follow up with a few questions of the individual or the nominator before consideration of membership is made. This will include, as necessary, validation of any statements, titles, ranks, honours and decorations.
- 5.7 False or misleading information will result in the application being rejected and, if thought to be or is illegal, will be raised with the appropriate authority for advice and how to proceed.
- 5.8 As part of the application process, any potential member must sign the required disclaimer stating that they have no criminal convictions resulting in a custodial sentence or a suspended sentence.
- 5.9 Any potential member approved for further consideration will have their name, region where they live and country of residence posted on the Order's gazette page for approximately one month. This enables confidential representations by others to be made to the Deputy Grand Prior responsible for Membership.
- 5.10 The Order's gazette page found on the website explains the gazetting process.
- 5.11 Any person objecting to being gazetted or feels they have valid grounds to not be gazetted MUST write to the Deputy Grand Prior responsible for membership within 14 days of their application explaining, in confidence, why they do not wish to be gazette. Failure to comply with this requirement will end the application and no offer of membership will be made.
- 5.12 Only the Grand Prior can agree to a person not being gazetted. Only in very rare and exceptional circumstances will a person not be gazetted.
- 5.13 Potential members are advised to look at the gazette page and familiarise themselves with the three stage process. Only when Stage 3 has been fully met will they be entitled to the ranks and privileges of being a member of the Order granted by the Grand Prior.
- 5.14 After the gazetting period, the Deputy Grand Prior responsible for membership will write to the potential member with the Grand Council's final decision.
- 5.15 It is not necessary or required that the potential member pay any fees (oblations, admin fees or passage fees) prior to final acceptance as the period of gazetting has to be completed first.

- 5.16 The Order has a scale of yearly oblation fees according to the rank of the member. New members will be informed of the oblation fees as part of the application process. They are currently:-
- a) Squires and Demoiselles – young people between the ages of 16 -21 years, free – no fees.
 - b) Officer – Yearly oblation £50 and a one-off administrative fee in the first year only of £150.
 - c) Knight/Dame – Yearly oblation £70 and a one-off passage fee in the first year only of £240.
 - d) Knight/Dame Commander – Yearly oblation £90 and a one-off passage fee in the first year only of £240.
 - e) Knight/Dame Grand Cross – Yearly oblation £100 and a one-off passage fee in the first year only of £240.
- 5.17 The oblation fees are set through the Grand Council of the Grand Priory. Only the Grand Prior can waive or adjust any part of an oblation, admission or passage fee.
- 5.18 To remain a member of the Order, the oblation is paid annually. Where oblations are not maintained, entitlements and ranks will be removed and may not be used.
- 5.19 New members will be informed of the administrative or passage fee (as appropriate), as part of the application process.
- 5.20 For overseas members joining the UK Grand Priory, the Grand Registrar will need to add an amount for packaging and postage to cover any additional charges incurred. These vary from country to country. Potential new members we will be informed of the amount at the time of their formal offer of admission to the Order.

Unfortunately, overseas postal systems and customs checks can frequently and significantly delay items getting to home or business addresses in some parts of the world

6. The General Data Protection Regulations.

- 6.1 The Order complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (UK and EU).

7. Conditions of membership and continuing membership

- 7.1 It is a condition of membership and continuing membership, entitlements, post nominals, honours, decorations and medals of the Order are strictly forbidden to be worn or used publicly or privately for professional or

personal gain, advancement, commercial gain or media use without the express permission of the UK Grand Prior and the UK Grand Chancellor in advance.

- 7.2 Members may not write or publish anything about the Order of St George and their membership publicly or privately for professional or personal gain, advancement, commercial gain or media use without the express permission of the UK Grand Prior and the UK Grand Chancellor in advance.
- 7.3 When a membership lapses or they resign, that person may not wear any item of the Order's regalia awarded to them or given to them or use any titles or post nominals relevant to the rank they held within the Order. This also applies to any item of the Order's regalia that the member may have bought such as a Knight/Dame mantle (gown).
- 7.4 Persons who leave the Order for any reason, should offer to return any items of regalia to the Order. The Order may offer to buy them back at a fixed price depending on the item and its condition.

Contact membership@orderofstgeorge.co.uk for further information.

- 7.5 A lapsed, resigned or suspended member may not attend any meetings of the Order unless invited or approved to do so by the Grand Prior or, in their absence, a Deputy Grand Prior of the UK Grand Priory.
- 7.6 No member can represent the Order without the formal permission of the Grand Prior.
- 7.7 Members of the United Kingdom Grand Priory who deliberately or consistently do not comply with the Grand Priory's rules, protocols and procedures or bring the Order or the Grand Priory into disrepute will have their membership revoked by the Grand Prior. They must not continue to use, wear or exhibit any entitlements that they may have had as a member of the Order. Only the Grand Prior can revoke a membership.
- 7.8 All applicants must understand and accept that under no circumstances will the United Kingdom Grand Priory enter into any correspondence regarding rejection of an application to become a member.

8. Promotion and Advancement

- 8.1 As in true chivalric orders, membership is an honour and promotion is never solicited.

Honours and promotions awarded to reflect the member's experience, service and commitment to the Order and charitable work or other significant charitable work within the member's local or wider community.

- 8.2 Promotion, advancement and the giving of the Order's awards (including to individuals who are not members) is at the discretion of the Grand Prior.
- 8.3 Should an advancement or promotion be considered, the nominee may be asked to sign the Grand Priory's declaration in regard to criminal offences. Refusal to sign will result on the promotion or advancement being withdrawn and their continued membership reviewed.

9. Re-joining after a Lapsed Membership

- 9.1 Where membership lapses, or a member resigns, irrespective of that person's previous rank or responsibility within the Order, there is no automatic right to have their membership re-instated and activated at the same rank or with the same responsibilities prior to the lapsed membership.
- 9.2 Whilst the Grand Prior, in exceptional circumstances, can allow a further period of grace after the 28 days permitted for renewal, all lapsed members or resigned members wishing to re-join must sign the declaration in regard to criminal convictions and comply with any policies, protocols, procedures and requirements current at the time of their wish to re-join the Grand Priory.
- 9.3 Persons wishing to re-join must apply in writing using the Grand Priory's postal address or through email to membership@orderofstgeorge.co.uk
- 9.4 On receipt of the request, they may be sent re-joiners information which they must comply with within 14 days. They may be asked to complete the on-line petitions form and submit.

The reason for this is so that the Grand Priory ensures it complies with GDPR requirements as for all membership matters.

- 9.5 In compliance with GDPR, only a Data Controller of the Grand Priory can authorise the update or adjust membership records.
- 9.6 All persons applying to re-join the Order will go through a period of gazetting on the Order's website.
- 9.7 Where this process is not complied with, their membership will not be reinstated and the requirement to do so cannot be waived by the Grand Prior.

10. Notes

- 10.1 In all matters pertaining to the Grand Priory, the Grand Prior retains the right to approve or decline any application or request made by any member irrespective of rank within the Order or length of service.
- 10.2 The Grand Prior cannot ignore any policies, protocols or procedures that could, by ignoring them, bring the Order of the Grand Priory into disrepute, show favouritism or result in a complaint being made under the Grand Priory's Complaints Policy and procedures.
- 10.3 In the absence or incapacity of the Grand Prior, a Deputy Grand Prior, approved by the Grand Council will be Acting Grand Prior. They will consult, as appropriate, with other senior officers and post holders of the Order and Grand Council and, if necessary, the Magisterium Officium, to ensure the smooth leadership and management of the UK Grand Priory.
- 10.4 The Deputy Grand Prior responsible for Membership, Protocols and Procedures can be reached through:-

membership@orderofstgeorge.co.uk

11. Associated Policies

This policy is associated with:-

- a) The Code of Conduct Policy – Maintaining Positive Relationships
- b) Speaking out Policy
- c) Safeguarding Policy
- d) Health and Safety Policy
- e) Medals and Honours Policy and Protocol
- f) Regalia Policy and Protocols.
- g) Policy for the Use of the Order's Crests and Logos

Appendix

- i. The award of 'Member of the Order of Merit of St George', or the award of 'Knight/Dame of the Order of Merit of St George' is something to celebrate and can only be awarded by the Grand Prior.

In order to protect the good name of the Order and to avoid bringing it into disrepute or to cause a complaint, any person within the Order or external to the Order being considered for the award of the Order of Merit of St George, will be asked to sign the Order's declaration in regard to criminal offences. Refusal to sign will result in the consideration being withdrawn and, in the case of a member, their continued membership reviewed.

Where the person is under the age of 18, the approach will be made through their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). In such cases, care and consideration must be maintained at all times in

order not to cause the young person any anxiety or to their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or to create a safeguarding issue.

Where the young person belongs to an organisation such as The Combined Cadet Force, Scouts, St John's Ambulance Cadets, Church Fellowship, school or college etc., and that is where they have been recognised for the award, the initial approach will be made through the person responsible for the organisation. That responsible person will be asked to approach the young person's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) on behalf of the Order and be the ongoing link at all times unless the person's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) decide otherwise. The wording that should be used in any approach to young people through their parent(s) or guardian(s) or organisation to which they belong is - *The Order's Medal of Merit is awarded to worthy, good and honourable people, in and out of the Order, to recognise their outstanding achievement or meritorious service to the Order or to others. If there is any reason why the award should not be given then please say so.*

ii. Declaration of criminal offences committed during membership.

It is the responsibility of any member or, in the case of a squire or demoiselle under the age of 18, their parent(s) or legal guardian, who becomes subject to an indictable criminal offence that results in a conviction and a sentence – custodial or suspended – that they inform, the Deputy Grand Prior responsible for membership as soon as possible. Failure to do so will result in their membership being revoked by the Grand Prior.

Whilst many summary offences are considered minor and are normally dealt with in a Magistrates Court, the Crown Court may deal with summary offences which include, committal for sentence, an alternative verdict reached by a jury for a summary offence, conviction of a summary offence on the indictment, conviction of a summary offence which was sent as a related offence to an indictable offence.

In such circumstances, member or, in the case of a squire or demoiselle under the age of 18, their parent(s) or legal guardian, must inform, the Deputy Grand Prior responsible for membership as soon as possible. Failure to do so will result in their membership being revoked by the Grand Prior.

On all safeguarding issues the Deputy Grand Prior responsible for membership will inform the Order's Designated Safeguarding Lead. At all times, the Order will comply with GDPR.

Updated January 2026

N.B Any reference to Grand Prior, where it is not specifically added, should be read as meaning the United Kingdom Grand Prior.

