

The Geological Society

PROFESSIONAL STANDING COMMITTEEMeeting at Burlington House, at 1.00pm on Thursday 13th November 2008**MINUTES**

Present: D Manning (Chair), G Tuckwell, T Berry, M de Freitas, P Nathanail, A Carbray, M Culshaw, P Maliphant, J Venus, J Lewis, B Gaskarth, A Douglas.

Item	Minute	Action
1	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from R Allington, V Banks, T Berry, M Culshaw, K Hiscock, A Law, P Nathanail, P Thorn and J Venus.	
2	Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 3 rd September were agreed as a true and accurate account.	
3	Matters Arising	
5.6	Item 5.6 - Process in Hong Kong DM to contact HKRG after the meeting to update on progress with the new CGeol interview process.	DM
7.1	Item 7.1 - Female Mentoring Scheme Training day held on 19 th September was very well attended. AD hopes to be able to begin work on creating a general mentoring scheme in 2009.	
7.2	Item 7.2 - SiLC Minutes No urgent responses have been received.	
7.6	Item 7.6 - University Reps No response as yet to the request sent via CHUGD to have Department Secretaries distribute literature on behalf of the Society.	
11.3	Item 11.3 - H&S Inspectorate The H&S Inspectorate have now issued more improvement notices on individuals and companies working in the quarrying industry. The Principal Inspector has agreed to produce a brief document covering the issues raised with individual/companies over their reports, and will distribute copies to the Society and ICE once completed. It was agreed that this item be placed on the main agenda for the next meeting.	JL AD
4	Chairman's Business The Science Council Interim License Review to assess the Society's capacity to award Chartered Scientist status was held on 6 th November. As part of the review the panel considered the changes being made to the	

current Chartership process and are happy with the new system, which is already in advance of some of the bodies currently licensed by the Council.

A number of CGeols have recently been asked by local authorities if Chartership qualified them as a competent person to sign off flood risk assessments. DM confirmed that this is the case, provided that the individual has gained the necessary experience or has covered this area adequately through CPD.

5 Chartership Process

5.1 Logistics

It was noted that the two main issues regarding the Chartership Interview Days are the availability of suitable locations and the large costs involved. It was suggested that one large room, suitably divided by partitions, could be used for some of the interviews. This was agreed and will be trialed at the first interview day at Burlington House in April by using the Lower Library to conduct some of the interviews. AD

ICE and other similar bodies charge their Chartership candidates an application fee of around £200, and the possibility of raising the Society's application fee to a similar level was suggested. The annual Cgeol supplement could also potentially be increased to meet the rising costs of the application system. However, it was noted that a balance would need to be found between increasing the charge whilst not deterring potential applicants due to exorbitant costs. AD to investigate how much other similar bodies (CIWEM, IES, ICE, IMMM etc) charge for Chartership and report at the next meeting. AD

Over 2000 chartered fellows have been contacted to apply under the new system, however only 100 or so applications have been received, concern has therefore been raised that fellows are finding the new requirements off putting. A significant number of emails expressing concern about the new Scrutineering system have been received, mainly from fellows in the South West region who are apprehensive about the distance they will be required to travel and the large time commitment involved. With such a small pool of validated scrutineers it has become increasingly clear that scrutineers may have to be asked to travel further afield than their local interview centre in order to match in with applicants. However this was felt to be a factor that would ensure that only the most committed fellows would apply for the role.

Agreed the CPD reward for acting as a Scrutineer needs to be defined. DM

See also Item 5.7 below

5.2 Timetable

November update circulated to the Committee.

The first Scrutineers Event Day is to be held at Burlington House on 9th

April, with the first interview dates to be held on 15th April (Burlington House) and 15th July (Edinburgh).

5.3 Guidance Documents

Engineering draft issued to committee, although it still requires some small modifications, especially to the definition of 'competence', the inclusion of the ability to work unsupervised and the number of non-core skills applicants should be competent in. Academic draft also received. Both Academic and Engineering draft documents to be circulated to whole committee for comment before finalising. AD

It was noted that the Engineering Guidance document must map easily onto the Engineering Training Guide.

Drafts from Hydrogeology and Petroleum Groups to be received by 1st December.

5.4 Composition of Panels

Chartership Panel

George Tuckwell has now been appointed as Chair. All current F&V members wishing to serve on the new panel have now informed DM of their intention, and the remainder of the Panel members will be selected from accepted scrutineer applicants. GT DM

Chartership Audit Panel

Ruth Allington has now been appointed as Chair. Two remaining members to be agreed by RA and DM. RA DM

5.5 Auditing

MdF produced a draft audit questionnaire to be used internally by the Professional Committee/Chartership Panel. DM and GT to consider the draft in detail although they are both broadly in agreement, so long as capturing and collating the information would not prove too arduous. DM GT

5.6 Chartership Officer

The CO job description and person spec have now been finalised and published on the website, as well as being included in the general issue e-newsletter to all fellows on Monday 17th November. Applications are due back by 12th December, with interviews provisionally to be held on 8th January. Agreed that the interview panel should be GT, EN and DM and that this panel, plus RA and BG, should initially assess the applications.

5.7 Validated Scrutineers' Appointments

All CGeols who are not currently registered as Scrutineers have now been approached to submit applications. There has been quite a negative reaction from a number of fellows to the request to submit 3 years post chartership CPD records with their applications. DM confirmed that this record does not necessarily have to be via the Geological Society scheme but that a comparable body's scheme would also be acceptable. However, it was agreed that those applicants not prepared submit any form of CPD

record will have to be rejected.

Those committee members present were issued with a set of applications to assess sheet and return as soon as possible. DM to contact those applicants who have submitted non-standard applications or whose CPD records are not of the required standard. All

6 Council Matters

The cost of the new process will be discussed at the Council meeting on 26th November.

7 Professional Matters

7.1 SiLC

PN gave an update on SiLC matters to the committee:

- A complaints/disciplinary procedure to be used against SiLCs currently being developed
- New post of SiLC Champion being advertised to promote the qualification
- Technical development framework for those considering becoming SiLC
- 104 SiLCs in total, most of whom are CGeols
- Standard of applications has dropped recently and the pass rate is now only around 50%

It was suggested that SiLC could be promoted more within the Geological Society, possibly via an article in Geoscientist outlining what action CGeols need to take in order to become SiLC. PN

7.2 Environment Group

Prior to the meeting, Mike Rivett issued 'The Environment Group: Status and Way Forward' to the committee for discussion. PN pointed out that he did not in fact start the original Environment Group, but that ~~xxx~~ did. It was agreed that option 4 in the paper (ie to disband the present Environment Group and replace it with a Co-ordinating Committee) be proposed by the Professional Committee as the best way forward, with the recommendation that the replacement be called the Environment Policy Group/Committee or Task Force and report to the External Relations Committee. Also agreed any Fellows currently working in Whitehall should be approached to be a member.

MC will update MR on comments received, and input will also be sought from Science Committee, before final recommendations passed to Council. MC

7.3 YGG

JV reported that the YGG are currently in the process of trialing a new national role. Some regions have expressed concern that the YGG may attract members away from the Regional Groups. However, JV has

reassured those Groups concerned that the YGG are committed to working in partnership, not competition, with them.

Central Scotland and South East Groups are now keen to get local YGGs up and running in their regions. DM added that the Northern Group would also like to liaise with YGG more closely – JV to contact. JV

YGG facebook page now has over 100 members, JV to send list of those currently registered to AD to ensure they are fellows of the Society. Possibility of Geological Society having a facebook page to be investigated. AD

The group is now in touch with 12-14 other early career geoscience groups around the world, and a YGG delegation will be attending the YES Congress in Beijing in October 2009.

7.4 Accreditation Panel

Newcastle University MSc Petroleum Geochemistry has now been accredited along with a number of first degree courses at UCL.

As the University of Derby now has a new head of department, it is hoped an application will be submitted to have a number of courses accredited in the near future.

The panel hopes to be more proactive in 2009 by making contact with a number of Universities in India and China with a view to accrediting more overseas courses.

7.4 Regional Groups

MC is currently working on the RGCC Governance paper for Council - draft to be circulated to all Professional Committee members once finished. MC

A number of fellows in the south would like to set up a new, South Coast Regional Group. This proposal has the full backing of the Thames Valley RG as the area it covers at present is too large to be practical. MC will therefore be encouraging a formal request to the Executive Secretary to create the new Group. DM advised the TVRG include a sum of money in their 2009 RG grant application to cover the start up costs of this new group in the interim. MC AC

It was suggested that each Regional Group should be actively seeking a University representative to sit on its committee in order to encourage closer links between the groups and the universities. MC to add a paragraph into the correspondence that will be sent to all Regional Groups requesting their annual reports asking the Chairs of the groups to contact their local Society University rep. MC

AD reported that the Regional Groups would have membership

lists/email details provided in the very near future.

7.5 F&V Committee

MdF reported that most F&V members wish to continue to sit on the new Chartership Panel.

The F&V committee will formally be wound down by email before the end of the year.

8.0 Any Other Business

8.1 Flagstaff Declaration

Documents on the recent Flagstaff Declaration were issued to the committee. AD to email the final version of the Declaration to all Committee members for information.

9.0 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 8th January 2009 at 1.00pm.