

Notes of GSL chartership group meeting held by WMRG on 11 June 2019 in Birmingham

Five members seeking chartership gathered in Birmingham on June 11 for an hour to attend an open forum hosted by WMRG to discuss the chartership process. Bill Gaskarth from GSL was there to address the issues arising, along with WMRG committee members. It soon became clear that the chartership process isn't just about the applicants, the sponsors and scrutineers play an equally important role.

The discussions are summarised in the following take-home points that apply to applicants but feature also the role played by sponsors and scrutineers.

- 1 Get advice from sponsors early on, they have to sign off your application and need to be involved in the process
- 2 Ensure that sponsors are happy with the focus of your application
- 3 Start collating records and obtaining sign offs in a timely manner, don't put this task off to the last minute
- 4 Start by preparing an outline of your professional development (note – not a career cv) and link it with the criteria, do a bit at a time, a targeted approach gives a better chance of success at interview
- 5 Scrutineers don't want to wade through submissions looking for relevant information, they are told to send back applications containing lots of non-relevant material and if they try instead to be helpful scrutineers are hindering the process (rejecting inadequate submissions would be better for all)
- 6 If an application is rejected it means that liaison with sponsors has not been done to ensure that in their professional opinion the applicant is ready for Chartership and they think that the application is strong
- 7 Self help groups are useful to practice presentations, constructive criticism and feedback is needed, equivocation or platitudinous mutual back-slapping won't help
- 8 Select a topic for your presentation that engages the scrutineers and generates interest, choose something specific that is of interest to you (Criterion 3), but be selective of material taken from reports you've written
- 9 Supporting information used in the application should showcase all criteria, but the main thrust should be Criteria 1 and 2
- 10 CPD evidence must demonstrate the plan-act-reflect cycle, and not just be a stamp collection
- 11 The applicant identifies their area of competence so that appropriate scrutineers can be selected
- 12 Paternity/maternity leave is not a hindrance to the process, the applicant should demonstrate that they were keeping in touch during this time

There was a brief discussion on electronic submissions, and how people should sign the documents. This question was put to GSL after the meeting, who provided the response reproduced below.

'Currently our online application system is down – we are having this removed from our website. We accept paper forms via our file transfer box through tranferbigfiles.com . The details on how to access this are on the application forms on the website. With regards to signatures the forms can either be printed, signed and the scanned in and uploaded or electronic signatures can be used'.

It is intended to follow up this first get together with open forum type self-help meetings through the year, once Bill's presentation on chartership to WMRG at the September meeting has taken place.

Notes of GSL chartership group meeting held by WMRG on 12 November 2019 in Birmingham

The meeting was the second informal get together of geologists currently seeking chartership in the WMRG area. The aim of the meeting was to focus on the presentation part of the chartership interview.

Rob Meredith was one of about 5 people present who are currently aiming to get chartered in 2020, and gave a practice run of the presentation he intends to use. Andria Loppa passed her interview this year and gave a repeat performance of the presentation she used at interview, and talked about her experience.

Listed below are some of the take home thoughts from the general discussions following the presentations.

- Above all, this is your opportunity to show your enthusiasm for the aspect of geology that interests you the most. A strong start and finish helps to engage your audience.
- You don't need to dwell on your background, the scrutineers will have read that already.
- Stick to 15 minutes.
- The importance of emphasising the geological aspects of the project chosen as the topic for the presentation was emphasised (on a construction project this means not just the geotechnical or engineering aspects).
- Much of the geology in construction involves glacial and alluvial soils, and there are plenty of publications dealing with the engineering geology of these materials. It is important to show in the presentation how an understanding of the geology contributes to the ground model, and how desk study, site investigations and laboratory testwork improved this understanding for the selected project and how the findings informed the selection of geotechnical parameters as well as design/construction choices and decisions.
- Reference to existing publications demonstrates a commitment to CPD. In construction generally practitioners are always asking about feedback from real life experiences, this is an opportunity to do your bit. You could show for example, if our current understanding of glacial deposits can be confirmed or improved by your experiences.
- Mention your role and contribution to H&S (one of the examining criteria).
- Mention your role in the project team (an opportunity to show your understanding of the code of conduct and your competence to do the allocated tasks).

For the interview itself, be prepared to answer questions on the seven assessment criteria (Andria was asked 62 questions at her interview, so some homework will pay dividends). The presentation provides you with the opportunity to convince the scrutineers that you fulfil the requirements of the first three criteria (your understanding of geology, being able to evaluate data critically, and communicating the results).

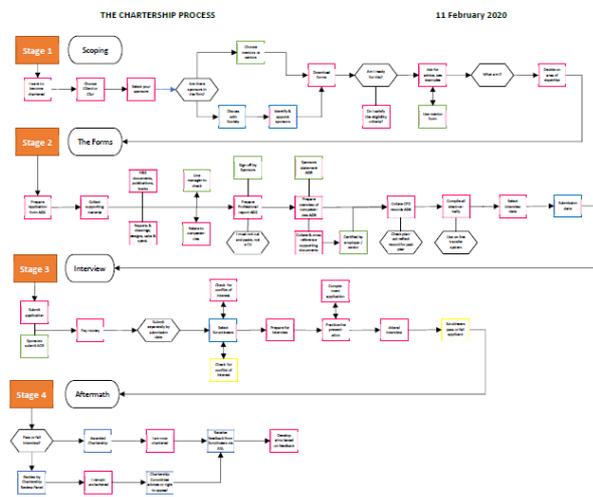
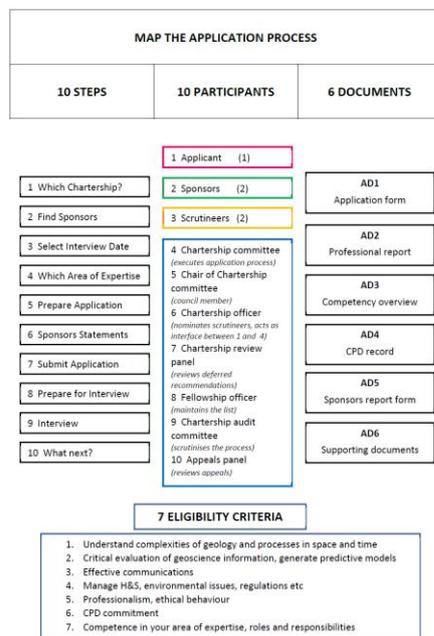
Notes of GSL chartership group meeting held by WMRG on 11 February 2020 in Birmingham

For the first meeting of 2020 a relatively small group of 4 geologists seeking chartership assembled to map the process involved for the applicant. Bill Gaskarth was present to address questions arising during the meeting.

The Geological Society website identifies the steps involved, the participants in the process, and the documents and forms that have to be collated and submitted to support the application. The application will be assessed based on a series of criteria. Altogether, there are 10 steps in the process, 10 participants, 6 documents and 7 evaluation criteria.

The aim of mapping the application process is to see the link between the steps in the process, the participants and the documents that have to be compiled. These factors are summarised on the first working document. Those attending the meeting worked through the steps in the process and developed the second working document. Both charts are shown below.

WMRG CHARTERSHIP MEETING 11 February 2020



Notes of GSL chartership group meeting held by WMRG on 10 March 2020 in Birmingham

This event was aimed to help those attending the first interviews of 2020 which are held Mid-Late March. All will benefit from seeing how others are pitching their chartership applications.

Alex Deltenre from Atkins gave a trial run of his presentation. He chose two topics to reflect his work experience – cross rail site investigations and a quarry resource assessment. The talk dealt largely with evaluation criteria 1 and 2. The slides were extracted from modelling software outputs.

The questions afterwards asked for clarification on slide details, Alex's role in the resource project, and whether his chosen topics were the same as those in the professional report. Alex intended to bring plenty of drawings to the interview, including hand drawn sketches.

Bill Gaskarth did not attend because he is one of Alex's scrutineers. There were seven attendees plus Alex and myself.

Notes of GSL chartership group zoom meeting held by WMRG on 24 June 2020

Topic – interview feedback

There were 35 participants. Those who registered for the meeting had been asked to identify what stage they had reached in the chartership process. Most were filling out the application forms, i.e. they were at the stage that precedes the interview stage.

Alex Deltenre and Bill Gaskarth, applicant and scrutineer respectively, related their experiences of the interview process, which was conducted using zoom. This June session of the chartership self-help group follows our March get together when Alex gave a trial run of his presentation for the interview.

Points to note:

Alex spoke first and listed the points he considered important in preparing for the interview

- Once he knew who his scrutineers would be, he checked out their interests and experience to make sure he knew their background
- Where he relied on old projects with his submission, he re-familiarised himself thoroughly with their contents
- He made sure his CPD was up to date, and that it showed how his objectives were met in accordance with the plan-act-reflect requirement
- He practised his presentation and possible questions on many occasions – it's surprising how errors creep in despite diligent checking
- He had plenty of additional documentation to hand to showcase his skills and demonstrate competency

For the interview

- Preparation is key to a successful interview (especially in the zoom environment)
- Give particular attention to cross referencing geology at all times
- Use examples to demonstrate your thought processes and how you obtained answers to problems
- Stick by your geological interpretations within reason even if the scrutineers disagree – your projects will have been checked and reviewed by other senior staff
- Use a short introduction about yourself to give you time to relax

Bill followed by running through the process he follows before the interview as a scrutineer.

- First, he checks the application forms for completeness and eligibility
- Then regarding competence, he checks to see if there is any aspect of the submission that is no longer applicable, for example where someone gained a skill in the past but is no longer using it and no longer maintaining CPD
- This aspect is relevant to Alex's situation, where he gained experience in exploration before moving into engineering – the role of the sponsors is important in the application process as they will know if your submission meets the required standards
- The submitted documents will be used to judge competence – in the professional report and supporting reference documents he looks for evidence of how the candidate has developed competence, and to see what lessons have been learnt
- At this point, he will be able to decide if the submission is acceptable to go to interview

At interview, he stressed the importance of presenting something that you're proud of and to show your enthusiasm for the work and geology. Say what you think in your application, it's not a company report.

Notes of group zoom meeting held by WMRG on 14 July 2020

Shaun Richardson – chartership officer of GSL

There were 28 participants.

Shaun replaced Bill Gaskarth as GSL Chartership Officer some 18 months ago. He gave a comprehensive overview of the application process to become CGeol and CSci for a fellow following the normal route. The topics he covered included completing the application forms and supporting documents, the interview and CPD. For each topic, he summarised the main issues he'd experienced during his time in office which gave a useful insight into the common pitfalls. He also presented a rough timeline for the application once the forms have been submitted, and touched on the other ways fellows can become chartered.

This meeting was recorded and is available to view on the WMRG portal at GSL.