

ASSOCIATION OF CHARITY INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

BECOMING A FULL MEMBER - A BRIEF OUTLINE

- 1 All ACIE members start as Affiliates, so the first step, if you have not done so already, is to apply to join ACIE as an Affiliate (the application form is on the ACIE website at: www.acie.org.uk - or contact the ACIE office).
- 2 Once you have joined, you then request a Full Membership application pack from the ACIE office, preferably by email so we can send the pack as attachments and you can complete it on screen. However - see the questionnaire at the end of this paper: '*Are you ready to request a Full Membership application pack?*' - which provides you with a framework for considering if you are ready to apply yet.
- 3 Full Membership is awarded on the basis on an application form (which checks your understanding and experience), two references, and two sets of charity annual accounts which ideally you will have independently examined (or prepared and examined). The application is then scrutinised rigorously by the ACIE Membership Committee who decide whether the standard of the work submitted and the answers supplied merits the award of Full Membership (FM) status.
- 4 Nb. Full Membership is not awarded on the basis of attending an ACIE training course, nor on holding the professional qualification of any other body, nor are there any examinations involved. However, an application needs to be made with the same care and attention as you would give to any professional examination.
- 5 Full Membership is awarded in one of two categories, Fellow and Associate:

Fellow: authorised to work with any charity eligible for IE

Associate: authorised to work with charities eligible for IE within one of the five authorisation bands below (R&P meaning Receipts & Payments):
 - i) R&P accounts only, up to income of £100,000
 - ii) both R&P and Accruals accounts, up to income of £100,000
 - iii) R&P accounts only, up to income of £250,000
 - iv) both R&P and Accruals accounts, up to income of £250,000
 - v) R&P accounts up to income of £250,000 and Accruals accounts up to income of £100,000
The professional designation awarded to those who are successful is FCIE and ACIE (for Fellow and Associate, respectively).
- 6 The accounts that are submitted by an applicant should reflect the level of Full Membership being requested. For example, it is unlikely that you would be awarded Fellow status if all your charity accounting experience is limited to charities with incomes under £100,000 and you do not examine a sizeable number every year.
- 7 However, ACIE is aware that there is a potential difficulty where mandatory qualifications for carrying out independent examination have been introduced (in general terms, for charities with income over £250,000 in England & Wales and NI; and for charities preparing accruals accounts in Scotland (usually non-company charities with income over £250,000 plus all charitable companies eligible for IE)).

- 8 In these instances, it may be necessary to submit one set of accounts that you have examined which are below the income threshold of the Full Membership category you wish to apply for, plus one set that you have prepared which are over that threshold. What you are seeking to do is demonstrate that you know your way around charity accounting at the appropriate level.
- 9 In arriving at a decision, the Membership Committee has five options:
- a to award the category requested
 - b to award a lower category than requested
 - c to award a probationary category, with a deadline for expiry if specific conditions are not met within the time period
 - d to request further information before making a recommendation
 - e to reject the application for Full Member status (the applicant would still remain an Affiliate member of ACIE, and could apply again in the future).
- 10 The fees for this during 2016-17 are likely to remain as follows:
- a Affiliate: the initial fee varies according to the joining date, but the annual subscription is £55.00 (*but only £30.00 if acting in a voluntary capacity*)
 - b Full Membership application: a one-off admin fee of £30.00 (*but no charge if acting in a voluntary capacity*)
 - c If your Full Membership application is successful, then the next annual membership subscription renewal will be at Full Membership rates, which range from £90.00 to £150.00 per annum (*£50.00 for voluntary IE's*) - depending on the category and authorisation band awarded.
- 11 ACIE is planning to introduce a CPD (continuing professional development) scheme for its Full Members. It is intended to be light-touch but effective.

QUESTIONNAIRE: Are you ready to request a Full Membership application pack?

| | | YES | NO |
|----|--|-----|----|
| Q1 | Do you have at least two sets of charity accounts that you have independently examined that you could submit with your application? | | |
| Q2 | Are you confident that those accounts are correct, complete and, where necessary, compliant with the relevant SORP? | | |
| Q3 | Have you actually carried out several independent examinations - and indeed many over the last 2 years if you are applying for Fellow? | | |
| Q4 | Can you answer questions on independent examining - theory and practice? | | |
| Q5 | Do you have more than a very recent experience of charity accounting? | | |
| Q6 | Does your knowledge, ability and experience of charity accounting / IE match the category of Full Membership you wish to apply for? | | |
| Q7 | Do you keep up to date with changes in charity accounting? | | |

If your answer is NO to any of the above questions, then you may not be ready to apply for Full Membership just yet, but if the majority are YES, then you are well on your way.