

# Summary of GSA Rule changes for Annual General Meeting: 25 May 2023

## Front page

Adopted by the Members on **28<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

Change to: Adopted by the Members on **25<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

### Explanation

The date the new Rules are adopted by members must appear on the front of the Rules.

The changes to the GSA Rules outlined are in response to two major changes in the governance and structure of the GSA:

1. A change in the operating model following the resignation of our CEO, Sue Fletcher, and the review of our financial model and
2. The introduction by the Governing Council of a modified membership structure that aims to elevate the status of GSA professional membership whilst expanding access and appeal of GSA, and diversify our membership.

## 1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

**Remove: CEO** means the Chief Executive Officer of the Society.

Explanation: This position no longer exists.

### ***Changes to Membership definitions***

Explanation:

As the GSA grows, it needs to ensure it is an inclusive society that welcomes younger members and people working in the resources sector who might be non-Earth Scientists, whilst acknowledging the prestige of being a professional Earth Scientist. To address this need, the GSA's Governing Council has completed a long-term, strategic review of the current membership structure. Through analysis of our membership demographics; evaluation of other national and international geological societies; and assessment of our membership categories against our key strategic objectives (namely membership engagement, a progressive GSA and the narrative and reputation of the geosciences), the Governing Council has proposed a modified membership structure to our members.

The proposed adjustment to the professional member categories were sent to the members for consultation and peer review. The proposed changes are aimed at elevating the status of GSA

professional membership to align more effectively with other professional societies around the world whilst expanding access and appeal of GSA membership to a wider and more diverse cohort. As a society we need to grow and build on the great work of professional Earth scientists working in research, in government, in industry. But we also need to better acknowledge the work of the volunteers and capture and engage the enthusiasm of people who are just interested in Earth Science.

## **Edit Associate Member & Teacher Member**

**Currently: Associate Member** means a person who is at least 18 years of age, who is not eligible to join as a Full Member, Joint Member, Retired Member, Tertiary Student Member, Teacher Member, or Graduate Member, who has a genuine interest in earth sciences, and who has applied for and been admitted as an Associate Member. Schools may also become Associate Members. Associate Members do not have the right to vote or be office bearers.

**Currently: Teacher Member** means a person who is teaching within the Primary, Intermediate or Secondary schooling system and has applied for and been admitted as a Teacher Member on the basis of their interest and experience in teaching in the field of earth and environmental science.

Explanation: Merge Associate and Teacher Member categories and broaden to encourage and enable mineral collectors, fossickers, the interested public etc to join this group.

### **Revised definition**

**Associate Member** means a person who is at least 18 years of age, who has an interest in Earth, planetary and environmental sciences, but does not currently have the necessary qualifications or work experience to become a Fellow. Schools may also become Associate Members. Associate Members do not have the right to vote or be office bearers, but will have access to publications online (hard copy journals can be purchased), Specialist Groups, GSA activities, and any discounted rates that are linked to these.

As non-professional Earth Scientists, Associate Members are not eligible to join any other member category and will not have a postnominal.

### **FAQ for the website:**

- What is an Earth Science-related qualification?
  - A tertiary qualification (degree or diploma) that includes subjects that are focused on Earth sciences. This could include (but is not restricted to) geology, geochemistry, geophysics, palaeontology, geography, environmental science, soil science, paleobiology, paleoclimate, geotourism, geoengineering and geomatics
  - This list is not exhaustive and if you have doubt about your eligibility, please contact a local Division of the GSA for assistance
- What is equivalent work experience?
  - Three years working in an Earth Science-related field. This could include (but is not restricted to) secondary teaching (see additional FAQ below), geotourism, field geology, geoengineering, geomatics
  - This list is not exhaustive and if you have doubt about your eligibility, please contact a local Division of the GSA for assistance
- What “teaching” experience counts towards membership criteria?

- Secondary teaching (or higher) related to the Earth and environment curriculum (subject to terminology changes)

## **Edit Fellow**

**Currently: Fellow** means a Member who has been successfully nominated for election as a Fellow on the basis of their significant contribution to the earth sciences or related fields and elected by the Governing Council. The Governing Council may set guidelines for the nomination process. Following the adoption of these rules, Fellows of the Society may be included in the categories of Full Member, Joint Member, and Retired Member.

### **Revised definition**

**Distinguished Fellow** is any person who is a voting member of the Society, who is an Earth, planetary or environmental scientist with a minimum of ten (10) years cumulative professional experience (excluding allowable career interruptions), who has made a demonstrated and significant contribution to the Geological Society of Australia and has made a demonstrated and significant contribution to Earth, planetary and environmental sciences or related fields, shall be eligible to be elected a Distinguished Fellow of the Society. The Governing Council may set guidelines for the nomination process. Following the adoption of these rules, Fellows of the Society may be included in the categories of Joint Fellow and Retired Fellow. A Distinguished Fellow will be entitled to use the postnominal initials DFGSAust. Prior to adoption of these rules, a Distinguished Fellow was termed a Fellow.

## **Edit Full Member**

**Currently: Full Member** is a Member who is an individual who has applied for and been admitted to membership and who is a graduate of a university or other tertiary institution who has been awarded an academic qualification majoring in earth sciences and has been employed in any technical or scientific aspect of the earth sciences for a period of at least 3 years within the 10 years prior to applying to become a Full Member. Prior to adoption of these rules, a Full Member was termed a Member.

### **Revised definition**

**Fellow** is an individual who has applied for and been admitted to membership and who holds a Professional qualification that includes Earth, planetary or environmental science subjects or related fields, or equivalent work experience (minimum 3 years work experience). Postnominal initials. Fellows may use the postnominal FGSAust. Prior to adoption of these rules, a Fellow was termed a Full Member.

## **Edit Honorary Member**

**Currently: Honorary Member** means a Member of the Society who has been given honorary membership of the Society prior to the adoption of these rules, or by the Governing Council, in recognition of a distinguished career in earth sciences or for service to the Society. Following the adoption of these rules, the number of Honorary Members at any one time shall not exceed 35.

**Revised definition:**

**Honorary Fellow** means a Member of the Society who has been given honorary membership of the Society prior to the adoption of these rules, or by the Governing Council, in recognition of a distinguished career in Earth, planetary or environmental sciences or for service to the Society. Following the adoption of these rules, the number of Honorary Fellows at any one time shall not exceed 35.

**Edit Joint Member**

**Currently: Joint Member** means a Member who is eligible to be a Full Member in his or her own right and who is and remains a spouse (including de facto spouse including same sex partner) of an existing Full Member, and who has applied for and been accepted as a Joint Member.

**Revised definition:**

**Joint Fellow** means a Member who is eligible to be a Fellow in his or her own right and who is and remains a spouse (including de facto spouse including same sex partner) of an existing Fellow, and who has applied for and been accepted as a Joint Fellow. Postnominal initials. Note: this group has applied for and been accepted in their own right as a Fellow, therefore they may use the postnominal FGSAust.

**Edit Life Member**

**Currently: Life Member** means a Member who paid for Life Membership prior to the adoption of these rules. This option will no longer be offered with the adoption of these rules. However, all previous Life memberships will be honoured until such time as they expire.

**Revised definition:**

**Life Fellow** means a Member who paid for Life Membership prior to the adoption of these rules. This option will no longer be offered with the adoption of these rules. However, all previous Life memberships will be honoured until such time as they expire.

**Edit Retired Member**

**Currently: Retired Member** is a Member of at least 10 years standing in professional practice in the earth sciences and who has retired from professional practice and has applied to change membership status to Retired Member.

**Revised definition:**

**Retired Fellow** is a Member of at least 10 years standing in professional practice in the Earth, planetary or environmental sciences and who has retired from professional practice and has applied to change membership status to Retired Fellow.

**Edit School Student and Tertiary Student Members**

**Currently: School Student** means a school student who has applied for and been admitted as a

School Student Member and has a genuine interest in earth science on the basis of evidence from a primary or secondary teaching institution. School Student Members must be studying in Australia and do not have the right to vote or be Office Bearers.

**Currently: Tertiary Student Member** means a Member who is enrolled in undergraduate studies in the earth sciences at a tertiary institution and who has applied for and been admitted to membership. Tertiary Student Members includes the Student Members at the adoption of these rules.

***Explanation: Revised category that incorporates School and Tertiary Students***

**Revised definition:**

**Student Members** are defined as individuals studying Earth, planetary and environmental sciences or related fields for a professional qualification recognised by the GSA. Secondary school students are also able to qualify for this membership category. Student Members less than 18 years old do not have the right to vote or be Office Bearers.

**FAQ for the website:**

- What is an Earth Science-related qualification?
  - A secondary school qualification that can lead to an Earth Science course in a tertiary institution
  - A tertiary qualification (degree or diploma) that includes subjects that are focused on Earth sciences. This could include (but is not restricted to) geology, geochemistry, geophysics, palaeontology, geography, environmental science, soil science, paleobiology, paleoclimate, geotourism, geoengineering and geomatics
  - This list is not exhaustive and if you have doubt about your eligibility, please contact a local Division of the GSA for assistance
  - U3A is not working towards a qualification
  - Some TAFE Certificates may be considered working towards a Professional qualification (please contact a local Division of the GSA for assistance).

## **4.1 Categories of Membership**

**Currently:** Following the adoption of these rules, the membership of the Society shall consist of the following categories:

- (a) Associate Member;
- (b) Company Member;
- (c) Full Member;
- (d) Graduate Member;
- (e) Honorary Member;
- (f) Joint Member;
- (g) Life Member;
- (h) Retired Member;
- (i) School Student;

- (j) Teacher Member and
- (k) Tertiary Student Member.

**Revised definition:**

Following the adoption of these rules, the membership of the Society shall consist of the following categories:

- (a) Fellow
- (b) Distinguished Fellow
- (c) Associate Member
- (d) Graduate Member
- (e) Student Member
- (f) Retired Fellow
- (g) Joint Fellow
- (h) Honorary Fellow, Foundation Member, Life Fellow
- (i) Company Member

*Update for membership category change:*

**4.2**

Subject to these rules, the Governing Council may, at its discretion, approve to become a Full Member of the Society:

- (a) Any person who has been employed in any technical or scientific aspect of the earth sciences for a period of at least 3 years; or
- (b) Any person who has undertaken and published results of significant research in the earth sciences.

*Revised rule:*

**4.2**

Subject to these rules, the Governing Council may, at its discretion, approve to become a Distinguished Fellow of the Society:

- (a) Any person who has been employed in any technical or scientific aspect of the earth sciences for a period of at least 3 years; or
- (b) Any person who has undertaken and published results of significant research in the earth sciences.

**All references to CEO to be removed.**

**4.3 Application to become a Member**

(b) Every application for membership must:

- (i) Be sponsored by two (2) existing Members, at least one of whom should be a Full

Member, stating their knowledge of the applicant;

*Update to 4.3.b.i for membership category change:*

(i) Be sponsored by two (2) existing Members, at least one of whom should be a Fellow (including Distinguished, Retired, Honorary or Joint Fellows, or Graduate Member), stating their knowledge of the applicant;

*Update to 4.3.b.iii, remove reference to CEO, change to:*

(b) Every application for membership must:

(iii) The relevant Division must approve or reject the applicant as soon as practicable after receiving the application for membership and notify the CEO of that decision in writing.

#### **4.4 Change of Membership Category**

(a) Upon information being provided by a Member to the CEO with supporting evidence for a change in the category of membership of a Member, the Public Officer will update that Member's category of membership.

Remove reference to CEO, change to:

(a) Upon information being provided by a Member to the GSA with supporting evidence for a change in the category of membership of a Member, the GSA will update that Member's category of membership.

#### **4.7 Resignation of Membership**

(a) A Member is entitled to resign from membership of the Society at any time by giving written notice to the CEO.

(b) If a person ceases to be a Member, the CEO must make an appropriate entry in the Register of Members recording the date the Member ceased to be a Member.

Remove reference to CEO, change to:

#### **4.7 Resignation of Membership**

(a) A Member is entitled to resign from membership of the Society at any time by giving written notice to the GSA.

(b) If a person ceases to be a Member, the GSA must make an appropriate entry in the Register of Members recording the date the Member ceased to be a Member.

## **7. MEMBER RIGHTS AND BENEFITS**

### **7.1**

Subject to Rule 1.1, Members shall have the following rights:

- (a) To stand for election to or be appointed to the Governing Council in accordance with these rules unless they are an Affiliate Member, a Company Member or representative of a Company Member, a School Student or an Associate Member,
- (b) To stand for election to or be appointed to the Committee of a Division, Branch and Specialist Group, of which they are a participant unless they are an Affiliate Member, a Company Member or representative of a Company Member, a Student or an Associate Member; and
- (c) To vote at general meetings of the Society unless they are an Affiliate Member, a Company Member or representative of a Company Member, a School Student Member or an Associate Member.

### **Revised rule:**

### **7.1**

Subject to Rule 1.1, Members shall have the following rights:

- (a) To stand for election to or be appointed to the Governing Council in accordance with these rules unless they are an a Company Member or representative of a Company Member, a Student Member less than 18 years old, or an Associate Member;
- (b) To stand for election to or be appointed to the Committee of a Division, Branch and Specialist Group, of which they are a participant unless they are a Company Member or representative of a Company Member, a Student Member less than 18 years old, or an Associate Member; and
- (c) To vote at general meetings of the Society unless they are a Company Member or representative of a Company Member, a Student Member less than 18 years old, or an Associate Member.

### **7.2**

Members shall have the following benefits:

### ***Current rule***

- (a) Full Members and Honorary Members shall receive without any further payment, 1 copy of each issue of one of the Society's nominated journals of their choice (including the Society Journal) in addition to the Society's national newsletter ("The Australian Geologist");

### **Revised rule**

- a) Distinguished Fellows, Fellows, Honorary Fellows and Retired Fellows shall receive without any further payment, 1 copy of each issue of one of the Society's nominated journals of their choice (including the Society Journal) in addition to the Society's national newsletter ("The Australian Geologist");



### ***Current rule***

(b) Joint Members shall receive all benefits of Full Members except they shall receive electronic access to the Society's Journal and national newsletter. Retired Members, Associate Members, Tertiary Student Members, and Teacher Members will be provided internet access to the Society Journal online and may obtain hard copies of the Society Journal by paying additional charges as determined by the Governing Council from time to time;

### **Revised rule**

b) Joint Fellows shall receive all benefits of Fellows except they shall receive electronic access to the Society's Journal, Graduate Members, Associate Members and Student Members will be provided internet access to the Society Journal online and may obtain hard copies of the Society Journal by paying additional charges as determined by the Governing Council from time to time;

### **DELETE**

(c) Affiliates may receive publications from the Specialist Group, which they have joined, and may obtain hard copies of the Society Journal and national newsletter by paying additional charges as determined by the Governing Council from time to time.

### ***Current rule***

(d) All Members shall be entitled to use post nominals denoting their category of membership as determined by the Governing Council from time to time.

### **Revised rule**

(c) All Fellows shall be entitled to use post nominals denoting their category of membership as determined by the Governing Council from time to time.

## **10.4 Members Ballot for election of General Councillors on Governing Council**

(c) To record a valid vote a Member must submit their completed ballot paper to the CEO or as otherwise specified in the ballot material so that the ballot paper is received no later than 5 business days prior to the date of the AGM at which the composition of the Governing Council is to be declared in accordance with Rule 10.6.

### **Remove reference to CEO, change to:**

(c) To record a valid vote a Member must submit their completed ballot paper to the GSA or as otherwise specified in the ballot material so that the ballot paper is received no later than 5 business days prior to the date of the AGM at which the composition of the Governing Council is to be declared in accordance with Rule 10.6.

## **11.3 Delegated Functions of the CEO**

(a) Subject to specific instructions from the Governing Council, the CEO is responsible for the day to day functions and operations of the Society and reports to, and is answerable to, the Governing Council for those activities.

**Remove reference to CEO, change to:**

Subject to specific instructions from the Governing Council, the Association Manager is responsible for the day-to-day functions and operations of the Society and reports to, and is answerable to, the Governing Council for those activities.

**12. GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY**

**12.4 Notice**

(d) A Member desiring to bring an appropriate matter before a general meeting may give written notice of that business to the Secretary or CEO. If the Governing Council determines the matter is appropriate it must be included in the next notice calling a general meeting given after receipt of the notice from the Member.

**Remove reference to CEO, change to:**

(d) A Member desiring to bring an appropriate matter before a general meeting may give written notice of that business to the Secretary or Association Manager. If the Governing Council determines the matter is appropriate it must be included in the next notice calling a general meeting given after receipt of the notice from the Member.

**12.9 Voting**

(a) Only the following Members have voting rights at general meetings of the Society:

- (i) Full Member;
- (ii) Retired Member;
- (iii) Joint Member;
- (iv) Honorary Member;
- (v) Tertiary Student Member;
- (vi) Graduate Member;
- (vii) Teacher Member; and
- (viii) Life Member.

**Updated membership categories revised to:**

Only the following Members have voting rights at general meetings of the Society:

- (a) Fellow;
- (b) Distinguished Fellow;
- (c) Graduate Member;
- (d) Student Member (at least 18 years old);
- (e) Retired Fellow;
- (f) Joint Fellow;
- (g) Life Fellow; and
- (h) Honorary Fellow, Foundation Member Life Fellow.

## **14. BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS**

### **14.1**

With the exception of delegations by the Governing Council to the Executive Committee, CEO, Office Bearers, Standing Committees, Divisions, Branches and Specialist Groups, all financial or other business transactions to be conducted on behalf of the Society must be approved by the Governing Council.

#### **Remove reference to CEO, change to:**

With the exception of delegations by the Governing Council to the Executive Committee, authorised agents, Office Bearers, Standing Committees, Divisions, Branches and Specialist Groups, all financial or other business transactions to be conducted on behalf of the Society must be approved by the Governing Council.

## **17.2 Funds—management**

(b) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments including electronic transactions must be signed/approved (including for electronic approval) by two Members of the Governing Council or authorised employees of the Society, and in the case of Divisions, Branches and Specialist Groups, by two members of the relevant committee, which must include the treasurer of that committee. At all times, all funds or grants made available or allocated to any Division, Specialist Group or Branch by the Society together with any other income and other assets under the control of a Division, Specialist Group or Branch, remain the property of the Society to be applied in accordance with the Objects and the rules of the Society and not for any other purpose.

#### **Change reference of staff to authorised agents**

(b) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments including electronic transactions must be signed/approved (including for electronic approval) by two Members of the Governing Council or authorised agents of the Society, and in the case of Divisions, Branches and Specialist Groups, by two members of the relevant committee, which must include the treasurer of that committee. At all times, all funds or grants made available or allocated to any Division, Specialist Group or Branch by the Society together with any other income and other assets under the control of a Division, Specialist Group or Branch, remain the property of the Society to be applied in accordance with the Objects and the rules of the Society and not for any other purpose.