



Australian Acoustical Society

A.C.N. 000 712 658

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR GRADE MEMBER, GRADUATE AND ASSOCIATE

It should be noted that, particularly in the case of Member or Associate applications, no grading decision will be made if the Society is not able to establish from the application form the level of understanding, expertise and experience in acoustics of the applicant. It is therefore important that the applicant completes the Application Form and supplies proof of qualification, experience and the time spent working in the field of acoustics.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the **Membership Information** pamphlet which outlines the various gates for entry into the Society.

The applicant should ensure that detailed and verified information is provided for the following important components:

1. EDUCATION

The Application Form makes a distinction between *formal qualifications* and *other studies at a tertiary level*. Gate MA requires the applicant to have a recognised tertiary qualification. Recognised tertiary qualification means a degree or diploma (comprising the equivalent of at least 3 years full time study) appropriate to the field of acoustics.

The Application Form requires applicants (for grade Member, Graduate or Associate) to provide certified copies of qualifications. The Society is prepared to accept a copy of the qualification(s) so long as it has been signed by a responsible person* to certify that the original or a certified copy has been sighted. The following words may be used as a guide: "I certify this to be a true and exact copy of a document sighted by me. Signed....Occupation...."

* Fellow or Member of the Society, the institute that awarded the qualification(s) or a person qualified to sign a Statutory Declaration.

Other studies at tertiary level. The course title, duration, stage reached, institution or organisation running the course, and relevant dates must be supplied.

2. PRESENT POSITION

The applicant must provide details of their current employment, duties and the fraction of time that they spend working in acoustics. (More detail is requested in the following section.)

3. PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE

This table is one of the most important parts of the application form.

(A) Central section of Table - Chronological list/ details, etc.

For the grade of **Member** and **Associate**, the statements to be included in this section should make it clear to what extent the applicant has developed an understanding and ability to work, and follow developments, in their field of acoustics and the time frame in which they have been involved with acoustics.

- (a) For each of the gates for grade **Member** the applicant must show engagement in the science or practice of acoustics at a *professional* level. Professional level means being able to make a *judgement* whereas technical means being able to apply knowledge. In this context the Society must assess the degree of responsibility, the level of planning, the nature of the data analysis and assessments made from data, etc., which the applicant has *personally* undertaken in their work in acoustics. {For further details on this important point, see the Appendix to this document.}
- (b) For each of the gates for grade **Associate** the applicant must show engagement in the science or practice of acoustics at *technician* level. Technician level refers in this context to the degree of competence of following established procedures for measurement, testing, calculating, etc in the field of acoustics.
- (d) Applicants for the grade of **Graduate**, where the applicant has an appropriate recognised educational qualification but currently lacks sufficient experience in acoustics at a professional level to become a Member, must convince the Society that they have a *genuine interest* in acoustics. They should provide a statement explaining why they are applying for membership and indicate any past, current, or anticipated involvement with acoustics. Where possible, applicants are advised to submit details of work experience, along the lines required for Member grade, in order that the Society can make a recommendation about the probable time for them applying for transfer to Member grade. The applicant is advised to provide verification of their practical and/or theoretical experience in acoustics.

(B) Dates (Months/Year) - Proportion of time spent in acoustics.

For the grade of **Member** and **Associate** the applicant must state the *proportion of time* spent in acoustics. This statement must be verified (see below). It should be noted that often the applicant will have a “learning period” when they enter a new field of acoustics during which they may not be working at a full professional level. Further, applicants will normally be involved with minor administrative and management tasks associated with their work in acoustics. The Society recognises these facts, and Council has now directed that such times shall be considered as part of the period specified for each gate providing such times do not constitute a significant fraction of the applicants time spent on acoustics.

Often an applicant may have been working in two areas simultaneously: for example spending two days per week undertaking acoustic research and three days working as a consultant. On the form, indicate these as two separate sections, with the appropriate starting and completion dates for each section. In the “Proportion of time ” column, indicate the percentage of time working in acoustics during the fraction of the working year involved. For example, it may be “100% working in acoustics for 2/5 of each year” for the research component but “50% working in acoustics for 3/5 of each year” for the consulting.

(C) Verification

A separate column appears for verification. This column should be signed by a person familiar with the applicant’s work. The person need not necessarily be a member of the Society.

- (a) Persons verifying claims in **Member** and **Associate** grade applications would assist the Society and applicant if they were to supply a letter advising the grounds on which they are able to verify the claims. Verification of the professional and technical experience should concentrate on confirming the applicant’s personal level of involvement in acoustics and the time spent in these areas, rather than the total employment period. It may be necessary for the Proposer to contact the person verifying an applicant’s claim, in order that the Proposer can ascertain that the verifier understands the level of personal work in acoustics which must be undertaken by the applicant in order to fulfil the entry gate requirements of the Society.

- (b) Applicants for **Graduate** grade should have any claimed experience verified.

(D) Copies of reports, etc - Confidential Information

Because of the need for applicants for **Member** grade to *prove* that they are working at a professional level, *in exceptional circumstances* it may be helpful if copies of reports, design calculations, etc. produced by the applicant are included with the application. Any confidential information will be noted and returned to the applicant.

An alternative is to provide a **Statutory Declaration** indicating the nature of the work and clearly outlining the role played by the applicant in the work. The Statutory Declaration should also indicate why the original

material is unavailable, eg. because of its confidential nature or because the work was performed overseas. A Statutory Declaration can also be used if, for any reason, the applicant is unable to provide verification of the time spent in acoustics. The Statutory Declaration must be signed by the applicant or their supervisor and witnessed by a person qualified to witness a Statutory Declaration.

Our *preferred option* is for the **Proposer** to view/discuss the information with the applicant and/or the employer and for the proposer to then clearly state that the nature of the work has been investigated, how the verification was achieved, and to explain why, in the proposers' opinion, the applicant's work is at a professional level.

4. **DECLARATION**

The application form requires a declaration from applicants that they will conform with the rules of the Society. This must be signed and dated and an entrance fee attached.

5. **CHECK LIST**

The application form also includes a check list which must be filled in. The application will not be processed if the check list has not been completed.

6. **DECLARATION BY PROPOSER AND SECONDER**

In an attempt to overcome problems associated with applicants for **Member** grade having to prove that they are working at a professional level, the Society has decided to place more emphasis on the **Proposer** verifying the level of work undertaken by the applicant. The applicant is still required to supply information about the nature of the work and the responsibilities and judgements they have undertaken. It is then the responsibility of the Proposer to check these claims on behalf of the Society and then make an appropriate declaration.

The role of the **Secunder** is to check the application is complete and to ensure that the Proposer has diligently performed the checking procedure.

In this way it is anticipated that the Society (through the Division Committees) will generally have a simple role in the grading procedure: basically only having to ensure that all parts of the application have been correctly completed. This procedure should greatly speed up the time for membership applications to be processed.

The **Proposer** shall hold the grade of Fellow or Member and have been a member of the Society for at least five years. While space has been left on the application form for the Proposer's comments, it is anticipated that the Proposer may prefer to detail his comments in an accompanying letter. It is the Proposer's responsibility to decide, as an experienced member of the society, that the applicant has an adequate professional (for Member grade) or technical (for Associate grade) standard, and has been at that level for sufficient time to justify admission into the Society. Depending on how well the Proposer knows the applicant, this may require the Proposer to interview the applicant, inspect the work done by the applicant and even visit their workplace. Such a rigorous investigation is *not* required for an application for **Graduate** grade, unless a Graduate applicant chooses to have his/her present experience evaluated by the Society. .

The **Secunder** shall hold the grade of Fellow, Member, Graduate or Associate of the Society. It is envisaged that the Secunder will have read the application form, discussed the information in the form with the applicant and had some communication (perhaps by telephone) with the Proposer. Again we are relying on the Secunder, as a member of the Society, to uphold the standards of the Society. A rigorous investigation is *not* required for applications for **Graduate grade** (unless requested by the applicant).

APPENDIX**Some additional comments about applications for Member grade.**

The main thrust of the supplied information must be to explain what was YOUR involvement in the acoustics components of your work experience. Very often, past applicants have listed a series of projects undertaken by a firm, with an implied inference that this was their work. However this is unsatisfactory information, as many people may have been employed in the particular project and the applicant may really have played a minor role. Further, the Society needs to feel confident that the applicant is working at a professional rather than a technical level.

Useful statements have the form:

“I created a procedure for taking measurements ...”

“My role was to analyse the data by developing a program which ...”

“After analysing the data, I decided which was the best option and wrote a report to...”

“Others took the outdoor measurements while I performed the calculations to show ...”

In particular, avoid statements of the form “I was involved in” as these provide very little information.

Clearly indicate what YOU did and show that YOUR actions involved decisions at a higher than technician level.

While it is anticipated that discussions with the Proposer will clarify the level of work experience, it is still incumbent on the applicant to clearly outline *their* work experience on the application form.