



New Membership Structure

Introduction

The last significant review of our Membership offer, including our categories and subscription bands, was in 2008/2009.

The changes that have taken place in laboratory medicine over recent years cannot be overstated and we have seen this reflected in our membership. At a Council meeting on March 1st it was agreed that a task & finish group should be formed to assess the membership offer, ensuring what we offer our members is appropriate, relevant and valued, to modernise and simplify how we define membership, remove some anomalies that exist, and determine how much each pays in subscription fees without impacting on our overall income.

The process

Committees and members were approached and a task & finish group was formed comprised of self-nominated members from a cross section of the membership (spanning varied laboratory medicine specialities, regions and career stages, and included trade union and retired members), chaired by the Company Secretary.

The group met twice on March 30th and April 22nd and reported back to Council on May 31st where a full discussion of the proposals took place.

Key principles that were agreed included a need to simplify the membership structure, engage with members from a diverse range of institutions, deliver cost-effective and high-value services, as well as to diversify the range of subscription payment options.

Discussion highlighted that our uniqueness as a trade union is highly valuable and should be positioned as a benefit to all practicing members.

Making limited content free of charge to students will both fulfil our core purpose and provide a pipeline for future membership.

Based on member feedback ACB Extras was no longer a valued benefit of membership and should be cancelled at the next opportunity.

The recommendation is to simplify the membership structure to that of Student, Member and Retired. Emeritus, Fellow and Honorary would remain unchanged.

Detailed below are the proposed membership benefits from 2023 which highlight existing valued benefits, remove benefits with little or no perceived value and add extra benefits (indicated ***below***).

The Membership Offer

Benefits of membership

	Student	Member	Retired
Regional meetings/webinars discounts Member discounted and free-of-charge year-round event programme	X	X	X
National events discounts Including UKMedLab, National Audit Meeting and more		X	
Training Programmes – member rates and free Including our residential training courses and management & leadership courses		X	
Scientific Journal The Annals of Clinical Biochemistry	electronic only	X	
Member newsletter Currently bi-monthly ACB News but may increase in frequency in 2023	X	X	X
Mailbase Open to all in the healthcare science community with its current and future developments led by ACB members	X	X	X
Mentoring Programme Bespoke platform that connects members as well as providing dedicated support and resources around target and goal setting and development		X	
CPD repository Ability to store CPD activities and material in your online account		X	
Online resources Including material from events and audits, guidelines, research papers, posters and consultations		X	
Laboratory Medicine Learning Academy Including Online learning, EFLM Academy (usually €15), HEE-funded specialist courses & content and partner content (such as AACC's Adaptive Learning)		X	
Research & Innovation Grant eligibility Offering grants to support early stage research		X	
Other grants and awards eligibility Including the CP Stewart Memorial Fund, Educational Bursaries and bursaries from other organisations such as Royal College of Pathologists		X	
Access to CSci and EuSpLM registration Chartered Scientist and European Specialist in Laboratory Medicine		X	
Trade Union support The Federation of Clinical Scientists – regional union support, advice and expertise		X	
Benevolent Fund Charitable fund for members and their families providing financial support to those experiencing difficult times		X	X
ACB Committee eligibility Professional development opportunities, peer networking and the opportunity to advocate for the profession		X	
International Committee eligibility As above, but in a global context through the EFLM and IFCC		X	
Access to meeting room by appointment Access to fair use of our central London boardroom/small events space free of charge		X	

Proposed changes to categories of membership

Student – retain this category of membership but no longer incur its negligible fee, instead we should reduce the benefits of membership to just those relevant to students and students interested in moving into the profession in the future.

Federation – this category of membership be discontinued for new applicants, but be honoured for existing ‘union only’ members. Existing members for whom more than just trade union support would be appropriate should be encouraged to convert to Member.

Overseas – members based outside of the UK & Ireland to be considered within the same categories as those based inside the UK & Ireland so remove Overseas Ordinary and Overseas Student categories of membership.

Retired – the criteria for entry to this category remain the same, but those who are still practicing as a health professional in some form (so likely still requiring access to the Member benefits listed above) should remain Members.

Emeritus, Fellow and Honorary – no changes be made to the awards categories of membership at this time.

Member – all current Ordinary and Overseas Ordinary members across all these sub-set subscription bands enter this category of membership with a single subscription fee.

Proposed subscription fees

Category	Full Subs fee	Discounted Subs fee
Student	Free	-
Member	£240	£150
Retired	Free	-

The discounted fee would be available to those in their first 5 years of membership.

To mitigate any significant increase for existing Ordinary band 1 members, the 5 years £90 discount would commence from 1st January 2023. After this period most members previously in Ordinary band 1 would move up at least one subscription band level. For all other subscription bands, we consider the 5 years commencing from the date they first joined.

* Members of the Association of Clinical Biochemists in Ireland would be entitled to the discounted subscription.

Mitigating circumstances

Current Subs band	Current 2022 fee	2023 fee (if no change except an increase by inflation)	Proposed 2023 fee	Members longer than 5yrs (+/-)	Members within first 5yrs (+/-)
Ordinary Band 1	£142.50	£155.33	discounted	-£5.33	-£5.33
Ordinary Band 2	£189.00	£206.01	£240.00	£33.99	-£56.01
Ordinary Band 3	£238.50	£259.97	£240.00	-£19.97	-£109.97
Ordinary Band 4	£266.00	£289.94	£240.00	-£49.94	-£139.94
Overseas Ordinary	£197.00	£214.73	£240.00	£25.27	-£64.73

Any members experiencing a reduction in their fee resulting from the discount whilst in their first 5 years of membership may choose to waive the discount should they wish.

Flexibility in payment options

Another mitigating measure is to introduce the option for monthly subscription payments. Under the proposed fee structure this would equate to £20 per calendar month for full fee payers and £12.50 per calendar month for those in their first 5 years of membership or currently Ordinary band 1.

NB. Membership fees are still an annual commitment irrespective of the payment method / schedule. In the event of termination of membership the full annual subscription fee must be paid for the current year.

Resolution

Council asked members to accept this recommendation and agree necessary changes to the Articles and Bye-Laws at the Annual General Meeting on 13th July 2022 to which the voting members present agreed.