

# **Irish Association of Social Workers**

## **Rules and Bye-laws**

### **Section 1: Membership**

#### **Criteria**

- 1.1. The membership of the Association shall consist of:
  - a. Individuals who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are recognised as social workers by the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.
  - b. Overseas members need also be registered by a relevant registration board as outlined above.
  - c. Individuals who have retired, currently non-working (i.e. on sabbatical, students on recognised social work qualifications, working in a non-social work post), or are unemployed but who hold a social work qualification including the NQSW awarded by the National Social Work Qualification Board, the CQSW formerly awarded by CCETSW or who are registered as social workers with the Social Work Registration Board of CORU.
  - d. Student members being persons undergoing a recognised undergraduate course of studies in Social Work or a recognised post graduate course under conditions prescribed by the Board of the Association
  - e. On the invitation of the Chair, a Commercial Person who is not a Member of the Company may be co-opted to the Board either to fill a vacancy or as an additional Director provided that the appointment does not cause the number of Directors to exceed the maximum number of Directors. That person so co-opted shall remain a Member of the Board only until the next Annual General Meeting, when s/he shall retire and may stand for re-election at that AGM;
- 1:2. Members of the Association shall be subject to the Association's code of ethics and practice and the Association's Rules and Byelaws and/or CORU Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers, and a breach of these may result in termination of membership under Article 5 of the Articles of Association.

## **Application process**

- 1:3. Any application for membership shall be submitted, in writing, to the Office Manager on behalf of the Honorary Secretary of the Association who shall submit the same to the Board of Directors.
- 1:4. The Board can direct that an applicant be admitted as a member of the Association on payment of membership subscription for the current year.
- 1:5. Members shall be entitled to attend Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings of the Association

## **Membership Subscription**

- 1:6. Every Member shall be required to pay the subscription appropriate to his/her category when accepted into the Association, and subsequently on the 1st day of January in every year.
- 1:7. Where any person is accepted by the Board to any category of membership of the Association there is a pro-rata rate for those who wish to join during the year; this is available to new members or those who have not been members for the previous two years.
- 1:8. A Member wishing to transfer from one category to another must request this in writing and/or email to the Office Manager. If this transfer is granted, it becomes operative on payment of the appropriate adjustment in subscription.
- 1:9 It is the responsibility of Members to inform the Office Manager in writing and/or email of any change in their membership status, members shall be liable for any outstanding arrears due to a delay in informing the Office Manager of any change in their membership status.
- 1:9. Persons who qualify for membership of the Association who are not working or are retired, may opt to be Members at a special rate of subscription and have full voting rights.
- 1:10. The Board of Directors shall decide the appropriate rates of members' subscriptions for each of the categories within the Association.
- 1:11. The Board of Directors shall prescribe and publish the scales of subscriptions compounding the annual subscription payable by any category of member under these rules.

- 1:12. The Board of Directors may return any subscription, or any fee paid for compounding subscriptions entirely at its discretion.
- 1:13. The Board of Directors can decide that anyone whose subscription is in arrears shall be served with a notice to this effect in writing to the last addressed registered with the Association.
- 1:14. A Member who fails to pay his/her subscription within two months after service of notice may cease to be a Member at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- 1:15 Any member who wishes to resign must inform the Office Manager in writing and/or email.

## **Section 2: Ethics and Values**

- 2:1. Members are required to adhere to the following:
  - a. IASW Code of Ethics and Code of Practice
  - b. IASW Rules and Byelaws
  - c. In addition, members who are registered as social workers will be required to adhere to the CORU/ Social Work Registration Board's *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics*.

## **Section 3: Council and Special Interest Groups**

### **3:1. Council.**

Council is an advisory group of the Board of IASW and all Council members must be members of the Association. It is made up of the Chair of IASW, two other Board members and one representative of each Special Interest Group (preferably the Chair of each Special Interest Group). All other Board members are entitled to attend Council meetings. Additional members of Council may be agreed by the Board.

- 3:1:1. The Council shall meet at least four times a year.
- 3:1:2. The Meeting of the Council shall be chaired by the Chair of the Board or nominated person by the Chair of the Board.
- 3:1:3. The Council's functions are;
  - a. To advise on and contribute to the development of policy within the Association.
  - b. To assist in the realisation of the aims of the Association.

- c. To encourage via the Special Interest Groups the continuous professional development of members.

3:1:4. A person shall cease to be a Member of the Council;

- a. where he/she has been absent without an alternate delegate from two consecutive meetings of Council, unless his/her absence is excused by resolution of the Board prior to the second consecutive meeting.
- b. where he/she has failed to pay his/her subscription to the Association in accordance with Rule 2.

### **3:2 Special Interest Groups**

3:2:1 Special Interest Groups are formed by members who seek to pursue the best interests of service users and promote the professional development of social workers. Special Interest Groups are open to social workers of any grade.

3:2:2 Associate group are formed by members who seek to pursue the best interests of service users and promote the professional development of social workers. Associate groups do not need to be open to social workers from any grade.

3:2:3 Application to form a Special Interest Group shall be approved by the Board of Directors. Special Interest Groups shall operate to the agreed policy and procedures of Association including but not limited to; the Guidelines for Setting up a Special Interest Group.

3:2:4 The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the Special Interest Group shall be members of the Association.

3:2:5 The Chair of the Special Interest Group, Associate Group and Committees or a nominee who is a member of the Association shall attend Council meetings.

3:2:6 Special Interest Groups shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year and elect a new committee at this AGM.

3:2:7 Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups & Committees shall prepare an annual report on their activities and membership each year in advance of the Association's AGM.

3:2:8 Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups & Committees shall not operate a separate bank account

3:2:9 Up to date information regarding the contact details of the Executive Officers of each Special Interest Group, Associate Group & Committees shall be forwarded to the Association.

3:2:10 Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups & Committees shall adhere to the Association's Guidelines for Financial Management, Guidelines & Application Form for CPD Funding & Group Protocol

3:2:11 Where a Region, Committee or Group has drawn up a set of rules for the conduct of business, they must be in-line with the Memorandum & Articles of Association and Rules & Bye-laws and must be submitted to the Board for approval.

3:2:12 Once adopted by the Board any further alterations to rules for Regions, Committees or Groups must be submitted to the Board for approval.

3:2:13 Special Interest Groups, Associate Groups & Committees shall submit a short-written report on their Groups activities at least three working days prior to each Council meeting.

#### **Section 4: Role of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the Board**

- 4.1. **Chair:** It is the role of the Chair to:
- a. Chair meetings of the Board of Directors, Council and the Association's AGM.
  - b. Set agenda in advance of board meetings in consultation with the Secretary
  - c. Ensure that probity of the Association is maintained and that all actions and decisions taken are not in conflict with the stated aims and purposes of the Association
  - d. In consultation and collaboration with the Board of Directors shall ensure that all agreed decisions are implemented.
  - e. In consultation and collaboration with the Board of Directors take the lead role in the line management of employees of the Association.
  - f. In consultation and collaboration with the Board shall ensure that all the required human resource policies and procedures are followed with regard to paid employees.
  - g. To be the figurehead for the Association with regard to meetings with Government Ministers, senior management within the HSE and other national organisations.

- h. In consultation and collaboration with the Treasurer, shall ensure proper financial governance of the Association's funds, financial records and ensure that the Association accounts are audited as required by legislation.

4:2. **Vice Chair:** It is the role of Vice Chair to:

- a. To substitute for the Chair when so required, as requested by the Chair or Board, taking on the role and responsibilities as above in 4:1.
- b. The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in his/her duties as required.

4:3 **Hon Secretary:** It is the role of the Secretary to:

- a. In consultation with the Chair agree and circulate the agenda for Board and all relevant committee meetings
- b. Ensure effective communication with members occurs.
- c. Check minutes with chair and circulate
- d. Update membership records
- e. Act as Company Secretary

4:4 **The Office Manager** (in consultation with the Hon secretary) shall:

- a. Respond to correspondence
- b. Make arrangements for meetings
- c. Take minutes, recording decisions clearly.

4:5 **Treasurer:** It is the role of the Treasurer to:

- a. Oversee drawing up of budgets and accounts
- b. Present financial reports to the Board and at the Association's AGM
- c. Alert the Board to any financial irregularities, current account cash flow problems
- d. Ensure accounting procedures and controls are in place for the Association, including special interest groups as appropriate.
- e. Advise paid staff or volunteers of the Association regarding financial matters.
- f. Advise on financial implications of new projects
- g. Ensure that insurance policies are up to date and adequate cover is obtained.

## **Section 5: Communication to external bodies such as Government Departments, National Organisations and the Media on behalf of the Association.**

5:1 All communication on behalf of the Association to external bodies from Special Interest Groups or other sub groups or committees of the Association, shall be approved in advance by the Board or its nominated persons. Normally the Chair in consultation

with the Honorary Secretary of the Association will decide on routine matters that are not controversial in nature or content.

5:2 The Board shall be informed by Special Interest Groups and committees of the Association, regarding any planned meeting with Government officials or senior managers within statutory bodies or national organisations on receipt of the invitation. The representatives of the special interest groups or committees who **such** meetings shall include the Chair, or a person nominated by the Board.

5:3 Neither the name of the Association nor the address of the Headquarters or of any committee or Group, shall be used otherwise than in connection with Association business approved by the Directors and neither the name nor the address shall be printed or written on any notepaper or other document not belonging to or issued by the Association (*As Per the Memorandum & Articles of Association*)

## **Section 6: Alterations to the Rules & Bye-laws**

6:1 Suggested changes to the Rules & Bye-laws must be signed by a proposer and seconder and submitted to the Board not less than thirty days before the Annual General Meeting or other Meeting called for the purpose of considering the Rules & Bye-laws

6:2 Rules & Bye-laws shall only be altered or amended by a simple majority of Members present and voting at General Meetings called in accordance with the relevant Memorandum & Articles of the Association, all Members having been notified.