

Concept for change to MSA membership levels

1. Background

The MSA currently has three membership levels:

- Student member
- Associate member
- Full member

The Associate and Full member categories have been in place since the very early days of the MSA, and the Student member category was added later. For a time, there was also a “Fellow” category of membership, which is no longer used. Given the change in the nature of the workforce over the years, as well as the change in focus of the MSA and the implementation of the Professional Metrologist Programme, a simplification of the membership categories is proposed.

2. Constitutional requirements and current membership levels

Under clause 8 of the current (2020 revision) of the MSA constitution (Rules), we find that:

8 Who is eligible to be a member

Any person who supports the purposes of the Association and meets the criteria for membership as appears on association website is eligible for membership.

There are currently three levels of membership shown on the MSA website, with somewhat loosely formatted criteria as follows:

Student Members

\$ 0 / per annum

Student Members are full time students under the age of 25 that have an interest in metrology but do not currently satisfy the requirements for a higher grade of membership.

Applications are usually assessed within 7 days.

[Join Now](#)

Associate Member

\$ 45 / per annum

Associate Members have an interest and involvement in metrology but do not currently satisfy the requirements for a higher grade of membership.

Applications are usually assessed within 7 days.

[Apply Now](#)

Full Member

\$ 45 / per annum

Full Members must satisfy requirements regarding appropriate experience in metrology and/or formal educational qualifications.

Extensive practical experience may be deemed as equivalent to formal qualifications. Please allow 2 weeks for review of your application by the Membership Committee.

[Apply Now](#)

In addition to the website account information and contact details that the Student and Associate Members submit, the Full Member is also required to submit an attachment as evidence of experience or qualifications, plus also names of two existing Full Members who endorse the candidate.

Clause 9 of the Rules shows:

9 Application for membership

- (1) To apply to become a member of the Association, a person must submit an application via the online membership portal, stating that the person—
 - (a) wishes to become a member of the Association; and
 - (b) supports the purposes of the Association; and
 - (c) agrees to comply with these Rules.
- (2) The application—
 - (a) must be in a form approved by the Committee; and
 - (b) must address any criteria for membership listed on the Association website; and
 - (c) may be accompanied by the joining fee.

Note

The joining fee is the fee (if any) determined by the Association under rule 12(3).

Clause 9 part (1) is effectively a re-stating and re-wording of the requirements of clause 8, along with the requirement that the applicant will comply with these Rules. Part (2)(b) again refers again to the website and part (2)(a) implicitly refers to the website since the Committee is responsible for the content on the website and hence how the application is submitted.

3. Rationale for current membership levels

At the time the membership levels and criteria for membership were written, the Professional Metrologist Programme was not available. After some consultation and feedback, it is my understanding that the main reasons for the differentiation between the Associate Member and the Full Member is twofold.

First, the Full Members were distinguished from the Associate Members in that they were considered to have a certain level of qualification, thus making the Full membership effectively have a higher status than the Associate membership. Only Full Members could be a nominee for someone who wishes to become a Full Member. This also provides a level of eliteness to being a Full Member, as well as aspiration for Associate Members to eventually, with a bit of experience or additional qualifications, to be promoted to Full Members.

The category of Fellows to the MSA was proposed, according to the September 1995 edition of The Australian Metrologist, as a person who has been eligible for membership as a (full) member for at least five years, as well as either holding a position of “considerable” responsibility or making “significant” contributions to the art or science of metrology.

Second, I understand that one reason for the need for demonstration of qualifications to become a Full Member is that then someone who is accepted as a Full Member would then be eligible to contribute to writing of technical methods, review papers, take part in conference scientific committees, etc.

4. Proposal and motivation

We now have the Professional Metrologist Programme in place, which provides for an additional recognition of qualifications, experience, and contributions of the candidate to the metrology sector. So this means that the second reason for having the additional prerequisites for Full membership are no longer needed. Additionally:

- When our taskgroups are working on developing test methods, the members of the taskgroups are chosen on the basis of their level of skills and ability to be able to provide input, not just that they are Full Members.
- When our conference scientific committees are put together to evaluate submitted abstracts, the committee members are also chosen on the basis of their knowledge of the metrological fields and familiarisation of the requirements of the conference programme.

I therefore propose that we **remove the Associate Member category and remove the requirements that Full Members need a proposer and a seconder and need to demonstrate qualifications or experience**. Membership of the MSA would simply be on the basis of clause 9 (1) of the Rules, i.e. that the candidate:

- Wishes to become a member of the association;
- Supports the purposes of the association; and
- Agrees to comply with the Rules of the association.

Candidates would still need to be approved by an appropriately delegated taskgroup, but the application process would become simpler – the approval would be more making sure that the person applying to become a member seems to be a real person (presumably the form which is submitted on the website has an “I am a real person” check).

It was put to me that by loosening the membership requirements it would make it easier for someone to hijack the organisation by recruiting and paying for a group of unconscionable people to join. Realistically, (a) it is probably already the case that two members could do so as it currently stands and (b) I think that we need to expect that people will generally behave in good faith.

Furthermore, I can't see why we would put obstacles in the path of people who wish to be members of the MSA – I think that we should be encouraging people to become (full) members and to engage with the association. We have discussed regularly at recent AGMs and in MSA Committee meetings the desirability for the MSA to attract members from second and third tier labs as well as workers in industry who do measurements but who wouldn't necessarily consider themselves a metrologist (or know what a metrologist is!).

I also recently found out that two MSA Committee members whom I thought would be Full Members are actually Associate Members – one because they considered that they do not have the qualifications and the other because at the time they applied to become a member they didn't know two existing full members. These are both members of the MSA Committee who have made significant contributions to the association, but are not full members.

The changes that I am proposing have been circulated to the MSA Committee by email and discussed at MSA Committee meetings on 27th July, 7th September and 19th October this year. They have the general, but not unanimous, agreement by the MSA Committee members.

5. Required changes to the constitution (Rules)

There will not be any required changes to the constitution. Since the constitution refers to the website for membership levels and acceptance criteria, we just need to build this into the website. The changes would be to:

- Remove the Associate Member category;
- Simplify the text for the Full Member to, e.g. “Full members are people who support the purposes of the association and who wish to become members”;
- When the applicant clicks “Apply now” and goes to the Membership Checkout page, the Evidence, Proposer and Seconder fields would be removed, and two checkboxes would be added:
 - “I support the purposes of the Metrology Society of Australasia (MSA)” and
 - “I agree to comply with the with the MSA rules and to abide by its constitution”
- The same checkboxes would be added to the Student Membership application.
- There would need to be an “I am not a robot” button – currently there isn’t one, although it does go to a payment form which presumably would need to be successfully completed.

6. Feedback requested

MSA members are encouraged to provide their feedback to me at president@metrology.asn.au with CC to secretary@metrology.asn.au. This will be discussed at the MSA 2026 AGM on 9th November, and then again at the following MSA Committee meeting in December.

Tony Bergen
MSA President
21/10/2026