

The Psychological Society of Ireland Governance Handbook

FOREWORD

This handbook provides the Psychological Society of Ireland's (PSI) directors, Council Members, Members, and employees with an overview of the PSI's governance framework and practices to support the implementation of good governance. It is designed to provide clear information on structures, procedures, codes of conduct and to create a culture of transparency where matters are dealt with in an equitable, timely, and consistent manner.

The information contained in this handbook applies to all PSI activities at the time of writing. It supersedes all other documents relating to governance matters including previous terms of reference and protocols.

The contents of this Handbook shall not constitute nor be construed as a promise of or as a contract between the PSI and any of its members or employees.

This Handbook, along with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Society and the [Code of Ethics](#) form the governance of the PSI overall. It will be kept under review by the PSI Council and may be amended from time to time by agreement of Council.

Members and employees are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this handbook. It will be available in the member's area of the PSI website.

Council members will be requested to sign and return the confirmation of receipt and understanding of all the documents following their appointment to Council.

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The Psychological Society of Ireland: Who we are

The PSI motto is

Quanta Est Animi Magnitudo

Roughly translated as

How vast is the power of the mind

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) is the learned and learning Society and professional body for psychology in Ireland. The PSI was established in 1970 under the Companies Acts 1963 to 2013 as a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital on 15 November 1985: Certificate No. 110772. PSI is also a Registered Charity: 7481

PSI currently has circa 4,000 members with expertise in education, science, and practice of psychology. The Society is governed by its President and Council, who are elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting held each year.

At the time of writing, there are 11 Divisions and 11 Special Interest Groups, with further such entities proposed. Each of these groups has their own governance code and membership requirements. The template for guiding these is detailed in this document.

The Vision, Mission and Values (VMVs) are outlined in the current Strategic Plan which runs until 2022 (see relevant documentation).

Role of Company Directors

Council Members who are officers of Council are also Company Directors and have wide and diverse responsibilities. Their duties arise primarily from the following sources:

1. Statute (Acts of the Oireachtas and other legislation e.g. EU Regulations);
2. The Common Law;
3. The Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Under Irish Law, a Director/Trustee is in a position of trust and owes a duty of care to the company first and foremost.

A Director's common law duties can be summarised into 3 principles:

1. Directors must exercise their powers in good faith and in the interests of the company as a whole. Personal interests, the views of certain sections of the staff or any outside interests should be put aside at the Council table;
2. Directors are not allowed to make an undisclosed profit from their position as Director. They must disclose any vested interests in the company in advance of taking office;
3. Directors are obliged to carry out their functions with due care, skill and diligence and to be competent to make decisions on behalf of the company and its constituent members.

A Director's main statutory duties can be summarised as:

- A Director is an officer of the company and is under a duty to comply with his or her obligations under the Companies Acts and to ensure that the company complies with the requirements of the Companies Acts;
- Every company is required to maintain proper books of account. The Directors must ensure that this is complied with. The company must keep books of account for at least six years;
- There is a duty to prepare annual accounts and have an audit performed. The Directors are also required to annex a report known as the Directors Report to the annual audited accounts. The annual accounts must be laid before the Company's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and signed by a minimum of two Directors on behalf of the Board;
- It is the Directors' duty to ensure that all registers are maintained;
- Company Directors are legally obliged to ensure that certain documents are filed with the Registrar of Companies;
- Directors are required to disclose certain personal information for the Register of Directors and to disclose to the Board any interest they may have in any contract with the company;
- The Directors have a duty to convene General Meetings, including the AGM.

Good Governance

In addition to legal duties, there are matters pertaining to corporate governance for which Directors are responsible. Governance concerns all the procedures which ensure the overall direction and accountability of the organisation. These include:

- Strategic planning and implementation of the organisation's objectives;
- Overseeing the proper financial management of the company;
- Being a responsible employer and ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation;
- Ensuring good relationships with the local community, voluntary, and statutory agencies.

The duties imposed on Directors of companies are extensive and apply equally to Directors and shadow Directors. If a Director acts recklessly or fraudulently by causing the company to incur excessive debts, defrauding creditors, consistently failing to keep proper books of account or for any other reason, then that Director can be made personally liable for the debts of the company. There are also a limited number of circumstances where criminal sanctions may be imposed on a Director. A person who accepts the office of a Director has the responsibility of ensuring that he or she understands the nature of the duty a Director is called upon to perform.

It is important to remember, however, that no Director is required to perform his or her duties with a greater degree of skill than could reasonably be expected from a person with his/her own knowledge and experience. This means that each Director is required to exercise his/her duties to the best of his/her ability. In order to do this, a Director needs to, at a minimum, familiarise himself/herself with relevant legislation, the Memorandum and Articles, and other relevant documentation pertaining to the company, keep informed of the business being conducted by the Board of Directors and seek further information and professional advice if unclear on any matter.

Code of Conduct for Council Members

As a Member of Council you are expected to:

1. Act with honesty, integrity, respecting others at all times

The objective of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that high standards of the group and individual behaviour are observed by the Directors in the context of their roles as Directors of the Society.

- Use power responsibly
- Ensure that any possible conflict of interest is disclosed or avoided
- Strive to earn and sustain public trust and the trust and respect of the Society membership at a high level

2. Exercise due care, diligence, and skill

- Ascertain all relevant information
- Make reasonable enquiries
- Understand the financial, strategic, and other implications of decisions

3. Act in good faith in the best interests of the Society

- Demonstrate accountability for your actions
- Accept responsibility for your decisions
- Avoid activities that may bring the Society into disrepute

4. Act fairly and impartially

- Avoid bias, discrimination, or self interest
- Demonstrate respect for others by acting in a professional and courteous manner

5. Use information appropriately

- Ensure information gained as a member of Council is applied to proper purposes

6. Use your position appropriately

- Avoid the use of your position as a Director to seek an undue advantage for yourself, family members or associates
- Ensure that you decline gifts or favours that may cast doubt on your ability to apply independent judgment as a Director of the Society

7. Act in a financially responsible manner

- Understand financial material that comes before Council
- Actively inquire into this material

8. Comply with the Society's governance rules

- Have a working knowledge of the Society's governing documents and policies
- Act within the powers and functions set out in the Society governing documents

9. Demonstrate leadership and stewardship:

- Promote and support the application of the Society's values
- Act in accordance with this Code of Conduct

Governance Structure

The PSI has a number of formal groupings responsible for the oversight of the governance and activities of the Society. These are:

- The Council and Council Officers (Board of Directors);
- Council Committees;
- Council Working Groups;
- Divisions and Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

There are also a number of protocols designed to guide conduct and behaviour among Members in relation to each other, staff, and the public.

The Council and Council Officers (Board of Directors)

The Council is the governing body of the Society. The Council Officers act as the Board of Directors with all the legal and financial responsibilities and obligations that acting as a Board of a Limited Company entails.

The Council is responsible for overseeing the direction and effective running of the Society as a Limited Company and as a charity. According to the Society Memorandum and Articles (Interpretation 1: "Council means the Board of Directors for the time being of the Society") all Council Members are the Directors of the company. Elections to Council take place at the AGM. The election process is governed by the PSI Memorandum and Articles which clearly state the terms of office and the process of election.

Persons eligible for election to Council should be fully paid-up Members, have a track record of contribution to the work of the Society, and demonstrate competence in governance issues of a membership organisation.

The officers of the Council are drawn from the elected Council Members at the first meeting of the newly elected Council. Officers of the Council are:

- The Honorary Secretary;
- The Honorary Treasurer;
- The Membership Secretary;
- The International Liaison Officer.

Officers may put themselves forward for office or be nominated by Council Members. In the event of more than one nominee, a vote may be called. Procedures for the vote can be determined by Council.

Co-optees may be selected by the Council on an annual basis, based on merit and the competence or specialist expertise required by the Council from time to time. A Council skills assessment occurs every year to support the Council in identifying required specialist expertise. Nominations must be put forward by Council Members and voted on.

Process for Co-opting Members to Council

A proposer and seconder are required to complete the co-optee nomination form, specifically outlining the current expertise gap on Council or the grouping within the Society requiring representation. The ability of the proposed individual to fill the specific role should be outlined and a biography provided.

In the event that a Student Affairs Group (SAG) or Early Graduate Group (EGG) nominee is not elected to Council, it is recommended that in the course of the deliberations of potential co-opted nominees Council should consider co-opting a SAG and EGG nominee.

The nomination form must be returned to the Chief Executive Officer and/or President on or before a date no less than two weeks prior to an upcoming Council meeting.

The signed proposal and rationale form, along with the biography shall be included in the Council pack

and placed on the Council agenda.

The nomination will be discussed by the proposer or seconder at the next Council meeting. If neither the proposer nor the seconder are at the meeting or leave prior to the discussion of the item, any decision must be deferred until the following meeting.

After the merits of the co-opting are discussed a decision shall be made by a show of hands, requiring the approval of two-thirds of those present to ratify.

In cases of an uneven decision or number, the Chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

The co-opted individual will be bound by the terms of point **21.3** of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Role of Council

The key role of Council is to act as the Board of Directors, to identify and direct policy, and to represent PSI's Members. The responsibilities of the Council include:

- To represent Members and to act in the collective best interest of Members;
- To ensure good governance and to adhere to current legislative and financial obligations under the Companies Acts;
- To hold regular Council meetings;
- To develop the PSI's strategic plan and oversee its implementation;
- To develop, and ratify organisational policies, position papers, and statements;
- To further the aims and objectives of the Society in keeping with the Memorandum and Articles;
- to act as the strategic decision-making body for the Society;
- To monitor and manage risk.

Role of Council Members

Council Members should see themselves as the custodians of the Society and always act in accordance with the responsibilities of company directors. More specifically they should:

- Attend a minimum of 70% of Council meetings and contribute to decision-making;
- Make objective assessments based on their experience and expertise;
- Take an active role in the life of the Society by attending events, the Annual Conference, and other professional learning and development activities;
- Represent the society in a positive way to all audiences and stakeholders;
- Contribute to decision-making;
- Liaise with Divisions and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and contribute to their development;
- Enhance the Society's strategy-making capability by appointing a strategic planning working group
- Monitor and update a comprehensive and effective risk management register for the Society by appointing a risk management committee.
- Set the framework for the financial strategy, approve the annual budget, monitor performance against the budget, and approve the annual accounts.
- Communicate Council policy internally and externally;
- Propose and elect candidates for Council officer positions;
- Actively promote the Society's VMVs among Members and all stakeholders;
- Take on additional pieces of work as required by Council, such as participation in working groups and accreditation panels.

Induction

Each Council Member shall seek to uphold the values of the Society and to act in a legally and financially responsible manner. As soon as is possible following the commencement year of Council, Members shall receive an induction outlining their: key duties and responsibilities; key governance

requirements and documents; and, other duties expected of them. All Council Members, including those co-opted, will be required to attend this induction and to sign a Declaration of Fitness to Serve.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

This policy has been developed because conflicts of interest commonly arise, and do not need to present a problem to the charity if they are openly and effectively managed. It is the policy of the Psychological Society of Ireland as well as a responsibility of its charity trustees, that ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest be avoided and that any such conflicts (where they do arise) do not conflict with their obligations to the Psychological Society of Ireland.

The Psychological Society of Ireland will manage conflicts of interest by requiring charity trustees to:

- Avoid conflicts of interest where possible;
- Identify and record any conflicts of interest;
- Carefully manage any conflicts of interest;
- Follow this policy and respond to any breaches.

Responsibility of the board of charity trustees

The board is responsible for:

- Establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across the charity;
- Monitoring compliance with this policy;
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

The charity trustees should ensure they are aware of their legal obligations in the management and control of their charity and should refer to the Charities Regulator's Guidance for Charity Trustees. For further information on this see the Charities Regulator website (www.charitiesregulator.ie)

Identification and disclosure of conflicts of interest

Once an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it must be entered into the Psychological Society of Ireland's register of interest, as well as being raised with the board of charity trustees. The register of interests must be maintained by Chief Executive Officer or Office Manager, and record all information related to a conflict of interest (including the nature and extent of the conflict of interest and any steps taken to address it).

Confidentiality of disclosures

In order to support charity trustees to disclose their conflicts of interest, access to the Register of Interest will be limited to the board of trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, the Council Secretariat, and the Office Manager. The register of Interests may also be disclosed to the Charities Regulator if it is requested by the regulator.

Action required for management of conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest of Members of the board of charity trustees

Once the conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the board of charity trustees (excluding the disclosing charity trustee and any other conflicted person) must decide whether or not conflicted charity trustee should:

- Vote on the matter (**this is a minimum**);
- Participate in any debate; or,
- Be present in the room during the debate and the voting.

In exceptional circumstances, such as where a conflict is very significant or likely to prevent a charity trustee from regularly participating in discussions, it may be worth the board of charity trustees considering whether it is appropriate for the person with the relevant conflict resign from the board of charity trustees.

What should be considered when deciding what action to take

- In deciding what approach to take, the board of charity trustees will consider whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented
- Whether the conflict will realistically impair the disclosing person's capacity to impartially

- participate in decision-making
- Alternative options to avoid the conflict
- The charity's objects and resources, and
- The possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of, the charity.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of at least a majority of the board of charity trustees (excluding any conflicted charity trustee) who are present and voting (if applicable) at the meeting. All details regarding the conflict of interest, including the action arising, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Compliance with this policy

If the board of charity trustees has a reason to believe that a person subject to this policy has failed to comply with it, it will investigate the circumstances.

If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the board of charity trustees may take action against the person. This may include seeking the person's resignation from the charity.

If a person suspects that a charity trustee has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, they must discuss with the person in question, notify the board of charity trustees, or the Chief Executive Officer.

Operating Guidelines for Council

The composition of the Council is provided for in the Memorandum and Articles of the Society. The Chief Executive Officer shall attend Council meetings in an ex-officio capacity as the representative of the executive management team but shall not have voting rights.

Meetings will be held a minimum of eight times per year at dates to be announced by the incoming President at the beginning of the Council year (January). Every effort will be made by the President to arrange meetings on a day / time that will facilitate attendance at the meeting by Council Members.

The agenda shall be agreed between the President and the Chief Executive Officer in advance of each meeting. Council can also be requested to provide topics and material for meetings. The agenda should ideally be circulated seven days in advance of the meeting with relevant accompanying documents.

Minutes of all meetings shall be taken by the Council Secretariat (staff member) and the minutes of the last meeting circulated to all Council Members in advance of the meeting. A summary of Council decisions should be circulated to Members as soon as they have been agreed. If there are any "off agenda" items discussed, these should be recorded, and any actions decided should be minuted. The formal minutes of the Council should always state at a minimum the title of the "off" agenda item and the action/decision taken.

Governance Team

The Governance Team comprises the following:

- The President;
- The President-Elect;
- The Honorary Secretary;
- The Honorary Treasurer;
- The Membership Secretary;
- The International Liaison Officer;
- The Past President.

This group forms the **Governance Team** of the Society, along with the **Chief Executive Officer** in an *ex-officio* capacity.

This group is a subgroup of Council and can be convened by its Members or the Chief Executive Officer, if required, from time to time to discuss matters of strategic importance or to take decisions on behalf of Council which may require an urgent response. It is not intended to replace Council but to augment it as need arises.

Its role is to:

- Act as the overseeing governing team of the Society for its period of office;
- Ensure compliance with all Society guidelines and legal and financial requirements;
- To ensure all Members of Council and Chairs of groups are aware of their responsibilities;
- To take urgent action/decision making if necessary between Council meetings;
- Meetings of the Governance Team should be minuted and any decision taken by the Team should be noted and discussed in the subsequent Council meeting.

Role of the President

The President means any person appointed pursuant to Article 26.1 of The Psychological Society of Ireland's Constitution.

PSI staff support the President's role in relation to all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.

The role of the President is to:

- Act as the figurehead of the Society;
- Represent the Society at events;
- Lead and act as the Chair for Council meetings, the AGM, and the annual conference;
- Lead the Governance Team;

- Ensure all meetings of Council are constructive, timely, and conducted in accordance with the Society's Constitution;
- Implement all organisational policies, procedures and objectives.
- Consult with other board members, executives, and staff about general operation;
- Lead Society delegations, representations and be an advocate for Members;
- Be available for media and public commentary;
- Promote the Vision, Mission and Values among Members;
- Ensure that the Society adheres to its codes;
- Promote the Society's strategic plan;
- Recommend two citations during their presidency;
- Meet regularly with the Chief Executive Officer to guide and review performance of the Society and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Oversee the Society's budget and financial activities by supporting the CEO and Honorary Treasurer in conjunction with the Resources Committee;
- Act as a financial signatory, signing off expenditure for the Society with the Honorary Secretary and CEO;
- Provide a handover to the President-Elect and Council Members at the end of term.

Role of the President-Elect

The President-Elect means any person appointed pursuant to Article 26.1 of The Psychological Society of Ireland Constitution.

PSI staff support the President-Elect with all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.

The role of the President-Elect is to:

- Be a Member of the Governance Team
- Be a Member of the Risk Management Committee
- Support the President in executing organisational; or departmental procedures, goals and policies where appropriate ;
- To deputise as appropriate;
- To sit on committees where required.

Role of Honorary Secretary

The Honorary Secretary means any person appointed pursuant to Article 28.1 of The Psychological Society of Ireland Constitution.

PSI staff support the Honorary Secretary role in relation to all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes etc.

The role of the Honorary Secretary is to:

- Fulfil the role of Company Secretary;
- Be a Member of the Governance Team, the Resources Committee, and the Risk Management Committee;
- Liaise with PSI staff to ensure the company documents are up to date and in accordance with the Companies Act;
- Liaise with Council Secretariat to receive President-Elect nominations
- Prepare the Honorary Secretary report for the AGM
- Liaise with PSI staff to ensure the Annual Report is submitted to the Charities Regulator
- Call the Annual General Meeting and other general meetings in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles;
- Liaise with PSI staff to ensure that the minutes and records of the Society's general or special meetings are kept.
- Provide a handover to Honorary Secretary elect and Council Members at end of the term.

Role of Honorary Treasurer

The Honorary Treasurer means any person appointed pursuant to Article 29.1 of The Psychological Society of Ireland Constitution.

PSI staff support the Honorary Treasurer with all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.

The role of the Honorary Treasurer is to:

- Be a Member of the Governance Team and the Resources Committee;
- Monitor the monthly management of the financial accounts of the Society with the accountant & CEO, and report to Council at regular intervals on the state of the PSI's finances;
- Liaise with the CEO and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis and to review the quarterly accounts where necessary;
- To update Council on the quarterly accounts;
- Liaise with the CEO, the accountant, and the Resources committee to ensure that proper accounting records are kept, financial resources are properly controlled and economically spent; in line with good governance, legal and regulatory requirements;
- Liaise with the CEO and Resource Committee to present budgets, internal management accounts, and annual financial statements to Council;
- Liaise with the CEO, external auditor, and the Resources Committee to ensure the annual audit is carried out;
- Meet the external auditor once a year;
- Report to the AGM on the financial audit and position of the Society;
- To act as a board-level liaison with the external auditors on specific issues such as the Auditors' Management Letter and the related board representations.

Role of Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary means any person appointed pursuant to Article 30.1 of The Psychological Society of Ireland Constitution.

PSI staff support the Honorary Treasurer with all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes etc.

The role of the Membership Secretary is to:

- Be a Member of the Governance Team and the deputy chair of the Membership, Qualification and Chartership Committee (MQCC).
- Review membership criteria and membership access to the Society;
- Oversee all matters relating to the membership experience of the Society;
- To meet with the chairs of Divisions and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) quarterly alongside the Division Liaison Manager to ensure the compliance of the work of all groups;
- Liaise with the Division Liaison and Committee Coordinator/Staff to Advise Council on the general status of Divisions and Special Interest Groups i.e. Activity, number of Members

Role of International Liaison Officer

The International Liaison Officer means any person appointed pursuant to Article 30.1 of The Psychological Society of Ireland Constitution.

PSI staff support the International Liaison Officer with all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.

The role of the International Liaison Officer is to:

- Be a Member of the Governance Team;
- To oversee international relations for the Society;
- To represent the Society at international organisations of which it is a Member and to attend their meetings and functions;
- To establish and maintain relationships internationally with other organisations that have aims relevant to those of the Society;

- To liaise with committees and Members of the Society's Divisions and Special Interest Groups in order to stay informed of their needs and update them on international developments;
- To coordinate the participation of and feedback from PSI Members in representative roles within international organisations;
- To facilitate internal communications about relevant international news and events;
- To report to the Council and advise on international policy.

Role of the Past President

PSI staff support the Past President with all administrative tasks such as follow-ups, correspondence, notices, organising meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.

The role of the Past President is to:

- Be a Member of the Governance Team;
- Advise and support Council.

Role of the Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer reports to Council and is responsible for the overall management and delivery of the Society's Strategic Plan. The Chief Executive Officer provides leadership and direction and co-ordinates the activities of the Society in accordance with the VMVs, the strategic objectives and as approved by Council.

Specifically, the Chief Executive Officer has a role in relation to **Members** to:

- Liaise with Members and Member groups to promote the aims of the Society;
- Assist in recruitment and retention of Members;
- Promote new Members' services.

In relation to the **Council, the Governance Team and the President** to:

- Support the President in their role;
- Keep the President, Governance Team and Council informed of all relevant matters on an ongoing basis and to advise Council on best practice courses of action;
- Liaise with Officers, Council and Governance Team on all compliance matters;
- Develop draft strategic plans and budgets for presentation to Council;
- Represent the Society as appropriate;
- Ensure compliance in relation to financial, legal and employment matters.

In relation to **staff** to:

- Provide leadership and direction;
- Run the operation and manage staff on day-to-day basis;
- Direct work programmes and projects of the staff;
- Ensure high-performance ethic and manage staff performance;
- Ensure the resources are available to run the operation including identification, recruitment, selection and development of all personnel;
- Ensure services are delivered to the highest standards;
- Provide enabling and engaging working conditions and environment;
- Keep systems and infrastructure up to standard and fit for purpose;
- Advise all groups, committees and panels as appropriate;
- Uphold standards of professional conduct.

Council Committees

There are a number of Committees delegated by Council under the Memorandum and Articles, and also as required for the proper conduct of Society business. These groups shall be approved by the Council. The relevance of each group shall be reviewed regularly, every three years, in the context of the organisation's strategy, expectations of achievements for the Society, key priorities and how success will be measured. All groups will provide guidelines on how their performance will be reviewed. Minutes of the meetings shall be kept and made available if requested. Council has the power to disband any group if it ceases to be relevant or reduces in size (as outlined in Memorandum and Articles).

Membership, Qualifications & Chartership Committee (MQCC)
Communications & Events Committee
Resources Committee
Science & Public Policy Committee
Undergraduate Accreditation Committee
Postgraduate Programme Accreditation Panels
Postgraduate Accreditation Committee
Expert Validation Committee
Standing Conference Committee
Risk Management Committee

Each group is outlined in terms of its:

- Purpose & Objectives;
- Membership Composition & Criteria;
- Accountability & Reporting.

Role of Chair of Committees and Groups

Each committee or group should elect a Chair at the beginning of the calendar year. The term of office for the Chair should be one year.

The key responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- Chair all meetings;
- Agree the agenda in advance;
- Steer the meeting and follow the agenda;
- Ensure active participation of all Members;
- Call for votes from time to time when consensus cannot be achieved;
- Uphold standards of conduct at the meeting;
- Summarise all decisions;
- Act in an impartial and fair way during discussions until called upon to vote;
- Summarise decisions and follow through on actions.

The Chair does not have the power of veto as all Members have an equal voice in the decision and outcome. In the event of a tied vote the Chair will have the casting vote. Some groups may wish to rotate Chair to give Members experience of chairing meetings. There is no automatic entitlement to the role of Chair. In line with the Constitution, Council Members may not chair more than one group and the Chief Executive Officer may chair committees or groups as appropriate.

Membership, Qualifications & Chartership Committee (Formerly MQRC)

Purpose & Objectives

- To review and approve applications for Chartered Membership and overseas applications
- To work with the Membership Secretary to advise Council on matters relevant to membership and Chartership

Membership Composition & Criteria

Chair

Deputy Chair (Membership Secretary)

Co-opted Members as appropriate

Accountability and Reporting

Reports to Council

Meets monthly

One-year term

Minutes taken by Members of the Committee

Communications & Events Committee

Purpose & Objectives

To oversee all PSI communications, internal and external, written, verbal and electronic.

To identify, organise and promote events.

More specifically to:

- To promote the activities and brand of the PSI;
- Develop communication guidelines for all Members and spokespersons;
- To comment on issues of public importance as they relate to psychology;
- To utilise all forms of communication media to promote the vision and strategic objectives of the Society;
- To raise public awareness of psychology and psychological well-being.

Membership Composition & Criteria

Head of Communications (Chair)

CEO*

Two Council Members**

Up to a maximum of five other PSI Members

Members must adhere to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the Committee.

Accountability and Reporting

Reports to Council (via a written report from the Chair submitted for Council pack).

Meets every two months or sooner if required.

Three-year term.

Minutes taken by PSI office staff member supporting the Committee.

*The CEO's presence on the Committee is optional

**The option of the Past President and President-Elect joining the Committee is open, but not mandatory, and will be supernumerary to the existing compliment

Resources Committee

Purpose & Objectives

The purpose of the Committee is to oversee the resources: people and finance of the Society. While the Chief Executive Officer will have day-to-day responsibility for the people and financial management, the Committee will more specifically:

- Regularly review the financial status of the Society;
- Receive appropriate input from the Society's Auditor;
- Ensure accurate systems for monitoring and accounting of funds for budgeting and planning purposes are in place and to report to Council on any financial irregularities and concerns;
- Oversee short and long-term investments on behalf of Council;
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and that legal and corporate obligations are properly fulfilled by due dates;
- Ensure that all people & organisation policies and procedures are in place.

Membership Composition & Criteria

Honorary Treasurer

Honorary Secretary

Chief Executive Officer
President-Elect
Committee may co-opt Members with needed expertise as required

Members of this group should have an understanding of financial accounting and preparation of accounts as well as people and organisation best practice. Membership will change from year to year based on Council officer ship. The Chief Executive Officer will remain on the group from year to year
Term of office is one year

Accountability & Reporting

- Reports to Council
- Meets when required
- Report to Council 4 times a year
- Reports Quarterly accounts to Council
- Reports audited accounts

Science & Public Policy Committee

Purpose & Objective

- To promote scientific knowledge and evidence-based psychology
- To inform public policy
- To translate psychological knowledge for the benefit of society
- To promote the exchange of ideas
- To challenge the inaccurate representation of psychological research/knowledge

Membership Composition & Criteria

Chair

Membership Secretary

A minimum of two academic PSI Members drawn from third-level institutions

A minimum of two practitioner PSI Members

One early career PSI Member

PSI Research and Policy Officer

Accountability & Reporting

- Reports to Council
- Meets four times a year or when needed
- Liaise closely with the Communications & Events Committee to promote the dissemination of knowledge

Undergraduate Accreditation Committee (UAC)

Purpose & Objectives

- The purpose of the Undergraduate Accreditation Committee (UAC) is to oversee the standard and quality of all undergraduate programmes run by third-level institutions in the state. The UAC's objectives are to reassure students undertaking an undergraduate course that their qualifications will be recognised by the PSI.
- Accreditation Panels for individual courses will be selected from the Members of the UAC. An Accreditation Panel for an undergraduate programme is to consist of three Members of the UAC from which a Liaison will be chosen for that accreditation review and is responsible for ensuring that the accreditation review is following the Undergraduate Accreditation Process.
- The Undergraduate Accreditation Committee will regularly review the Undergraduate Guidelines to make sure that they are up-to-date and are in line with international standards and will notify Council when it is appropriate for the Guidelines to be updated.

Membership Composition & Criteria

Chair

Co-opted Members by PSI Council as appropriate

Members must adhere to the Undergraduate Accreditation Process when reviewing accreditation applications.

Accountability and Reporting

- Reports to Council
- Meets as needed
- Term of office for Chair is one year and can be re-elected by Members of the UAC
- Minutes taken by Member of the Committee

Postgraduate Programme Accreditation Panels

Purpose & Objectives

- There are a number of Accreditation Panels formed to accredit postgraduate courses. Their purpose is to oversee the standard and quality of all postgraduate programmes for psychologists run by third level education institutions in the state.
- The Panel objectives are to reassure students undertaking course of study that their qualifications will be recognised by the PSI and potential employers and that the various institutions comply with standards of education expected by the PSI.

Membership Composition & Criteria

The panels are composed of a mix of:

- Academics with considerable experience of the area of study;
- Practitioners in the chosen discipline under review;
- An external evaluator;

Accountability & Reporting

Each Panel is formed when a new programme is being formed or when an existing programme needs re-accrediting. Each programme discipline has a set of guiding principles which the Panel follow in assessing applications. These guidelines outline how the programmes should be structured, managed, and delivered (see website for details and list of programmes accredited at the time of writing).

Postgraduate Programme Accreditation

Purpose & Objectives

- The purpose of the Postgraduate Accreditation Committee is to provide strategic leadership and oversight for postgraduate accreditation matters that fall outside the scope of active accreditation panels.
- The committee will provide support and advice to courses prior to and in between accreditation processes which involve panels. (It will advise Council on adaptations to course procedures which may need to be made in the case of national emergencies.) The committee will regularly review postgraduate accreditation guidelines to make sure that they are up to date and are in line with international standards and will notify Council when it is appropriate for the guidelines to be updated. The committee will liaise with, provide support to, and give strategic oversight for Divisions looking to update their accreditation criteria.

Membership Composition & Criteria

Chair

Co-opted Members by PSI Council as appropriate

Min. 1 Council Member to ensure fluid communication

Term of membership min. 3 years

Max. 8 Members on the committee at one time excluding external stakeholders

Accountability & Reporting

- Reports to Council
- Meets quarterly or as needed
- Term of office for Chair is 1 year and can be re-elected by Members of the committee
- Minutes taken by a Member of the committee
- Members will liaise with accreditation panels, Divisions, and UAC as needed

Expert Validation Committee

Purpose & Objectives

- To advise the Validation Unit of the Department of Health, in relation to applications received for a statement of equivalence in either Clinical, Counselling, or Educational Psychology training as to the equivalence of the qualifications presented to Irish training standards and requirements. These include EU-trained applicants, covered by the general system of Directive 2005/36/EC, and those trained outside the EU.
- To advise as to the equivalence of training of an overseas applicant and where appropriate, make recommendations as to what periods of adaptation are required to address shortfalls in training when compared to current PSI accreditation standards.
- The committee will review Period of Adaptation reports when completed and forwarded from the validation unit and recommend acceptance or otherwise.
- The committee where appropriate and available, offers general information and advice and to the Validation Unit in relation to qualifications, experience, and period of adaptations.
- The committee's primary point of reference for the comparison of qualifications is governed by the relevant current PSI Accreditation Guidelines.

Membership Composition & Criteria

Membership currently consists of a Chair, and a selection of reviewers from the areas of Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology.

Chair

Co-opted and voluntary Chartered Members from the areas of Clinical, Counselling and Educational.

A PSI Staff Member

Accountability & Reporting

- Reports to Council
- Applications are reviewed by a pair of reviewers and the committee meets approximately monthly or as needed to review the outcomes.
- Minutes taken by PSI office team supporting the Committee.
- Individual Members are required to follow protocols as set down by the Chair/ PSI Council and can only undertake/complete actions as decided by the EVC.
- Term of office for the Chair is one year and s/he can be re-elected by the Members of the EVC.
- The process for the review of applications and communication is supported by PSI Office staff and a standard operating procedure. Applications are assigned to and reviewed by a pair of reviewers and the committee meets approximately monthly to review the outcome and organise communication of outcomes to the Validation Unit via the PSI President.

Standing Conference Committee

Purpose & Objectives

The SCC, working alongside PSI staff Members, is central to the organisation of the PSI Annual Conference. Objectives include, but are not limited to:

- Working within the budget approved for each annual event.
- Identifying potential locations, venues, and virtual service providers (if necessary) for PSI Annual Conferences.
- Identifying keynote speakers and pre-conference workshop presenters.
- Ensuring promotion of the Annual Conference throughout the PSI membership and other international psychological societies/associations.
- Assisting with the abstract review process and award judging.
- Developing a comprehensive and robust Conference programme.
- Setting delegate registration rates.
- Ensuring the Annual Conference provides a forum for exchange of ideas among interested practitioners, researchers, academics, and students in the field of psychology.

Membership Composition & Criteria

The PSI Annual Conference Committee comprises of the following voting Members:

- A maximum of five PSI Members, one of which will be elected as chair, for a one-year term, by the SCC Members.
- PSI Head of Communications.
- PSI Events Coordinator.
- The PSI General Administrator & Member Support will act as administrative support to the SCC, taking minutes and working with the chair to draft agenda, organise meetings, and undertake other duties specific to the SCC.
- Membership of the SCC is based on a three-year term. Meetings to be held every two months, but more often if necessary, with attendance being a mixture of in-person and online platforms.

Accountability & Reporting

- All SCC Members are responsible for attending meetings and fulfilling tasks as set out at each meeting.
- Individual Members are required to follow protocols as set down by the Chair/ PSI Council and can only undertake/complete actions as decided by the SCC.
- Members must adhere to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the SCC.
- The SCC will provide a quarterly report to Council via a written report in the Council pack.

Risk Management Committee

Purpose & Responsibilities

- Quarterly review and updating of the organisation's risk register to ensure effective risk identification and management;
- Oversee implementation of actions for risk mitigation by the CEO and staff team;
- Identify top organisational risks and risk trends to be shared with the Council on a quarterly basis;
- Support Council in the annual review of the full risk register.

Membership Composition & Criteria

CEO

President-Elect

Honorary Secretary

Two other selected Council Members (co-opted by Council as appropriate)

The Committee should be chaired by a Council Member of the group and this should be reviewed on an annual basis.

A selected PSI Staff Member

Accountability & Reporting

- Meetings to be held quarterly, or more often if necessary, with attendance being a mixture of in-person and/or online. A quorum at each meeting shall be three Council Members.
- The CEO will present the top organisational risks to Council on a quarterly basis and a full review of the risk register on an annual basis.
- The committee is to correspond with the Resources Committee via the Honorary Secretary to agree on identified financial risks and their potential impact on the organisation.

Divisions & Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

There are a number of Divisions and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) actively working on areas of specialism and interest in psychology. The terms of reference for each group, along with forms for applying for and running events are detailed in the Division and Special Interest Group Handbook. The terms need to be reviewed every three years to remain current. The overall purpose of each Division and Group is summarised below. The establishment of Divisions is governed by the Constitution, whilst the Special Interest Groups need approval from Council to be established. Guidelines for establishing and disbanding Special Interest Groups are at the end of this document.

The detailed completed templates can be obtained from each Division or Group or the Membership Secretary.

The Chairs of the Divisions and Groups meet with the Membership Secretary and Division Liaison and Committee Coordinator quarterly to review progress and the work of the groups. Financial and membership monitoring is provided for by a combination of the officers of the relevant Groups and the PSI Team. Divisions and Special Interests Groups must submit a yearly report to Council on their activity, finances, and plans.

Divisions

Division of Academics, Teachers and Researchers in Psychology (DATRiP)

The Division was set up with the principal aim of promoting best practice in teaching and research in psychology by providing a forum for the sharing of knowledge and expertise among psychologists working in research and/or teaching fields.

Division of Behaviour Analysis (DBA)

The aim of the Division is to further develop behavioural psychology as a profession and a science; to promote good professional training and practice; to uphold high ethical and professional standards among behavioural psychologists; to encourage research and dissemination of knowledge of behaviour analysis to other professionals and interested bodies; to develop public awareness of the nature aims and practical application of behavioural psychology; to liaise with the Psychological Society of Ireland in pursuit of these aims.

Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP)

The aims of the Division are to promote the development of Clinical psychology as a profession and as a science, and to encourage and facilitate the attainment of high standards of professional competence and behaviour in clinical psychology.

Division of Counselling Psychology (DCoP)

To promote the development of Counselling Psychology as a legitimate body of psychological knowledge and as a professional field of psychological activity.

Division of Educational Psychology (DEP)

To promote best practice in Educational psychology by providing a forum for the sharing of knowledge and expertise among Educational Psychologists.

Division of Forensic Psychology (DFP)

To promote best practice in, and lead in the development and application of Forensic psychology.

Division of Health Psychology (DHP)

To promote best practice in, and lead in the development and application of, Health psychology.

Division of Neuropsychology (DoN)

The aim of the Division is to develop clinical and policy issues of relevance and it is particularly committed to developing policies and guidelines for the practice and advancement of Neuropsychology nationally.

Division of Sport, Exercise & Performance Psychology (DSEPP)

To advance the development of sport, exercise and performance psychology.

Division of Work and Organisational Psychology (DWOP)

To promote best practice and lead in the development and application of Work and Organisational psychology.

Division of Psychotherapy (DP)

The Division of Psychotherapy promotes two key objectives; the promotion of psychotherapy as a core discipline within psychology, and the unifying recognition of Chartered Members across all PSI Divisions who have pursued requisite training in psychotherapy, such that PSI can endorse them as having specialist expertise in the practice of psychotherapy.

Interest Groups

Special Interest Group in Addiction Psychology (SIGAD)

This group's aim is to provide Members with a forum for the exploration and collaboration on addiction issues. It aims to disseminate accurate and evidence-based information relating to the treatment of addiction in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice and improve treatment outcomes.

Special Interest Group in Autism (SIGA)

The SIGA aim is the promotion of research related to autism and awareness of the needs of people with an autism.

Special Interest Group in Coaching Psychology (SIGCP)

The SIGCP is a professional Group for Psychologists, Coaches, Coach Trainers/Providers and Academics. It is committed to raising the standards and professionalism of Coaching.

Special Interest Group in Eating Disorders (SIGED)

The SIGED is dedicated to providing a forum for psychologists with an interest in eating disorders. SIGED aims to promote professional development in clinical practice, research and training for psychologists who work or are interested in the field of eating disorders.

Special Interest Group in Intellectual Disabilities (SIGID)

The SIGID provides psychologists working in the field of learning disabilities with a forum to share professional skills and expertise and access best practice of the time, therefore playing a key role in continuing professional development.

Special Interest Group in Media, the Arts and Cyberpsychology (SIGMAC)

The SIGMAC offers Members new areas to engage with and explore. It offers the society a centre for a new area of expertise to support pre-existing areas e.g., the use of technology in applied areas. It also actively establishes links with related SIGs and groups within and outside the society. These tasks, aims and objectives are deeply rooted in the PSI's strategic goals.

Special Interest Group in Paediatric Psychology (SIGPeP)

The vision of SIGPeP is to foster the theoretical, applied and professional development Of Paediatric psychology in Ireland

Special Interest Group Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (SIGPIMH)

The mission of the SIGPIMH is to foster the theoretical, applied and professional development of perinatal and infant psychology as a specialist field within mental health.

Special Interest Group for Psychologists in Private Practice (SIGPPP)

This groups aims to address the particular needs and concerns of psychologists in private practice and advocate for and provide support for its Members

Student Affairs Group (SAG)

SAG is a group within the PSI which is run by students for students (undergraduates and postgraduates). It aims to enhance the experience of students across Ireland by fostering a sense of community through personal, professional and social development opportunities.

Early Graduate Group (EGG)

The PSI EGG was founded in 2012 by PSI Council with the main aims of representing Graduate Members within the Society, acting on issues relevant to psychology graduates during the first ten years of their career and assisting with the development of PSI Graduate Members.

The Special Interest Group in Trauma & Adversity

Founded in 2021 The purpose of the SIGTA is to provide a forum for psychologists and health Professionals with an interest in trauma informed practice and research. The group aims to increase awareness of trauma informed practice through continuing professional development and providing a space for discussion to promote and increase the provision of trauma informed practice. The SIGTA will aim to achieve these objectives by providing talks and workshops. The SIGTA aims to promote awareness of lived experiences of service-users.

The Special Interest Group in Clinical Supervision

Founded in 2021 the aim of this group is to promote the area of clinical supervision as a distinct and autonomous area of professional expertise within the field of psychology through the advancement of professional development, peer collaboration, and research between practitioners, professionals, and academics. The group aims to promote the dissemination of information regarding best practices, education, and research in clinical supervision for its Members

The Special Interest Group in Human Rights

Founded in 2021 The purpose of the SIG is to operationalize PSI's affirmation of the Human Rights statement under which the PSI functions through its membership in the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations. Modelled upon the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Psychology's particularized statement of Human Rights was adopted both by the International Union of Psychological Science (2008) as well as by the PSI through membership of the EFPA.

The Special Interest Group in Ethnic Minorities

Founded in 2021 the aim of the Ethnic Minorities SIG is to promote professional practice and cultural competence in working with ethnic minorities. The SIG in Ethnic Minorities aims to disseminate information which supports the PSI and the wider public in becoming culturally proficient.

The Special Interest Group in Addressing Climate and Environmental Emergency

Founded in 2021 the primary goal of this group is for public benefit; to help raise awareness of climate change, the environmental emergency and how psychology can help us understand and resolve these issues.

Appendix 1

Guidelines for the Establishment and Disbanding of Special Interest Groups

The Society wishes to encourage Members to form and run groups that represent diverse and inclusive interest for Psychologists. This document sets out the guidelines for setting up groups within the Society.

Establishing a Special Interest Group

1 In order to set up a group there must be a minimum of ten fully paid-up Members of the Society who agree on a common set of objectives and aims in a specific area of relevance to psychological science or practice

2 The group needs to apply to the Council for approval for the group and its objectives. To do this it will need to prepare a proposal document outlining its purpose, proposed work programme and outcomes which will benefit the Society and the area of interest that it represents. This will need to be put on the Council agenda for ratification

3 Once approved, membership should be open to any Member of the Society who wishes to join and who agrees to abide by the aims and objectives of the group

4 A small committee needs to be elected from the Members comprising at minimum The Chair, Treasurer, Membership Officer and Secretary. The group should meet at least 4 times per year to remain viable

5 Groups should anticipate that a significant amount of work will be required in the first year in order to establish the group on a proper footing. Time commitment will be essential for sustainability

6 All records of the group, including membership list, finance and activities must be kept by the group in electronic format. All communication must be via email using the PSI designated email address and be GDPR compliant and adhere to the PSI email protocol

7 The group's aims will be posted on the PSI website by a Member of the PSI team

8 Any proposed events requiring budgetary approval must be submitted to the PSI Events Team in advance using the agreed protocols

9 Special Interest Groups are advised to charge a membership fee to ensure accurate tracking of Members and to cover out of pocket expenses. The group annual budget will be monitored by PSI Accounts and the group Treasurer. No group will be permitted to exceed this budget, to carry over funds from one year to the next or to use it to subvent events, which are the subject to a separate accounting process in the Society accounts

10 Special Interest Groups will be expected to run events during the calendar year. Each event must be financially viable and return a surplus to the Society. Event proposals must follow the protocols laid down by the Society

11 Groups must hold an annual meeting at which they will elect officers and committee and set their annual membership fee

12 Groups may request to have a Council contact point with whom they can liaise.

Disbanding a Group

A group can be disbanded by the Council for the following reasons:

- 1 A recommendation from the committee of the group to Council that it is no longer active and wishes to disband
- 2 A recommendation from the Membership Secretary or the CEO to Council that the group has not met its obligations in relation to membership numbers or required level of activity
- 3 The group breaches of any of the PSI codes of Ethics or endangers the financial or legal reputation of the Society through running loss-making events, unapproved events or entering into legally binding agreements without prior authority

Appendix 2

Volunteer Grievance Procedure

1. Introduction

The Psychological Society of Ireland aims to create a work environment where volunteers feel valued at work. We also recognise that there may be occasions when volunteers have concerns or grievances, and this grievance procedure enables individual volunteers to raise grievances more formally. The procedure provides an open and fair way for volunteers to make known their problems and aims to enable grievances to be resolved quickly before they fester and become major problems.

2. Informal Discussions

In the first instance, if any volunteer has a grievance about their volunteering, a colleague, or a staff Member they should discuss it informally, as soon as possible, with the Membership Secretary if the grievance is about their role or a colleague. If the grievance is regarding a Member of staff, they should discuss it informally with the Office Manager, unless the grievance is about the Office Manager then the issue should be discussed with the CEO. The CEO and Office Manager will take the grievance seriously and ensure that everything is done to try and resolve the issue informally. It is hoped that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage.

Formal Procedure

3. Stage 1

If a volunteer feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, they should put the complaint in writing to the Membership Secretary or the Office Manager. If the complaint involves the staff member's line manager, the complaint should be put in writing to another manager in the organisation or CEO.

A meeting will be held between the volunteer and the Membership Secretary (or other appropriate person) to respond to the complaints raised. The meeting will be an opportunity for the volunteer to explain their complaints and share how they would like them to be addressed. The volunteer has a right to be accompanied to the meeting.

Following the meeting, the Membership Secretary (or other appropriate person) will give a written response within 5 working days of the meeting outlining how the complaint(s) will be responded to. If the complaint is against another volunteer or Member of staff or requires further investigation, the line manager (or other appropriate person) will need to carry out further meetings or investigations. In this case, the 5 working days limit above, may need to be extended. The response will follow this meeting and include a reference to the right of appeal.

5. Stage 2

If the volunteer feels the issue has still not been resolved satisfactorily, the volunteer must raise the matter, in writing, with the President-Elect. The President-Elect will appoint a subcommittee made up of Members of Council to hear the grievance. The President-Elect will invite the volunteer to a meeting with the subcommittee where they can discuss the matter and establish how best to resolve the situation. The volunteer has a right to be accompanied to the meeting.

Following the meeting, The President-Elect will give a written response within 5 working days of the meeting outlining how the complaint will be responded to. If the complaint is against another member of staff or volunteer, or requires further investigation, the President will need to carry out further meetings or investigations. In this case, the 5 working days limit above, may need to be extended. The response will follow this meeting and include a reference to the right of appeal.

6. Right of Appeal

If the volunteer wishes to appeal against any grievance decision, they must appeal, in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated to them to the President. The President will convene an Appeals Subcommittee to hear the appeal and the staff member will be invited to a meeting with the Appeals Subcommittee. The volunteer will have the right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting.

The PSI President-Elect and Members of Council on the original committee will not form part of the Appeals subcommittee. The Appeals subcommittee's decision will be final.