Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading

Replies to member questions

on the annual report and proposed changes to the CIEP Regulations

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You, the CIEP's members, have responded to our annual report and to our communications about our upcoming annual general meeting.

We, your Council, appreciate the thoughtfulness and care that you've put into your messages to us. We're grateful for your expressions of support for what we're doing and for your useful questions about our report and our plans.

We'd like to address some of the salient questions that you've asked here. We hope you'll continue to engage with us on these topics by emailing any director, by posting on our forums, or by coming along to the open Q&A session on Saturday 11 September.

Your questions on our annual report
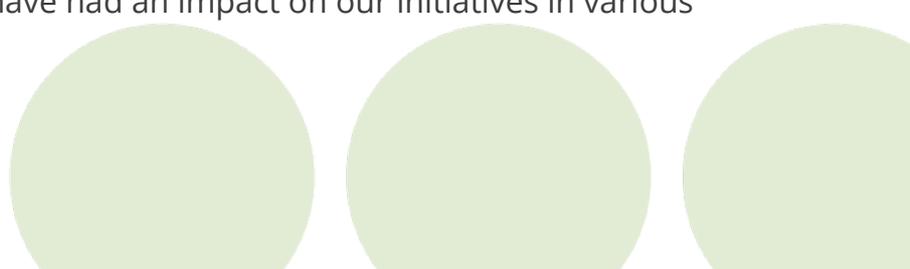
Priorities and strategy

Members have asked us, in various ways and at various times, how the Council decides on priorities for the CIEP. It's an important question and worth our examining regularly.

Historically, as our organisation has developed and membership has grown, the CIEP's directors have had to juggle strategic work with operational responsibilities and have often, of necessity, worked reactively rather than proactively.

Now chartered, our Institute needs a board that can undertake long-term planning centred on a clearly defined strategy. It also needs a team of professionals who can manage the organisation's operations effectively. By hiring a CEO and delegating some operational tasks, we took steps towards that model.

We regret that our first CEO, Betty Doyle, had to leave us so soon after arriving, but we learned a great deal from working with her and she helped us in important ways. We are now planning how best to meet the remaining need. We've recently hired an admin assistant and a membership manager. Our Recruitment Working Group is advising us on further recruitment priorities. We'll keep you up to date on developments.

The effects of the pandemic on our organisation and on individual directors, combined with operational needs, have had an impact on our initiatives in various

areas in recent months – but we are now in a position to start focusing again on opportunities and building a strategy that is fit for the future.

Meanwhile, our wonderful team of member volunteers can and should expand: we've been boosting member involvement in our initiatives and we'll continue to do so.

Visibility

You also asked us what we're doing to raise awareness of the CIEP, our members, our work and our values.

Content centring on CIEP values

We believe that one of the most powerful ways in which the CIEP can signal its values to the publishing world beyond the membership is with **useful solutions-focused content** – webinars, fact sheets, booklets, guides, focus papers – that shows rather than tells what we stand for.

We've already developed an extensive list of potential speakers, writers and resources. That's the easy bit. So is finding the budget for this content. What's time-consuming is the **research, creation, design and production process**.

To add momentum to the project and streamline it, we've created the **Values Working Group (ValWG)**, a Council-led group comprising the EDI, marketing and communications directors, plus the information editors. And we're making headway. Here's what's already in the pipeline:

- A racial literacy glossary is in early first-draft stage.
- The writing of a focus paper on singular 'they' and inclusion is in progress.
- An article on the words 'native'/'non-native' in the context of language competence will be published soon.
- A free mini-guide, *Editing Fiction with Gender-Neutral Pronouns*, is in production.
- A blog post on authenticity reading has been commissioned for publication after the CIEP conference.
- A conscious-language webinar and complementary fact sheet are in development.

Why this strategy is effective

Content is a powerful strategy because it has effect at multiple levels.

First, because it solves problems, people will talk about it, link to it and share it, which means its reach is beyond the CIEP. Others take on the job of distributing it via social media and word of mouth, while our own social media publish our problem-solving

content twice-weekly on Mondays and Thursdays. The new CIEP resources will be given a big push once they're available.

Second, content is also SEO-friendly because it's tagged with relevant keywords and first-level subheadings. This means it will show up in search engines. The outcome is that people who go hunting for solutions to language problems related to identity and representation will find CIEP content organically … and then talk about and share it.

Considering external PR

The ValWG is also exploring the outsourcing of news about this content to the media. Meaningful public relations (PR) requires good contacts in the right places. It's a demanding job that needs specialist expertise. With the best will in the world, the marketing and communications directors don't have the skill or the time to carry out that work. And so we'll need help – either from a member with that skill set or an external agency.

We've started the discussion and will report back to you with our plans. We'd also love to hear from any members who have PR expertise and can help steer this kind of work.

The external relations remit

Last autumn, the Council decided to discontinue the remit of **external relations (ER)**. Several members have expressed concern about its disappearance and the absence of information, in communications from the Council, about the development and nurturing of our links with other organisations. Among the questions members have raised are:

» **Has the CIEP's work on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) been favoured over the pursuits that were covered by the external relations role?**

» **Our chartership team, Sabine Citron and Gerard Hill, created many links with public bodies and partner organisations while putting together our chartership bid. Have these links been cultivated, and if not, when will they be?**

» **What's happening with the initiatives to build a working relationship with universities (particularly with a view to standardising ethical considerations), and with writing groups across the country?**

First, our **EDI work** is not an accessory or add-on: we believe its aims are fundamental to our Institute's values, and we want it to permeate every aspect of our Institute as quickly as possible. We are fortunate that our newest Council member, Luke Finley, has done extensive work in this area and was in a good position to carry forward this

initiative early in his time on the Council. This has not involved any neglect of our other aims; it is integral to all of them.

The Council originally created the **ER role** to focus attention and resources on nurturing the many kinds of links that would benefit our Institute and our members, including with:

- professional and membership organisations whose aims are linked to ours
- government and other public bodies whose work relates to ours
- universities and colleges that offer qualifications in editorial work
- universities and colleges whose faculties and students need editorial services
- organisers of events and conferences relevant to our interests
- libraries and writers' groups.

We discontinued the remit, as a distinct role, not because we wanted to discontinue our work on such projects but because it proved unrealistic to assign responsibility for all of these areas to one part-time director. The Council came to recognise that these different target audiences demand different skill sets, as well as professional support and adequate resources.

- Nurturing strategic links with **peer and partner organisations** fits well within a CEO's role, and we asked Betty Doyle to take this forward. Betty started working with us in November 2020. By the time of her departure from our Institute in August 2021, she had taken steps with several; the annual report covers that work only to February this year.

- Before the pandemic, we had been sending member ambassadors to **university and college courses in publishing** to present sessions on editorial skills and techniques. Such work properly falls under the training remit, and it's important that the lessons and materials our members use for these purposes dovetail with the other **CIEP training and CPD content**. We hope to review and standardise such visits within that context soon.

- The editorial work that our members do for university and college **students and faculties**, and the **ethical considerations** attached to it, are linked both to the resources and support we supply to help our members develop their businesses – resources that involve more than one director's remit – and to the professional standards we represent.

- Connections with **event organisers and writers' groups** can be, and have been, ably nurtured by our marketing and communications teams. We also, of course, rely on members to flag up such opportunities. Our local groups have often been the source of such suggestions.

Disability policy

At the 2018 AGM, we agreed to draw up and implement a disability policy, and a member has asked us what progress we've made. The publication of our **Dignity Policy** was a critical first step towards that, setting out disability clearly as one of the nine protected characteristics:

> We hope that **all members will feel supported and empowered to access all of the CIEP's offerings …** the CIEP has a duty to ensure that its events and activities are free from any form of direct or indirect discrimination on grounds that include age, **disability**, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, maternity or pregnancy, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

Before COVID-19 derailed so much of the Council's work, an accessibility framework was in progress, to include an accessibility statement (a statement of commitment to improving access to and empowering disabled members within CIEP spaces) and an accessibility checklist for CIEP activities and events. This was put on hold as CIEP group meetings shifted online, but it is worth noting that this change of format has widened participation of those with limited mobility and that we can offer, in those online spaces, closed captioning for members with deafness and hearing impairment.

We have also, since spring 2020, been working on anti-racism within an Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG). This work will be a model for empowering and amplifying members who experience marginalisation along other (potentially intersecting) axes, including disability.

Council communications

It's been suggested that Council should share more about its activities. We've already begun our work to address this by creating a dedicated communications remit.

Council News now goes out monthly and it's longer than it's ever been! The feedback you've given us has been positive. Some of you were eager to see the newsletter available in PDF, so that's what will be happening come September.

The communications director has also asked the membership for feedback on how the CIEP can support new members better. The responses have been extremely useful, and they're helping us to map out which resources and levels of support need to be made more visible and what else we might introduce.

Once we launch the new CIEP website, you'll find it much easier to get answers to your questions, not least because it will include a searchable, topic-based learning centre.

In-house working group

We agreed at the 2019 AGM to support a member-led working group focused on building inclusion of CIEP members who work in-house. The group was set up and we hope its members will drive this work forward. The Council wants to continue to support the work of this group and is happy to discuss this further with any of its members.

Your questions on our proposed changes to the CIEP's Regulations

How the CIEP's Regulations can be changed

First, we'd like to remind you of the status of our Regulations and the process for changing them. Our governance documents are in a hierarchy: our Royal Charter at the top, then our Bylaws and then our Regulations.

Our **Charter** says

> 7.
>
> i. The members, by a Special Resolution passed at any General Meeting by not less than two-thirds of the members entitled to vote and voting, may revoke, amend or add to the Bylaws for the time being in force.
>
> ii. No such revocation, amendment or addition shall have effect until approved by the Lords of Our Most Honourable Privy Council, of which approval a Certificate under the hand of the Clerk of the Privy Council shall be conclusive evidence.

That is, we can't amend our Bylaws without approval of the Privy Council.

Our **Bylaws** say

> 16 The Council of the Institute may make from time to time such Regulations as it deems necessary or expedient or convenient for the proper conduct and management of the Institute and for the purposes of prescribing conditions of membership [going on to give instances of what the Regulations may cover: admissions, member conduct, governance procedures]
>
> 17 The Institute in a General Meeting and by a Special Resolution, passed at any General Meeting by not less than two-thirds of the members entitled to vote and voting, shall have the power to make, alter, add to or repeal the Regulations

In other words, both the Council, independently of members, and the Voting Members have powers to change our Regulations.

Our intention in proposing changes

Seeking to bring you with us as we professionalise the CIEP and improve both transparency and fairness in Council processes, we delivered a **discussion paper** explaining the amendments we've recently proposed and on which we'll be asking you to vote at our AGM.

The amendments proposed will give the Council the **scope to improve our recruitment process** and support the Council in handing responsibility for recruitment over to a Nominations Committee. The aim is a Council better equipped, and better supported, to deliver the kind of skilled leadership that the Institute and its members need and deserve.

Should the vote be positive and that broad framework put in place at the AGM, we'll be able to seek members' help in delivering the detail – keeping everyone up to date with progress along the way.

Your questions

We're delighted to see the thoughtful and useful questions you've raised about our proposals. Here they are, together with our thoughts.

Requirements for nomination, election, appointment and retention of members of the Council (proposed regulation 8.2)

We originally proposed:

> The Council shall have the power to propose such requirements for the nomination, election, appointment and retention of members of the Council as it considers necessary from time to time, including: …

A member has expressed concern that this could give too much power, with not enough accountability, to the Council. To counter this, we had proposed:

> 8.3.1 The Council shall appoint a Nominations Committee, which shall approve any requirements proposed by the Council under regulation 8.2.

… but we realise that this could be taken to mean that the Nominations Committee (NomCom) is required to rubber-stamp anything that the Council proposes under regulation 8.2.

To make the accountability clear, we are **now proposing a revised version** of regulation 8.2:

> 8.2.2 The Council shall appoint a Nominations Committee. Any requirements proposed by the Council under regulation 8.2.1 shall be subject to approval annually by the Nominations Committee.

To see all the proposed changes to our Regulations, please read the full **revised proposal** before you vote. It includes an additional amendment to make the existing wording about the Remuneration Committee consistent with the proposed new 8.2.2.

Nominations Committee

Member question:

» **How will the NomCom be appointed? If the Council appoints the Nominations Committee and also sets eligibility and performance criteria for new Council members, what is to stop that process being abused or unfairly manipulated by the Council?**

Our proposal would give the Council the power to appoint a NomCom but does not specify how the NomCom will be recruited or selected. In the first instance, we plan to draw up terms of reference and a role description for NomCom members, seek volunteers from among our members and put the selection of the first NomCom to a vote of members.

We anticipate that the NomCom will comprise mostly non-directors and a small number of Council members. As we refine the way it works, we may ultimately move to a NomCom that operates entirely independently of the Council.

Member question:

» **To work effectively, the NomCom will need detailed knowledge about what the Council's work involves, and what skillsets are required for the different remits. How will the NomCom gain such knowledge?**

The Council will initially be involved in specifying the eligibility and performance criteria for new recruits to the Council, with the NomCom's input. When we appoint a new CEO, we will also seek their input. We will build in periodic reviews of these criteria, because they will have to change with the needs of the Institute. We will, of course, share details of this process with you as we develop it.

Member question:

» **When will the new procedures for director recruitment come into effect?**

If members approve our plan, we intend to prepare for recruiting to the NomCom directly after the AGM, drawing up terms of reference and a person specification and circulating these to members.

Removal of members of the Council (proposed Reg 12.2)

Member question:

» **The existing Reg 11.1 sets out what a member should do if they have a complaint against the Council or one of its members, but neither that Reg or the proposed Reg 12.2 specifies what would be legitimate grounds for such a complaint. Where can a member find this information?**

The Regulations aren't the place where such information would be set out; we need a separate procedural document, as we have for complaints against members. In regulation 6.2, 'Complaints against members', we refer to our Complaints Procedure, which is available on our website under the Standards menu. The current regulation 11.1.3 reads, 'The Council shall publish a procedure for handling such complaints.' We haven't yet published such a procedure but plan to do so as soon as practicable.

Member question:

» **Proposed Reg 12.2.2 says 'The Council shall not seek the non-voluntary removal of a Council member without due process, to include the offer of support and training to remedy issues arising.' What constitutes 'due process', who decides what it is, and who is involved in it?**

We are revising our Directors' Handbook to include information about what expectations the Institute should have of its directors and the support available to them. The new procedure for handling complaints against directors will reflect these. These are part of a wider review of our people management practices.

Member question:

» **Proposed Reg 12.2.3 says that the Council is not obliged to disclose the grounds for the removal of a Council member, except to the NomCom. What is to prevent removal on unfair grounds? Could the Council announce the reasoning to the membership in broad terms and make the details available upon request?**

As with our existing procedure for complaints against members of the Institute, we cannot undertake to make descriptions or details of complaints available to members, for reasons of confidentiality and the CIEP's duty of care. The release of such information could unfairly prejudice members' opinions of one or more of the parties

involved. There could be legal consequences should we breach confidentiality in this way.

Length of CIEP membership for prospective Council members

Member question:

» **Would you consider requiring that anyone nominated to the Council should have been a member of the CIEP for a certain period of time, perhaps two years? This would give them time to get to know a few people and the CIEP's approach on the forum, attend a conference, etc.**

This seems to us an idea worth looking at, and we'll raise it with the NomCom once it's appointed.

20 August 2021