

1 RULES FOR CENTRES

1.1 Names and Territories of Centres

A Centre is defined as a collection of IMechE Members in any territory for the purpose of advancing any of the objects of a Division in that territory.

Each Centre shall be named after the territory in which it operates. Such territories shall be subject to addition, alteration or adjustment from time to time by the Division Board as may be considered expedient.

1.2 Objectives of Centres

The objectives of a Centre, pursuant to Article 7 of the Charter, shall be to aid the Division Board in their pursuit of the aims and objectives of the Institution in general, and of the Division in particular, in the territory covered by the Centre. This will be achieved by arranging meetings for the delivery of presentations and informal discussion, by arranging visits to works and objects of scientific and educational interest to Members and in such other manner as may be considered suitable by the Division Board.

1.3 Membership of Centres

Membership of a Centre gives an individual the right to stand for membership of the committee of that Centre and, provided all other requirements are met, to participate in votes organised by the Centre. Each Member whose recorded address is within the territory of the Centre shall be a member of that Centre unless, by notice in writing to the manager of the Institution's membership database, they have expressed a wish to be a member of another Centre, in which case they shall be a member of that other Centre. No person shall be a member of more than one Centre for any one Division.

No subscription shall be required from any member of a Centre beyond that payable to the Institution prescribed in the By-Laws.

1.4 The Centre Committee

1. The affairs of each Centre shall be controlled by a Centre Committee.
2. The Centre Committee shall be of a size commensurate with the number of members of the Centre. As a minimum there must be three members of the committee. If the Centre wishes to have a committee containing more than twelve voting members, this must be approved by the Division Board.
3. Two thirds of the Centre Committee must be corporate members of the Institution. All Officers must be corporate members of the Institution.
4. Any member of the Division Board who is a member of a Centre will be an ex-officio member of the Centre Committee.

5. Changes to the composition of the Centre Committee will be proposed by the existing committee and approved by the Centre at the Centre AGM. The Centre Committee may not veto any nomination that has been made and if the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies on the Centre Committee an election must be held.
6. The Chair of the Centre shall be Chair of the Centre Committee. In these rules they are referred to as the Chair.
7. The Chair shall be a member of the Institution and the Centre.
8. A Centre Secretary must be appointed by the Centre Committee. The Centre Secretary must be a member of the Centre and a corporate member of the Institution.
9. The Centre Secretary must invite nominations for membership of the Centre Committee from the Centre membership at least two weeks prior to the Centre AGM.
10. The interests of Young Members of the Centre are to be represented on the Centre Committee by a representative number of Young Members. If there should be no suitable Young Members, the Centre Committee must nominate one of their number to represent the interests of current, and future, Young Members of the Centre.
11. One, or more, vice-Chairs may be appointed. They must be members of the Centre but need not be corporate members of the Institution.
12. Members of the committee may be allocated roles such as Treasurer or Meetings Secretary as the committee feels appropriate. The person carrying out the Treasurer's duties must be a corporate member of the Institution, unless agreed by the Division Chair and HQ staff.
13. The term of office for the Chair and the Centre Secretary shall normally be either two or three years. Each may be re-appointed for further terms, but should the Chair stand for more than five years (whether continuous or not) this must be authorised by the Division Board. The term of a Centre Secretary should normally be a maximum of 5 years unless a suitable successor is not available in which case the term may be extended by agreement with the Division Chair.
14. The term of office for other members of the Centre Committee shall normally be three years. These terms will be managed to provide a stagger of retirements from the committee. Committee members may serve for more than one term.
15. The Centre Committee may decide to co-opt non-voting members who will be able to further the interests of the Centre and this is to be encouraged. Such people could be members of academic bodies or other engineering institutions, or people who by their attendance at meetings have demonstrated their ability to further the interest of the Centre.

16. The Chair will be responsible for managing the active participation of all Committee members.

The Chair will be responsible for succession planning for roles on the committee and for ensuring, with the support of their fellow committee members, that the committee remains quorate.

1.5 Voting rights

1. It is accepted that most decisions made within a Centre will be achieved by consensus, but where a vote is required the following will apply:
 - a) All members of the Centre Committee may vote at committee meetings. Three corporate Members of the committee will constitute a quorum.
 - b) All Members of the Centre may vote at meetings of the Centre.
 - c) When a vote is required to agree the membership of the committee, an election will be held in a manner approved by the Division Chair.

1.6 Centre Handbook

The Centre Committee will produce a Centre Handbook to describe how the Centre will run its affairs. As a minimum this handbook will cover the following topics:

- a) How the Centre will meet the needs of the local engineering market.
- b) How the Centre will liaise with the Regional/International structure of the Institution.
- c) How the Centre will publicise its meetings.
- d) How the Centre will meet the current goals of the Institution and Division.
- e) How the Centre will develop the interests of the Institution and Division.
- f) How the Centre Committee will be organised, defining the roles and responsibilities of office bearers.

1.7 Holding of meetings

1. Each year the Centre Committee will decide a programme of meetings at which speakers may make a presentation relevant to the interests of the Centre.

The Centre Secretary shall be responsible for publicising Ordinary meetings.

2. The Centre Secretary shall ensure that a suitable record of ordinary meetings is kept detailing the venue, presenter, topic and attendance along with any other relevant information.

3. An AGM is to be held each year to which all Centre Members are invited. This may be combined with an ordinary meeting and must be publicised (as a minimum) in a similar manner to an ordinary meeting.
4. Centre Committee meetings are to be adequately publicised to members of the committee and held at least twice a year.

1.8 Financial Matters

1. The Committee must identify one of their number to be responsible for running the financial affairs of the Centre – A Treasurer.
2. At least two members of the committee must take responsibility for the total annual expenditure of the Centre and ensure that it has been spent in the interests of the Institution.
3. A Centre budget will be agreed for the Centre. This will be agreed between the Centre Chair, Division Chair and member of staff responsible for the Division.
4. It is the responsibility of the Centre Treasurer to make a final budget request for the calendar year following to the IMechE Divisions and Groups team by 1 September each year.
5. This budget will be managed using the financial procedures of the Institution and up to the limit of the Centre's annual budget.
6. Even though all Centre accounts are electronic, all expenditure must be accounted for in January, June, September and December even if this represents a zero return. A zero return will be assumed for September but if expenditure has been incurred a return may must be presented.
7. Financial matters must be discussed at each meeting of the Centre Committee.
8. All Centres must have a bank account that is registered with the IMechE Accounts Department. A Centre may use a bank account already in use for other IMechE purposes (e.g. a Region or Branch account) but must advise the IMechE Accounts Department and Divisions and Groups team and provide confirmation from the account holder of this arrangement. Full details of the account including account number, bank branch, sort codes, signatories etc must also be supplied. In the event of a Centre closing its bank account or moving its account, the Centre Treasurer must inform the IMechE Accounts department and Divisions and Groups team.
9. The Centre Treasurer must be one of the approved signatories of the Centre bank account. The Centre Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that succession planning is undertaken and executed to ensure that the Centre is always able to identify which Members can authorise payments and that they are willing and able to do so.

10. Under no circumstances are Centres allowed to operate an overdraft or a budget in deficit.
11. In the event of any financial incident including fraud, theft (or any attempt made) or sudden and unexpected expenditure that may cause a Centre or the IMechE any financial or reputational difficulty, the Hon Treasurer and Centre Chair must immediately inform the Division Chair and IMechE Accounts department and Divisions and Groups team.

1.9 Centre Reports

1. The Centre Chair is responsible for ensuring that:
 - A regular report is provided two weeks ahead of *each* Division Board meeting – or as requested by the Division and Group staff.
 - An annual report for the Centre is submitted to the Division Board two weeks before the AGM of the Division, describing the activity of the Centre through the previous session.
 - A Centre activity report is submitted via the online reporting system following every event (contact k_manning@imeche.org for access to the reporting system and guidance on its use).
2. A report detailing the Centre's financial activity will be made available to the members of the Division Board and IMechE Divisions and Groups team, when requested.