

Policy: External members and observers of IPEM committees and groups

Background

Some IPEM committees and groups appoint corresponding members, other professional members (who contribute helpful expertise and perspective to the committee's work), and/or observers. This policy clarifies how this practice can continue whilst:

1. Conforming with legal requirements for data protection
2. Conforming with IPEM's information governance policy.
3. Ensuring business and Intellectual Property protection
4. Ensuring professional conduct from all participants
5. Ensuring IPEM is not mis-represented by someone who has not been authenticated as an expert
6. Enabling regulatory input where needed

Definitions

Core Committee members

These are expected to be IPEM members. Their membership level requirement will be outlined in the committee terms of reference.

Other Professional Member

These are members of other professional bodies linked to our profession that have a Code of Professional Conduct. They are appointed by their organisation as per the terms of reference to represent the perspective of that organisation and offer relevant professional expertise and information within the area of medical physics and engineering.

Co-opted Professional Member

These have been invited to participate for their specific expertise which cannot be found within the IPEM membership. For example if medical input is needed from a Radiologist or a specialist from industry or a university is needed for a Task & Finish group.

In order to be in this category they still need to be either:

- A member of a professional body with a Code of Conduct or
- Listed on a professional register or
- Employed by a recognised research or education institution

Observers

These are invited by the committee to build relationships with the external organisation. Often these are regulatory bodies which facilitate better understanding by both parties. If they regularly attend and add important value to the committee then an observer could be considered a Co-opted member if they meet the criteria.

Corresponding members

These can be past chairs or other IPEM members in the profession who can offer advice and support to a committee. Their terms of office should be outlined in the terms of reference. Generally they should never stay longer than 3 years.

IPEM members from an IPEM Task and Finish group, a committee or a member who is one of IPEM's external representatives reporting back from that external committee can also fall under this category.

Professional Contributor

Person who is a member of another group, committee or department in a professional or public body who provides regular reports and updates to a group or committee. They may or may not be

Policy: External members and observers of IPEM committees and groups

an IPEM member but IPEM is not involved in appointing them.

Issues

It appears that some external representatives of committees, and even those designated as 'observers', had access to the same information and papers as members, and have been given access to committee workspaces such as a dedicated Teams channel. This can be inappropriate, and not necessarily normal practice. Where such additional committee members are not IPEM members they should not automatically have unlimited access to the same business data as IPEM members.

More importantly, any person who handles any personal data must under Data Protection law have signed a confidentiality agreement, and some external committee members have declined to do so on the grounds that they are not IPEM members/volunteers.

Policy

It is IPEM's policy that participants in IPEM communities and groups are clearly differentiated from each other, as set out in the table below, and that committee and information handling practices should reflect this. This will enable committees to benefit from the expertise and insight that external members bring to their discussions without breaching Data Protection law or creating any risk of inappropriate access to IPEM's business information.

It is the responsibility of the Committee Chair and secretary to ensure that every member is aware of the nature of their role; and that access to the appropriate Teams workspace is arranged for them. The committee Secretary should ensure that the role of everyone attending a meeting is recorded, and that papers are accessible and distributed in accordance with the scheme shown in Table 1. The National Office Manager responsible for the committee can support this.

Access to some papers will be discretionary and the Committee Chairs will be responsible for assessing whether any other IPEM information is sufficiently business sensitive (such as conferences planned) or includes personal data (such as committee applications) that it should not be shared with external members in emailed meeting papers. In cases of doubt, the Data Protection Officer (Deputy CEO) in IPEM can provide guidance.

Policy: External members and observers of IPEM committees and groups

Table 1: Committee roles and access

	Core IPEM Member	Other professional member	Co-opted professional member	Observer	Corresponding Member	Professional Contributor
Origin / Reason	IPEM committee structure determined by governance reviews and trustees	Specified in TOR as an important contribution to the success of the committee	Required to offer specific expertise not available in the committee and IPEM membership	Specified in TOR as an important contribution to the success of the committee	Specified in TOR as an important contribution to the success of the committee	Members of an external group which is deemed relevant by committees and groups
Contributes	To full business of committee	External expertise, perspective and information	Specific expertise not available in membership	External expertise, perspective and information	Only on specific items if requested by committee	Regular but infrequent written updates and reports
Appointment of individuals	Either ex officio or by volunteering	By own organisation as per TOR	Invited by Committee chair on behalf of IPEM	Invited by chair or appointed by own organisation	Either ex officio or invited by chair	By the external group they sit on
Access to Teams channels with documents incl minutes	Yes	Yes – if member with a professional association and data protection agreement signed	Yes – if member with a professional association and data protection agreement signed	No – agenda and a reduced version of minutes can be emailed	Discretionary by chair. Data protection agreement to be signed	No
Making public statements about outputs of committee	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Voting rights on committee business and appointments	Yes	Depends on committee / group TORs (e.g. T&F group)	Depends on committee / group TORs (e.g. T&F group)	No	No	No

Policy: External members and observers of IPEM committees and groups

	Core IPEM Member	Other professional member	Co-opted professional member	Observer	Corresponding Member	Professional Contributor
Expenses	Yes	generally no, depends on arrangement	Yes	Not but depends on arrangement	Not applicable	Not applicable
List of Members kept by IPEM	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Signs IPEM DP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not required as no access to Teams	Yes	Not needed