

Responses to questions raised during various engagements by members based in the UK

26 May 2020

Dear members,

Over the past few months SAICA executives have had the opportunity to engage with members based in the UK. Various questions were raised by members with the assurance that these would be addressed by SAICA in an open communication with the members.

Below are the questions raised by members and the responses thereto.

1. The current Board does not have representation from international members.

The previous SAICA Board had representatives from various constituencies, including international members. The new Board, appointed in 2019 in terms of the updated [SAICA Constitution](#), does not have constitutional representation. Instead, a SAICA Council was formed to represent member constituencies. There will be three international representatives on the Council, up from one in the old Board. The chairman of Council represents Council on the SAICA Board.

The international member committees previously comprised three regions (USA, UK and Australasia). Members were elected onto these committees, as opposed to being voted on by members. SAICA is in the process of changing the geographical representation of these committees, as well as the way that members are elected thereto.

Three international regions are being established to replace the three committees.

- The Americas Region (comprising North and South America, as well as various islands in the region)
- EMEA (Europe, Middle East and rest of Africa)
- ASPAC (Asia Pacific region, which also comprises Australia and New Zealand)

In addition to the current sub committees in the USA, UK and Australia and New Zealand, discussions to form committees have already started with members in the following jurisdictions with significant member representation: Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Guernsey, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Holland and Mauritius. The sub-committees will be represented in the regional committees being established.

A nomination and voting process has been established to facilitate member-nominated regional committees. In the coming weeks members will receive an email notifying them of the nomination and voting process in order to capacitate the regional committees.

This process is a direct result of a call for member-elected representative committees.

2. What are the names of the local committee members?

The names of the committee members will be updated on the SAICA website after the election of the regional committees. Members who represent a specific location will automatically form part of the local committee.

3. Members who hold reciprocal membership pay two membership fees, which members feel is onerous.

The structure of reciprocal membership fees is determined by the contracts that govern reciprocal memberships, the terms of which are largely standard between the various institutes that have entered into reciprocal arrangements.

SAICA has taken note of the concerns of members and will engage with other institutes, through the various international bodies on which we are represented, to find means of ensuring that member value is not eroded by duplicate member fees.

4. Will SAICA introduce differentiated fees for different member classes?

The membership fee charged to all SAICA members is informed by the initiatives that need to be undertaken in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the Institute. The initiatives undertaken cut across the whole value chain of the organisation, including promoting the profession, upholding the value of the profession through the education that is provided to potential CAs(SA) of the future, and delivering value to the existing members. Considering that these costs are incurred for the benefit of all members irrespective of their location, it is currently not feasible for a differentiated base fee to be charged.

5. Why are members still paying for the Thuthuka program?

The Thuthuka program aims to increase the number of disadvantaged students who want to become CAs(SA), through partnering with accredited universities, and creating a special learning environment for these students. The program is funded primarily through donations and grants from local and international donors. The program has not only been successful in creating CAs(SA), its working model is now being replicated by government in its funding of the 'missing middle' for other professions as well.

Only 1% of membership fees is allocated to Thuthuka. This forms less than 1% of Thuthuka funding. SAICA stands firmly behind the success of the program, and would not be in a moral position to approach funders if members themselves do not believe in creating a future for the profession.

6. Members would like a note breaking down how their prior year's membership fee was spent when the membership fee invoices are circulated.

The [2019 Annual Integrated Report](#) includes a breakdown of the prior year's membership fee. SAICA further commits to include a breakdown of the fee in future fee notices.

7. Who can members in the UK contact to have their views heard?

Bruce Freer (BruceF@saica.co.za) is the Regional Executive: International Members. Bruce is responsible for the servicing of international members, and in addition to one-on-one engagements with members, Bruce is also responsible for member committees internationally. Bruce is ultimately responsible to deliver services that members want in the region, and does so in consultation with member committees.

An escalation process, explained in the answer to question 8, is available to members.

8. What is the escalation process for complaints?

Members can raise complaints via the Regional Executive, who is empowered to act on behalf of members. Should members not be satisfied with the response received, the escalation process would be to the Senior Executive: Member Engagement, then the COO, and the CEO.

Members can also raise concerns via the representative body, which would be the UK Committee for members in the UK, which the committee would be able to escalate to the Council and, if necessary, the Board.

9. What are the plans to roll out suitable programs to members in the UK?

The identification of programs to roll out is informed by direct engagements with members, through discussion with the local committee, and through proactive scanning of the professional environments that members form part of (roles, industries, etc.). In addition, members are occasionally surveyed to find out what their needs are, and these are incorporated in the products and services that are rolled out.

In addition, SAICA has undertaken a comprehensive project to identify what the changing roles and expectations of Chartered Accountants involve, and these competencies form part of an expansive range of products and services that is already being rolled out to members via webcast. All webcasts rolled out to members in South Africa are available to international members live and is made available after the broadcast as a video.

In addition, SAICA is in constant contact with our peer institutes worldwide to understand what they are doing for their members, which is included in the planning process.

SAICA holds memberships with the Global Accounting Alliance (GAA) and Chartered Accountants Worldwide (CAW). Among the benefits of membership is that SAICA members can access fellow member institute events at the same rate as that of the home institute. For example, members of SAICA can access ICAEW events in the UK at the same rate as ICAEW members pay for those events.

For more information on the GAA visit their [website](#). Members can also find more information on the [GAA Passport](#), which allows them to access fellow institute events.

CAW promotes the CA brand worldwide, while ensuring that CA-designated institutes continually share best practice, including in the engagement, marketing and education spaces. For more information on CAW visit their [website](#).

Members can also access the [CAW global identifier](#) which members can use on their stationery and professional profiles.

10. Members would like the breakdown of the number of members by country.

The number of members by region is provided for in the [2019 Annual Integrated Report](#), which is available on the SAICA website.

11. What is being done to ensure that the Chairperson at the AGM answers all member questions?

SAICA and the Chairman would at all times like to address any matter raised by members, however due to time constraints, it is not always possible for the Chairperson to respond to all member questions asked during the AGM. The Chairperson has already indicated that all questions not addressed during the 2020 AGM will be answered after the AGM, and the questions and answers will be posted on the SAICA website and communicated to members.

12. Why is SAICA communications not relevant to me/why do I not receive SAICA communications?

SAICA has various newsletters that deal with a variety of subject matters, designed to keep members informed on matters facing the profession, various technical developments and matters, and seminars and events, amongst others. Members can subscribe or unsubscribe to newsletters that are of relevance to the individual member. This can be done via the SAICA website.

SAICA has also embarked on a project to update every member's details. Members are requested to engage in this process, which will result in improved engagement and services to members.

Members are also encouraged to proactively keep their membership profile, which includes job role, industry and contact details, up to date. This ensures that members receive content relevant to them and their location.

13. What is the latest position on the improvements to the SAICA website?

The SAICA digitisation process, known internally as Ushintsho, has prioritised the development of the background IT architecture that will enable SAICA to develop a modern and user-friendly website. The redevelopment of the website is expected to be completed during 2021.

We regret the inconvenience of the current website and apologise to members for the sometimes frustrating experience when interacting with the current website. We request your understanding and appreciate your patience during our digitisation drive.

14. Where can we access more information on the new CPD policy?

Details on the new output-based CPD policy, including recorded video sessions on the new policy, can be accessed here: <https://ca2025.co.za/cpd-home/>

Members can also send questions and concerns about CPD-related matters via email to newcpdpolicy@saica.co.za.

Groups of members wishing to have a personal presentation to their company or constituency can contact azharp@saica.co.za to set this up.

15. What is SAICA doing to strengthen and speed up the disciplinary processes?

The new by-laws governing SAICA's disciplinary processes will become effective on 1 June 2020. The new by-laws can be found on [SAICA's Governance website](#).

Enhancements to the new by-laws include provisions related to the publication of guilty findings, specific conditions under which the Board may cancel membership, as well as new mechanisms to differentiate between more serious cases of punishable conduct and lesser offences. The new by-laws will allow for disciplinary processes to be resolved speedily.

16. How is SAICA collaborating with other institutes so that knowledge is shared and a common goal of improving the standard of accountants worldwide is achieved?

SAICA is a member of IFAC (the International Federation of Accountants), GAA (Global Accounting Alliance), CAW (Chartered Accountants Worldwide) and PAFA (Pan African Federation of Accountants). In addition to the executive level, SAICA also plays a role in various 'sub-committees' of some of the relevant organisations, including in the education, brand and marketing, and member engagement areas. Through these bodies and committees SAICA can both influence, create and get access to best practice. Some of the member benefits are articulated in question 9 above.

SAICA values every opportunity to engage with members, and I am looking forward to engaging with members in the UK in the coming months.

Regards,
Freeman Nomvalo