

Discussion Paper: ICE Voting Rights

A. Background

1. The Trustee Board has discussed the issue of whether voting rights for Graduate members of the ICE should be extended. After listening to Council's advice in December 2019, the Trustee Board has asked for a discussion paper to support members' debate of the issue before any decisions are taken. Council wishes to discuss the issue again in both April and July 2020.
2. But, while the debate was prompted by a debate about graduate voting rights, the Trustee Board and the ICE Council believe that there are much wider questions about how we engage *all* of our members. Council and the Trustees also recognise that there are changing expectations within society. EngTech and AMICE are a core part of the Institution and their position should be considered at the same time. There is an argument to make sure that our young, enthusiastic and vibrant technicians and graduates are well placed to move us forward: they are one of the most active sector of membership (perhaps not in voting - but they do put on and attend a huge number of events).
3. Council will debate the subject in April and Trustees are keen that members have the chance to discuss the issues so that Council members are well able to represent members' views in that debate. This is the first stage of the discussion and no decisions will be taken in April.

B. Facts

4. Identifying the issue is always more difficult than solving the problem. As at November 2019 there are 15,965 GMICE in UK and 3,181 outside UK (total 19,146). Traditionally we assume, with a degree of unconscious bias, that our graduate cohort is under 30. While this is partially true, we have 7,000 graduates in the 35-55 age bracket. 5,377 have been graduate members for longer than 10 years. There are 5,921 in the largest cohort which is 26-30-year olds. The GMICE profile is at Annex A.
5. There are three ICE Council seats reserved specifically for GMICE. GMICE are elected by GMICE for GMICE Council seats in a direct election. Additionally, there must also be one EngTech and one IEng member of Council.

C. The problems we are trying to solve.

6. Both Council and the Trustee Board agree that significant changes, such as amendments to voting rights, should only be made after careful consideration, and only if such changes are in the long-term interests of, and benefit to, the Institution. In their discussions the Trustee Board and Council identified a number of questions. The first question is to decide what problem the Institution is trying to solve. There are number of potential answers:
 - a) The Institution does not benefit from the enthusiasm of younger members. *Changing voting rights is unlikely to address this. Providing relevant, inspiring and valuable engineering insight and knowledge might, backed up by professionally advantageous networks, mentored by wise and supportive experienced engineers, might. It is notable that in the 2019 elections only 5.9% of eligible graduates cast their votes (compared to the 9.1% of general members).*

- b) The Institution appears old and stuffy to younger members. *This argument is worth exploring.*
 - c) GMICE are disadvantaged through the Institution’s electoral system. *Again, this might be worth exploring.*
 - d) It is wrong in the 21st century that we don’t allow everyone a say in the debate on our future. *There is merit in exploring this argument, but it applies to all members not just GMICE. That seems anomalous.*
7. There are supporting arguments. The Institution could use the “no taxation without representation argument”, in other words those who pay a fee should be able to vote. The Institution would need to consider whether AMICE would be granted voting rights under this argument as they pay the same as GMICE (and are not represented on Council).
 8. The Institution could alternatively use the aspirant member argument: “those who will inherit the Institution should have a full say in its future”. But then the Institution would need to decide its policy on students and on apprentices who are studying but not yet qualified.
 9. There may therefore be two issues which require very different approaches. The first is to convert the 7,000 odd graduates aged over 35 to full membership. We should, where appropriate, maximise use of the career appraisal route. D Membership is already driving this campaign.
 10. The second issue is how we improve the engagement of our younger aspirant members in thought leadership and knowledge exchange. There is much that is good already and it will be important to build on what graduates want rather than design solutions to problems they don’t see. We must also remember that people starting out on their careers are busy, have any number of competing priorities, and therefore that anything we build must be complimentary rather than burdensome.

What voting rights does the Institution intend to give and what effect would this have?

11. But should the Institution decide that the problem can only, or best, be fixed by changing voting rights, it must define what voting rights it is considering. Currently GMICE can only vote to elect graduates to Council as set out in bold below: G1. They could be allowed full voting rights to elect all Council members, in which case the Institution would have to decide whether GMICE were still the only ones able to elect graduates. The Institution could restrict GMICE voting rights so that they could only elect GMICE to GMICE positions on Council but could vote on all other matters. Or the Institution could restrict certain rights such as the ability to contribute to a call for an SGM, or the right to talk at an SGM. While there are variations to be made the basic GMICE options are:

Option	By-Law changes	Subscription rates	Elections of General Council members ¹	SGM Voting	Calling for SGM
G1 (as now)	No	No	No	No	No
G2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

¹ This would mean that GMICE would vote in the elections for the three graduate posts. *Additionally*, they could vote in the elections for General Members of Council. The analogy is that CEng and IEng MICE can vote in the election for general members, *and* for the candidates standing in their own nominated home region.

G3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
G4	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
G5	No	No	No	Yes	No

What voting rights the Institution will give, or not, to EngTech?

12. But if the institution decides to give or amend voting rights to GMICE it will have to consider whether the arguments for doing so would also apply to other groups. The obviously disenfranchised group is the 2639 EngTech who are MICE but have restricted voting rights as set out below in bold: T1. The Institution could leave their voting rights as currently but would need to explain why if they allowed GMICE (who are not professionally qualified) to vote. Having spent inordinate amounts of time and resource to attract a growing cohort of EngTechs it would be unfortunate if EngTech, which is the fastest growing cohort in the ICE, felt second-class citizens. Council believe that EngTech should only become eligible to vote only once they have achieved EngTech, not while they are under training. The options are (again with variations):

Option	By-Law changes	Subscription rates	Elections of Council members	SGM Voting	Calling for SGM
T1 (as now)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
T2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
T3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

What voting rights the Institution will give, or not, to AMICE?

13. The Institution will also need to consider whether it wishes to grant rights to AMICE. Their existing rights are in bold below: A1. This is easier and there is precedent with the other PEIs. One could argue that the 995 AMICE are not professionally qualified and have no plans to be so. But one could fall foul of the no taxation without representation argument as AMICE pay the same subscription as graduates.

Option	By-Law changes	Subscription rates	Elections of General Council members	SGM Voting	Calling for SGM
A1 (as now)	No	No	No	No	No
A2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
A4	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
A5	No	No	No	Yes	No

C. The Mechanics of the Change Process

14. To change voting rights for any grade of membership would require a change of By-Law 4. Under Charter Article 14 that will require a member ballot in which two-thirds of *corporate* members will need to agree. The ballot result is then subject to Privy Council approval. Before the Privy Council approves the ballot request it will seek the agreement of the Engineering Council and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). To ensure adequate member debate and consultation the earliest this issue would go to a member ballot would be in June 2021.
15. Under By-Law 4 Voting rights are as follows:
 - a) Corporate Members are entitled to vote on all matters for which a vote of members is required by the Charter and By-laws.
 - b) Technician Members may vote: in elections of members to the Council; on any resolution relating to subscriptions (By-law 14); and on such other matters as the Council shall determine, provided that such matters do not require the approval of a Special Resolution or relate to the professional qualifications or professional conduct of members.
 - c) Graduate members (but no others) shall be entitled to vote in the election of Graduate members to the Council.
16. Under By-Law 2 Corporate Members include:
 - a) Honorary Fellows who prior to their election to that grade of membership were Members or Fellows;
 - b) Fellows;
 - c) Members (which includes CEng and IEng).
17. Under By-Law 2 the following are *not* corporate members:
 - a) Technician members (but they are professionally qualified members).
 - b) Graduates;
 - c) Students.
 - d) Vice Patrons;
 - e) Honorary Fellows who are not Corporate Members;
 - f) Companions;
 - g) Associate Members (AMICE);
 - h) Affiliate Organisations.
18. **The key deduction is that if voting rights are to be changed it will require the support of a two-thirds majority in a member ballot. The only people who will be allowed to vote in that ballot will be: Honorary Fellows who prior to their election to that grade of membership were Members or Fellows; Fellows; and Members (which includes CEng and IEng). So, it is this group who will need to be persuaded.**

D. Questions for the Membership

19. Therefore, Council would like to understand the views of the membership on the following:
 - a) Should voting rights be extended to GMICE?

- b) If yes should GMICE be allowed to vote on:
 - i. By-Law changes;
 - ii. Subscription rates;
 - iii. Calling for an SGM;
 - iv. Voting at an SGM;
 - v. Should GMICE be able to take part in the vote to elect General Council members as well as the vote to elect the three GMICE members of Council;
 - vi. Or, should GMICE only take part in the vote to elect the three GMICE members of Council;
 - vii. Or, should the Institution disestablish the three Council seats reserved for GMICE and instead allow GMICE just to take part in the election of the General members of Council;
20. Eng Tech MICE. Council would also like to understand the views of the membership on the following:
- a) Should voting rights be extended to Eng Tech MICE?
 - b) If yes should Eng Tech MICE be allowed to vote on:
 - i. By-Law changes;
 - ii. Calling for an SGM;
 - iii. Voting at an SGM;
21. AMICE. Council would also like to understand the views of the membership on the following:
- a) Should voting rights be extended to AMICE?
 - b) If yes should AMICE be allowed to vote on:
 - i. By-Law changes;
 - ii. Subscription rates;
 - iii. Calling for an SGM;
 - iv. Voting at an SGM;
 - v. Electing General Council members.
22. ICE Council members will be hosting discussions to seek the members views. Members can also submit their views in writing to the Director General and Secretary at governance@ice.org.uk . Views are requested by 1 June 2020.

Annex:

- A. GMICE Profile.

GMICE PROFILE

Annex A

The graphic shows the age of GMICE along the x axis and the number of GMICE along the y axis. Each column is colour coded to show how *long* members have been GMICE.

To explain, using the third column from the left as an example. We have a total of 3,038 GMICE who are aged between 31 and 35. Of that 3,038 total, 350 have been GMICE for 11-15 years, 1,023 have been GMICE for 6-10 years and 1,665 have been GMICE for 5 years or less.

Inevitably some of the detail is obscured but it gives an accurate enough overview for Council to understand the GMICE profile.

