

## 5 **Member Groups**

Member Groups enable members of the Institute (and others) to share and advance their common interests in Information Technology. Member Groups are integral to BCS and are bound by the Institute's Royal Charter and rules. Groups have a responsibility to adhere to the Institutes policy and strategy. A Member Group can be a Branch, a Specialist Group, International Section or any other properly constituted grouping approved by the Membership Board on behalf of the Institute. Members of the Institute are encouraged to join and become active in Member Groups.

Branches and International Sections are geographic clusters of members; upon joining the Institute each member will be given the option of joining one or more Branches. Specialist Groups are formed by a number of people with a common interest in some aspect of Information Technology, its application, or impact.

The Institute supports Member Groups, both financially and with other resources. The Membership Board provides a link into the Institute's decision-making process and the Membership Group team of staff is there to give practical assistance: Every Member Group has an administrator in BCS Swindon who is there to support the Group.

<http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/mg-administrators.pdf>

- a)
- b)
- c) See the section on "Links with other organisations"  
<http://www.bcs.org/content/ConWebDoc/37600> for more information.
- d) The mechanisms for joining a Member Group include using the web site [www.bcs.org](http://www.bcs.org) or contacting Customer Services. E.g. a group for young professionals might have an age limit. Conditions should be seen as reasonable and necessary for the group to be credible (e.g. BCS Women or ELITE) without discouraging those who wish to learn from those with more knowledge and experience.
- e)
- f)

## 6 **Member Group life cycle**

- a) Institute members are encouraged to form new Member Groups where there is proof of unmet demand and no conflict with existing Member Groups, e.g. geographic or subject matter overlap. The process consists of four stages: stage one requires an initial proposal that outlines the case for the formation of the new group; stage two consists of a meeting of all interested parties to discuss the proposal and test the interest in the proposed group; stage three requires an expansion of the initial proposal to include operational details and stage four is approval by finance committee. The full process is available on the volunteer portal at [http://volunteer.bcs.org/Proposing\\_a\\_new\\_member\\_group](http://volunteer.bcs.org/Proposing_a_new_member_group).
- b) It is often helpful to establish a subgroup and then, if it is successful, to float it off as an independent group. Subgroups share the budget of the parent group.
- c)
- d)

e)

## **7 Member Group governance**

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

## **8 Member Group Committees**

- a) Member Group Committees are responsible for welcoming new members to their group, both by email when they join and in person when they first come to an event. Guidance is available at [www.volunteer.bcs.org/sites/default/files/Sending\\_welcome\\_emails\\_to\\_new\\_Member\\_Group\\_members.doc](http://www.volunteer.bcs.org/sites/default/files/Sending_welcome_emails_to_new_Member_Group_members.doc).
- b) Committee members may take on a range of other roles. For more details about the roles see: [www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/roles-committeemembers.pdf](http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/roles-committeemembers.pdf).
- c) As the Chair and Treasurer are essential for the effective running of a group they are specifically elected to their roles.
- d) Where the Committee wishes to use remote voting they need to: (i) Contact the BCS Member Group Team to check that resources will be available to run the vote and to obtain templates for use in the following steps; (ii) Ask Group members for nominations, which can include additional information to assist Group members to vote; (iii) Give at least two weeks before the deadline for nominations to be submitted; (iv) Use the Group's website to make information about all candidates available to all those qualified to vote at least two weeks before the deadline for voting ends; (v) BCS HQ will then operate an electronic vote on the Member Group's behalf. The Chair and Treasurer will get the result of the vote, and can ask for a list of those who have voted if they wish to accept additional votes on the night.
- e)
- f)
- g)
- h) Further information is available on how best to conduct committee meetings:
- Conduct of business in BCS Boards and Committees [www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/conduct-of-business.pdf](http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/conduct-of-business.pdf)
  - Conduct of electronic meetings [www.bcs.org/conduct/emeetings](http://www.bcs.org/conduct/emeetings)
  - Responsibilities of BCS officers [www.bcs.org/responsibilities/officers](http://www.bcs.org/responsibilities/officers)
- i) Electronic attendance is permissible.
- j)
- k) What Member Group committee members say and publish (including on social media) should be appropriate for a representative of a professional body. Communicating on behalf of any part of the Institute (including a Member Group) should only be done with appropriate authority. Criticism of the Institute should be kept out of public forums..
- l)
- m) Support (including administration) is available from BCS Swindon. It is not charged for but needs to be requested and reserved. The Events

organisation document [www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/event-organisation.pdf](http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/event-organisation.pdf) shows the full range of help available. A template for making applications is available at [volunteer.bcs.org/sites/default/files/Application\\_Template\\_for\\_additional\\_resources\\_staff.doc](http://volunteer.bcs.org/sites/default/files/Application_Template_for_additional_resources_staff.doc). Support services should be used responsibly. Where support services (e.g. booking a room) are reserved, but repeatedly not used, the Member Group may be prevented from reserving that resource for a period of time.

- n)
- o) The BCS Information Security Policy Statement [www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/information-security-policystatement.pdf](http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/information-security-policystatement.pdf). Requests to use membership details should be sent to the Member Groups Team.
- p) All member data must be handled in strict accordance with the BCS Information Security Policy Statement [www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/information-security-policystatement.pdf](http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/information-security-policystatement.pdf). Committee members who are professional members (MBCS/FBCS) of BCS may have access to BCS membership data, subject to: An explanation of why access is necessary that is acceptable to the Member Group committee (i.e. no one has vetoed it) and Confirmation that the person requesting access understands the Data Protection Act. Requests to use membership details should be sent to the Member Groups Team.
- q) Groups must ensure that they are fully aware of statute in this area.
- r) The BCS Code of Conduct, which is available at [www.bcs.org/category/6030](http://www.bcs.org/category/6030) will be used if a potential conflict of interest comes to light. Non-members of the Institute are liable to sanctions including having their committee membership terminated.