



MEMBERSHIP POLICY FRAMEWORK

Continuous Membership and Active Participation

Policy Statement

The Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) recognizes that progression to higher categories of membership should reflect not only academic qualifications and professional experience but also sustained commitment to the Association and to the Library and Information Science profession.

Accordingly, eligibility for advancement to Associate Membership, Fellowship, and Life Membership shall require evidence of continuous membership in good standing together with active participation in the activities and objectives of the Association, unless otherwise determined by the Council under exceptional circumstances.

The Association considers continuous Annual membership and active engagement to be important indicators of professional commitment, loyalty to the Association, and continued support for its mission, objectives, and professional standards.

Continuous Membership

Continuous Membership means maintaining annual membership without interruption by paying the prescribed annual subscriptions within the periods determined by the Council and by complying with the Constitution, Rules, Regulations, and policies of the Association.

A lapse in membership resulting from non-payment of subscriptions or failure to comply with the Rules shall constitute a break in membership unless the Council formally approves reinstatement and determines how that interruption will be treated for eligibility purposes.

Periods during which membership has lapsed shall not normally be counted towards the qualifying period required for progression to Associate Membership, Fellowship, or Life Membership.

This provision encourages members to remain continuously engaged with the Association rather than treating membership as something that may simply be resumed whenever convenient.

Maintenance of Membership Rights and Privileges

Members admitted to the categories of Associate Member and Fellow Members shall continue to enjoy the rights, privileges, professional recognition, and services attached to those categories only while maintaining continuous membership in good standing without interruption in accordance with the Constitution, Rules, Regulations, and policies of the Sri Lanka Library Association.

Where membership lapses through non-payment of subscriptions or for any other reason provided for under the Rules, the member shall not be entitled to exercise or claim the rights, privileges, professional recognition, or

services attached to that membership category until membership has been lawfully reinstated in accordance with the procedures approved by the Council.

Active Participation

Continuous membership should be complemented by meaningful participation in the activities and development of the Association.

Examples of active participation include, but are not limited to:

- Attending Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings.
- Participating in conferences, seminars, workshops, and Continuing Professional Development programmes organized or recognized by SLLA.
- Serving on the Council, Standing Committees, Task Forces, or Working Groups.
- Contributing to publications, journals, newsletters, and research activities.
- Presenting papers, delivering lectures, or facilitating training programmes.
- Mentoring students and early-career professionals.
- Assisting in educational programmes, conferences, outreach initiatives, advocacy activities, and professional development programmes.
- Representing the Association at national or international professional events.
- Contributing in other meaningful ways that advance the objectives and reputation of the Sri Lanka Library Association.

The Association recognizes that members contribute in different ways. Participation should therefore be assessed broadly and should not be limited solely to holding elected office.

Application for Membership Categories

Associate Membership

Applicants seeking Associate Membership shall demonstrate:

- The prescribed academic qualifications.
- The required professional experience.
- Continuous membership in good standing for the prescribed qualifying period.
- Evidence of reasonable participation in the activities of the Association.

Associate Members shall continue to enjoy the rights, privileges, professional recognition, and services attached to Associate Membership including using the title “Chartered Librarian” only while maintaining continuous membership in good standing without interruption. In addition, every active Corporate Member shall be entitled to use the initials “ALA (Sri Lanka)”. Any lapse in membership shall result in the suspension of those rights and privileges until membership has been duly reinstated in accordance with the Constitution, Rules, Regulations, and policies of the Association.

Fellowship

Fellowship represents the highest level of professional recognition conferred by the Sri Lanka Library Association and should be awarded only to members who have demonstrated distinguished professional achievement together with sustained commitment to the Association.

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Sustained professional excellence.
- Significant contributions to Library and Information Science.
- Leadership within the profession.
- Continuous membership without interruption for the prescribed qualifying period.
- Active participation in SLLA programmes and professional activities.
- Contributions that have advanced the objectives, reputation, and professional standing of the Association.

Fellows shall be entitled to enjoy the full rights, privileges, professional recognition, and services associated with Fellowship, including the official use of the professional designation "Chartered Librarian," and the initials "FLA (Sri Lanka)" only while maintaining continuous membership in good standing without interruption.

Any break in membership shall result in the suspension of those rights and privileges, including the entitlement to officially use the designation Chartered Librarian, until membership has been lawfully reinstated in accordance with the Constitution, Rules, Regulations, and policies of the Association.

Life Membership

Life Membership is intended to recognize long-standing commitment, sustained participation, loyalty, and distinguished service to the Sri Lanka Library Association.

Eligibility should include:

- The prescribed qualifying period of continuous membership.
- A demonstrated record of active participation in the Association.
- Full compliance with all financial obligations to the Association.
- Continued adherence to the professional standards, ethical principles, and values expected of members.

Life Membership should therefore be regarded as recognition of long-standing loyalty and sustained service rather than merely the payment of a one-time fee following a specified number of years of membership.

Unlike other membership categories, Life Membership is granted upon payment of the prescribed one-time Life Membership fee and thereafter remains valid without the requirement for annual subscription payments. They are also entitled to use the designation Chartered Librarian during the period of Life membership if they are an Associate or Fellow at the time of obtaining the Life Membership.

Accordingly, the requirement for continuous membership without interruption applies only in determining eligibility for the award of Life Membership by assessing the applicant's qualifying period of uninterrupted membership and active participation prior to admission. Once Life Membership has been duly conferred, no further annual continuity requirement shall apply.

Assessment by the Membership Committee

The Membership Committee should evaluate not only academic qualifications and employment history but also the applicant's engagement with the Association.

To support this process, the Association should introduce a Membership Participation Record as part of the application procedure. Applicants should summarize their contributions during the qualifying period, including committee service, conference participation, publications, mentoring, training, research, educational activities, and other professional contributions.

The Membership Committee should verify the information submitted through available Association records and make recommendations to the Council accordingly.

Provision for Exceptional Circumstances

The Association recognizes that genuine interruptions in membership may occur due to exceptional circumstances such as overseas employment, prolonged illness, family responsibilities, or other compelling reasons.

To ensure fairness, the Council shall retain the discretion to consider such circumstances on their individual merits and determine whether any interruption should affect eligibility for advancement, provided that such discretion is exercised consistently and without undermining the integrity of the membership framework.

Why This Policy Strengthens the Membership Framework

This policy shifts the emphasis from simply measuring academic qualifications and years of professional experience to recognizing sustained commitment to the Sri Lanka Library Association throughout a member's professional career.

By incorporating continuous membership and active participation as essential requirements for advancement, the policy encourages members to remain actively engaged with the Association, contribute to its programmes and professional activities, and uphold its objectives and standards.

It further reinforces the principle that Associate Membership and Fellowship are continuing professional distinctions whose rights, privileges, services, and professional recognition—including, in the case of Fellows, the official use of the designation "Chartered Librarian"—are dependent upon maintaining continuous membership in good standing.

Similarly, by requiring uninterrupted membership as a prerequisite for the award of Life Membership, the policy recognizes long-term loyalty and sustained service while preserving the unique nature of Life Membership as a category conferred upon payment of a one-time fee without further annual subscription obligations.

The Sri Lanka Library Association believes that these principles will strengthen the Association's governance, encourage greater participation by members, preserve the integrity and prestige of its higher membership categories, and ensure that advancement within the Association reflects not only professional achievement but also enduring commitment, active engagement, and dedicated service to the Library and Information Science profession.