

Actuarial Society Update – October 2017

Key Dates for the Year

Event	Cape Town	Johannesburg	Other venue	
Seminars				
Life	19 May	23 May		
Health	4 May			
Investments	18 Sept			
Retirement	24 July			
Short term		29 Aug		
Risk mgt		14 Sept		
Banking		2 Aug		
Wider fields		7 Sept		
Golf days	30 May			
IAA meetings			Budapest Chicago	19-23 Apr 4-8 Oct
Annual general meeting	21 June	21 June		
Young members' convention	29 June			
Convention		17-18 Oct		
Africa Seminar		16 Oct		
A100/A200 & F106 exams	18-28 April & 25 Sept – 4 Oct			
A301 exams	3-4 May & 10-11 Oct			
A302 exam	16 May & 24 Oct			
F201-F206 exams	18 May & 26 Oct			
F101-F105	24 May – 2 June & 6 Nov – 15 Nov			

Working in the USA

In recent years, the Presidents and staff of the Society have devoted considerable time and effort to establishing mutual recognition agreements (MRA's) with leading actuarial organisations from around the world. In terms of these agreements there is a reciprocal arrangement for Fellow members to work in each other's jurisdictions subject to a few conditions. These conditions typically involve familiarity with local conditions so require time working under supervision and completing the equivalent of our Practice Module examination. Agreements have been completed with the United Kingdom (IFoA), Ireland, Australia, Netherlands, Canada and Germany.

In the USA we have established a similar agreement with the Casualty Actuarial Society (CAS) – which will provide recognition for actuaries who have taken the General Insurance Fellowship exam (F203). However, the USA environment is more complex with 5 recognised actuarial organisations. The three most prominent are CAS, the Society of Actuaries (SOA) and the American Academy of Actuaries (AAA). CAS and SOA both offer actuarial education and are responsible for qualifying actuaries in USA.

Actuaries, however, need to belong to AAA if they are to complete any regulatory work. We have to date been unable to secure an MRA with the SOA as MRAs do not form part of their current strategy. However, qualifying through a USA based organisation is not a requirement for membership of the AAA.

Members wishing to do statutory or other work in USA can apply to the AAA. They would need to provide proof that they have the required quality of actuarial education as well as attend their accreditation course (and pass the exam) and work for a period under supervision in USA. Members of the Society wishing to work in USA are welcome to apply to the AAA (<http://www.actuary.org/>). They will be required to provide proof of education as well as attend their accreditation course and have the necessary US work experience. They will however not be accepted as members of the SOA at this time so may find that they have access, at a reasonable cost, to fewer CPD opportunities than other actuaries operating in USA but will be able to participate fully in the CPD and other activities of AAA.

The Society will be working with the office of AAA to provide greater information on our qualification and other processes which should make it easier for members wishing to join AAA to meet the necessary entry standards. We expect this to be a slow process but members need not wait for this to be completed to make applications in their individual capacity.

Managing email

Email is the Society's primary means of communication with members. Although efficient and relatively low cost, this has resulted in a huge number of emails being sent to members. To manage the flow of emails while retaining the flow of information, members will have the option of opting out of certain message categories when they renew the annual membership. Renewals will open in November and members are encouraged to make use of this facility.

Convention feedback

The 2017 convention broke the 2016 record for the highest attendance at an Actuarial Society convention. The convention had a strong focus on transformation as well as a range of technical and professional papers during the 4 plenary sessions plus 5 parallel sessions with 5 options in each session. During each parallel session workshops on Inclusion and Unconscious Bias were run by Nene Molefi. These workshops were over-subscribed with many members wishing to attend not being able to. As part of our overall transformation initiative, we will be looking at options for members of the Society to have access to Nene's work – various options will be considered.

Awards

The two highest awards made by the Society are the President's Award and the Murray Medal. The President's award is made at the sole discretion of the President of the Society while the Murray Medal is awarded by a panel consisting of members of Council and previous Presidents and recipients of the award – who need to unanimously agree that the recipient is worthy of the award. They are not awarded every year.

President's award

This was awarded to **Professor Stephen Jurisich** who has taught the actuarial class at Wits for longer than most people can remember – influencing the lives of many students and actively taking an interest in their employment and professional development after they leave university. In addition, he has been involved in the ASSA education structures since we started planning to develop our systems and made a significant contribution to the CSI committee and the Academy mentorship scheme.

Murray medal

This was awarded to **Mickey Lowther** for his tireless work, often behind the scenes, on developing the broad range of professionalism and normative skills as well as the development of the disciplinary process and the CPD scheme. Mickey has worked tirelessly on this for many years – often in collaboration with his late wife, Professor Wendy McMillan (their work was described in the most recent edition of South African Actuary <http://www.actuarialsociety.org.za/assa-news/south-african-actuary-magazine/>)

Subject prizes

These are awarded for performance during the previous year in the F200 series (Fellowship Applications) exams. Prizes are only awarded to students who have displayed sufficient competence in their exam to warrant the prize and not merely for passing. It is not unusual for prizes not to be awarded in all subjects. This year prizes were awarded for performance in all 6 fellowship subjects. The winners were:

F201 – Health care	Yashtil Moodley
F202 – Life Assurance	Ashraf Moolla
F203 – Short term	Aliska van Niekerk
F204 – Pensions	Maria Goosen
F205 – Investments	Ziyaad Bobat
F206 – Banking	Ernest Louw

Prizes for Research and Papers

A disappointing feature of the 2017 convention was that there were very few papers

presented at the convention so neither the Swiss Re or RGA prizes for papers at the convention were awarded. However, the RGA prize for the best published research in 2016 was awarded to **Conrad Beyers, Joel Dabrowski & Pieter de Villiers** for their paper *Systemic banking crises early warning systems using dynamic Bayesian networks*.

Green exhibitor

Convention exhibitors are judged on the sustainability and social consciousness of the exhibition stands. The winning exhibitor receives not only a weighty, environmentally friendly trophy but also a free exhibition stand at next year's Convention and first pick as to which stand they choose. This year it narrowed down to the battle of the reinsurers with **Munich Re** edging out Swiss Re in a photo finish.

Congratulations to all the award winners. I hope their example will inspire members to contribute to the Society and to write papers for the 2018 Convention (that will be held in Cape Town on 24-25 October 2018); Students to aim not only to pass but to take the prize in what is already an elite field; and Exhibitors to aim to win the free stand at the 2019 convention.

Normative skills

Our overarching objective for Education is to develop and maintain a world class education system for professional actuaries, which remains relevant (locally and globally) to the ever-changing needs of the profession. As a further development in support of this overarching goal, we will introduce some enhancements and improvements to the Normative Skills programme with effect from 1 January 2018.

The **Foundation Actuarial Professional Practice (APP)** will be introduced with effect from 1 January 2018 as part of our Normative Skills programme to complete the lifelong learning approach to acquiring normative skills. This programme will fit in before Core APP and is designed for students prior to commencing full-time employment. Accredited universities may apply for accreditation of Foundation APP and if accredited, may recommend exemptions for Foundation APP to successful students attending the course(s) at the accredited university.

The aim of the Foundation APP syllabus is that successful candidates should understand what it means to be an actuarial professional in South Africa, to facilitate knowledge of the diversity inherent in the South African business and social environments and to familiarise candidates with the cognitive, normative and organisational skills that members of the Actuarial Society of South Africa should obtain in order to maintain the standards required in the profession.

The Foundation APP programme will consist of 3 modules which will mainly be delivered in an online eLearning format. The syllabus is published on the Actuarial Society of South Africa website (<http://www.actuarialsociety.org.za/student-zone/associate-fellowship-studies/normative-skills/>). Registrations for this course will also open on 6 November 2017.

As a transitional arrangement for phasing in Foundation APP, the following students will not be required to complete Foundation APP:

- All students who joined ASSA as a student member before 1 January 2018.
- All students who join ASSA as a student before 1 January 2020 and who meet the admission criteria for Core APP, namely, who have passed (or been exempted from) all of the A1 and A2 level subjects, at the time of first joining ASSA.
- Students who meet the university requirements to graduate with an accredited degree from an ASSA level 2 or level 3 accredited university before 1 January 2021.

The **admission criteria** and specific pre-requisites for the various workshops and assessments of the **Core APP** have also been amended and these will take effect from 1 January 2018. The amended admission criteria for Core APP can be found on the Actuarial Society of South Africa website.

Giving back

At the convention we received video feedback from Paper Video on the work they are doing aided by the Actuarial Society Education Trust and many members engaged with Paper Video in the exhibition area on the huge impact we are having on Education in South Africa. ASET has supported Paper Video for almost 3 years now during which time it has grown from a struggling start up with a revolutionary idea to a strong viable social enterprise changing the face of education at schools that use PV resources. Our contribution has ensured that this difference is felt where it is most needed – at schools that lack both funding and experienced quality teachers.

A note of thanks (and call for continued support) from Paper Video:

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all ASSA members who make donations towards the Actuarial Society Education Trust. Thanks to the support we have received from you and corporate South Africa, we have been able to roll out our resources to more than 12,000 learners from low income backgrounds! For the vast majority of these learners, our sponsored resources were the first time they ever got to experience the benefit of having access to an extra teacher

to assist them in their studies. The impact that these resources have made through your donations has been truly humbling.

With continued support from ASSA members and corporate South Africa, we know that we can make a real difference in the education and opportunities of South African learners!



In conclusion, it is up to you

The Actuarial Society exists for two reasons. Firstly, to serve the public interest as a professional association for actuaries and, secondly, to serve our members. Please complete our member survey by 10 November so we can determine how best to serve you. As everyone who doesn't vote in a referendum or election knows, if you don't participate, you are accepting the decision of those who do. The survey can be found at [Click here to start the ASSA 2017 member survey](#)

Regards

Mike McDougall