

Summary of voting and voter feedback from the 2019 EGM

Introduction

At an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held at the CIfA Conference in Leeds in April 2019, accredited members were asked to vote on a resolution to introduce a Chartered Archaeologist grade of accreditation. In accordance with CIfA's Charter, the resolution required 75 percent of those voting to be in favour in order to be passed. The resolution failed to gain sufficient support and was not passed. Following the EGM, the CIfA Board undertook to consider carefully the feedback received¹ from members before making any decisions on how to proceed in the best interests of the profession (<https://www.archaeologists.net/chartered>).

The Board recognises the need for better engagement with members and is grateful to all members who took the time to provide feedback.

The Board continues to aspire to the goal of becoming a chartered profession and, having taken on board members' concerns, will explore options and consider whether revised proposals might be brought back to members in the future.

Analysis of voting statistics

- 29 percent of eligible members voted on the resolution put forward to the EGM
- 749 members voted online and 116 voted in person. There were 11 abstentions
- 55 percent of those voting voted in favour (375 online and 100 in person)
- 45 percent voted against (374 online and 16 in person)

Although less than a third of eligible members voted, this was a much larger proportion than has previously voted at general meetings, due to the introduction of an online voting system.

The breakdown of votes by category was as follows

- 59 percent of votes were from Members (MCIfA)
- 24 percent were from Associates (ACIfA)
- 17 percent were from Practitioners (PCIfA)
- Slightly more than a third of MCIfAs, slightly fewer than a third of ACIfAs and a fifth of PCIfAs voted
- Of those who voted, slightly more than half of ACIfAs and slightly less than half of PCIfAs were in favour

¹ Analysis of voting statistics and feedback was carried out on anonymised data

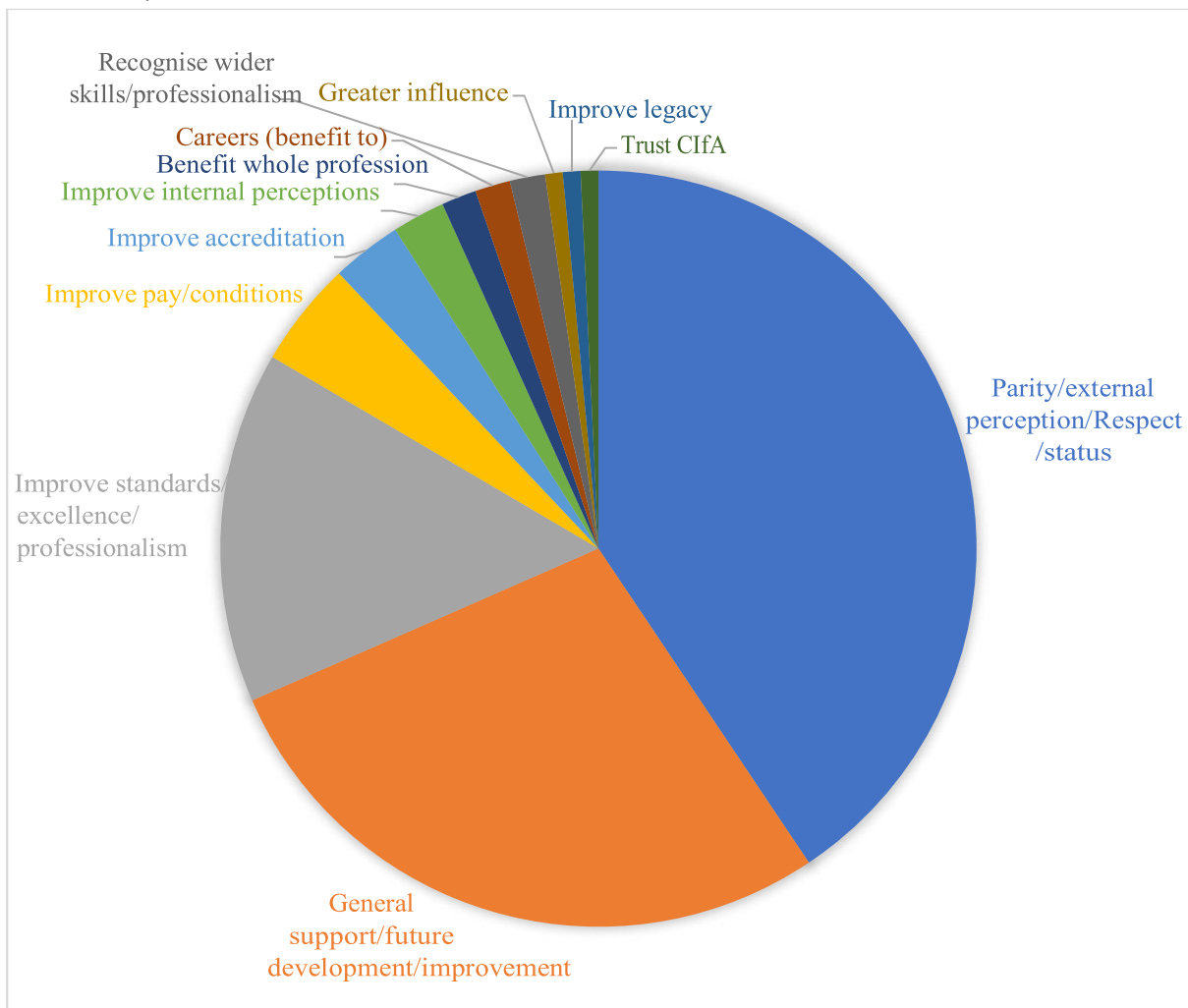
- Just under 60 percent of MCifAs voted in favour.

Analysis of voting feedback

Members voting online were given the opportunity to leave feedback on the reason for their vote. This has been considered along with the record of speakers at the EGM.

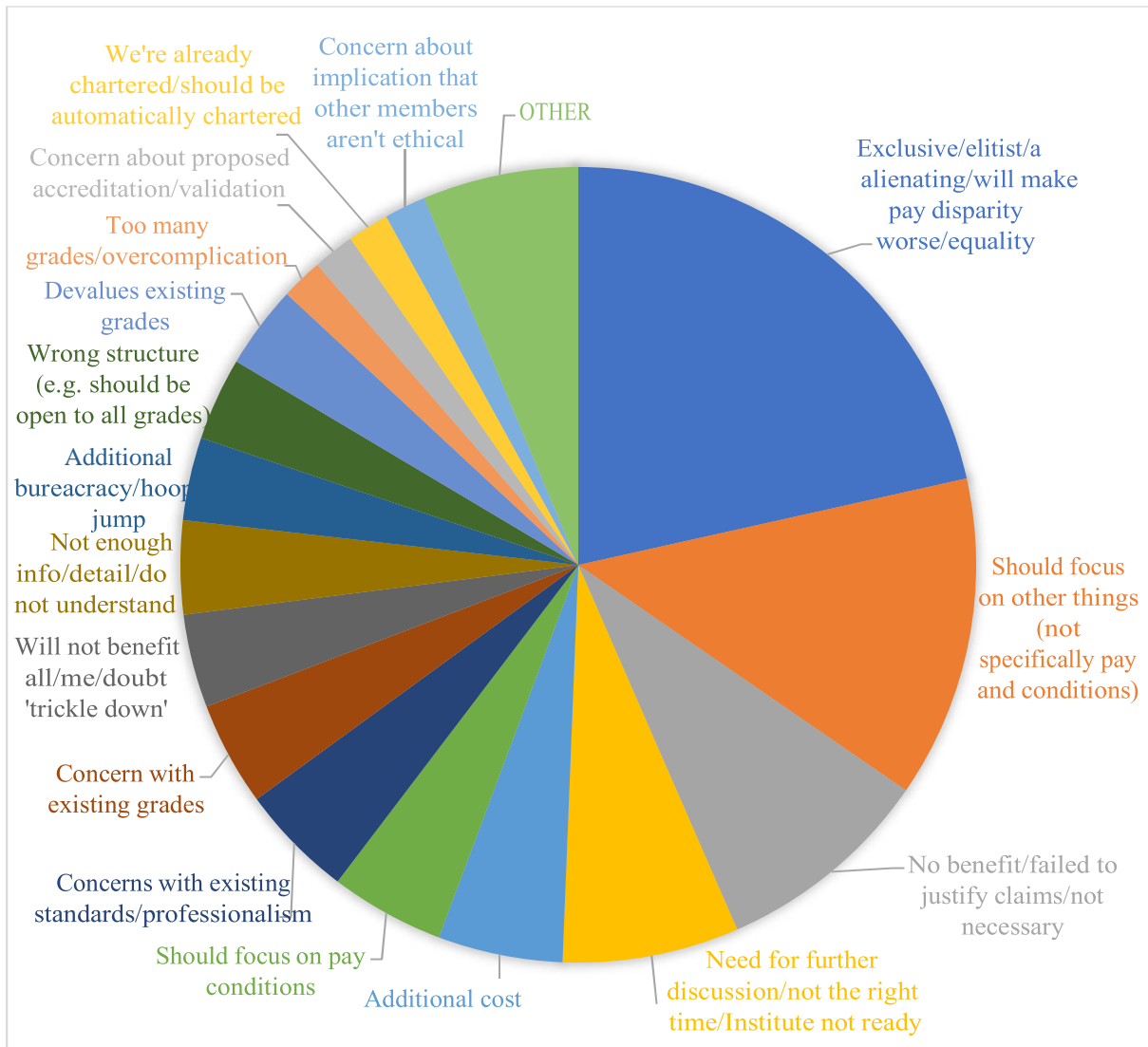
In favour of the resolution

The main reasons given for voting in favour of the resolution related to becoming a chartered profession and achieving parity with other professions and improving the external recognition and perception of archaeology and archaeologists, leading to increased status and increased awareness of the value of archaeology. Voters also mentioned support for CfA's work and for greater professionalism, the need for continued improvement and the potential for individual chartered status to improve standards and focus on excellence.



Against the resolution

The reasons why members voted against the resolution were much more varied. The most common reasons were concerns that the introduction of a chartered grade of accreditation was elitist and/or divisive, a feeling that Cifa should be focusing on other priorities and that the benefits of chartered archaeologist to the profession were not clear.



Of the feedback directly related to the proposal itself, it was clear that the relationship between Chartered Archaeologist and existing grades of accreditation caused concern for members, either because they felt that the addition of a further grade was elitist or that it devalued existing accreditations. The feedback also indicated that our comms campaign was unsuccessful in explaining how and why the Board believes that becoming a chartered profession through individual chartered status will help address some of the concerns, particularly around raising standards and ethical behaviour

The feedback from members voting against the resolution also raised some important issues that are not directly related to the resolution itself but reflect wider sectoral concerns. These included

support for local government services, supporting career development and training, promoting (and enforcing) professional standards and ethics, and Brexit. CifA has invested considerable resources in these areas in recent years. The feedback suggests that CifA needs to communicate more effectively on all areas of its work.

The feedback also revealed a need for better communication and engagement with members about what is and is not in CifA's remit as a professional body and how we work with others on issues not directly within our remit.

Next steps

The Board has agreed to invest additional resources to improve engagement and communication. CifA's Advisory Council, Groups and their associated networks have a key role to play in this. Using information from the Advisory Council's participation survey, changes have already been made to how we involve and engage members, and further opportunities to improve this will be sought. The Board is committed to improving engagement with PCifA members and encouraging more to take an active part in the work of the Institute.

The Board will also use the feedback on Chartered Archaeologist to review CifA's professional accreditation structure. This will include reviewing the assessment criteria for each accredited grade, the language and examples used in our guidance and how we promote the importance of professional accreditation as part of individual career progression. The results of this work will inform any future revised proposals for a Chartered Archaeologist grade of accreditation.