

Accreditation - President's response

I'd like to thank Allan Charlton and the rest of the Western Sydney group of the ASTC (NSW) for taking on this issue and coming up with a proposal.

I would like you all to start thinking about the issue and discussing it with your fellow writers, and give us some feedback about what you are thinking.

I had a number of issues with the initial proposal that I would like to share with you. I have discussed these with Allan personally, and we find that we are pretty much in agreement on most things.

- I liked the simplicity of the scheme and the four levels proposed.
- For a MEMBER, the three years experience can be contract, permanent, or a combination but gaps are not included. For part-time work or intermittent contracts, you add up the days worked.
- For a FELLOW, I don't think we should specify '*Three years in a leadership role*'. Many technical writers don't have management skills, and are not suited to managing, but are still respected in the profession. Allan's response to this is that the definition of a leadership role is not limited to managing or leading a technical writing team. It includes a team member who is expert in some way such that the rest of the team go to that person for advice.
- I suggest that '*has been a presenter at least one ASTC annual conference*' be changed to:
 - Has contributed to the technical communication profession in a major way by being active in one or more of the following areas over the last year:
 - Has been a presenter on a technical writing subject at a conference such as the ASTC (NSW), AODC, TCNZ, INTECOM or Winwriters.
 - Writes regular articles aimed at professional development of technical writers that have been published in an appropriate technical publication, for example an ASTC newsletter.
 - Member of an ASTC or STC committee for 2 years or more, has taken responsibility for an area of the committee's operations and has contributed in a major way.
- I think for the scheme to have any value, we have to have ongoing, yearly accreditation, for example, MASTC (2004). People then have to attend x hours of professional development in a year, such as suitable training courses, attending ASTC meetings or conferences to keep their accreditation current.
- I think accreditation should be a national thing, not an ASTC (NSW) or ASTC (Vic) specific accreditation.
- I would like to start off with a scheme such as Allan and the Westies group have proposed, with a view to moving forward to accrediting specific skills in a couple of years.

What do you think? Please let me know by e-mailing me at president@astcvic.org.au. We are planning to have an open discussion on the subject after the AGM in May. Come along and make yourself heard! This issue affects all of us as writers, and seeks to improve our public profile and professional standing.