

Terms of Reference

**FINAL DRAFT, September2024**

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| **Committee Title:** | RLSS Diploma Team of Reviewers |
| **Purpose and Scope:** | The Diploma Team of Reviewers is responsible for:   * Identifying contributions eligible for the Diploma Awards: Diploma, Diploma (Applied) and Advanced Diploma. * Assessing Diploma applications, in accordance with the established procedures, and recommending awarding of the Diploma(s). * Assisting RLSS Commonwealth Headquarters (RLSS HQ) with the dissemination of significant research in the field of lifesaving and drowning prevention to the broader RLSS community. |
| **Membership:** | **Chair (Team Leader) of the Diploma Team of Reviewers** Appointed by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the Deputy Commonwealth President, Operations Manager, and the Executive Director.   * The function of the Chair is to coordinate and motivate the active engagement of the Diploma Team of Reviewers in the achievement of the responsibilities as shown below. * To ensure the timely review of Diploma submissions by the Reviewers within the timeframes listed and to provide final approval to Diplomas being awarded. * To review and make a recommendations to the Board of Trustees June meeting on the recipient(s) of the annual Research Honour – awarded on 25th July each year. If required, to consult with Reviewers and/or Executive Director, Operations Manager, Deputy Commonwealth President on the selection of the recipient(s) of the Research Honour. * The Chair is appointed for a 2-year term and up to a maximum of 4 terms. * The Chair, in liaison with the Operations Assistant, is to provide a 6 monthly written report to Board of Trustees (or more frequently as requested by the Deputy Commonwealth President) on the work of the Team of Reviewers, including the number of applications received, the number of applications under review, the number rejected, and the number recommended for approval by the Board of Trustees. * To monitor and refine the processes used to review Diploma’s ensuring that timeframes are met or delays are communicated with the nominee of a Diploma submission   **Membership of the Diploma Team of Reviewers**  Preference is for at least 1, and up to 3 subject matter experts from each RLSS region:   * Asia Pacific * Americas & Caribbean * Europe & Africa   NOTE: Subject matter experts (academic and/or practitioner), as members of the Team of Reviewers, will bring their skills and expertise in the review and assessment of research submitted for consideration. This may include methodological or content expertise. It is recommended that more than 50% of the Team of Reviewers have experience in drowning prevention and/or lifesaving practice or research.  ***Advisors***  The Chair of the Team of Reviewers has the ability to co-opt in advisors on particular issues for limited durations.  ***Observers/Ex-officio***   * Relevant RLSS Portfolio Director(s) * Operations Manager * Executive Director   The quorum for a formal meeting of the Team of Reviewers shall be 3 Team members (excluding the Advisors, the Director and Operations Manager). There shall be one vote per Team member.  The Reviewers are appointed on a two-year term basis with no limit to the number of terms serviced if their skills and expertise is appropriate to assess Diploma submissions. |
| **Guidance for Membership:** | The philosophy on the recruitment to the Diploma Team of Reviewers is as follows.   1. The primary emphasis is recruiting people from an academic and/or practitioner perspective with relevant knowledge, skill, experience and capacity to be active members on the Team of Reviewers. 2. Representation is spread across the regions. 3. Representation supports the diversity policy of RLSS, by including considerations of gender, youth, and cultural diversity. 4. The have the availability to meet agreed timelines and present written reports on request.   The number of members of the Team of Reviewers shall be based on the resources needed to achieve the tasks in the desired timeframes, as directed by the Chair. |
| **Secretarial functions:** | From within the Team of Reviewers and the RLSS Operations Assistant |
| **Reports to:** | Board of Trustees through the Executive Director and Operations Assistant, and as required by the Charter, By Laws and Regulations. |
| **Consults with:** | * Executive Director and Operations Manager * Relevant portfolio Directors * RLSS Member Organisations * Other organisations or subject matter experts as identified by the Diploma Team of Reviewers |
| **Meetings:** | The Diploma Team of Reviewers will generally correspond and consult via email.  Formal Team of Reviewers meetings may also be held from time to time (recommended at least six monthly) by electronic teleconference (e.g. Zoom). If held, there shall be notes of the meeting taken and provided to RLSS HQ within 14 days.  Diploma Award applications will be circulated within 7 days following receipt and logging by RLSS HQ in accordance with the established procedures.  Agreement on nominations to be notified to the Board of Trustees will be via email unless there are any disputes, in which case a teleconference will be arranged for resolution. |
| **Duration:** | The Diploma Team of Reviewers is a Standing Committee of RLSS at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.  The Team of Reviewers will be reviewed every two years. Outcomes of the review and recommendations will be provided by the Chair (Team Leader) in conjunction with and via the Operations Manager to the Board of Trustees. The Review shall include:   * Team of Reviewers membership. * Level of participation and contribution by each member. * Number of nominations received and reviewed. * Number and subject matter of Research Papers and associated information submitted for Diploma consideration. * Diplomas awarded. * Research Papers and associated information available for promotion on the RLSS website and promoted through to RLSS Members. * Feedback from Members on the impact of the research and information provided to them. |
| **Overall Budget:** | It is anticipated that the work of the Team of Reviewers is voluntary.  Expenditure for Team of Reviewers communication and any member communication will be included in the RLSS HQ operational budget. |
| **Key Tasks and Deliverables:** | The Diploma Team of Reviewers shall:   * Keep abreast of current and historic research and developments in the field of drowning prevention, water safety and lifesaving. * In conjunction with RLSS Headquarters, assist in the promotion of the Diploma Awards within the RLSS and to the broader Commonwealth community. * Review the criterion for the assessment and approval of each of the Diploma Awards and review the criteria at least once each two years. * Review and assess Diploma applications in accordance with established procedures as outlined in these Terms of Reference, preferably with one month (30 days) of their receipt but no longer than 3 months (90 days). * Make recommendations through RLSS HQ to the Honours Committee for Honours acknowledging a person or persons who:   + have submitted significant pieces of work which do not meet the Diploma criteria, or   + have made significant contributions to expanding research and knowledge of drowning prevention and lifesaving and who may be worthy of being recognised with the annual Research Honour (as listed in the following section). * Identify and forward to RLSS HQ, research that does not meet the Diploma criteria or has not been awarded a Diploma, but is identified as significant contribution to knowledge related to RLSS vision and mission, for promotion and circulation to RLSS and its Members. * Investigate the development of a Diploma Network and/or creating formal or informal links with other international research/drowning prevention networks. * As and when required by the Chair, review Research Honour nominations in order for a recommendation to be made to the RLSS Board of Trustees for their June meeting.   ***Policies/Procedures***  In conjunction with RLSS HQ, at least once each two years, review and recommend guidelines and procedures associated with RLSS Diploma, including:   * RLSS Diploma Information Guidelines (Handbook) and Nomination Form. * Promotion of submitted research and associated information on the RLSS website and to member organisations.   In the event of an absence of consensus by the Reviewers in the awarding of a Diploma or if the Reviewers believe awarding a Diploma is risky or controversial, there will be independent oversight by a group comprising the Deputy Commonwealth President, Deputy Commonwealth President Designate, Executive Director and the Director of Drowning Prevention who shall determine an appropriate course of action.  ***External Relationships***  Members of the Diploma Team of Reviewers should use their knowledge of external organisations and relationships involved in research and practice in drowning prevention, water safety and lifesaving to input to the strategic direction of RLSS. |