

Society membership subscription rates 2021

Members are invited to approve the membership subscription rates for 2021. It is proposed that subscription rates will see a small increase for 2021.

1. Background

The Society's membership continues to grow through the combination of a quality membership offering, affordability and the good will of the membership, which acts and speaks very positively when promoting the organisation.

In order to continue developing and growing the membership, we need to ensure we maintain the balance between the cost of what we offer, the price we charge for it, and the value our members place on membership. This increase ensures that we can continue to offer our members quality via our communications, professional development and engagement opportunities, journals, and events.

2. Recent history of Society subscription rate increases

Membership rate increases have been relatively modest in recent years, as Table 1 illustrates.

Table 1. Subscription rates over the last seven years.

	2014 (£)	2015 (£)	2016 (£)	2017 (£)	2018 (£)	2019 (£)	2020 (£)
Full	75	75	75	77	77	79	79
Full Concessionary	33	33	33	35	35	38	38
Postgraduate	33	33	33	35	35	38	38
Undergraduate	15	15	15	15	15	17	17
Affiliate	15	15	15	Free	Free	Free	Free

In 2019, we adjusted the rate for members paying by direct debit, to align their rates with those paid by card/cheque paying members.

3. Comparison with other similar organisations

Across the market, subscription rates are generally increasing at a slower rate than they have in recent years, reflecting the relatively low rate of inflation (1.5% for 2019/2020) and the lower (for some organisations) rates of membership growth.

However, many of the organisations against which we compare ourselves have increased their rates over the previous 12 months, with their most current applicable 2020 rates displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of membership rates, in GBP, for different organisations. Those shaded in green offer post nominals/Fellowship – arguably a higher value offering which requires significant resourcing; those in grey are at a similar price point to us and those in blue have always been priced lower than us. Many of our members are also members of these organisations.

	Royal Society of Biology*	Royal Society of Chemistry	Institute of Physics	British Pharmacological Society	Biochemical Society*	American Society for Microbiology*	Microbiology Society	British Society for Immunology*	Society for Experimental Biology	Society for Applied Microbiology*
Fellow	193	162	146	175						
Full Member	116	140	117	105	84	160	79	75	63	60
Postgraduate Student	41	20	35	30	27	29	38	25	22	30
Undergraduate Student	15	20	15	free	16	29	17	free	22	15

*other organisations to which our members commonly belong.

4. Proposed subscription rates for 2021

In previous subscription rate papers, we have referred to the merits of reviewing our rates on a regular basis and adjusting them as necessary by small increments. This avoids the need for major and potentially uncomfortable changes at more irregular intervals.

Over the last few years, we have seen the growth of activities to support different underrepresented groups within the membership. The most visible of these groups, the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum, has led to various initiatives to encourage membership of the Society and has helped early-career colleagues interact with and shape the future of the organisation. More recently, we have also rolled out activities to support those who wish to learn more about clinical and health-related microbiologists via investment in collaborative efforts with the Healthcare Infection Society, Lister Institute, and continuing meaningful work with the Federation of Infection Societies. We continue to invest time and research into other growing areas of interest for our members and potential members while maintaining our activities to support our members' interests across the policy and publishing areas.

Based on our continued and considerable investment in the membership offering; our desire to maintain relativity with our competitors; and recognising the impact the coronavirus may have on some individual members' circumstances, we propose a relatively small increase to all rates in 2021.

The proposed subscription rates for 2021 are highlighted in Table 3.

Table 3. Microbiology Society membership subscription rates over the years, and the proposed rates for 2021, highlighted.

	2014 (£)	2015 (£)	2016 (£)	2017 (£)	2018 (£)	2019 (£)	2020 (£)	2021 (£)
Full	75	75	75	77	77	79	79	82
Full Concessionary	33	33	33	35	35	38	38	41
Postgraduate Student	33	33	33	35	35	38	38	41
Undergraduate Student	15	15	15	15	15	17	17	18
Affiliate	15	15	15	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free