



EASY STAGES GUIDES

SUBMITTING ANNUAL RETURNS

Introduction

Once a year, Clubs are required to update their membership records as held by Federation Office, and pay their fees accordingly. These are called "Annual Returns". Some Clubs experience difficulties in completing and returning them on time. This guide aims to explain the process clearly.

Stage 1: Be aware of Federation Timescales

Club Secretaries and Club Treasurers should be aware of the following dates:

- December/January:** Capitation fee information for the coming Club year is printed in Sorooptimist News
- 1st February:** Documentation is sent to AACM (African, Asian, Caribbean and Malta) Clubs
- 31st March/1st April:** Documentation is sent to UK and Republic of Ireland Clubs

The documentation consists of:

1. Club's individual annual return and list of members as currently held on the Federation database
2. List of Club Officers form
3. Membership fee breakdown
4. Annual return calculation sheet
5. Membership Forms (new members, resigned members, change of members details and transfer)
6. Book of Memories Form
7. Donation Form
8. Magazine Subscription Form (for friendship links)

- 31st May:** Deadline for receipt of updated annual returns, payment and Club Officers
- 1st July:** First reminders sent to Clubs whose Annual Returns/Payment have not be received.
- October:** Clubs who have not submitted their Annual Returns will have their Charters withdrawn.

Stage 2: Set appropriate Club Timescales

Plan ahead. Club Secretaries and/or Club Treasurers should: (the months given in the early stages are suggestions, set your own as appropriate for your Club)

1. **Nov:** Find out the Regional/National Association/Network fees for the following year (for UK Clubs this will include the UKPAC Levy)
2. **Nov:** Set your own Club fees for the following year.
3. **Dec/Jan:** Check Sorooptimist News for details of fees due to Federation

4. **January:** Write to all members (by email if possible), letting them know the total fees payable for the coming Club year, when these should be paid to the Club Treasurer, and asking them to confirm by 1st February that they will definitely be continuing their membership in the following year. Log responses, so that you know who is continuing and who is leaving (ask for reasons if someone decides to leave). Telephone anyone who has not responded by 1st February.
5. **February/March:** Complete a Member Leaving Form for each member who is definitely leaving, and ask them to sign it. Send it to Federation Office. If these forms are received in advance of the documentation being sent to the Club, the members will not be on the list of members which is sent to the Club, which will make it easier for you to complete your Returns and collect the fees due.
6. **April:** Use your Club AGM to collect any outstanding fees from members. **Note:** some Clubs successfully operate a direct debit scheme, where members pay a proportion of their fees monthly, so that they don't have to pay the whole amount at one time. Fees should be paid in advance, so that Clubs have the funds to pay the fees when due, but this does mean setting the amount payable 12 months in advance. Your Club could set a nominal amount to be paid monthly, and then any extra could be collected in April. This would have the advantage that if members have already paid (most of) their fees, they are less likely to leave, although Clubs should be prepared to issue refunds to members who have to leave due to unforeseen circumstances in advance of Fees having been paid to Federation/Region/National Association/Network.
7. **May:** Update the list of members which was sent to you by Federation Office. You can amend contact information directly on the list. Complete the appropriate form for any additional members leaving or any new members.
8. **May:** Calculate the amount payable to Federation Office, using the Annual Return Calculation Sheet. Multiply the number of members you have by the capitation fee due for each member. UK Clubs should add the Insurance Premium due. **Note:** Clubs should not pay fees for members that they have had no contact with following the initial letter in January. The Club may not be able to recover these fees, and Federation do not issue refunds once the Returns have been processed. If you have not received a response and have not been able to contact the member by telephone by the time you send in the Annual Returns, treat the member as leaving. They can be reinstated later if necessary.
9. **May:** Your updated list of members may be sent to Federation Office by email if preferred, or included with the cheque. Your list of Club Officers (elected at the AGM) should also be included. This should be received by 31st May. **Note:** you may pay by direct bank transfer if preferred BUT it is essential that:
 - a) the reference used is the whole or part of the Club Name (do NOT use Soroptimist International as your reference)
 - b) that you email Federation Office informing them that payment has been made by bank transfer and giving the date of transfer, amount and reference. SIGBI Bank Details will be sent by email on request. All charges incurred by making a bank transfer must be met by the Club.
10. **June:** Regional/National Association/Network fees to be paid, based on number of members submitted to Federation Office (contact your Region/National Association/Network for details of how these are to be submitted).
11. **July:** Allow up to one month for the Returns to be processed and the cheque to be cashed. If there are any errors or queries concerning your Returns or the amount paid, the Club Secretary will receive an email. She will also receive an email containing the membership numbers of any new members. No emails are sent simply acknowledging receipt of the Annual Return. If your cheque has not been cashed by 1st July, and you have not received an email as above, contact Federation Office to check that your Return has been received.

12. **July:** Reminders are sent to Clubs (Club Secretary), whose Annual Returns/Payment have not been received. If you receive a reminder, then respond IMMEDIATELY. You may have sent your documentation and it has not been received, or you may have a reason that it has not been submitted on time. Communication is vital, so that Federation Office is aware of the situation.

13. **October:** Reminders will be sent regarding outstanding Annual Returns/Payments between July and October, with copies to the appropriate Federation Councillor and Region/National Association/Network. At the FMB meeting prior to Federation Conference, any Club whose Returns are still outstanding, will have their Charter withdrawn. If no communication is received by the same time the following year, the Club will be closed.