

Preliminary remark

For a hundred-year-old international body the draft is adequate as machinery but thin on the protections a learned society most needs in difficult times: a clear, statute-level disciplinary procedure with a right of reply; an explicit conflict-of-interest provision; and a safeguard of the editorial independence of the journal and of the Archives from the governance organs. The Academy's own history argues for writing these protections into the statutes themselves, rather than leaving them to a *règlement intérieur* that any future Council majority can rewrite.

The “Perpetual Secretary” and the term limit

The title in Article 16 designates the office as “perpetual,” yet Article 12.5 assigns it a four-year term, renewable once, a maximum of eight years. A perpetual secretary who is term-limited is a contradiction the statutes nowhere resolve. The Academy should decide explicitly whether the historic title is preserved as an honorific (in which case the statutes should say so) or whether the term limit governs (in which case the title is misleading and a future dispute over re-eligibility has no clean answer).

The cap of 500 effective members and the transition

Article 6.6 limits effective members to 500, while Article 6.1 folds all former corresponding members into the effective class on the day of adoption. For an academy with a century of accumulated correspondents, this risks exceeding the cap immediately, with no rule governing the consequence. A transitional article is needed: either grandfathering members above the cap until attrition brings the total below 500, or suspending new elections until that point.

Inconsistency in the amendment machinery

Article 20.1 permits amendments proposed “by the Administrative Council or one-quarter of the members” and states that “the rules of Article 11 apply.” But Article 11.2(b) requires individual written confirmations from one quarter of the effective members within thirty days — a demanding threshold — whereas Article 20 refers to active members and a one-third quorum. Active and effective are distinct categories under Article 6.3, and the two articles use them inconsistently. This will generate procedural disputes precisely when the stakes are highest.

Discipline and expulsion left to the internal regulations

Article 6.5 permits termination for “serious misconduct” but delegates the entire procedure to internal regulations not before the Assembly. Members are thus asked to approve a power of expulsion without seeing how it will be exercised. At a minimum the statutes should fix, at statute level, who may initiate proceedings, what notice and right of reply apply, and what majority is required. Given the Academy's own documented history with external political pressure on learned societies in the 1930s, a statute-level safeguard here is not a formality.

Article 12.6 (succession by runner-up) The rule giving preference to “the candidate with the second highest number of votes” assumes contested elections. Where a post was unopposed there is no runner-up and the rule is silent. A fallback should be stated, appointment by the Executive Committee, ratified by an Extraordinary General Assembly.

Gendered language — Officers are referred to throughout in the masculine (“He represents,” “his term”), while Article 3(d) commits the Academy to gender balance. A centenary revision should adopt neutral phrasing or “he or she/ hey.”

Article 10.1 (frequency of the Assembly) — “Every two years” and “every four years on the occasion of a Congress” read, literally, as two overlapping series. The intended biennial

cycle, one instance of which coincides with the quadrennial Congress, should be stated unambiguously.