

THE MASONIC CIRCLE

The Masonic Circle held its first meeting on Wednesday 10 July 2019. There were 24 participants in attendance from seven Lodges including three from the Lodge St. Andrew No. 1437 SC. The group comprised 3 installed Masters, 12 Master Masons, 4 Fellowcrafts, and 5 Entered Apprentices (see Appendix 1). Four of the participants also attended the **Essential Facilitation Skills Workshop** and helped facilitate the discussions.

What is the Masonic Circle?

The Masonic Circle, a facilitated Masonic study group, is a monthly collaborative learning sessions for Freemasons who want to improve their understanding of our rites and ceremonies. The purpose of the Masonic Circle is to:

- to stimulate our interest and understanding of Freemasonry,
- to foster the intellectual development of the Craft, and
- to promote masonic education and instruction through open discussion.

The meetings of The Masonic Circle are open to all Freemasons including Entered Apprentices

How does the Masonic Circle work?

At the Masonic Circle meetings, participants engage in actively learning by exploring important Masonic and philosophical concepts in our Ceremonies. The Masonic Circles is based on inquiry-based and collaborative learning; educational methods alluded to in the Ceremonies of Initiation and Passing. The form of learning helps the participants develop fresh perspectives and promote a better understanding of Freemasonry.

Why the Masonic Circle?

Research shows that students who attend facilitated study groups regularly gain a deeper understanding of the material. Facilitated study groups also offer the potential of fostering a sense of community. Research shows that over time, the participants increasingly engaged and interacted with peers; leading to a stronger sense of community and belonging that motivated individuals to look out for one another.

What does the Masonic Circle's programme offer?

At the inaugural meeting of the Masonic Circle, the participants discussed "What is Freemasonry?" and upcoming meetings the Circle will discuss:

14-Aug-2019	The Perfect Points of our Entrance
11-Sep-2019	Who are Fit and Proper Persons to be made Masons?
09-Oct-2019	The Cardinal and the Theological Virtues

13-Nov-2019	Audi, Vide, Tace - The Initiatic Experience
11-Dec-2019	The Deeper Meaning of the Greater & Lesser Lights
08-Jan-2020	What are the Three Grand Principles of Freemasonry?
12-Feb-2020	The Meaning of Charity in its Most Ample Sense
11-Mar-2020	The Symbolism of the Three Distinct Knocks
08-Apr-2020	Using the Working Tools of the First Degrees
13-May-2020	The Symbols of the First Degree Tracing Board
10-Jun-2020	Towards an Exegesis of Freemasonry

In Year 1, the Masonic Circle will focus on the Entered Apprentice Degree. In Years 2 and three, the Masonic Circle will develop the syllabus for the Fellow Craft and Master Masons Degrees.

CONCLUSION

The Masonic Circle is intended to address membership attrition.

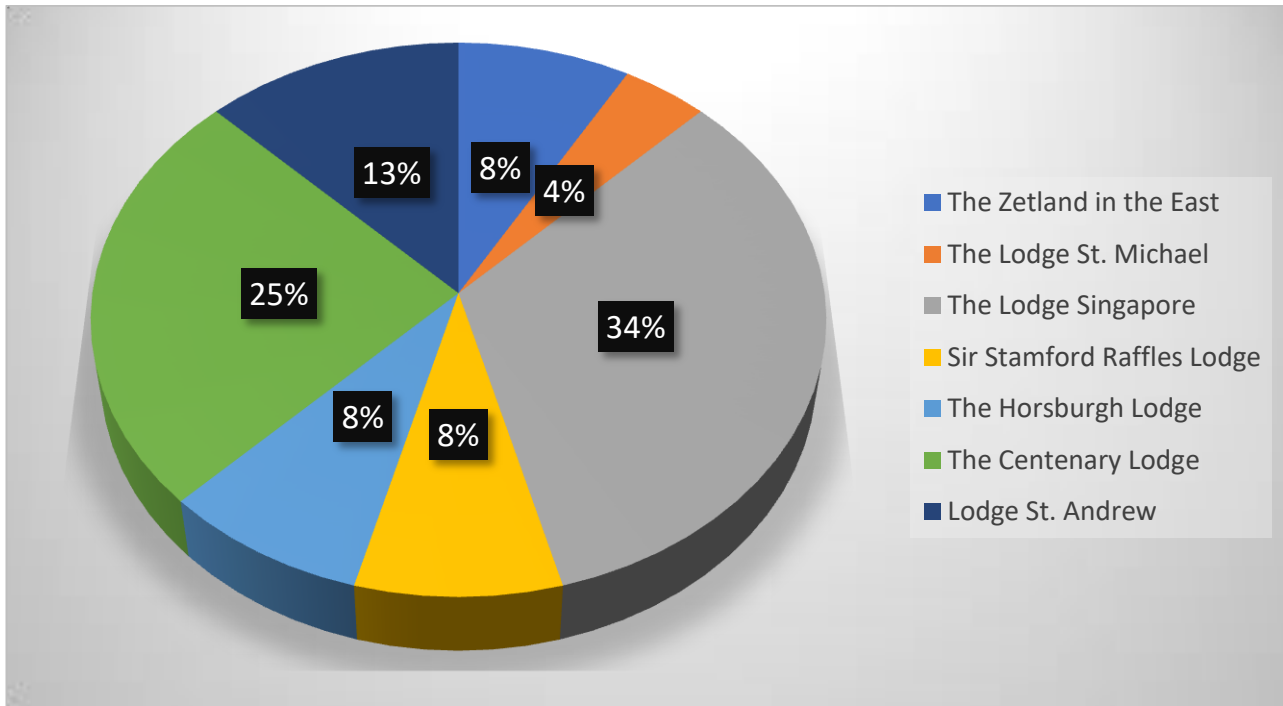
Research has shown that facilitated study groups have helped address attrition in many higher education institutions. Research has also shown that retention can be improved if students experience social and academic integration. Social and academic integration is often restricted to the classroom and often facilitated by teachers, an often limited resource. Facilitated peer learning in study groups, however, promotes academic and especially social integration outside the classroom without recourse to faculty resources.

See Appendix 2 for **Evaluation** and Appendix 3 for **Additional Feedback**

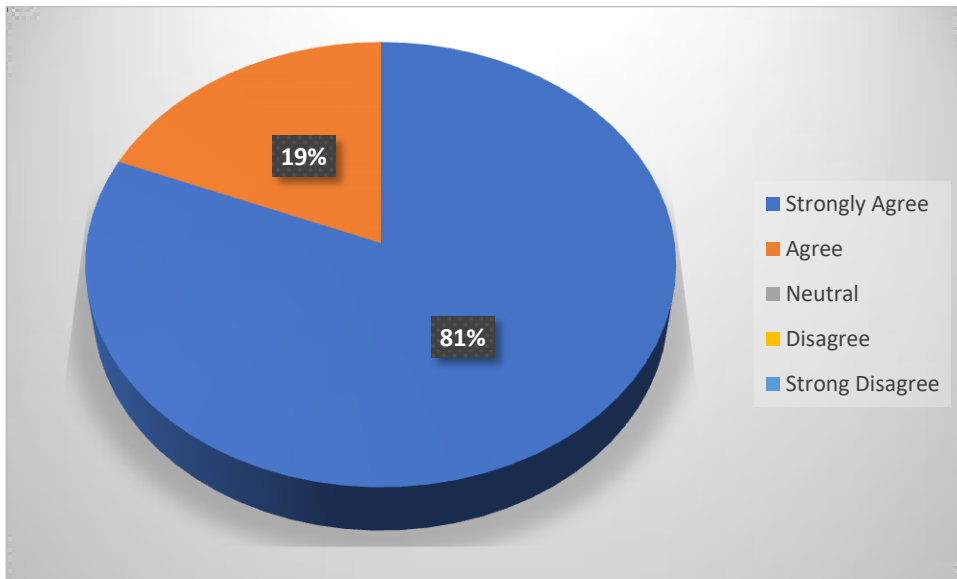
Darren Desker

Darren Desker
President
DGLEA Education Group

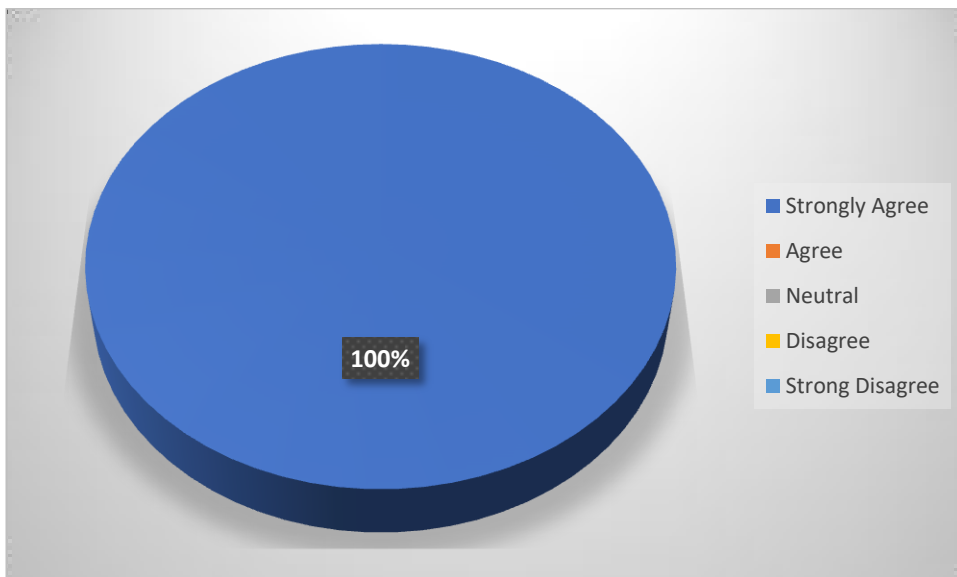
ATTENDANCE



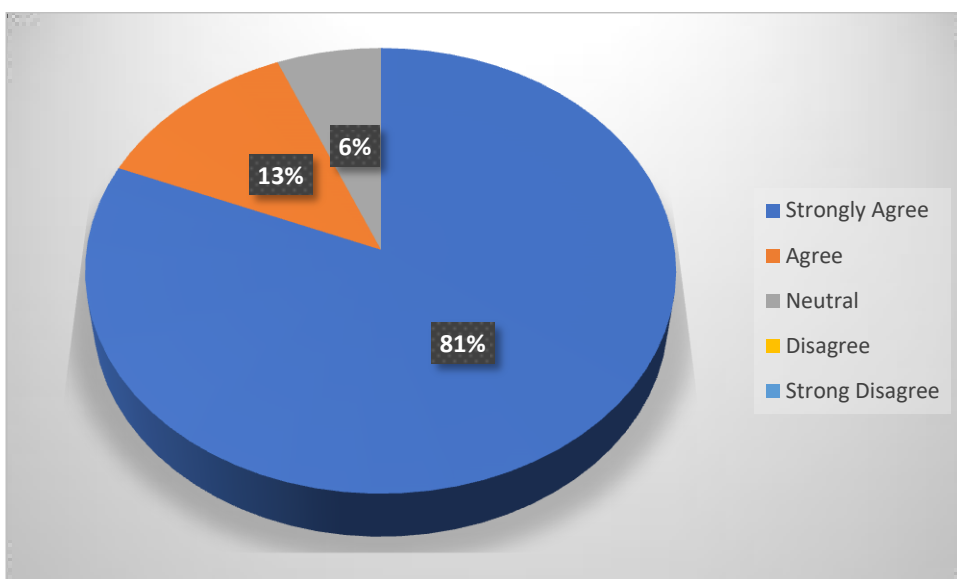
EVALUATION



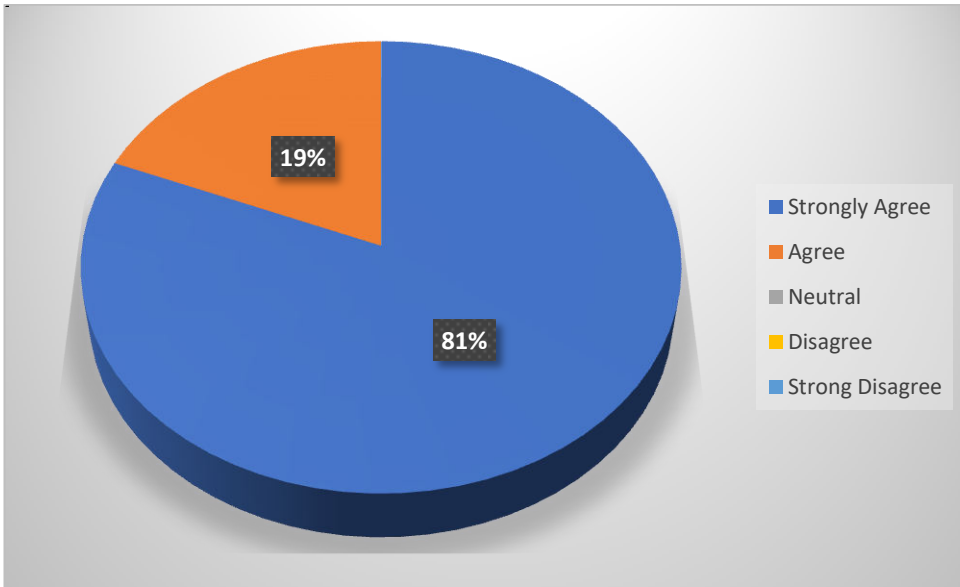
The programme was helpful in understanding Freemasonry



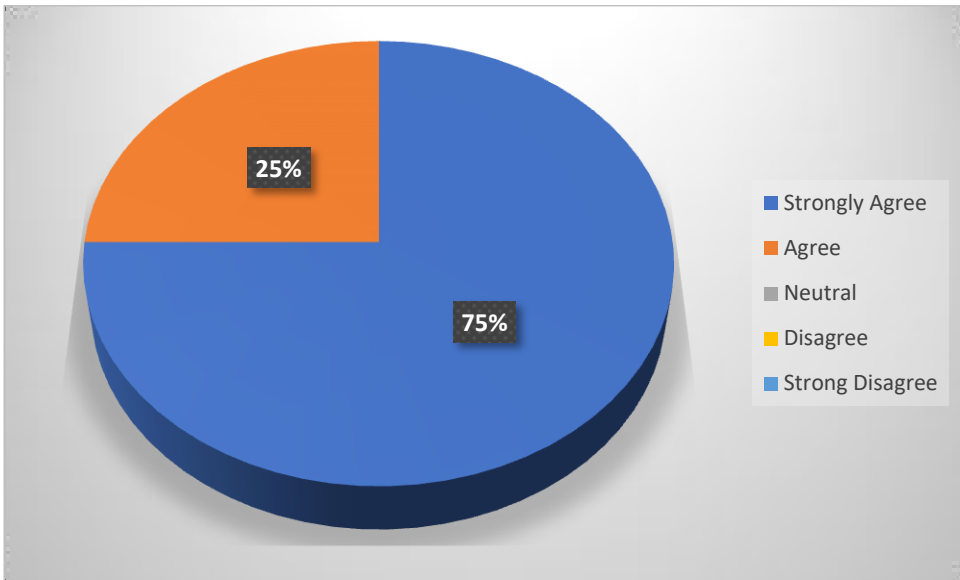
The programme was well paced, and within the allotted time



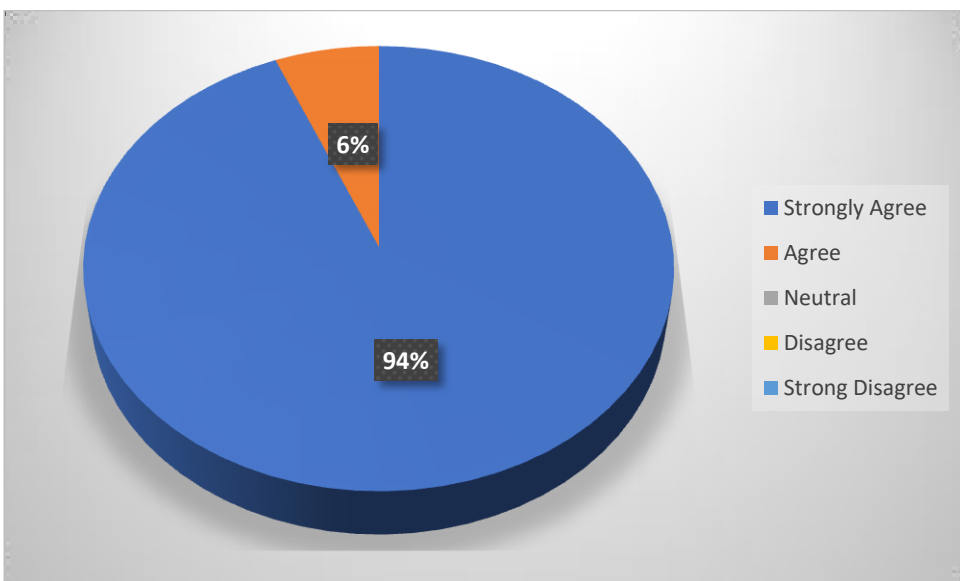
I will recommend this programme to other Freemasons



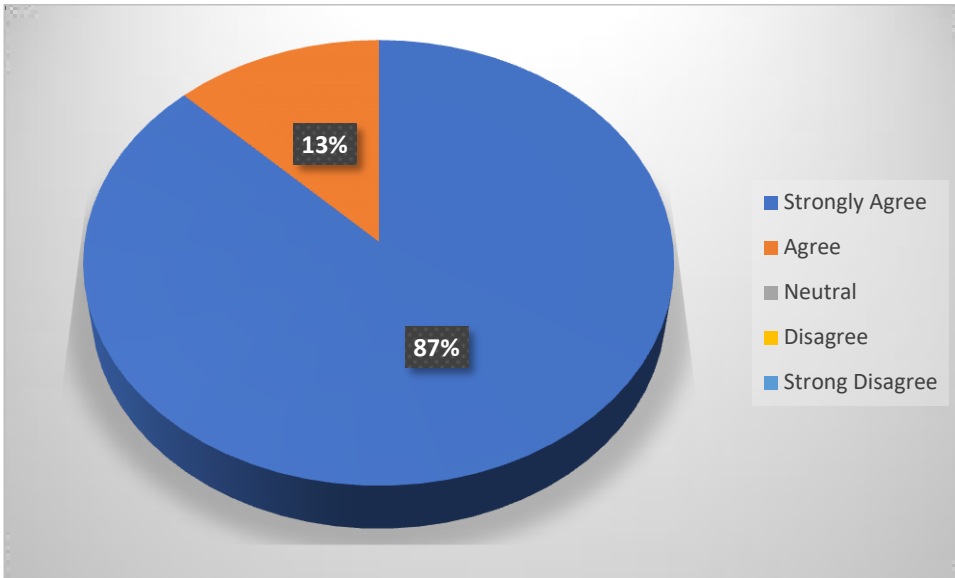
The instructor was a good communicator



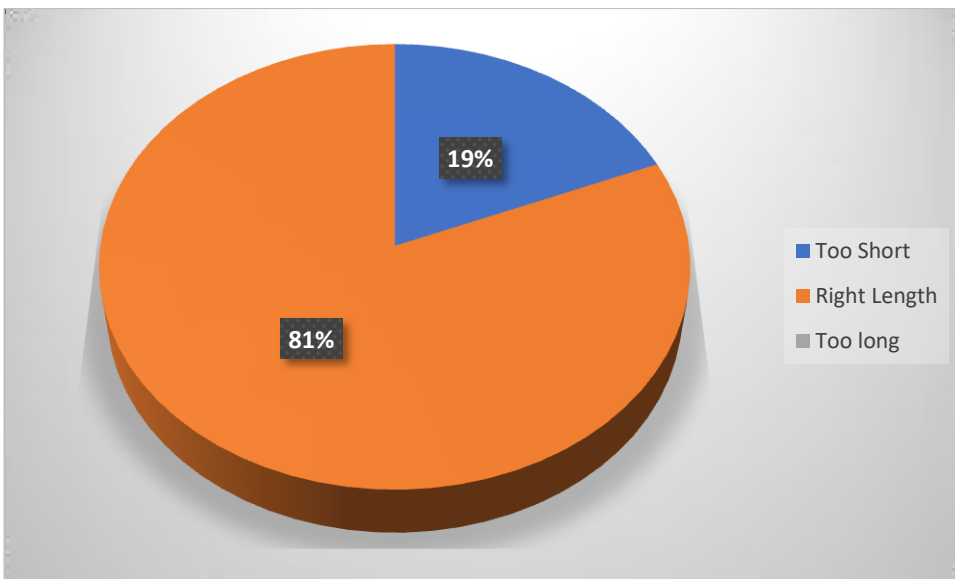
The material was presented in an organised manner



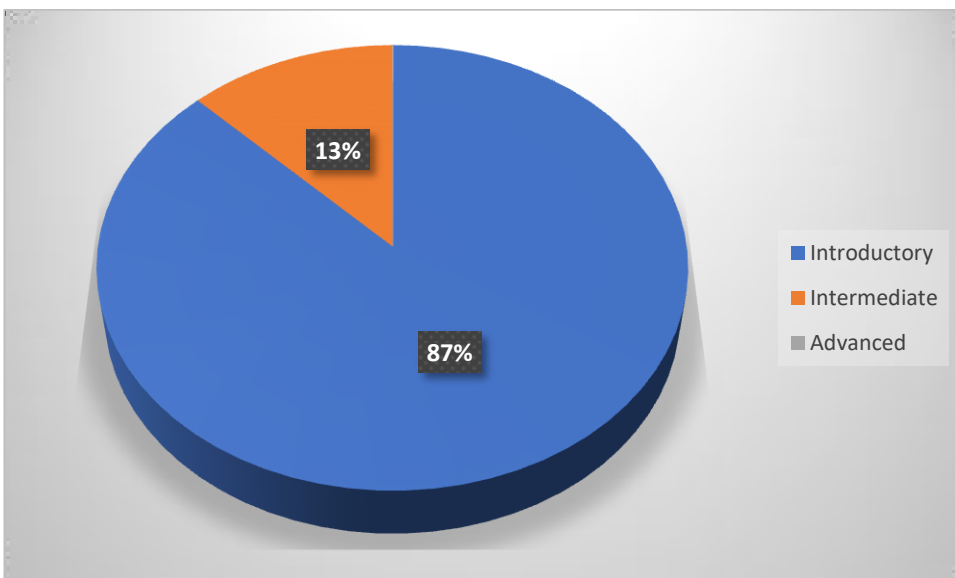
The instructor was knowledgeable on the topic



I would be interested in attending a follow-up, more advanced workshop on this same subject



The duration of the programme



The level of the programme

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

Q. What did you most appreciate / enjoy / think was best about the programme?

- The presenter's knowledge of the subject, and the positive contribution from the participants.
- The discover of Freemasonry's history of ideas
- There seems to be a structured programme to introduce Freemasonry to the newly initiated. It will help with the journey, iron out any misunderstanding, and help form new friendships.
- The depth of the subject and the group dynamics.
- The time for exchange of ideas and interactivity.
- Interactive programme, fun, and enthusiastic group of Freemasons.
- Listening to different perspectives on Freemasonry, and the explanation of the First Degree.
- Enjoying Darren Desker's performance and his quoting ritual is inspiring.
- The group work.
- The learning.
- The points were very well explained and I learnt a lot.
- Love the topics I have an interest in.
- Interaction with the Brethren

Q. I would be able to enjoy Freemasonry better if I knew about:

- The history or we can watch movies or do book reviews.
- The different symbols of Freemasonry.
- Masonic knowledge would generate more understanding of the Craft.
- Rituals and Masonic concepts.
- The rituals and symbols.
- Everything, and guided on what else is to be expected or learning on this journey.
- How I would better apply it to myself.
- Rituals and leadership improvement and how to improve character building and communications skills.

Q. I would like to learn more about Freemasonry by:

- Discussion, sharing and listening to more senior Freemasons.
- Engaging in more respectful group learning exercises, exploring Freemasonry's capacity for illumination in full.
- A structured programme.
- Structured lectures.
- W. Bro. Darren Desker and Brethren who have the knowledge to impart on basics of the Craft.

- Listening more to what senior Freemasons have to say, more lectures on the symbols and meaning of the rituals.
- Darren Desker.
- Attending more education programmes and attending other Lodge meetings.
- Attending classes.
- Attending and collaborating in more Masonic education.