

UACE(S)

Universities Association
for
Continuing Education (Scotland)

Hon Secretary
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**A meeting of UACE(S) was held at 2.00pm
on Friday 06 February 2004
at Napier University
in the Boardroom, Merchiston Campus,
10 Colinton Road,
Edinburgh**

Present: Sam Allwinkle, Napier; Jean Barr, Glasgow; Una Bartley, Universities Scotland; Lucy Bate (UACE Administrator); Con Gillen, Edinburgh; Ralph Gunn, Bell College; Lesley Hart, Strathclyde; Theresa Hoare, Glasgow; Hazel Knox, Paisley; Lucy McLeod, Napier; Anne McGillivray, Paisley; Keith Mackle, Dundee (Secretary); Helen Martin, Glasgow Caledonian; Margaret Mill, Napier; Alex Neil MSP (Chair); Leni Oglesby (UACE Secretary); Mike Osborne, Stirling; Donald Paterson, Aberdeen; Kate Sankey, Stirling; Tracey Stewart, Abertay Dundee; Raymond Thomson, Strathclyde; Colin Thorne, Strathclyde

The Chair welcomed Professor Leni Oglesby, UACE Secretary and Lucy Bate, UACE Administrator

- 1. Apologies**
Gillian Brown, Edinburgh; Wilma Clark, UHI Millenium Institute; Martin Cloonan, Glasgow; Dorothy Christie, Stirling; John Field, Stirling; Jim Gallacher, Glasgow Caledonian; Tom Inglis, Heriot-Watt; Julie McAndrews, Aberdeen; Pauline Parr, Perth College for UHI; Margaret Timms, Robert Gordons
- 2. Minutes of the meeting on 31 October 2003 in Perth**
Minutes of the previous meeting accepted as an accurate record.
- 3. Matters arising**
5 (a 5) Register of Expertise. The Secretary agreed at the last meeting of the WPHE Sub-committee to take this on board on behalf of UACE(S). He circulated a draft pro-forma which will be circulated to all UACE(S) Council and Sub-committee members. The intention is to produce a database which might be accessed via a UACE(S) website but would certainly be available for consultation by UACE(S) members, the wider Scottish education community, the Scottish Funding Councils and the Scottish Executive. The Secretary asked for comments on amendments to the form to be sent to him before he distributes it more widely.

5 (a 6) Map of Institutions. It was intended that Institutions produce maps of their institutions for this meeting. This hadn't happened. The Secretary agreed to distribute a model or form that member institutions could complete for the next meeting in June.

5 (a 9) Website. The task of producing a website was remitted to the Administration Sub-committee. It was agreed to discuss this under the Administration report.

4. Chair's comments

The Chair stated that he was very pleased to be Chairing UACE(S). He informed Council that the consultation paper on the merger of the Scottish Funding Councils would be out soon. The merger was a recommendation of the Lifelong Learning Committee that he had Chaired. Jim Wallace, Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, will announce, after 28 February, the latest phase of the Higher Education Review. This will look at, amongst other issues the knock on impact of tuition fees.

5. Reports from Sub-Committees

(a) WPHE (Dr Hazel Knox)

Dr Knox provided copies of her report to Council members (see attached). Issues covered at the last meeting included the future of UACE, the register of Expertise, the future of SNAP, a discussion about the range of other groups and bodies in existence. Dr Fearn agreed to tell the Committee about the activities of Scot-ELAS. The statistical returns were discussed along with the widely distributed press release which resulted in a flurry of comments and enquiries to Dr Knox. The next proforma is now out for completion with a deadline of the end of February for its return. The meeting also heard about institutions' involvement in the Community Planning Process and Community Learning and development Strategies.

(b) CPD (Professor Sam Allwinkle)

Professor Allwinkle reported on the draft results of the survey of Higher Education CPD activity carried out across Scotland. A new Knowledge Transfer Grant Matrix, with 12 categories (CPD is one), was launched half way through the survey and it was decided to halt it at that point. Information has been received from 10 HEIs in Scotland. There are a number of issues that are concerning the CPD Sub-committee. The Scottish Funding Councils' Joint Strategic Plan highlights HEIs' role in research and commercialisation and FEIs' role in CPD activities. Professor Allwinkle believes that lifelong learning and CPD needs to be seriously grasped by the Universities, the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Parliament. He feels that people in work could be the new excluded group. The relaunch of ILAs and piloting of BLAs was mentioned. Alex Neil believes BLAs could be an important tool to generate funding for CPD.

(c) Administration (Ms Theresa Hoare)

The focus of the last meeting of the Administration Sub-committee was the reintroduction of ILAs. A number of members had attended roadshows in Edinburgh and Glasgow. It appears that administratively the process will still be quite onerous. It was felt that politically the HEIs will have to become

involved. There was some concern about the timing of the launch – the thinking was that it may not be in time to realistically implement for 2004/05. A number of institutions were considering piloting the new scheme with a small and manageable number of courses where it was felt the most needy would benefit. It is still unclear who will decide on the eligibility of courses. Concern was again raised about the conflicting information given out by helplines the last time for which HEIs unjustly took the criticism. Robert McLean of the Scottish Executive announced the intention of holding sector specific meetings. The HE one is intended to be at the end of March and will be open to as many institutional representatives as possible. He is aware that there are problems specific to the HE sector. The scheme will be almost fixed by the end of March. It was agreed that UACE(S) members will come together to produce some guidelines to be given to the Scottish Executive and to helpline staff that they can use when advising callers on HE provision. Lesley Hart agreed that timing was very tight and welcomed the idea of piloting with a small number of courses in the first year. The means tested element (individual income less than £15k) was mentioned and it was stressed that this was an individual rather than a household income. This was welcomed because it may allow people on low incomes who are not eligible for the part-time fee waiver to participate. Ms Hoare raised the issue of the web pages at this point. The Administration group were unclear as to what Council were expecting of them. Council discussed the benefits of having a website, who it was aimed at and how it would be maintained. It was agreed that a small sub-group of the Administration Sub-committee would meet to look at these issues with the aim of producing a plan to bring to the next meeting. The Secretary indicated that there may be a small amount of money available to allocate to the production of a website.

(d) Linguists (Ms Gillian Brown)

The Linguist Sub-committee have not met since the last Council and no report was received.

(e) SNAP (Ms Lucy McLeod)

There had been two SNAP events since the last Council meeting. On 7th November an event on Access to Science was held at the University of Paisley and on 16 January an event on Workbased Learning was held at Glasgow Caledonian University. Each event attracted a different range of people and it is clear that SNAP is acting as a national network for practitioners in HEIs and FEIs working in access and widening participation. The next event is to be held at the end of March or beginning of April. This event will explore issues around institutions' participation in Community Planning and Community Learning & Development Strategies. Our Chair, Alex Neil, is scheduled to speak at the event. The grant for SNAP has been extended to the end of April 2004. The SNAP Committee, at its last meeting, discussed a proposal put to it by Margaret Dundas, The National Co-ordinators for Widening Participation. The proposal suggested that a Steering or Executive Group would be made up of the chairs of the four Regional Access Fora with additional representation. This group would guide and decide on a programme. There may be a role for an operational group made up of practitioners to ensure events took place. The administration of SNAP will be subject to a new contract. The next meeting of the SNAP Committee is on 13th February and it is hoped that some decision on its future would have been made by the Funding Council by then.

The Secretary reported that he had met with Margaret Dundas two days before and that there were three possible future outcomes. The Funding Council could put SNAP out to tender, it could be wholly subsumed within the role of the National Co-ordinator for Widening Participation or it could be subsumed within the Regional Access Fora. Margaret Dundas was insisting on an answer before the SNAP Committee meeting on 13 February. The Secretary has since been informed by letter that the funding for the current SNAP project will not be extended beyond 30 April 2004 (see enclosed letter).

6. The Future of UACE(S)/UACE – oral report from Dr Knox

The Secretary tabled two papers: the note of the meeting of the Working Group on the Future Structure of UACE on 18 December 2003 and Comments on UACE Priorities, structure etc from Professor Jim Gallacher of Glasgow Caledonian University who is a Vice-chair of UACE. These papers are enclosed with this minute. The notes of the meeting on 18 December 2003 propose a federal structure for UACE with a geographical sharing out of the annual conference (this year in Wales, next year in Scotland). The issue that was not tackled in any detail was the financial one and the proportion of members fees that would be returned to Scotland. The note of the meeting was to go to UACE Council on 29 January 2004 but that meeting was cancelled due to snow. UACE Secretary Leni Oglesby agreed with Dr Knox and stressed that discussions had focussed mainly on the English/Scottish arrangements due to those who were present at the meeting. Discussion centred on two topics – the future mission of UACE and its structure. All members have the right to ask what UACE will do for them in the future. Professor Oglesby believes that finance should not drive the mission and agreed that it was entirely appropriate that membership fees are withheld until a final decision has been made. There was a general recognition that Wales and Scotland are more effective in their dealing with their political masters. Professor Oglesby stated that there would be a paper out towards the end of February and that it was hoped to make final decisions in April. General discussion then took place about the relationship with NIACE and what sort of structure would be preferred and the issue of research with contributions from Dr Barr, Professor Osborne and Ms Hart. There was also general support for the comments made by Professor Gallacher in his paper. It was agreed that once UACE produces its paper a sub-committee of UACE(S) Council will be to provide comment on it. It will be made up of the Chair, the Secretary and the Chairs of the Sub-committees.

7. Reports from Universities

University of Stirling – Escalate UK producing a UK wide database on access to teaching programmes – this will include Adult Education teacher training within Universities – small grants are available for developments. The Administrator for the Medical Schools Widening Participation to Medical Education funded by SHEFC and NHS Scotland is based at the University of Stirling. The next CRL Forum is to be held on 31 March and is on the topic of Learning Regions.

University of Edinburgh – The University has changed its structure to three Colleges and Schools. The Office of Lifelong Learning is currently outside the academic structure but will be merging into the College system. The new Principal is keen that students have proper status within the University. The Knowledge Transfer grant and CPD Grants will be put into the baseline on the Colleges rather than the OLLL. All accredited courses are to be revalidated and be given appropriate levels on the SCQF. The University will be moving to a semester system. Online e-

learning courses have been developed in Animal Welfare, Clinical Audit and Archaeology of Scotland.

University of Glasgow – Members were reminded of the date of the event to mark Professor Maria Slowey's departure from the University. The Chair in Adult & Lifelong Education will be replaced. There will be a new research centre in the Faculty of Education.

University of Strathclyde – The successful Summer programme launched last year is to be expanded. The CPD Unit has been involved in a programme with the NHS designed to encourage ethnic minority groups into the NHS.

University of Paisley – Alex McLennan is moving to take up the post of Principal of Ayr College and will be a great loss to the University. The Winning Women project has been extremely successful. The Part-time Forum was successfully launched in mid-November. A second meeting is to be held on the 21st May.

8. AOCB
9. Date of next meeting Friday 25 June 2004, Bell College

Keith Mackle, Hon Secretary UACE(S), 09 April 2004