

SUALL

Scottish Universities Association
for Lifelong Learning

Hon Secretary
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Minutes of the Meeting of SUALL Council held on 12th November 2010 at the University of St Andrews

Present:

Fiona Andrews (UWS), Con Gillen (Edinburgh), Ruth Harris (St Andrews), Theresa Hoare (Glasgow), Jim Gallacher (chair), Helen Martin (Glasgow Caledonian), Alix McDonald (Strathclyde), Iain Morrison (UHI), Peter Murray (Aberdeen), Jane O'Rorke (UWS), Donald Paterson (Aberdeen), Geraldine Prince (ECA), Jonathan Staal (Abertay), Kaye Stevenson (Dundee), Hilary Westwood (Scottish Government)

Apologies:

Simin Abrahams (US), Jim Bradley (Stirling), Pete Cannell (OU), Neil Croll (Glasgow), Jackie Dunne (UALL), Richard Dockrell (Stirling), Graeme Ligertwood (SAC), Lea McKay (UWS), Rod Purcell (Glasgow), David Smith (Glasgow Caledonian), Ruth Whittaker (Caledonian), George Wilson (Edinburgh Napier)

Attending:

Lucy Bate (UALL), Wilma Clark (Tayside & Fife Forum)

The business meeting was preceded by a presentation from Wilma Clark, the Director of the Tayside & Fife Forum. She spoke about the key achievements of the Forum in the last five years and the embedding and exit strategy for the continuance of these activities. One of the main successes had been identifying gaps and developing partnerships to fill them. She urged institutions to engage with their Community Learning Partnerships to keep structures in place.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Business meeting were accepted as an accurate record with the addition of the phrase "in addition to the normal 750 at the summer school" in the ECA report.

Fiona Andrews requested that the paragraph describing her talk be amended to read:

The business meeting was preceded by a presentation from Fiona Andrews, the Acting Director of the West Forum. The scope of the Forum's work (which is supported by the Funding Council) had narrowed over the years, with the younger school age groups being changed (the GOALS project) as the emphasis had moved to the transition from S3-S6 to HE (the FOCUS project). Some schools which were dropped had found the original work so valuable that they were now funding it themselves. A pilot study on the effects of Families, Parents and Carers was underway. Further changes would take place in July when funding for the Adult Learning and Communities strand would cease. There were serious concerns about the impact of this on the SWAP programme (which provides agreed progression routes from colleges to universities).

2. Chair's Business

Jim Gallacher asked members to consider what the purpose of SUALL was, what defined our identity given that we were comprised of diverse groups with different agendas. It was obvious that the university sector would suffer in the near future so how do we achieve more by working together? Hilary Westwood reported

that there would be a move towards supporting skills for work and small business training and universities should think about how they could tap into this funding stream.

It was noted that SUALL had a body of expertise that could be used to brief institutions on changing their culture in order to value part time study. It was agreed that the area of flexible provision was one that SUALL could influence. Once the Green Paper was published a small group would be established to co-ordinate a SUALL response. This group would comprise of Jim Gallacher, Iain Morrison, Con Gillen/Geraldine Prince and a rep from GCal or UWS.

It was proposed that SUALL should present something at the UALL conference in Stirling. Jim Gallacher would liaise with Lucy Bate on the format.

3. Appointment of New Secretary

Following the restructuring at Glasgow University, Ms Hoare was no longer directly involved with Lifelong Learning and had therefore asked that a new Secretary be appointed. She was willing to continue till the next meeting but it was essential that someone else be identified by this time.

4. Reports from Sub-Committees

Widening Participation in HE

Jane O'Rourke reported that the collection of the WP stats was proving difficult. The Group were asked to provide clarity on the purpose of this exercise and to consider whether it was still relevant. Peter Murray offered to look at the form to determine how easy it would be to get the information from HESA data. It was agreed that a report on these issues should be prepared for the next meeting. A number of institutions now had the Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark and had action plans for supporting care leavers. The issue of access to the professions would be discussed at a future meeting.

Management and Administration

At its last meeting this group had a presentation from Irene Vezza of Glasgow University about disability issues. This presentation was available on the website. The group were briefed by Hilary Westwood on proposed changes to ILA500, which from August 2011 will be called a part-time grant and will be administered completely by SAAS with online application in line with full time grants. It was noted that several members of MAULL were also members of the Government's 'ginger' group for part time funding and any issues about this could be raised through this forum. Attempts would be made to increase the spread of representation on MAULL by writing to those institutions who do not currently send anyone to the meetings. The next meeting in January would concentrate on tutor engagement and the May one on assessment.

Research

This group had not met.

KILTS

This group had not met.

It was suggested that in future written reports should be submitted in advance to allow more time for discussion of issues arising rather than just providing a summary of activities. Council were also asked to consider whether or not these subgroups were still an appropriate way of carrying on the business. Sub group chairs should discuss this with their members, and report back to the next meeting.

5. Reports from Universities

Glasgow Caledonian: restructuring, 7 schools to 3; move to a trimester system being reviewed; summer school to be reviewed, had healthy numbers; campus in London now running.

Strathclyde: Rob Mark appointed as Head of CLL which was now in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences; expect to get more involved in research.

UWS: numbers healthy, UG FT increased substantially; LLL Academy subsumed into Student Link.

Aberdeen: same number of students as last year, picked up in last few days; 6 new courses using the videod presentation technique in the level 1 MA and pilots running in education and sociology.

Edinburgh: numbers had increased, online registration had been a big investment but was working well; finances were healthy, getting bequests which were being used for student bursaries; languages for undergraduates had produced extra students for the Modern Language department.

Edinburgh College of Art: fees were up and numbers were down, hopes that the merger would help but no transition funding assigned to support the part time degree; Abu Dhabi degree programme now approved.

Glasgow: despite the 25% rise in fees numbers on the open programme had remained fairly steady; around 50% of students on this and the Access programme were using ILAs or SFC fee waivers; the Access courses were heavily oversubscribed and applications had to be closed early in the summer; 184 students entered GU from Access courses, 75 from DACE, 77 from SWAP; following restructuring the School of Education has appointed co-directors for Community Engagement to pick up the lifelong learning brief.

St Andrews: the evening degree was now administered by the Learning & Teaching Office while the part time daytime degree was in Student Recruitment & Admissions; a greater breadth in the demographic of students on non credit courses was now being seen; summer programmes for adults were being re-introduced.

UHI: hopefully close to having university title conferred; major curriculum reform being undertaken which will enable prior credit, lifelong learning and sporadic study patterns to be recognised.

6. AOB

Members were asked to check the accuracy of their entry on the SUALL website and notify Donald Paterson of any changes required.

The chair asked that a one page summary be produced by Council members detailing what comes under the heading of lifelong learning in their institution. These should be forwarded to the Secretary for circulation in advance of the next meeting.

7. Date of next meeting: Friday 11th February at Dundee University

Theresa Hoare, Hon Secretary SUALL
23 Dec 2010