

SUALL

Scottish Universities Association
For Lifelong Learning

Hon Secretary
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Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 5th June 2008 at the University of Edinburgh

Present:

Jean Barr (Glasgow), Pete Cannell (OU), Con Gillen (Edinburgh), Lesley Hart (Strathclyde), Theresa Hoare (Glasgow), Marion Judge (Edinburgh), Alex MacLennan (UWS), Geraldine Prince (ECA), Raymond Thomson (Strathclyde), Colin Thorne (Strathclyde)

Apologies:

Jim Gallacher (Glasgow Caledonian), Helen Martin (Glasgow Caledonian), Anne McGillivray (UWS), Michael Allardice (Dundee), Fiona Andrews (Glasgow), Jill McKay (Dundee), Iain Morrison (UHI), Donald Paterson (Aberdeen), Alex Rougvie (St Andrews)

Attending:

Lucy Bate (UALL), Leni Oglesby (UALL)

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were approved.

2. Matters Arising

a. *Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy*

Alex MacLennan and Lesley Hart had met with Mark Batho immediately before the AGM. The meeting had been very positive, with Mark confirming that the Minister's view of the strategy was that it covered cradle to grave and that the adult learning part was therefore very important. Mark reported that the draft report of the Universities Taskforce did not mention lifelong learning and felt that it was therefore important for SUALL to be represented at the stakeholder meeting being held in August; he would ensure that an invitation was issued. The feeling of Council was that the battles for recognition of the worth of our work needed to be fought with our institutions not the government.

He also promised to set up a meeting with Fiona Hyslop, probably in September. A short briefing paper, no more than three pages, would have to be prepared, detailing what was happening in the sector. It was agreed to identify 5 or 6 main topics, if possible linked to the skills strategy eg RPL, blended learning, languages, immigrant communities; and to mention the EUCEN link to show the international nature of the work. Geraldine Prince agreed to pull this together along with statistical evidence which Theresa Hoare would collect.

b. UALL Awards Scheme for Good Practice

The proposed awards scheme was supported and approved by the UALL Council and would be piloted via its communications group. Major decision on the format still had to be taken but it was hoped to present the first awards at the March conference in Brighton.

c. Website

There was some discussion about who the website was for. It was agreed that the primary target was not so much learners as funders and practitioners. It was noted that the search facility was not working; Theresa would find out what technical help could be given by the site's hosts at Aberdeen. There was then a more general discussion about who SUALL should promote itself to and why, how we should do this and how any success would be measured. The key phrase that emerged from the discussion was that we were involved in 'talent management'. A small working group, comprising Lesley Hart, Geraldine Prince and Jean Barr, agreed to take some of the ideas forward.

3. Chair's Business

Professor MacLennan reported that the SCQF handbook was being revamped, with a big update on RPL. A number of additional credit rating bodies had been approved, including the Police College and the Chartered Institute of Bankers.

4. Reports from Sub-Committees

a. Widening Participation in HE

There had still been no feedback from SFC on the reports submitted by institutions on the use of the Wider Access Retention Premium or dissemination of good practice. There was no overall consistency on usage of funds within HEIs.

Phase Two funding of the Wider Access Fora would end on 31 July 2008. Allocation of funds from SFC for Phase 3 had been confirmed and each regional area was in the process of developing Phase 3 activities.

Many of the WP Group had already been awarded the Frank Buttle Trust Quality Mark for their Looked After Children activities - focusing on those that have come through care. Many other WP members were in the process of applying for this Mark.

Discussion took place re the recent allocation of FE/HE Articulation Funding to HEIs who had established (high number of student) articulation routes. There would be lead HEIs situated throughout Scotland who would be forming partnerships with Colleges and HEIs to further develop these routes. Members would be in discussion with lead HEIs re this development.

A request would be made to ALL SUALL partners for statistical returns for 06/07 and 07/08. It was anticipated that a leaflet/brochure would be produced in the autumn.

b. Management and Administration of Lifelong Learning (MAULL)

Hilary Westwood and Hazel Rutherford from the Scottish Government met the group to talk about ILA500. This was well attended as representatives from WPHE were also present as it was held between the two meetings. A number of practical issues were raised which they promised to address in the Q&A page on their website. A number of members were still coming under scrutiny within their institutions, with administrative structures, programmes and budgets being examined. The next meeting of the group would focus on the student evaluation process.

c. Research

The last meeting of the group had been held in parallel with a seminar at Glasgow University on "The Imagined Future: Adult and Lifelong Learning Research in Scotland", where the speakers were John Leavey from Learning Connections and Brenda Morgan-Klein from the Institute of Education at the University of Stirling. Pairing up with other organisations to run seminars was seen as a good option for the group to pursue. It was noted that a number of people were interested in doing research but needed a community to be involved with. The group would make an attempt to expand its membership, perhaps bringing in people from other disciplines. Michael Allardice had resigned as secretary following a change to his role at Dundee; he would be replaced by Ralf St Clair. Prof Oglesby noted that the "How to get published" seminar held in England was very well attended and the group should perhaps consider organising something similar.

d. KILTS

The attendance at the last meeting had been very poor; however those who were there heard a very good presentation from Bill Harvey, Director of Teaching and Learning at the Funding Council, on Knowledge Transfer and CPD. There was a feeling within the group that CPD was being under-reported by their institutions. Efforts would be made to reach the relevant people in each institution, particularly those working in research and innovation offices. Ideally there would be two representatives from each institution. A flyer detailing the benefits of membership would be produced. Members of the group were all now on the UALL CPD network and it was suggested that Amanda Selvaratnam be invited to give a talk on how this had developed so successfully.

5. Reports from Universities

Strathclyde: There had been a review of the Centre for Lifelong Learning which had produced a positive outcome. They would be moved into the Faculty of Education and their community engagement and access work, which was seen to be important, would be subsidised. The curriculum for the access summer school had been re-designed and had 130 students on it. The general summer programme was recruiting well.

UWS: More restructuring was taking place here. The Adult Learners Week winner was one of their part time students. Over 5,000 had enrolled on the summer programme. It was intended to hold a meeting of the part time forum in Glasgow in October.

Edinburgh: The merger with the Institute for Applied Languages was moving forward. Senior posts would be filled in August. The Office now had a section devoted to providing study skills for the whole university. Over 70 new courses would be offered in 08/09 although there were now no computing courses.

OU: Research on the impact of differential funding on student choices (full time/part time, curriculum etc) was being undertaken. A study on the use of ILA200 (80% response rate) showed that 82% of the learners were women, who greatly valued the fact that it was based on individual income. There was evidence that students were choosing courses on the basis of the funding available. Some curriculum developments, previously all done in England, were now originating in Scotland. A study is being done on new migrants/refugees and the implications for HE. Work on the needs of learners in rural areas was being carried out with UWS in Dumfries, with the emphasis on partnerships and sustainability.

ECA: ILAS have had a tremendous impact, with one third of the students using them, often to take an additional course. 850 learners were signed up for the summer school. The physical moves were now complete and all the staff were in one building now.

Their fourth re-validation in nine years was being done. International links were being nurtured: workshops in Estonia to look at exporting a model of the summer school had sold out; lifelong learning workshops had been run in Kyoto; and \$73,000 had been given by JP Morgan to support CPD for art teachers in Dubai.

Glasgow: A squeeze on budgets meant that Professor Findsen's post had not been replaced. However, the part time teacher for Ancient Studies had been approved. Students on the Community Development degree had been on a very successful study trip to Kathmandu, where they lived with local families, helped to build a school and worked with NGOs. The current allocation of ftes to continuing education programmes was being reviewed.

6. UALL Report

Intensive lobbying over ELQs had taken place. Lancaster CE department had been very badly hit and was breaking up. Birkbeck would no longer have a separate LL faculty but oversight at senior management level would remain. It was proposed to hold a number of seminars with political parties in order to get lifelong learning into their election manifestos. The quality network was being disbanded and its work subsumed into other networks. Work based learning and CPD networks were doing exceptionally well. UALL attention was now being turned to European links.

7. Dates of Future Meetings

14th November 2008 - University of Glasgow

13th February 2009 - OU (Edinburgh)

12th June 2009 - University of Aberdeen

Theresa Hoare, Hon Secretary SUALL
28 July 2008