

## First meeting of the SCONUL Working Group on Information Literacy, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005

### Notes

Present: Hilary Johnson (Chair), Vanessa Crane (EB Rep), Janet Peters, Helen Hathaway and Sheila Webber.

**Item 1. Apologies** were noted from Peter Godwin, Martin Jenkins, Stephen Town, Wendy White, Jo Parker and Ellen Breen. The resignation from the group of Martin Jenkins was noted, and membership was added to the agenda under item 8.

**Item 2. The notes of the 11th meeting** of the SCONUL Advisory Committee on Information Literacy were considered and agreed. The new Working Group will pick up a number of areas of work from the previous Committee and provide continuity. The Action points from the meeting were considered and noted as appearing later in the agenda.

**Item 3. Matters arising.** Janet Peters offered to contact the HEA Newsletter editor with a view to promoting the Learning Outcomes case study publication. **Action JaP.** It was noted that the idea of a list of organisational contacts had not been pursued, and would be actioned in conjunction with the production of the notes of the current meeting **Action HJ**

**Item 4. Discussion of the remit of the Group.** HJ and VC provided a contextual statement regarding the genesis of the document brought to the meeting. It had been primarily produced to meet the need for an outline document for the SCONUL AGM, but was in no way meant to be definitive, as many members of the group had not been able to comment hitherto.

The discussion opened up around the focus which the new Group now wished to pursue. This needs to demonstrate a match the SCONUL strategic direction of assisting especially with 'hot topics' in learning and teaching. It was agreed that the positioning of information literacy as both a means to aid learning, *and* as an appropriate goal for personal and professional development for students and for all those working in higher education, was important to the next phase of SCONUL's work in this arena. The recent context of the establishment of the CILIP special interest group, providing a professional focus for practitioners in IL, was noted. This allows the SCONUL Working Group to take a strategic, inter-professional approach, which can bring into its framework the skills interface between information and learning, information and research, and information as an organisational asset for organisational enhancement. In this regard, information literacy is not only an aspect of learner/learning support, but also in itself a pedagogical approach to the development of graduate and professional skills, linking with topics such as PDPs, career development and employability, the ethics of information use and legal compliance issues such as plagiarism and licensing (e.g. re-use of information resources in virtual learning environments). This view of the focus will be helped if the remit drops reference to libraries per se, as the library can be seen as only one form of interaction with information-related tools, techniques and processes.

The following were mooted as defining the new remit

- Develop, refine and promote the concept and SCONUL model of information literacy within the higher education sector

- Ensure that the role of information literacy in learning and teaching, research, and organisational enhancement is communicated effectively and understood by the wider educational professional groups in HE
- Work collaboratively with other groups (both within and outside SCONUL) and organisations to stimulate strategies and the development of underpinning pedagogies relating to information use in HE
- Develop the Group's web site to provide a focus for IL in HE in the UK
- Inform and advise the SCONUL Executive Board on IL and learning issues

The rationale as had been drafted for the document was felt to be a largely acceptable statement. Two amendments were suggested – that instead of 'learners and researchers' we substitute 'higher education', and that there could usefully be a reference to the 'Seven Pillars model'.

The revised rationale now reads (changes in italics)

'The Group is informed by recent debates about graduate skills, research training, communities of practice, e-learning and digital library developments, learning and teaching *using* digital information environments. The Working Group is concerned with the wide spectrum of ways in which libraries, librarians and the use of information contribute to, and enhance the effectiveness of, the process of learning and the support for learners *and researchers*. The developing concept of information literacy is an especial area of interest, *and the Group will refine and promote the SCONUL Seven Pillars model for information literacy*. IL is interpreted broadly, to encompass not only the development of information skills in higher education, but including aspects of understanding, knowledge creation (*and management?*), critical analysis, evaluation and judgement, and the entirety of interactions between users and information resources in the pursuit of excellence in learning, teaching and research.'

It was agreed that the remit and rationale should not make specific reference to named groups with which to collaborate, as these will shift over time and be varied according to strategic area of engagement. This aspect will be included in the objectives. The Group would devise a reference list of contacts and organisations as an aid to formulating action plans and specific objectives.

The meeting reviewed the draft objectives for 2005 and 2006.

- For 2005, an objective should be to develop the Seven Pillars model for a wider audience, reviewing the language and examples drawn upon to illustrate its relevance for the wider interpretation of IL in HE. A further objective could be to produce an update on the situation in respect of IL strategies in the context of institutional learning and teaching strategies. SW volunteered the possibility of a student project that could assist with the information gathering for such an update.
- The objective of producing a position statement should be expressed in relation to the SCONUL strategy and vision and current concerns/issues for learning and teaching.
- The objective in relation to evidence-based methodologies should be one for 2006 rather than 2005.

- An additional objective for 2006 was to ensure at least two significant contributions to major professional/sectoral event on behalf of the group.

The document with the remit, the rationale and the objectives for 2005 and 2006 will be redrafted in the light of these comments. **Action HJ**

The intention of placing a proposal in relation to MOSAIC Plus before the Executive Board was an early objective. HJ undertook to revisit the existing draft paper and take this forward for the next possible meeting of the EB. **Action HJ**

It was proposed and agreed that the idea of a Group event would be a substantive item at the Autumn meeting of the group. **Action HJ to alert LH**

## Item 5. Reports

- IL website development. The Group received an update from Selena Lock who had recently attended a meeting of the group looking at the EDUSERVE-supported web site. (*NB notes to be circulated with the minutes*). The Group felt that the request for a 'brief description of sectoral developments' in relation to HE activity was possibly not helpful. It was unclear what was intended to be done with this information. However the meeting was supportive of the need for active engagement with the website, and active links between the WGIL web pages and that of the new site. **Action HJ to discuss with ST and SL.**
- CILIP CSG IL Group. SW reported on a meeting of the CSG IL group. (*Notes to be forwarded to the WGIL members*). It was agreed that mutual cooperation was useful. Notes of each group's meetings will be circulated, and the possibility of formal cross-membership or other liaison mechanism will be considered at the next meeting of WGIL. **Action SW to circulate notes; HJ to ask LH to include this in the agenda for the next meeting.**
- Trident Group. HJ updated the meeting. Representatives from ALT and UCISA will attend the SCONUL one-day meeting in November. The ALT conference in September will also provide a useful networking opportunity.
- JISC I-Skills project has produced 2 'glossies' which had been circulated to staff development heads in institutions. This development was insufficiently known about by librarians – a note will be sent to LIS-SCONUL to alert to where the material is available (**Action HJ**). The material may provide a useful starting point for discussions with staff developers.
- National Teaching Fellowship. HJ updated the meeting with the project being developed by Chris Powis at Northampton. The focus of this is on librarians as teachers rather than IL as such, but will clearly be of interest to the Group. HJ will arrange for CP to attend a future meeting of WGIL. **Action HJ/LH**

**Item 6. e-Learning Task Force report.** The publication of the final report was noted and welcomed. The report provided a number of areas of work to which WGIL will contribute, as noted in the objectives. HJ noted that there was one further meeting of the Task and Finish group in July, from which she will report back.

**Item 7. Updating Seven Pillars.** SW introduced this by highlighting the ways in which she uses the model in her teaching of students. There is a need to update the presentation of the model. An outline draft had been circulated, upon which she would be pleased to receive comments as to structure, and any thoughts about amendments. **Action : all to comment to SW; SW to produce a revision.** This will be needed for September so will be actioned before the next formal meeting.

**Item 8 AOB.** Membership of the Group was noted as needing to be revisited. All the existing members wished to continue, but the (temporary) departure of JoP left a vacancy, and the resignation of MJ from the Group also left a vacancy. . HJ will clarify situation with regard to CONUL representation. The possibility of someone from the educational/staff development community was mooted. Members of WGIL will be asked to comment on suggestions for membership. **Action HJ note in the record of the meeting; All to consider membership.**

SW mentioned her involvement with a **European Socrates project** on developing the LIS curriculum. She is part of a group looking at information literacy and learning. SW also noted a useful contribution to a Canadian conference organised under the auspices of **WILU – Working Group on Instruction of Library Users**. Canada had not had a standing group on IL but this was about to be formed. Members of WGIL were very interested to hear this and looked forward to cross-Atlantic cooperation!

**Item 9 Date of next meeting.** It was noted that the 15<sup>th</sup> September may not be a feasible date. **HJ to confer with LH** and alternative dates will be flagged to the Group.

The meeting closed at 3.20 pm.