

SOCIETY OF COLLEGE NATIONAL & UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Working Group on Performance Improvement

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29 November 2007

Present: Stephen Town (Chair), Toby Bainton, Angela Conyers, Susan Copeland, Claire Creaser, Philip Payne, Tracey Stanley, Rupert Wood (Secretary), Jean Yeoh

1. Apologies had been received from Charlotte Jarvis.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2007 were accepted as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

3.1. Considering how to interest VCs in the outcomes of VAMP (Value and Impact Measurement Project) and the Performance Portal was on-going. It was agreed to consider this again once the Portal had been further developed and evaluated.

3.2. Stephen had discussed the wording of the question on libraries in the National Student Survey with the Chair of the SCONUL Quality Assurance Working Group. They had agreed that both groups would gather evidence about the validity of the question, possibly with a view to influencing its wording in due course. Stephen would ask Charlotte if she could pursue this on behalf of the WGPI.

Action: ST / CJ

3.3. Information from some recent PhD work underway on 'quality maturity' in libraries was still to be circulated to the Working Group.

Action: ST

4. Loughborough / BCU bid to HEFCE concerning evidence based management in HE libraries

Claire reported that a revised project proposal was to be submitted by 4 December 2007 and thanked those WGPI members who had helped with the bid. If successful it was planned that the project would start in April 2008.

5. SCONUL statistics

5.1. Claire reported that returns of the 2006/07 survey were now being submitted. Because of the development of the FAQs fewer procedural and methodological enquiries were being received from respondents.

5.2. Susan raised the issue of whether more guidance for respondents was needed on space issues, especially where space was shared between libraries and other units (for example other student services) but might or might not be under the aegis of the library. If changes to questions are needed the benefits to the survey's validity need to be balanced with the comparability of the statistics over

time. It was agreed that this issue would be discussed at the next meeting of the Sub-Group on Statistics.

Action: PP

5.3. It was agreed that it would be useful to incorporate a report for comparing an institution's data with the average of the various sector groups (CURL, new universities, etc.) in the SCONUL Statistics on the Web. Changes were also needed to the scaling properties of the charts. Claire will draft a proposal about these changes, which it was hoped could be funded in 2008.

Action: CC

5.4. Philip reported that the Statistics Sub-Group had highlighted two problematic areas which required further thought: firstly, how statistics on the preparation and delivery of information literacy teaching were to be effectively captured in those cases where institutional VLEs were used; and, secondly, whether multimedia material should be considered as a separate category when stock size and acquisition rates were measured.

5.5. The e-measures definitions table will be updated.

Action: AC

5.6. A successful training session arranged for those filling in the returns had been run by LISU, and a second was planned for January 2008. Links to the presentations made at the training days would be available via the Performance Portal.

Action: CC

5.7. A discussion list for those filling in the statistical return will be established, using the Performance Portal.

Action: PP

6. The Performance Portal

6.1. The Portal had been launched successfully in June 2007 at the SCONUL Conference to some acclaim.

6.2. There was a need to ensure that the SCONUL Statistics pages could be accessed as conveniently as possible.

Action: ST

6.3. Work on the Value section, still to be populated, has been commissioned from Sue Boorman (Higher Education Consulting).

6.4. Philip highlighted that the value and impact of space use in libraries was a potential area for development. It was noted that the M25 Consortium was interested in this topic at the moment.

6.5. Jean highlighted the value of ITIL (The Information Technology Infrastructure Library) to converged services; including content about ITIL would be investigated further.

Action: ST

6.6. Other possibilities for additional content were discussed. A bid would be made to the SCONUL Executive Board for unexpended funds from 2007 to be carried forward in order to develop the content further. It was expected that sub-editors / moderators would be needed to help populate the site further since an effective Community of Practice would probably only develop in this area with some encouragement and support. Volunteers were sought from the Working Group; those interested in taking on this role should contact Stephen.

6.7. A growing international interest in the Portal could be expected, for example from the US; this might pose issues for editorial control later on.

6.8. It was important to start collating statistics of use of the Portal so that its development could be effectively evaluated. Stephen said he would arrange for some statistics to be circulated.

Action: ST

7. The Publisher Deals Project

7.1. Angela reported that the second phase of the Project was now underway with seven continuing institutions and seven new ones involved. The Project aimed to assist libraries in the collection and analysis of e-journal usage statistics available through NESLi2 or similar publisher deals. Participating libraries are able to judge the value of the big deals and share knowledge and skills in analysing them. Ten publisher deals were now being covered.

7.2. The Project had done some analysis for the JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) on the possible reasons for the low take up of some of the Nesli2 deals.

7.3. Angela will evaluate the new JISC Academic Database Assessment Tool for possible inclusion in the Performance Portal's resource list.

Action: AC

8. LibQUAL+

8.1. Stephen reported that there had been twenty SCONUL member participants in the 2007 survey. A results and training meeting had been held in July 2007. Sixteen SCONUL members had expressed interest in the 2008 Consortium, including four new ones. An introductory training session will be held for new participants in January 2008.

8.2. Cranfield University is developing a research proposal to evaluate the use of LibQUAL+ in the UK.

8.3. Stephen has accepted an invitation to join the LibQUAL+ Steering Committee in recognition of the contribution made to the expansion and development of LibQUAL+ through the SCONUL Consortium and beyond since 2003.

9. WGPI Strategic Planning and the 2008 Action Plan

9.1. The 2008 Action Plan had been agreed. Costings would be sent to the SCONUL Executive Board. Included would be: a sum to develop the SCONUL Statistics on the Web (see 5.3. above); a sum for further development of the Performance Portal (see 6.6. above); a sum for the proposed joint SCONUL/ARL/CARL Evaluation Meeting to sponsor a keynote speaker; some 'ambassador' funds to support joint ARL/SCONUL or LIBER/SCONUL initiatives. Itemised costs will be sent to the SCONUL Secretary as soon as possible.

Action: RW / ST

9.2. It was agreed that the annual HELMS (*Higher Education Library Management Statistics*) report, which is a summary of some of the SCONUL Statistics aimed at VCs, should be made available via the web pages.

Action: TB

9.3. In the light of 4 above, the encouragement of an evidence based approach should be added as an objective in the Action Plan.

Action: RW

9.4. A short summary of the Working Group's work over the last year was required for the SCONUL *Annual Review*. A draft will be circulated to the rest of the Group for comment.

Action: RW

10. Any other business

It was noted that putting up documents on the WGPI's web pages would now be handled by the Secretary rather than the Chair.

11. Dates of future meetings

The proposed meeting on 17 January 2008 has been postponed until 6 March. Future meeting dates are:

6 March 2008 (12noon for 12.30 at SCONUL Headquarters)

22 May 2008 (12noon for 12.30 at SCONUL Headquarters)

18 September 2008 (12noon for 12.30 at SCONUL Headquarters)