

SOCIETY OF COLLEGE NATIONAL & UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Working Group on Performance Improvement

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24 September 2009

Present: Mary Davies (Chair), Toby Bainton, Simon Bevan, Angela Conyers, Claire Creaser, Ann Davies, Louise Jones, Elizabeth Malone, Rupert Wood (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence / Membership of the Working Group

Apologies had been received from Susan Copeland.

Mary welcomed the new members of the Working Group to the meeting.

The Working Group expressed its thanks to Philip Payne, who had resigned from the WGPI since the last meeting. Philip had chaired the Sub-Group on Statistics; managed the LIRG/SCONUL Impact Initiative Project; and generally championed the WGPI's work over many years. Rupert will convey thanks to him from the Group.

Action: RW

2. The Action Plan and future priorities

The Group's Action Plan was reviewed. Most of the outstanding deliverables from the Plan concerned the Performance Portal, discussed under item 7 below.

It was noted that an annual report for 2009 and a new Action Plan for 2010 would be requested by the Executive Board before the end of 2009.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

4.1. It was agreed that Simon and Louise would liaise with representatives from the Working Group on Quality Assurance about the library / learning resources questions in the National Student Survey to see if a case could be made for recommending improvements. Such a case, if it were to be made, would need to be drawn up jointly by the WGPI and the WGQA for the Executive Board.

Action: SB / LJ

4.2. Angela reported on the Publisher Deals Project. The Project had assisted libraries in analysing the value of the Nesli 'big deal' journal packages by organising workshops and providing participants with templates for carrying out detailed analyses of usage statistics. Twenty libraries in each of two rounds had worked with data from six publishers.

4.3. Claire thanked those who had sent comments on the draft Annual Statistics 2007/08. The listing order of institutions had been changed on the Statistics on the Web to bring them in line with the order in the SCONUL membership list. The same order would be introduced in the Annual Library Statistics for 2008/09.

4.4. The [results of the survey on assessment and performance measurement in UK and Irish libraries](#) had now been published. The report had been launched at the recent Northumbria Conference in Florence by Stephen Town on behalf of Selena Killick and Tracey Stanley.

5. SCONUL Statistics

5.1. Claire reported that the 2007/08 statistics had been published and the database for the Statistics on the Web updated. Returns for 2008/09 were starting to be submitted.

Two further Workshops will be organised (17 November 2009; 7 January 2010) aimed at both those who fill in the returns, and those who use the statistics (for benchmarking, etc.)

5.2. e-Measures

Angela reported that, after a wide-ranging review, draft recommendations for revising the questions on electronic sources of information were now being made.

The aim of the review was to ensure that the e-measures questions in the annual statistics were as robust as possible in order to give confidence in their use in a national and international context, and to assist SCONUL members in benchmarking their own results with other libraries.

A focus group of e-resource librarians and others had commented on the recommendations and some had agreed to pilot them. The draft recommendations would now be circulated to the lis-SCONUL-stats email discussion list for comment. Meanwhile members of the Working Group agreed to arrange for feedback on the proposals from their own institutions to be sent to Angela and Claire by mid-October 2009.

Action: ALL

The intention is to minimise any extra burden on those filling in the annual returns; however, the level of assistance and support that it will be appropriate and affordable to give respondents will need to be discussed, since this is a complex matter. A degree of centralisation of some data collection might be possible. It was agreed that further thought would also be needed on the level of detail required from these questions.

5.3. The Statistics Sub-Group.

It was agreed that the membership of the Sub-Group would be: Ann Davies (Chair), Toby Bainton, Pat Barclay (co-opted), Angela Conyers, Susan Copeland, Claire Creaser, Elizabeth Malone.

It was agreed that the time was ripe for a comprehensive review of the statistical series to make sure they were in line with the needs of SCONUL members. Issues of 'super-convergence' in some HEIs might need to be addressed further. Liaising with UCISA (Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association) about matters of joint interest could be fruitful; and a wide consultation with SCONUL members generally over the direction of development might be required.

6. JISC Collections NESLi2 Usage Statistics Portal

Angela demonstrated the Portal, which is currently under development. It has been commissioned by JISC Collections from Evidence Base and Mimas, working with Cranfield University, in order to assist libraries and JISC in the analysis of Nesli2 usage statistics and the management of e-journal collections. Usage data from five libraries in respect of three publisher deals has been used to develop the prototype.

One of the Portal's offerings is a 'SCONUL return' table giving usage data for the academic rather than the calendar year.

The Working Group thought that the Portal showed great potential usefulness and appeared very easy to navigate. It could also be of benefit in encouraging more COUNTER compliant statistics from some publishers.

It was agreed that Mary would send a paper to the SCONUL Executive Board meeting in October recommending that SCONUL sends support for this development to JISC Collections.

Action: MD

7. Development of the Performance Portal

It was agreed that a Sub-Group would be formed to consolidate and develop the Portal. The membership would be: Louise Jones (Chair), Simon Bevan, Claire Creaser, Selena Killick (co-opted), Rupert Wood.

It was noted that content for the Value section of the Portal was being commissioned.

It was reported that the Executive Board was keen for the Statistics Trend Analysis to be disseminated as widely as possible.

8. Any other business

8.1. Angela reported that Evidence Base was developing a project on Value Management and agreed to circulate more information about it to the Working Group.

Action: AC

8.2. Angela reported that a seminar on measuring impact that she and Philip Payne had given at the recent Umbrella Conference had stimulated a lot of interest.

A talk Philip Payne had given to a JIBS User Group meeting on e-measure statistics had also generated a lot of interest. It was thought that any comments from JIBS User Group members on the proposals for the revised e-measure questions in the SCONUL Statistics, once the proposals had been reported to the lis-SCONUL-stats list (see 5.2. above) would be very welcome.

9. Dates of future meetings

Rupert will circulate possible dates for meetings in January 2010 and in May 2010. [Subsequently arranged for 21 January at 12.00 for 12.30; and 12 May at 12.30 for 1.00]