

## SCONUL/UCISA WORKING GROUP ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

.Minutes of Meeting held on 13 June 2003 at the SCONUL Secretariat

**Present:** Jeremy Atkinson - University of Glamorgan (Chair)  
Michael Breaks - Heriot-Watt University (Secretary)  
Scott Robertson - University College Chichester  
Ann Mathie – University of Gloucestershire  
Carys Thomas - Loughborough University (UCISA)

**Apologies:** Keith Webster - School of Oriental & African Studies  
Biddy Fisher – Sheffield Hallam University  
Cathryn Gallacher – University of Bristol

**Copies:** Wayne Morris - University of Glamorgan

### 1. Membership

It was noted that Julie Howell had resigned and would be replaced by Cathryn Gallacher, University of Bristol. This change had been confirmed by the SCONUL Executive Board. Carys Thomas was welcomed as the new UCISA representative on the Working Group.

### 2. Previous Minutes of Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting dated 23 October 2002 were approved.

#### Matters Arising from the Minutes

It was confirmed that the UCISA representative would forward the minutes of these meetings to appropriate UCISA members.

**Action: Carys Thomas**

The Action Plan has been forwarded to the Executive Board.

The Aide Memoire for Reviewers Evaluating Learning Resources has been published as a SCONUL briefing paper.

### 3. Teaching Quality Enhancement Committee Report

SCONUL had made a response to the interim report emphasising the issues of Institutional Information Strategies and the contribution of non-teaching staff. The final report, submitted in January 2003 (<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/Learning/TQEC/final.htm>), proposes the creation of a single, central body to support the enhancement of learning and teaching in higher education. The new body is provisionally called The Academy for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

### 4. QAA Developments

An update on quality issues had been sent by Jeremy Atkinson (JA) to the SCONUL and UCISA lists and he had sought responses from those who were willing to share their experiences of the new process of QAA Institutional Audit. 12 responses have been received to date.

JA met Nicola Channon from QAA on 23 May 2003. He had discussed with her the new quality processes and how learning resources would fit with them. It was perhaps too early to reach any conclusions and the new processes should be better understood by Christmas

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2003. The discipline audit trails will pick up learning resources and the SCONUL/UCISA Aide Memoire will continue to be used as long as the academic review process continues, and it may also be used for Further Education audits. It was observed that the lack of concentration on Learning Resources could be seen as a positive aspect of the review process, as there was general confidence in their management and delivery. The QAA would welcome feedback from SCONUL/UCISA as both the QAA and institutions gain more experience. The QAA felt that it needed more information on student data and this might be available via the UCISA MIS Group.

**Action: Carys Thomas**

There was a need to gather information on institutions' experiences of the new processes and it was agreed that JA would request those institutions who had been through the new process to prepare a one-page summary, covering both library and IT, which could then be placed on the SCONUL and UCISA restricted web-space for the benefit of members. There was a need for details of questions asked and pursued by the audit teams.

**Action: Jeremy Atkinson**

### 5. Improving Standards in Research Degrees

There was a need to respond to this document and it was agreed that JA and CT would prepare a joint SCONUL/UCISA response.

**Action: Jeremy Atkinson and Carys Thomas**

### 6. Best Practice for External Evaluation of Library and Information Services

The Working Group noted the paper prepared by BF and MB, and commented that it concentrated on the academic quality management process but needed a broader context. The Working Group considered that members were looking for examples of practices at other institutions, written by learning resources staff, so that they might use these practices in their institutions as appropriate. There was therefore a need to collect real examples of best practice from members.

**Action: Biddy Fisher and Michael Breaks**

### 7. English Quality Matters

This had been covered under item 4.

### 8. Scottish Quality Matters

MB reported that Institutional Audits of Scottish HEIs will begin in 2003/2004 alongside the operation of joint funding council/institutional work to encourage quality across the sector.

### 9. Welsh Quality Matters

JA reported that a new quality process will begin in 2003/2004 and the operational guidelines and handbooks were being prepared.

### 10. Quality Working Group Web Site

It was noted that SCONUL was moving to a new software platform and that SCONUL Committee web-masters are to be trained. When this was completed, the content of the Group's web-site would be reviewed.

**Action: Michael Breaks**

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### 11. Dissemination to SCONUL/UCISA Membership

An abridged set of minutes would be sent to the Secretariat for the SCONUL Executive Board and also to the UCISA Executive Committee. JA would continue to circulate messages to the membership, as appropriate.

**Action: Michael Breaks and Jeremy Atkinson**

### 12. SCONUL Strategic Planning

MB would be representing the Working Group at the SCONUL Strategic Planning Meeting, which was being held in Oxford on 1/2 July 2003.

### 13. Date of Next Meeting

This would be held in October 2003 and MB would trawl for dates.

**Action: Michael Breaks**