
News from SCONUL

(culled from SCONUL's recent
e-bulletins of news)

Joint response by CURL and SCONUL to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report on scientific publications

Following their joint submission of evidence to the Committee, CURL and SCONUL made a joint response to the report of the Science and Technology Committee on scientific publications. The response (page 45 of the Committee's report at <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/news/scitechfinal/HC%201200%20Responses%20to%20SP%20crc%20final.pdf>) welcome the recommendations of the Committee, which encourage wider dissemination of the results of scientific research. The joint response was prepared by the new group on scholarly communications serving both CURL and SCONUL which held its first meeting on 30 September 2004. Its members are Stephen Pinfield (Chair) (Nottingham), Paul Ayris (UCL), Tom Graham (Newcastle), Elizabeth Heaps (York), Tony Kidd (Glasgow), Di Martin (Hertfordshire), Paul Sheehan (Dublin City), Hazel Woodward (Cranfield) + Fred Friend (JISC) and David Prosser (SPARC Europe), both coopted. Secretary: Toby Bainton pending the appointment of the new CURL Executive Secretary.

RAE: another report from the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee

The tireless Science and Technology Committee published on 23 September their report on the Research Assessment Exercise <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmsctech/586/586.pdf>

SCONUL librarians will be glad to see the Committee's insistence that the title of the journal in which a publication appears should not, in itself, be regarded as a surrogate measure of the quality of the research. (Recommendation 7, p.42: 'It is not acceptable for peer review panels to rely on the place of publication as a guarantee of quality. We recommend that HEFCE instruct panels to desist from this practice for RAE 2008 and ensure that panels are sufficiently large and well staffed to make informed judgements about the quality of

the submissions.' Paragraph 42 of the main report expands this point.

e-theses down under

The Australian Digital Theses Program (<http://adt.caul.edu.au>) is to be upgraded and expanded to form an online directory of all research theses and dissertations. A press release from our sister organisation in Australia is at <http://www.caul.edu.au/>

SCONUL: new health libraries group

The scholarly communications committee is not the only one to have undergone changes over the summer. SCONUL's former Advisory Committee on Health Services has been stood down, with thanks for all its work at a critical interface. It has been replaced by a smaller group with the intention of engaging the National Health Service at a strategic level: no easy task. The members of the new group are Judith Palmer (Chair) (Oxford), Sheila Cannell (Edinburgh), Margaret Haines (King's College London), Kath O'Donovan (Sheffield), Christine Stockton (Chester), together with Chris Bailey (Glasgow, SCONUL Chair's nominee).

Teaching and learning issues for libraries and information services

Coordination on the teaching and learning front is provided by reciprocal representation between the relevant committees of SCONUL and UCISA (Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association). Further cooperation takes place with the Association for Learning Technology. In October a 'coordination summit meeting' took place between officers of all three bodies to assess the best ways of working together to support our members.

Freedom of Information Act guidance from JISC

The JISC Legal Information Service and Dundas & Wilson have produced some guidance documents which, though aimed principally at Scottish further and higher education institutions, will have wider interest in the UK:

Freedom of Information and Intellectual Property Rights

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/publications/foidundaswilsonipr.htm>

Freedom of Information and the Public Interest Test

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/publications/foidundaswilsonpublicint.htm>

Freedom of Information and Contracts/Procurement

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/publications/foidundaswilsoncontracts.htm>

Specialist corner: the Linnaeus Link Project

This international project aims for an online union catalogue of material relating to the eighteenth-century Swedish scientist Carl Linnaeus and his students. Information is at www.nhm.ac.uk/library/linn

SCONUL staff: new accessions

Carme Abelló started work in the SCONUL office on 6 September and will be with us while SitMui Ng is on maternity leave. SitMui's new son Tyler was born on 7 September. All three mentioned here are doing well!

The SCONUL Vision

A SCONUL team has developed a vision for the future of our member libraries. This process has been followed before, and previous predictions have proved remarkably accurate. The latest Vision looks forward to 2010 and can be found at http://www.sconul.ac.uk/pubs_stats/pubs/vision%202010

SCONUL Advice note: JISC Plagiarism Detection Service

This month our Advisory Committee on Access to Information Systems and Services has issued an advice note about the Plagiarism Detection Service.

See http://www.sconul.ac.uk/activities/info_systems/papersAdvice%20Note%20on%20the%20JISC%20Plagiarism%20Detection%20Service.doc

Journal prices: LISU study

The Times higher education supplement for 15 October carried on p2 a piece on journal price increases, based on a LISU publication commissioned by Oxford University Press, 'Scholarly journal prices: selected trends and comparisons', which can be found at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/lis/lisu/pages/publications/oup.html>
It makes for interesting reading.

SCONUL signs Geneva Declaration

SCONUL has signed the Geneva Declaration, which is aimed at the World Intellectual Property Organisation. This powerful UN body drafts all the international copyright conventions, and in the past has been much concerned with increased protection of copyright. The new Declaration urges WIPO to take more account of users of copyright material and to attend to the needs of information-poor countries. The text of the Declaration is at <http://www.cptech.org/ip/wipo/genevadeclaration.html>

INSPIRE: new partnerships manager

Sally Curry has been appointed the new national partnerships manager for the INSPIRE project. She will be coordinating between regional access schemes, working towards a UK-wide offering for non-traditional library users, helping them to make use of the most appropriate library collections. Sally started work on 1 December and is based at the Robinson Library University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Sally is an employee of SCONUL in a post funded from several sources. Jon Purcell of the University of Newcastle has been appointed to the INSPIRE steering group.

Frye Leadership Program

For the third year running, SCONUL and our sibling organisation UCISA have each been invited by Educause to nominate a candidate for the Frye Leadership Program. To quote the Frye Institute's briefing. 'This program is designed for those in higher education who aspire to more significant leadership roles, including disciplinary faculty, librarians, information technology professionals, and administrators... Individuals who possess strong leadership ability and a profound interest in contributing to higher education at its top

administrative levels are sought for this selective program. See also www.fryeinstitute.org. For information about Educause see www.educause.net.' After a brief selection process, SCONUL's Executive Board has nominated Richard Wake, Deputy Librarian at Southampton University Library, for a place on the Program. If successful in the competition for places judged by the Frye Institute itself, Richard will benefit from a grant from JISC to enable him to attend the Program taking place at Emory University, Georgia, in 2005. In 2004 Maggie Fieldhouse, Deputy Librarian at the University of Sussex Library, successfully followed the course.

UCISA has chosen Andrew Gregg, Assistant Director (Corporate Information and Infrastructure Services), University of Ulster, as its nominee this year.

British Library regional programmes

Regional and Library Programmes at the British Library, under new strategic arrangements, have moved away from project-based funding to a managed and targeted programme in support of the Library's chosen markets. As a result the Concord (library and cooperation) website was closed on 19 October and related material can now be found at <http://www.bl.uk/about/cooperation.html>

New for records management

JISC Infonet has launched an 'applied infoKit' developed by Cimtech at the University of Hertfordshire. It is designed as a best-practice guide for institutions considering an Electronic Documents and Records Management project. The aim is to provide records managers and other information professionals with a 'one-stop shop' for impartial and practical advice, free from vendor bias and specific to further and higher education. An online version is at <http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/InfoKits/edrm>

Widening participation and fair access: research

HEFCE has just published its revised research strategy for widening participation and fair access. It naturally includes a concise summary of the issues faced by higher education generally in that area. The document is at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2004/04_34/

New SCONUL publication

Published in November: *Learning outcomes and information literacy*, a study of connections between information literacy and institutional learning and teaching strategies. A work to support practitioners, it supports SCONUL's aim of sharing good practice, and consists largely of case studies in six UK universities. This 70-page printed publication was designed and commissioned by SCONUL's Advisory Committee on Information Literacy and supported and produced by the Higher Education Academy. Free copies are being posted to SCONUL members.

Brussels report

The European Commission's insatiable interest in publishing and related matters is about to focus on the 'public domain'. As usual it's difficult to foretell what the agenda might be but this is a field where SCONUL will be expressing its views as soon as consultations begin. Meanwhile, not to be outdone by the UK's House of Commons, the Commission has set up an investigation into the scientific publications market in Europe, to be carried out in two universities and to report next year. We have been feeding evidence to the investigators. The proposed 'tidying up' of copyright legislation seems to be on hold until the Commission sorts itself out following the recent political changes. For that exercise SCONUL, and our usual allies, have stressed the inconsistencies between the copyright and database directives.

New accession to SCONUL archives

Warwick Price, recently retired from heading the library at the Dublin Institute of Technology, has kindly presented SCONUL with two bound volumes of the early records of one of our predecessor societies, COPOL (the Council of Polytechnic Librarians), spanning the years 1969 to 1987, and beginning with the minutes of the founding meeting at Sheffield Polytechnic almost exactly 36 years ago.