

Minutes for Membership Services Committee (MSC)

Wednesday 6 February 2013 at 10am – online

1. Participation and apologies

Participants: Shirley Evans (SE), Doug Gowan (DG), Kerr Gardiner (KG), Caroline Ingram (CI), Matthew Newcombe (MN), Yetunde Folajimi (YF), Tom Franklin (TF), Amanda Jefferies (AJ), Julie Voce (JV)
ALT Staff: Liz Wyatt (LW)

Apologies: Fawei Geng, Gill Chester

2. Announcements (if any)

Doug Gowan's appointment as Vice Chair was confirmed and he was welcomed into his new role

3. Minutes from the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as accurate.

Actions arose in reference to agenda items 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16.

All actions completed or covered on the agenda

4. Matters arising not covered on the agenda

JV requests that notice for SIG reports be given earlier.

Action: LW to request SIG reports at least a month in advance.

5. Survey updates

5.1 The survey was released (following suggested amendments from committee) on 6 Dec 2012 and closed 31 Jan 2013. In total 131 responses were received.

5.2 Initial findings from survey to date (LW)

Initial findings from the survey were discussed and it was noted that the survey had fewer responses than the previous one, but that responses indicate positive feedback generally. The main changes which were supported by members were to develop ALT's use of social networking and for the printed update to be replaced with an electronic update.

Action: LW to ask John Slater to provide detailed highlight report and then circulate. Data to include details of percentage of respondents who did not complete the survey, information about responses relating to SIGs and how many people completed it multiple times in different roles.

5.3. DG reports on About Members for Members cross working group. A member of the FE committee has volunteered to work on this following the call for volunteers. The planned timescale for the survey is to publish the survey in May/June in time for it to be added to the ALT-C 2013 schedule.

Action: DG to provide paper outlining ideas for survey. DG to circulate this in the next few weeks.

6. ALT Special Interest Groups (All)

6.1 SIG reports

M25-LT group

Event held at the University of Greenwich on 21st November. Planning has already started for the next meeting to be held at the Royal Vet College in Camden on 21st March and is expected to include a panel session on lecture capture and presentations on WebPA and Learning Analytics.

Eoin McDonnell has now left due to taking up a position in the private sector. Leo Havemann from Birkbeck, University of London has joined. The committee are due to meet on 11th February to discuss future activities

The Games and Learning SIG

Met in Edinburgh for a two-day event on 15/16 November. Currently has 86 members signed up to the Ning site. In the final stages of drafting a white paper on games and learning in Further and Higher education and have had two online meetings (12 October + 7 December) with an extended meeting/seminar on 14 February.

ALT Scotland

The ALT-Scotland SIG held their most recent meeting on the 17th January where it agreed on a number of actions, namely: To invite FE colleagues to apply for the remaining 2 vacancies on the steering committee to make sure the SIG has a more balanced representation. Twitter Hashtag decided as #ALTScot . Will continue to explore activity, including policy and strategy, around open education and OERs in Scottish institutions. Next event on 20th June at GCU and steering committee meeting will take place on the 22 April at GCU.

OERSIG

The SIG has discussed a list of possible actions to take things forward with a view to particularly recruiting some of the SCORE Fellows (many of whom are already active ALT members) to become more involved in leading SIG activities. With Open Education week coming up, the SIG officers will discuss with Caroline Greves, whether ALT could run a webinar in this context.

Action: LW to circulate SIG/RIG reports to all members

6.2 Proposed additions to SIG reporting (SE)

SE proposes formalising SIG/RIG reporting in line with ToR and proposes a template for reporting which details specific areas including: Membership numbers, latest developments, news, events, current areas of focus, areas of change, future plans, and recruitment (including target groups). Report to continue to be provided by chairs every January before MSC meeting.

MSC committee members to join a SIG/RIG if they are not already a member of one. This will provide additional input alongside the official chair's report.

All in agreement to continue with Chair of SIGs report received at beginning of Jan.

Action: LW to circulate list of SIGS and RIGS. Members to volunteer to join a relevant SIG or RIG.

Action: Draft reporting template to be circulated to MSC members and chairs of SIG/RIGs. Responses and thoughts to be given by 28 Feb

Action: for next meeting. SE to find out when current SIGS are due for renewal in line with policy. In addition to find out if LERSIG wish to continue. Add agenda item in next meeting. SIGS are supposed to send copies of their minutes to the MSC.

Action: SE to consider ALT policy document.

7 Membership (LW)

The committee received the membership report from LW. The committee noted the report overall and discussed the following points in detail:

Recruitment across all membership categories remains steady and continues to go well. There is some on-going chasing for renewals for Organisational and Sponsoring Members who are late renewing for 2012/13. It was also noted that the number of members who have chosen to receive the printed edition of the journal is significantly lower as was anticipated prior to the journal transfer to Open Access.

The renewal process for Organisational and Sponsoring Members for 2013/14 is due to start soon. The committee also discussed the annual setting of membership fees across all categories. As not all required information was to hand, SE as chair undertook to liaise with the committee following the meeting and this is included as a note to these minutes below.

Action: LW to circulate final year figures to the committee as they are produced for the Annual Report as in previous years.

8 Terms of Reference (TORs) (SE)

In discussion with the committee, SE proposed that members should choose an area of activity outlined in the TORs each and to take a proactive approach to engaging with their chosen area. The following were noted:

JV and KG interested in taking SIG review process forward;

All to continue to represent ALT and its members at events and ALT-C;

TF with members of the CDG are working on the development of CMALT;

All - To provide input on events and webinars. This is currently managed via the survey and the digest. In addition By the Members for the Members survey would provide this information.

In regards to "Advising and development of ALT's online membership service include social media. Cross over with the publications media" members asked for clarification how this area is developed, particularly as it overlaps in part with the work of the Publications Committee. JV who is a member of both committees could provide a potential link.

Action: SE and LW to liaise with Anna Davidge to discuss how work in this area may be taken forward in a joint basis.

9 CMALT (LW and TF)

The Committee noted that the CDG will meet on 19 Feb after the MSC and that thus no formal report from the meeting was available. TF and LW provided a verbal update on the areas of work currently underway:

CMALT Australasia launched, Quality Assurance assessments underway and Civi CMALT workflow progressing quickly. SE reported on CMALT initiative JISCTechDis scheme

Action: LW to circulate CMALT report after CDG meeting.

10 Events report (CG)

The Committee received the events reported provided by Caroline Greves

In relation to the report, DG asks if VAT can be reclaimed Hybrid VAT status. A scheme whereby there is still no charge on VAT on ALT-C but can be reclaimed in what is paid. TF asks if there is VAT on membership.

Action: SE to liaise with Maren Deepwell re the VAT question raised.

Note: Following the meeting, it is noted that ALT does not charge VAT on any services, including membership and events. ALT is exempt from VAT as a small educational charity.

11 Online operations report (standing item)

The Online Operations report was not available at the time of the meeting.

Action: LW to circulate after meeting

12 International matters (standing item)

None.

13 Items referred to and from other ALT committees (standing item)

Action: SE to look at how cross committee information is reported/shared

Action: LW to chase other operational committees regarding volunteers from each for DG's By the Members for the Members survey. Already one volunteer from FE.

14 Items to be reported to the Central Executive Committee (standing item)

The committee considered the membership fees for 2013 and following the note circulated by the chair accepted the recommendation for the fees to remain the same as the previous year.

15 MSC pages on website (NEW standing item)

MSC website pages to be updated with new job titles and biographies on a regular basis. Change requests and photos to be emailed to Liz Wyatt.

Action: Members to ensure their membership is current.

16 Dates of next meeting Thursday 6 June 2013 (online) at 10am

12 February 2013 - Additional notes following meeting:

Email circulated to all committee members from Chair on 8/02/13.

Dear Committee Members

There is an urgent need to review the decision on membership fees made at Wednesday's meeting.

Because my audio feed went down for part of the discussion I have reviewed the recording, in particular the comments made about budgets and the fee level, and have also taken the opportunity to discuss the issues with Maren and Liz.

It is clear that budget issues are the responsibility of the Central Executive Committee, taking advice from the GPC and the Honorary Treasurer. They are not part of the remit of the MSC and therefore for the committee to make decisions on them would be unconstitutional. In fact a great deal of work has been done by the GPC and Haydn Blackey on this year's budget and the recommendations will go for approval to the forthcoming trustees meeting. The budget plans do of course contain explicit assumptions about the fee level, with the key point being that they are to remain at the same level. Given this clarification it would serve no purpose to hold a special MSC meeting that would have no powers to make a decision on fees. After a discussion with Vice Chair Doug Gowan I am therefore taking Chair's action to cancel the proposed meeting. The MSC minutes will be discussed later this month at the Central Executive Committee, together with this note.

I trust you will approve of this course of action and of course would welcome any email responses.

Kind regards

Shirley