



Central Executive

Minutes

Chair-approved minutes from the meeting on Thursday, 19th February 2015.

1 Welcome and apologies

Chair: Diana Laurillard

Present: Doug Gowan (online), Sarah Sherman, Sheila MacNeill, Claire Donlan, Malcolm Ryan, Shirley Evans, Matt Lingard, Haydn Blackey, Alastair Clark, Martin Hawksey, Maren Deepwell

Apologies received from: Fiona Harvey, James Clay

2 Any other business

None identified. However Trustees noted their thanks overall for the improved papers presented at this meeting and noted the efforts of all involved, in particular the staff team.

3 Approve the Minutes of the last meeting held on 20 November 2014.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the last meeting and approved the minutes as accurate record of the meeting.

4 Matters arising

The Committee reviewed the Matter Arising report and noted that most matters had been dealt with or otherwise covered on the agenda.

5 Chief Executive's report

Trustees noted the report overall and MD presented key recommendations in more detail. Trustees discussed the items in relation to the following recommendations and approved these as follows noting additional actions:

1 Existing MOUs and partnership agreements	<u>Recommendation:</u> following the activity on the agenda today to organise stakeholders and draw up a clear plan of how to approach each category. MD with Trustees. Approved.
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6 General Election	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> for up to 3 Trustees to volunteer to be involved in contacting policy makers and for MD to also liaise with ALT Ambassadors to be involved where appropriate. Approved.</p>
9 ocTEL in 2015	<p>There is strong interest in ocTEL in relation to the ufi call and every possibility that the course and its content could contribute to the development of the course this is seeking to fund. However, we suggest that in the second quarter of this financial year we also consider to build on the development of ocTEL in the form of a week long intensive course for those who already have some expertise in Learning Technology. Feedback from the last 2 runs of ocTEL indicated that there would be interest in this and we could potentially run such a project with member involvement in the autumn. <u>Recommendation:</u> Trustees to consider ocTEL development again at the end of Q2. MH and MD to progress as appropriate. Approved.</p>
11 Progress in 2014	<p>Over the past 12 months we have made good progress in relation to all of the aims set out in the 2014-2017 strategy which was launched last February. We have undertaken a final review of the operational plan and below are some highlights of what we, as an Association, have accomplished in the past 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim 1: Intelligent use of learning technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● new ocTEL and conference platforms ● Aoc / ALT joint publication on Learning Technology in FE ● Showcase of technology in action at winter conference Aim 2: Research and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual conference attracts most non-HE participants and has excellent feedback ● Member led webinars and discussions increase ● Research in Learning Technology increases readership Aim 3: Strategy and Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ALT represents members on ETAG ● ALT engages with FELTAG and the FELTAG coalition ● Policy debate at Annual Conference Aim 4: Representing members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special Interest Group activities increase significantly ● ALT Wales is established ● new Annual Survey Aim 5: Leadership and professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ocTEL runs without external funding attracting similar engagement to year 1 ● ALT issues its first Mozilla Open Badges ● CMALT groups increase Aim 6: Communicating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New, consistent visual identity being introduced

	<p>online and in print</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appointment of a new editorial team for the newsletter ● Highest ever social media engagement for the Annual Conference
13 Risk Management	<p>In accordance with the risk management strategy the risk register has been reviewed and updated for the last financial year. Overview of risks that have changed during the last reporting period up to 31 January 2015:</p> <p>Risks that have increased and been managed:</p> <p>[24] Unable to secure sufficient project income;</p> <p>[25] Unable to fund a staffing and operational structure that is agile and flexible enough to cope with growth during peak and low funding periods;</p> <p>Risks that have decreased:</p> <p>[26] ALT cannot continue in the current hosting agreement;</p> <p>[21] Annual conference contribution to overall costs significantly drops;</p> <p>[27] Interruptions due to office move.</p> <p>Trustees further discussed key risks and mitigated action taken in relation to the first financial quarter this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Journal Editorial Team transition ● Unsuccessful project funding bids placing greater pressure on generating income via core activities ● membership income and renewals of organisational memberships <p>and further discussed impact on the staff team and the importance of supporting staff during times of high workload.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> MD/MH to ensure a read only copy of the register is in the shared folder for Trustees.</p>
14 Appointment of OER conference Chairs	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> Trustees to delegate approval of OER 2016 Co-Chairs to GPC.</p> <p>Approved.</p> <p>Trustees further discussed the running of the OER conference, related budgets and operations.</p>
15 Appointment of Co-Chairs for the Annual Conference	[confidential item]
16 Transition to CIO	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> For the Trustee working group (Chair, Treasurer and Vice-Chair) to continue to work with MD to progress the transition in the first instance. For MD to lead on transfer arrangements with legal and financial advisors.</p> <p>Approved.</p>
17 Honorary Treasurer	[confidential item]
21 Editorial Board and strategy for future development of the journal	<p>We need to set out a clear strategy for the future development of the journal which takes into account the transition to Open Access in 2012, its significantly increased online uptake, increased number of submissions and changing relationship with the research community. With the journal's running cost representing a significant investment for ALT we need to ensure that we have a clear vision of the journal's</p>

	<p>development.</p> <p>The Editorial Board have volunteered members to join a small working group together with a few Trustees and input from the publisher to work on this.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> MD to circulate call for a further Trustee to join the group. ML and MD to progress.</p>
22 Print Edition of Research in Learning Technology	<p>We have undertaken a survey of all current subscribers of the journal (included in the Appendix to this report). The Editorial Board first discussed feedback collected via a survey of all current subscribers as well as the overall decrease in numbers and enthusiasm for expanding the format of published content online. With input from the publisher the Editorial Board noted the strong uptake of the journal online, which was significantly increased since 2012 and considered the cost/benefits of continuing the print edition with a small number of subscribers.</p> <p>The Editorial Board expressed strong general support for discontinuing the print edition in favour of focusing on online content. The Board further noted the option to print special issues on a one-off basis for promotional purposes for example.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> For Trustees to discuss the cessation of the print edition of Research in Learning Technology with effect in 2015. Trustees approved the transition to online only publication with effect in 2015, reserving the option to print individual issues as desired.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> ML and MD to progress.</p>
23 Complaints	<p>Trustees further noted under item 23 in the report that no formal written complaints were received in the last year. This is being reported as outlined in ALT's Complaints Policy.</p>

6 Communications and website report

MH presented the report on communications and the website and high-lighted the key points including the updated theme for the main alt.ac.uk website which is more mobile friendly, the new #altc tag and related campaign and the statistics for usage across different online platforms. It was also noted that MH has set up an internal development platform which facilitated the work on the theme. Trustees noted the improved development of the new theme and noted thanks to Martin for the successfully completed work and new iterative approach to online development internally.

7 Financial reports and operational plan

HB presented the financial narrative report and related financial reports. The report outlines the preliminary year end report and current financial position. Taking into account the decreased income from external projects and the investment of part of the bequest from the Open Learning Partnership it is expected that we will make a small loss for the 2014/15 financial year.

Trustees noted the preliminary financial position at year end and approved the timetable for the production of the Annual Report and Annual Accounts.

Action: HB and MD to lead on the production of the Annual Report and Annual Accounts.

Trustees then considered the strategy set out for the budget and operational plan for 2015/16. HB discussed the budget figures which indicated a shift towards covering a great proportion of the core operational costs with core income activities. DG highlighted this as a positive development. Trustees also noted the strategy set out for staffing, further investment of the OLP bequest for the new financial year and enhanced collaboration with members.

Trustees approved the following recommendations:

Recommendation: Approve the overview budget and strategy, which will be reviewed on a quarterly basis as usual.

Recommendation: to approve the recruitment of a second part-time Support Officer with immediate effect.

Recommendation: to approve investment of £10k of the OLP as outlined above and to review further possible investment at the end of qrt 2.

Action: MD to lead on implementation of new budget and related ops plan and strategy for the 2015/16 financial year including the recruitment of the second part-time Support Officer and the investment of the OLP bequest.

Trustees also discussed the impact of additional workload being picked up by the Chief Executive at this time discussed additional capacity being required for the management of the journal in the coming months. Trustees delegated approval for related arrangements to GPC.

Action: MD to liaise with DG, DL and HB regarding this.

8 Operational Committees

8.1 Membership Development

SS reported from the recent meeting and presented the minutes, highlighting the following key points: The Committee supports the recommendation for ALT's membership fees for the 2015/16 financial year to remain at the 2014 level. Trustees approved this recommendation.

Action: MD to ensure this is implemented.

SS also reported the Committee's general support for the transition of the CDG into the wider CMALT assessors group approved. Trustees accepted that recommendation.

Action: MD to work with Liz Wyatt and the CDG on this transition.

Trustees also formally approved the merger of the Inclusive Learning SIG (ILSIG) and the Open Education SIG.

Action: SIG Officers and staff to ensure that all relevant information is updated and members informed.

SS also reported back in relation to the Committees recent work on Special and Regional Interest Groups with key ideas for development:

1. To encourage members to join together to establish new groups in the UK for North East, West Midlands, South West, South East, East or Northern Ireland in 2015/16 in line with ALT's strategic aims to better represent its members and increase networking and knowledge exchange at a local and national level;
2. In consultation with existing groups to review and update policies relating to Special Interest and other groups and to clarify the differences between the two types of groups, membership requirements and support with the aim of better supporting members in leading on group activities e.g. SIG-led conferences and events.

Trustees had a general discussion about these proposals and their implications including for membership of groups, support, national representation, local CMALT support and member recruitment. It was discussed that this would relate to the online community support developed further by the investment of the OLP bequest funds approved earlier.

Trustees then approved this development in general with a view to specific policies/proposals to be added to the agenda for the next meeting:

Action: MH and MD, in liaison with Trustees and SIG Officers, to progress.

8.2 Communications and Publications

ML presented the report from the recent committee meeting. The journal and its editorial team was discussed earlier under item 5. One of the key items highlighted was the increase readership of the newsletter and its naming to reduce the confusion between different news channels that ALT currently has. ML further noted that ML and further members of the committee are coming to the end of their term this September and that Neil Morris has joined the Committee as a new member.

Trustees formally approved this new member and noted their welcome. Trustees also noted their thanks to Rachel Harris who has stepped down from the Committee.

8.3 Further Education + Widening Participation

The Committee noted the minutes from the recent meeting in the absence of JC. MD gave an update on the recent committee meeting. Membership attendance is an ongoing concern and alternatives such as other times for meetings are being considered. Trustees noted efforts of Sarah Williams in recruiting and engaging with the FE sector on behalf of ALT. MD highlighted ALT's invitation to FE Coalition and opportunity to highlight ALT's existing involvement in the learning technology sphere. MD highlighted work in highlighting efforts to recruit Programme Committee members from FE and role in Committee members in advocating the submission of abstracts from this sector.

9 Events and conference report

Based on the report from Anna Davidge, MD covered main events coming up including on OER15 and ALT Conference. It was highlighted to Trustees that there is a new submission process for research papers and related publication in Research in Learning Technology. While the feedback to this change has been positive overall, additional support for international researchers will be put in place.

Action: MD together with Programme Committee to lead on additional support for international researchers.

MH also shared feedback and reflections from the winter conference in December in Edinburgh and there was a brief discussion about different session formats and taking a more interactive approach in other events.

10 Report from Annual Survey

The Committee noted that the first new Annual Survey was run as planned from early December to mid-January and this is the first report of the results of the data collected. MH presented his report of the analysis of the survey including key points and graphs show current and future priorities as charted by respondents. Trustees had a general discussion about the report and its findings.

Action: MH to lead on publication of the report and the data from the survey and liaising with MD on the related communications actions.

11 Activity: Trustees, stakeholders and strategy for 2015

Trustees engaged in a shared activity to examine current stakeholders.

Action: All Trustees to complete the online component of the exercise by 1st March 2015. MD to report back at the next meeting.

12 Any other business identified at the start of the meeting

None.

13 Dates of next meeting

The next meetings will take place on 19 June (London), 9 September (Convening Meeting in Manchester at the Annual Conference), 19 November 2015 (tbc).

Minutes written by: MD, MH 23 February 2015

Reviewed by: DL, 23 February 2015