

## **Minutes of the 28th Meeting of the English UK Accreditation and Professional Services Board (APSB)**

Held at: English UK, 219 St John Street, London EC1V 4LY

Date: 13:30 on Wednesday 19 September 2012

Present: Andrew Hjort (Chair), Dawn Abbott, Sarah Cooper, Tony Evans, Janey Futerill, Geoff Hardy-Gould, Nigel Heritage, Patrick Lawlor and Tony Millns

In attendance: Huan Japes and Annie Wright.

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### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Alison Chambers and Sue Edwards.

The Board noted the 28th Meeting of the APSB would be Alison Chambers' last and wished to express their thanks for her contribution to the work of the APSB and wished her all the best for the future.

### **2. Minutes of the 27th Meeting of the APSB held on Tuesday 15 May 2012.**

The Minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the Meeting.

### **3. Matters arising**

None (all matters arising were covered by the agenda for the Meeting).

### **4. Matters for discussion and decision**

- a. Accreditation UK: update on Accreditation UK Executive Board Minutes of the 26th Meeting (paper ASPB 28/4a)*

The Board noted the Minutes of the 26th Meeting of the Accreditation UK Executive Board held on 25 July 2012.

On the subject of CRB checks (as referenced in the Accreditation UK Executive Board Minutes) HJ informed the Board that a revised set of FAQs would be issued on receipt of updated information from the government on the new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The DBS is due to come into force in December 2012 and will incorporate the new Protection of Freedoms Act legislation. HJ reported that English UK would continue to recommend that homestay providers and employees at member centres who have unsupervised access to children under the age of 16 should have checks made.

AH recommended the Accreditation UK Executive Board and APSB are consulted on any changes to advice issued.

In reference to the Accreditation UK Executive Board Minutes AH provided an overview of the issue raised at a recent ASAC meeting concerning providers that are under review. TM felt it would be too damaging to a centre if the fact that it was under review was published and noted the purpose of the review was to give a centre time to improve. SC noted the review timescale is critical.

The Board proposed the timescale of the review period should be tightened. PL noted the review often related to welfare matters and suggested there would be difficulties tightening the timescale for summer centres which are only open for a few months per year.

*b. Accreditation UK: update on the August strategy away-day*

AH and TM provided a brief overview of the Accreditation UK strategy away-day held in August 2012.

AH reported on ideas discussed which included differentiating between types of providers and, for example, establishing different criteria for young learner centres, the introduction of an inspector's overview sheet of 'facts and figures', and the standardisation of fees and charges.

TM reported Tony Jones had argued for 'driving up standards' and substantially reducing the number of providers accredited by the scheme to c.300, but this had been resisted by Liz McLaren.

HJ asked whether there was any discussion on extending the schemes' remit to cover academic year and teacher training programmes. TM reported there was discussion on extending the scheme within the UK market before expanding overseas.

On the subject of the publication of inspection reports, AH informed the Board matters such as house style and 'not met' categories were discussed.

*c. Update on statutory accreditation and ISI (paper ASPB 28/4c)*

HJ spoke to the paper and updated the Board on matters concerning accreditation.

An English UK hosted training day on preparing for an ISI inspection had taken place on 12 September. The session was supported by the findings of an analysis of over 50 published ISI inspection reports which provided data on the main points providers need to address.

TM confirmed the main English UK Board had discussed the subject of whether English UK should alter its membership terms in order to permit centres into membership that are ISI or QAA accredited but not Accreditation UK. As the scenario had not yet arisen TM reported the main Board agreed there was no need to take immediate action on the matter.

SC questioned whether institutions inspected by Ofsted would be included alongside those inspected by ISI and QAA. TM confirmed Ofsted would be included as would any devolved equivalents in Scotland etc.

TM noted the preferred solution is for the Accreditation UK scheme to be recognised for T4 purposes.

HJ informed the Board that the number of published ISI inspection reports indicates the current cycle of ISI inspections is far from complete.

On the subject of the publication of Accreditation UK inspection reports, AH noted the length of time between the inspection and the publication of the report needed to be standardised. On the matter of 'points to be addressed' TE suggested they should be restricted to the criteria. AH suggested there is a need to distinguish between 'requirements' and 'recommendations'. GHG proposed the nature of the Accreditation UK inspection reports needed to change noting that at present they are intended for institutions' internal consumption, not the public.

TM indicated that the Accreditation UK EB position was that the Accreditation UK reports should be published in full except for the 'points to be addressed'.

(Note subsequent to meeting: On 5 October 2012 the Accreditation Unit issued a press release stating inspection reports will be published in their entirety from 2013, except for the points to be addressed, which is a working document to assist providers in preparing an action plan to meet the standards.)

*d. Update on SESF (paper ASPB /4d)*

HJ spoke to the paper and reported five member centres have closed so far in 2012, four of which required the SESF to be activated.

Discussion centred on SNT International College in Bournemouth, the most recent member centre to require the activation of the SESF. HJ reported English UK had had contact with 80 of the 100 students on roll. Accommodation costs for the SNT students were expected to under £15k. The PR outcome was positive, with features in the local press praising the support network put in place by English UK.

HJ noted the change of ownership issue at SNT and proposed member centres should be reminded of the requirement to inform both English UK and the BC of change in ownership.

*e. UK Training Days and CPD Calendar 2013/2014 (paper ASPB/4e)*

HJ spoke to the paper and informed the Board the Professional Services Handbook would be replaced with an online CPD calendar and a wall-chart calendar for the 2013-14 programme.

The intension is that the online CPD calendar will feature all ELT related training events including those hosted by English UK, BC, Londosa, CESOL etc, acting as a central source for ELT CPD. HJ anticipated the calendar would be supported by current sponsors, allowing some of the initial set-up costs to be off-set. HJ noted the second phase of the overall CPD scheme would look to establish a teacher association, allowing for CPD to be benchmarked and the recorded against an agreed set of standards.

The wall-chart calendar will be an English UK branded publication featuring listings of English UK training days and conferences.

*f. AISLi Italy and EFL Monitoring Board Malta Conference visits*

HJ gave an oral update on his attendance at the AISLi Italy event and ELT Conference in Malta. The AISLi event was reported to be useful and resulted in discussion of a number of

ways in which AISLi and English UK could work together such as offering consultancies on accreditation and an interest in offering the English UK DELTM in Italy.

In Malta HJ attended the first ELT Conference organised by the EFL Monitoring Board. He gave a presentation on an academic subject and met with Feltom representatives and the EFL Monitoring Board. HJ reported the Maltese government was taking ELT very seriously and looking to implement compulsory accreditation. ELT represents 10% of GDP in Malta.

## **5. Professional Services – updates**

### *a. Programme for the 2012 Teacher's Conference (paper ASPB 28/5a)*

HJ spoke to the paper and reported that speakers for the opening and closing plenary had been confirmed. Elective sessions include skills and language development and specific teaching contexts. An Early Bird discounted delegate rate had received a good response and HJ was hopeful the conference would attract around 300 delegates.

### *b. Qualifications 2012/2013: DELTM, CertSSM (paper ASPB 28/5b)*

HJ spoke to the paper.

The introduction of wikispaces is under consideration to provide participants with an online support forum. It was reported that the 10% increase in course fees in 2011-12 had had no effect on bookings, which were still strong. Both the DELTM and CertSSM were full with 18/19 participants per course for 2012-13.

PL asked if the DELTM or CertSSM qualification had been banded against the NVQ framework and HJ confirmed he was speaking to Trinity about this with a view to both courses being recognised as NVQ Level 7 qualifications. PL proposed approaching OCN in relation to the CertSSM.

HJ reported a new ELT marketing qualification for 2013-14 was under development and further details will be available at the 2013 English UK Marketing Conference in January.

### *c. Training days 2012/2013 & Professional Services Handbook (paper ASPB 28/5c)*

HJ circulated copies of the Handbook, which was published in August 2012. HJ noted publication costs and sponsorship were broadly in line.

Training days were reported to have 60 bookings to date.

## **6. Dates and venue of meetings for 2013 (paper ASPB 28/6a)**

HJ agreed to circulate a list of proposed dates for the APSB meetings in 2013.

The meeting concluded at 15:15.