

AMOSSHE Executive Meeting

Tuesday 22 November 2011 11am – 4pm

**AMOSSHE, Fourth Floor, 184-192 Drummond Street, LONDON,
NW1 3HP**



Agenda

Morning 11.00 – 1pm

1. Reserved Business
2. Apologies
3. October meeting minutes and actions
4. Matters arising:
 - a. Strategic discussion: stakeholder working (Ben)
5. Updates:
 - a. Finance (Gill)
 - b. Membership (Liz)
 - c. National Office (Liz)
 - d. CPD – Wider Horizons conference (Jenny/Sally)
 - e. Annual conference (Ben L/Gill)
6. Value and Impact continuation work (Raegan/David)
7. Consultancy and benchmarking (open discussion)
8. AOB
 - a. Note of current activity
 - b. Future strategic discussion topics
9. Future meetings

1.30 pm- 3.30 pm: strategic discussions

1. NUS – synergies, priorities, and the year ahead (Liam Burns, NUS president invited)
2. AMOSSHE nations and regions (Julie/Chris)

3.30pm – 4pm: accountability review

Executive Meeting - agreed minutes

22 November 2011

Philips and Slipman Rooms, AMOSSHE

11.10am – 1.15pm; 3.10pm – 3.20pm



Present

Andrew West, Chair
Liz Bromley, Vice Chair (Operations)
Ben Lewis, Vice Chair
Jenny Briggs
Sara Doherty
Brian Hipkin

Chris Lusk
Sally Olohan
Nicole Redman
Julie Walkling
Raegan Hiles, Policy and Public Affairs
Manager (meeting secretary)

1. Reserved Business

- 1.1 Exempt from formal minute.

Raegan Hiles joined the meeting after the Reserved Business items.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 Ben Bailey and Gill Jack.

3. October meeting minutes and actions

- 3.1 The minutes of the October Executive meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- 3.2 All of the actions identified in the October minutes and to be completed by November are completed or addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

4. Matters arising: strategic discussion stakeholder working

- 4.1 The Vice Chair noted that no Executive members have volunteered to manage stakeholder relationships. The Executive agreed that a set of trial contacts should be assigned to a third of the Executive, with objectives. Where possible, these will be Executive members who are not currently leading on substantive work areas for AMOSSHE, and/or the assignments will be linked colleagues' interest areas.

Action: Vice Chair to assign stakeholders to four or five Executive members, to develop the assigned stakeholder manager roles identified in previous discussion.

- 4.2 The Executive agreed that a breakfast policy meeting should be scheduled in spring, and might usefully be linked to the annual conference theme. The only costs to AMOSSHE will be the administrative resourcing to arrange and deliver the meeting. Venue costs will be provided by an Executive HEI.

Action: Vice Chair and one other to liaise with National Office to plan breakfast policy meeting for spring 2012.

- 4.3 The Executive agreed to review progress with stakeholder management at its June 2012 meeting.

Action: Policy and Public Affairs Manager to add 'stakeholder working' to the June 2012 Executive meeting agenda.

5. Officer Updates

a. Finance

- 5.1 The Policy and Public Affairs Manager introduced an update on the organisation's finances. In particular:
- a. The National Office has been successful in recovering much unpaid debt, with over £7,000 paid in the previous week. However, many institutions are still failing to pay invoices within the 30 day payment period.
 - b. The Vice Chair (Finance) and National Office realigned the operating budget for 2011/12 in light of the increased web support expenditure agreed at the October meeting. The revised budget includes information about other confirmed costs since the budget was first drafted, including the Value and Impact skills consultancy, the salary of the appointed Value and Impact Project Officer, and recruiting a second annual supporter. This has resulted in some savings against the original budget. The Executive approved the updated budget.
- 5.2 The Executive observed that the cancellation of Wider Horizons had implications for the organisation's annual finances, but this is been accommodated for in the revised budget. The group reflected on the benefits of events budgeting now including staff costs. This more informed costing model supersedes the previous 15% income target for events.
- 5.3 The Executive commended the routine reporting of bank balances and budget revisions by the Vice Chair (Finance), in particular tabling figures accurate to within one day of each meeting. They recommended that financial reporting continue in the same format at future meetings.

b. Membership

- 5.4 The Vice Chair (Operations) updated the Executive on membership cancellations and new memberships. Since the October meeting:
- a. One tier 2 HEI has left membership (London Metropolitan University).

c. National Office

- 5.5 The Vice Chair (Operations) updated the Executive on National Office business and staffing.
- 5.6 The Policy and Public Affairs Manager noted that supplementary work by the web providers has commenced, following the Executive's decision to improve server capacity at the October meeting. E-mail provision has been updated, and the website and CRM should move to a new server within the week.

d. Wider Horizons

- 5.7 The CPD2 and Events lead introduced a discussion about the cancellation of the CPD2 event, 'Wider Horizons.' The event had been scheduled for 24 November 2011, but at the end of October, only 12 bookings had been received. In line with the events cancellations policy, the CPD2 lead, Vice Chair (Finance) and Policy and Public Affairs Manager considered the low bookings and agreed to cancel 'Wider Horizons'.
- 5.8 Cancelling 'Wider Horizons' meant that AMOSSHE did not incur any cancellation costs. No speakers had booked travel and so the expenditure remained at £0. The only costs to the organisation were in staff time, and any negative reputational impact. Cancelling

'Wider Horizons' has implications for AMOSSHE's annual income, as external conferences were costed to generate surplus.

- 5.9 The Executive noted the difficulties in assessing why an event may have low bookings. They agreed that several factors probably contributed to the low uptake of 'Wider Horizons', including immediacy of the theme, oversupply of similar events, administrative delays and web support issues. Colleagues at a regional meeting suggested that strategic and 'big picture' thinking might be more appropriate at annual conference, while single day CPD should have a focused purpose. The Executive discussed whether identifying 'hot topics' for a CPD programme happens too early to be relevant, although noted the need to plan ahead and promote an annual programme of activity.
- 5.10 The Executive agreed that a positive message should be circulated about AMOSSHE being financially responsible to its members. Interest expressed since the cancellation suggests that there may be appetite for a similar event later in the academic year, or bring some of the interest into annual conference activity.

e. Annual Conference

- 5.11 The Vice Chair introduced a discussion about the 2012 annual conference theme and planning. A working group has been established, and two conference leads identified. One of these will be the main contact point for the National Office.
- 5.12 The Executive discussed potential conference themes. The conference should highlight what Student Services do that is different and distinct, resilient management practices, delivering on promises and outputs. The Executive agreed on an overarching theme of 'Greater Expectations.'
- 5.13 The Executive discussed potential keynote speakers for the conference, and identified a previous MP. They agreed to consider a panel session on day 2 of the conference that would involve several Vice Chancellors and ask them to discuss 'If I was your boss, I would tell you, as managers of Student Services, to... and I would want you, as managers of Student Services, to...'

Action (i): National Office to confirm contractual arrangements with annual conference venue.

Action (ii): Conference working group to develop 2012 theme proposal fully, identify speakers and sponsors for National Office to plan work and invite contributions.

6. Value and Impact continuation work

The Value & Impact Project Officer joined the meeting for this agenda item.

- 6.1 The Value & Impact Project Officer delivered an overview of Value and Impact activity since he started in post on 7 October 2011. They noted:
- a. Several HEI visits and regional meeting interactions as part of their induction.
 - b. Work undertaken in contacting universities and inviting contributions to the members' evaluation tools repository.
 - c. The external consultancy work in developing management support materials and a development programme, including plans for a pilot workshop in December 2011.
 - d. The delivery of a pilot 'masterclass' by the Policy and Public Affairs Manager at an Executive HEI.
 - e. The planned CPD activity in 2012, including the two previously agreed CPD events.

- f. The range of presentations delivered by Executive and National Office colleagues at several conferences, and future speaking engagements.
- 6.2 The Executive commended the range of valuable activity in continuing to promote the original Value and Impact Project and toolkit, as well as developing further meaningful resources for the sector. They noted the substantial contribution that the further Value and Impact work will make to ensure that Student Services professionals view AMOSSHE membership as essential.
- 6.3 The Executive considered ways to increase responses to the call for contributions to the evaluation tools repository. They committed to leading the sector in providing materials. Once some examples have been submitted, it will be possible to identify areas to request further information in. The group discussed whether requests for tools could be more specific, either by the type of tool or by service area.

Action (i): All Executive board members to contribute a minimum of one evaluation tool used in their department to the Value and Impact repository.

Action (ii): Value and Impact Project Officer to continue to liaise with HEIs to encourage contributions to the toolkit.

- 6.4 The Executive commended the high quality of the draft Management Support Pack developed by Paullus Consultancy. They agreed that this should be published on www.amosshe.org.uk as a members only resource.

Action: Policy and Public Affairs Manager to agree final Management Support Pack with consultant, and publish via www.amosshe.org.uk

- 6.5 The Executive discussed whether the organisation should invest in a second print run of the Value and Impact Toolkit, and sell copies of the toolkit together with the Management Support Pack. Whilst this is likely to generate profit, the demand is not known and the purchase of additional copies, and design commission for the support pack, represented too great a financial risk at present.

7. Consultancy and benchmarking

- 7.1 The Executive discussed whether offering consultancy services was a viable development option for AMOSSHE. They noted previous discussions about the proposal to offer consultancy services, and the issues around quality control, establishing demand for advice, and the costs of implementation. They agreed that offering consultancy services in the broadest sense was not appropriate for AMOSSHE at present.
- 7.2 The Executive agreed that any additional work activity must add to the range of membership services and benefits. They considered further the bespoke Value and Impact training delivered earlier in the month at an Executive HEI. Developing a tailored CPD offer where AMOSSHE holds the greatest expertise could be a valuable addition to the membership offer if developed and costed appropriately. Full information would need to be given to colleagues delivering the training if they were not drawn from the team immediately involved in the original Value and Impact Project.

Action: National Office to develop full costing proposal for bespoke CPD delivery based on the Value and Impact toolkit and development work.

- 7.3 The Executive discussed repeated calls from the sector for meaningful benchmarking data in Student Services. There are synergies between this need and the national Efficiencies and Modernisation agenda (Diamond report). The annual AMOSSHE members' survey offers a starting point for benchmarking data, which with some revisions and inclusion of Value and Impact data might offer maturity for a benchmarking model.

Action: Strategic discussion around benchmarking to be included in a future 11/12 Executive meeting agenda.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1 The Policy and Public Affairs Manager gave an update on Students FIRST progress. Students FIRST is the JISC funded project that AMOSSHE is project managing with Anglia Ruskin University, University of East London and John Smith & Sons. The project researchers are developing service delivery maps for both HEIs, and a time lapse sequence for video updates. There are some delays in establishing consortium agreements, and the University of East London is providing contract writing support. The project manager highlighted the different ownership and delivery needs of different project partners. The Executive agreed with the project board's decision to invite an independent project chair to the board, and that it could not be an affiliate staff member to any of the project partners.
- 8.2 The Policy and Public Affairs Manager noted that AMOSSHE is developing responses to the following consultation documents:
- a. 'Putting Learners at the Centre' (Scottish White Paper); and
 - b. 'Pathway 3 consultation' (Office of the Independent Adjudicator).
- The Policy and Public Affairs Manager thanked Executive leads for their support in drafting these materials. The Executive committed to commenting on draft responses when they are circulated to the group.
- 8.3 The Chair highlighted a project proposal from ECSTAS to research and develop a consistent set of information about Student Services provision across Europe. The project hopes to draw in support from AMOSSHE and like organisations across Europe, and will apply for EU funding in early 2012.

9. Future meetings

- 10.2 17 February 2012, Drummond Street, London. Strategic discussions to include 'member reach;' an invitation will be extended to UCISA to join the afternoon meeting.
- 10.3 4 April 2012, Drummond Street, London.
- 10.4 1 June 2012, Drummond Street, London.