

Minutes of the INQAAHE Board meetings held at

2004 Workshop, Oman

Sunday 21, Monday 22 and Wednesday 24 March 2004

Present: Richard Lewis, President
Dorte Kristoffersen
Mala Singh (Apologies for Wednesday meeting)
Steven Crow
Maria Jose Lemaitre del Campo
Wai Sum Wong
Lee Harvey
Tsutomu Kimura
Phil Meade
Séamus Puirseál, Secretary

In Attendance: Ann Graves

The INQAAHE President, R W Lewis, welcomed the Board to the 2004 workshop. Following discussion it was agreed that additional items proposed be included under the relevant item on the Agenda or under Any Other Business.

1. Minutes of Meetings

- 1.1 Minutes of Board meeting, 13 April 2003 - agreed
- 1.2 Minutes of Board meeting, 16 April 2003 – agreed
- 1.3 Minutes of General Assembly meeting, 15 April 2003 – agreed

Noted there were “typos” in some names included in the minutes. Mala Singh agreed to advise the secretariat of the appropriate amendments.

- 1.4 Minutes of Electronic Board Meeting, January 2004 – agreed

Discussion on the process of the electronic Board meeting was deferred until Item 9.

2. Workshop Programme

The Secretariat advised that they had met with the local organisers to discuss the arrangements for the workshop. It was noted that a number of ministerial representatives from Gulf Co-operation States would attend and that a degree of formality would attach to the opening ceremony.

Session I – Code of Good Practice

Following discussion on the report of the working group on the Principles of Good Practice it was agreed that the Principles be circulated to workshop attendees (preamble not to be included) and that M J LeMaitre would give an update on the progress of the working group. It was further agreed that discussion between smaller groups would be the best format for the session.

It was agreed that the session should be divided into (i) The Principles themselves and (ii) the meaning of the principles, with the need for a good discussion to bring members up to date and to engage those members who had not previously been involved. It was further agreed that the membership should be advised that the guidelines should only be used as a self-diagnostic tool and that any claim of INQAAHE approval should be avoided.

Session II – Links with Regional Organisations

D Kristoffersen advised that David Woodhouse would comment on her document, which had been circulated to the attendees, after which there would be break out groups to encourage more diverse discussions and then a return to the plenary group.

Session III – Publication and Dissemination Policy

Following discussion it was agreed that the outcome of the session should be to determine what advice INQAAHE could give to agencies on the nature of public reporting.

The Board agreed that INQAAHE should be more visible and that research projects leading to reports and regional publications should be encouraged.

Session IV - Distance Education

R Lewis suggested that the workshop discussion on distance education be discussed in the context of regional development and that the format of the session should be an open discussion, in order that views could be exchanged, highlighting issues that members may have. The Board agreed that the introduction to the session should compare open, distance and transnational education and clarify the facets of distance education particularly in areas where there is confusion.

Session V - Programme and Institutional Accreditation

The Board agreed that the focus of discussion should be concentrated on what is happening in Europe, the distinctions between different accrediting bodies, and institutional versus programme accreditation and how they are dealt with in different areas.

Session VI - Links with International Organisations

The Board noted the document prepared by M Singh for circulation at the session. It was agreed that the session should be an open practical discussion dealing with the link with UNESCO and where INQAAHE is located within the UNESCO frame. It was also agreed that additional areas for discussion should be other international developments and whether INQAAHE should take cognisance of these.

The Board deferred discussion on the UNESCO meeting of 5/6 April for further discussion.

Session VII - Regional Meetings

The Board agreed that E London chair the regional meetings with the following regions and leaders:

Latin America – M J Lemaitre

Europe – C Thune

Asia/Pacific – Wai Sum Wong/D Woodhouse

North America – S Crow

Africa - Raphael Dingalo

The Secretariat agreed to contact each leader and request the notes of regional reports for future posting on the INQAAHE website.

Session IX - Accreditation in the Gulf Region

The format and content of this session to be advised by the local organisers.

Session X – Development of INQAAHE

The Board agreed that this session be left to open discussion as there were a large number of local participants at the workshop who were unaware of the role and function of INQAAHE. The Board further agreed the need to follow on from previous sessions but also to progress the discussions.

Following discussion, the Board agreed that the President, R Lewis, will produce a draft document, for circulation to the board, relating to future policy areas and outlining briefly proposed priority areas.

3. **Constitution**

Following discussion it was agreed that a rewrite rather than an amended version of the Constitution be drawn up by S Puirseil and circulated to the Board for discussion within the next two months, to include the following:

- a more active role of INQAAHE in representing QA;
- more flexibility in the membership of the board and consideration be given to increasing the maximum number of members that can be co-opted in order to represent major groups and regional balance;
- filling of vacancies on the Board including that of the President;
- the appointment of a Deputy President
- the Secretariat to have the role of Chief Administrative Officer rather than Chief Executive;
- amendments to the membership application;

- amendment to allow Board make decision regarding venue for workshops and conferences.

4. **Membership**

Following a verbal report from D Kristoffersen on the recent meeting of the membership committee it was noted that applications for full membership had been received and approved from the following organisations:

Queensland Office of Higher Education, Brisbane, Australia
Consejo Nacional de Acreditación, Colombia
European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA), The Netherlands
NVAO (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie), The Netherlands
Commission for Academic Accreditation, United Arab Emirates
Ecole nationale de la santé publique, France

and for associate membership from the following:

General Practice Education and Training Limited, Canberra, Australia
Centre international d'études pédagogiques

The Board agreed that the application form for full membership required redrafting identifying key areas where information is required and a shorter form for associate members, it was further agreed that this be completed within the next two months during which time applicants would be advised that the process was being reviewed. Following discussion and a ballot of the Board it was agreed that in order to be eligible for full membership an agency has to carry out quality assurance or accreditation activities at institutional level and agencies whose function is confined to the recognition of other agencies do not qualify for full membership.

The Board welcomed the establishment of the Asia/Pacific group in association with the Network.

5. **Biennial Conference 2005, New Zealand**

P Meade gave a verbal report on the recent meeting of the conference organising committee. He advised that the existing high rate of the New Zealand dollar, as against the US dollar, had an impact on the registration fee and that the proposal for fees were Early Registration NZ\$1150 (US\$750) and Late Registrations NZ\$1400 (US\$917). The bid originally had been made by four organisations the AAU, NZQA, NZVCC and NZPCC but to date there was a need for increased involvement from all four organisations. P Meade stated that the committee of four had undertaken personal liabilities in relation to the Conference. The Board believe that the agencies who had been awarded the conference organisation should underwrite these liabilities.

The Board agreed that all four organisations would have to get involved in the organisational arrangements and noted that the host usually uses staff time as a subsidy towards costs. The board also pointed out that the general approach of the host is that the conference is viewed as a promotional tool and that funding by way of sponsorship should be sought.

The Board agreed that the registration fee should preferably be set at €530 but not exceed €550 otherwise there is a danger that there would be a good conference which members would be prevented from attending. This rate is to be read as the equivalent in NZ\$ on 23 March 2004 (€550 = NZ\$1031).

The Board agreed a deadline date of 15 April for agreement on the registration fee, with an ongoing progress report from the organisers. They also agreed that the President and Secretary should have the authority to make a decision and if necessary to negotiate with others. In the interim the programme committee will go ahead with S Crow organising the arrangements for the programme.

The main theme of the conference will be **Quality, Assurance and Diversity**

With the following sub themes

- Impact of diversity
- Indigenous peoples
- QA in transnational issues
- National, Regional, Global initiatives
- Effectiveness of Quality Assurance

6. **Development Fund**

The Board noted that the existing policy on the Development Fund had been agreed by previous Boards and that the fund, historically, has been used to support those attending workshops and conferences. The Board also noted that some organisations would be willing to contribute to the development fund but are prevented from doing so in the form of a donation and other mechanisms should be explored to assist such agencies in supporting the Development Fund.

The Board endorsed the expansion of the development fund with the possibility of setting up an INQAAHE foundation for subscriptions and the request for funding from other organisations, which would be designated for specific use. It was also agreed that support continue to be concentrated on attendance at workshops and conferences until a decision on money is made following which a more visible outline of the purposes of the development fund should be notified to members.

The Board agreed that the Secretariat establish, and report to the Board, alternative methods of requesting support for the Development Fund other than that of donations.

7. **Workshop 2006**

Following discussion the Board agreed to seek proposals from member agencies for the hosting of the 2006 workshop. It was also agreed that a policy should be adopted to allow the Board decide on the venue and that the following criteria should be taken into consideration:

- general accessibility;
- developed infrastructure;
- good organisational skills
- local attendance restricted, with a suggestion of an additional day for the workshops to discuss the role of INQAAHE with non members;
- finances – host required to invest where necessary.

8. **Conference 2007**

The Board noted the interest of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board of the Province of Ontario as hosts for the 2007 conference.

9. **Report from the Secretariat**

S Puirseil gave a verbal update report on the Secretariat outlining the main activities since the appointment of HETAC as secretariat:

- the new website was launched in December 2003 in time to facilitate a vote of all full members on the issue of fees;
- all members of INQAAHE have been invoiced (both electronically and hard copy) for their membership subscriptions for 2004 in line with the new fee structure and where appropriate for backdated fees for 2003. The Secretariat has set up both Euro and US Dollar accounts to facilitate ease of payment;
- communication with members is the key to the fulfilment of our function. The use of technology to facilitate this communication is becoming more important – to this end INQAAHE is becoming a more technologically advanced network;
- the Secretariat has introduced online Board meetings to facilitate improved contact between Board members. The first such meeting took place in January 2004;
- the period since the General Assembly in April 2003 has seen an increase in the applications for memberships which are processed via the website by the Secretariat;
- the Secretariat communicates with and facilitates links between members through the website, more recently through a monthly News update circulated to all members and posted on the INQAAHE website and by access to the Network's Members database. To ensure the integrity of the database all members have been contacted with a request that they confirm the details held by INQAAHE, to date in excess of 60 amendments have been notified to the secretariat.

The Board agreed that a working group be set up to deal with the information required for the database. The group will comprise R Lewis, D Kristoffersen, M J Lemaitre and S Puirseil.

The Board also agreed that a working group to review the INQAAHE website be set up comprising a three member group, the members to be agreed by R Lewis and S Puirseil.

In relation to the Electronic Board meeting the Board agreed that a formal continuous meeting would best facilitate the needs of the Board. It was agreed therefore that items be dealt with individually, one topic with a request for Board members to comments and R Lewis to sum up the views, following which the view of the Board would be circulated to the members. Each item to be defined as either a proposal or a decision.

10. **Application to UNESCO**

The Secretariat advised the meeting that the application to UNESCO from INQAAHE had been submitted, however UNESCO had recently requested further information, D Woodhouse had been contacted with a request to provide historical information on the Network.

11. **Any other business**

11.1 The Journal

The Board noted that there would be amendments to documentation submitted for the journal on the "Principles of Good Practice". It was agreed that M J Lemaitre forward amendments to L Harvey in good time for publication.

11.2 Appointment of Board members

The Board agreed that R Lewis would contact Tibor Szanto, Secretary General of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee and Don Barker of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board of the Province of Ontario, with a view to appointing both as members of the Board to fill the recent vacancies. The Board further agreed that no additional observers should be appointed at this time.

11.3 Working Groups

The Board agreed that it would be more appropriate to refer to those leading the working groups as convenors rather than Chairs.

M J Lemaitre advised that due to pressures of work she could not continue to chair the Principles of Good Practice group, however she would be happy to continue as a member. The Board noted the offer by D Kristoffersen to act as Convenor to the group.

The Board agreed a new working group on "New models of Accreditation, New forms of QA" be set up to include L Harvey (Convenor), S Crow and W S Wong.

11.4 The Board agreed that it would be preferable if future meetings were scheduled to take place before and after the workshop or conference rather than during the events.

R Lewis, President INQAAHE thanked the Board for their attendance and their input into the workshops and the meetings. L Harvey thanked the President and the Secretariat.

The meeting was brought to a close.