Association of University Language Centres  
Minutes of Executive meeting  
11th Jan 2017 – Queens University Belfast (QUB)

Present: Caroline Campbell (CEC - minutes), Catherine Chabert, Chiara Cirillo, Mark Critchley, Andrew Grenfell, Peter Howarth, John Morley (Chair), Hugo O’Donnell, Thomas Smith, Liza Zamboglou  
Apologies: John Glendinning

1. Minutes from Sept meeting  
The minutes were approved.

2. Matters arising  
Catherine Chabert was elected Deputy Secretary General for Cercles (not Deputy Treasurer as stated in the minutes) - minutes to be amended.

3. Committee membership and amendment to the constitution  
The constitution had been reviewed and changes drafted - this was circulated to members ahead of the conference. Two thirds of the membership is required to vote for the amended constitution to be agreed – this is scheduled for Thurs 12 January. Should the require quota of members not be in attendance at the conference, a vote by email will be required.  
CEC will complete her term of office as Secretary in 2017 – nominations will be invited at the conference. The Chair thanked CEC for her work as Secretary for the last 6 years and Treasurer for 4 years. Her links with AULC will continue with her role as IWLP representative for UCML. Catherine agreed to continue as Deputy Treasurer for another year.  
Action: JM to follow up on the amendment to the constitution

4. Association fees for 2017  
After discussion, it was agreed that the fee should be increased from £75 to £90 from 2017. The fee was last increased in 2009 from £45. It was felt that this is still a reasonable amount compared to UCML membership costing £200, Cercles 100 euros and BALEAP £500. Analysis of the feedback on the UCML-AULC survey shows that members are keen for more activities to be supported and/or facilitated so an increase in the fee will enable this. Registration for the conference will continue to be free. It was agreed that the 4 members of staff who were awarded assisted places should be asked to provide feedback on the conference.  
Action: MC to ask the 4 members of staff awarded assisted places for feedback on the conference; CEC to amend 2017 invoices to include the new membership fee

5. Belfast conference 2017 – final matters  
TS reported that there are 137 confirmed delegates, including sponsors, which is a new record. Thomas and Liza were thanked for all their hard work in hosting the conference and were congratulated on their excellent organisation of a packed programme which includes 20 parallel sessions.

6. Items for the AGM  
Chair’s report - The Chair indicated that the AGM at the conference would need to be very brief. Overall, there was a positive message to pass on to the membership: i) evidence of increasing numbers of IWLP students from the survey; ii) positive and steady progress on UNILANG; iii) a new initiative being taken forward in the form of the Language Learning Frameworks project. It was also noted that, since LLAS no longer exists, AULC is the only national representative body for language teachers in the HE sector - and the conference is the only national conference where all languages are represented.

Membership report – CEC confirmed that fees have been received from 63 institutions. This is down slightly from 67 members in 2015. The University of Salford has re-joined but the University of Bradford has opted
not to renew its membership. The list of members on the AULC website has been updated to reflect the current membership. Edge Hill University has expressed interest in joining in 2017.

**Treasurer’s report** – CEC reported that income of £4800 had been generated from the membership fee i.e. 63 institutions @ £75 in 2016 plus one late payment for 2015. However, expenditure was £6557.72 and therefore exceeded income. With the website now being hosted by Manchester University, the LLAS charge of £600 for hosting the website will no longer be incurred, nor the contribution of £1000 towards the biennial LLAS conference. The account balance at 1st January 2016 was £22 318.17 and at 31st December 2016 was £19 401.91.

**SIG reports; SIG reporting** - AG recommended that AULC hand over responsibility for organising the Chinese Learning and Teaching conference to Macmillan from 2017 and this was agreed. AULC will move to supporting other events such as the Arabic Language Teaching & Learning conference and other language areas. It was agreed that the Events Officer would report on the SIG activities to the Executive and at the AGM.

7. **Update on UNILANG**
Catherine reported that UNILANG is going very well in the current phase of raising awareness. As a result of two calls, 11 institutions will be involved in 2016-17 and 17 examiners have been approved covering 5 languages. Some specific events will be run to provide training for prospective examiners. An article is planned for publication in The Linguist. UCML has agreed to support by spreading the word. More examiners are being sought so a further call will be made. Marion Coderch, Lead UNILANG Examiner, had agreed to run a workshop for Spanish examiners on 11 January at QUB ahead of the conference and she will communicate ‘next steps’ for approved assessors.

MC reported that some progress regarding an employer representative had been achieved through discussion with Bernardette Holmes (Born Global/Speak to the Future). Bernardette would herself like to act as the employer interface on the UNILANG committee, although MC would not recommend this due to potential conflicts in the objectives of Speak to the Future and of the AULC/UNILANG project. However, MC did recommend to the AULC Executive that Bernardette work with the UNILANG Committee on the matter of employer liaison. As such it has been suggested that Richard Hardie (Chair of Born Global Steering Group) would de facto act as the Employer representative for the immediate term, and he and Bernardette would work with UNILANG on promoting the programme at a series of employer meetings being organised through Born Global/Speak to the Future. This might start with a business breakfast in London around Easter 2017. MC will confirm with Bernardette to put arrangements in place.

**Action:** MC to confirm with Bernardette Holmes

8. **Update on Language Learning Frameworks project for the design of language courses**
MC reported that, following the failed HEFCE catalyst bid, a will was identified to tackle the issue of course design and the CEFR. This is in response to the growth in the number of courses being offered to meet the growth in demand but with a view to encouraging greater consistency across IWLP. It is focussing on the ten most popular languages as identified by the UCML-AULC survey. The aim is to develop a reference framework to guide Language Centres in designing courses and to enable students and employers to understand the level of language achieved as per the CEFR bands. The framework aims to establish the length of course and the intensity regarding the number of hours of study required by a generic learner. Working groups have been set up to look at the Romance languages, Russian, East Asian languages and Arabic. Thanks to British Academy funding a first workshop was held on 28th October in London and a second on 11th January at QUB. MC hopes that a draft report will be ready for publication by end of July. The Chair commended the initiative and said it is an excellent example of collaboration in the sector.

9. **Future events**
- 22-23 April 2017 – UK Lingua conference, Durham University
• June 2017 - Symposium on language learning for universities in the south west (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Exeter), Cardiff University
• 8 September 2017 – LSPHE SIG, University of Oxford
• January 2018 - AULC 2018 conference, Sheffield Hallam University
• Tbc – an event for administrators via Management SIG, University of Manchester
• AULC 2019 - KCL has offered to host

10. Date of next meeting: May - to be confirmed in consultation with Christine O’Leary, SHU
Action: JM to liaise with Christine O’Leary (Sheffield Hallam). 5th May was suggested as a date for the next Executive meeting.

11. AOB
UCML – it was suggested that JM should meet the new Chair of UCML, Prof. Michael Gratzke. Catherine suggested inviting him to the May meeting of the Executive.
Action: JM to invite the UCML chair to the May Executive meeting

It was reported that the IWLP at Ulster University is moving to the School of Education. Hugo suggested that AULC should contact colleagues in 2018 about renewing their membership of AULC.
Action: Ulster University to be contacted late 2017/early 2018 regarding renewing membership of AULC

Chiara raised the matter of data protection and the ethical use of data when external surveys are advertised via AULC. Regarding the UCML-AULC survey, the Chair clarified that the email which accompanies the survey says that the data is reported anonymously, where it is kept and the purpose etc. No personal data is used. It was agreed that an ethical statement should be encouraged from the survey provider and that we should clarify “AULC does not endorse...” when circulating any external surveys. A policy statement will be added to the website.
Action: Chiara to draft some policy guidelines on data protection for AULC surveys; policy statement to be added to the website regarding the use of data