

Second EALTA Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 04 June 2005 - 16.15

Fleischer's Hotel, Voss

Present: Conference participants who are individual members of EALTA.

Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of minutes from the 2004 AGM
3. President's report on EALTA activities and progress in 2004
4. Presentation of EALTA accounts for 2004
5. Membership Committee report
6. Appointment of the auditor for 2005
7. Approval of changes to the Constitution
8. Approval of changes to the Membership Rules and Regulations
9. 2006 Conference venue and dates
10. Date of the next Annual General Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Neus Figueras (President of EALTA)

1. Approval of the Agenda

Neus Figueras (NF) called for discussion items under A.O.B. None were suggested. The agenda (listed above) was approved.

2. Approval of minutes from the 2004 AGM

No changes/clarifications were requested. The 2004 AGM minutes were approved.

3. President's report on EALTA activities and progress in 2004

NF reported on the following activities and achievements:

- i. the annual EALTA conference
- ii. growth in membership numbers
- iii. communication through the EALTA website, EALTA discussion list, and Specialist Discussion Groups
- iv. successful applications for sponsorship
- v. networking with other organisations
- vi. setting up administrative systems

NF thanked everyone who has contributed to EALTA's progress so far, particularly the European Network for Language Testing and Assessment (ENLTA) and the Lancaster-based staff (Graeme Hughes and Stephanie Strong) who provide systems support and advice.

4. Presentation of EALTA accounts for 2004

The accounting period for EALTA runs from 1 January – 31 December. The accounting period in 2004 ran from 23 April 2004 – 31 December 2004. Jayanti Banerjee (JB) reported that, during this period, no monies were received and no monies were spent. This statement has been verified by the 2004 EALTA Auditor, Steven Fligelstone.

5. Membership Committee report

The Membership Committee Chair, Sauli Takala (ST) reported on the following activities:

- i. a membership committee has been formed and comprises ST, J. Charles Alderson (JCA), Alan Davies (AD) and Felianka Kaftandjieva (FK).
- ii. the committee has received and approved 7 applications for Expert membership (Glenn Fulcher, John H.A.L. de Jong, Liz Hamp-Lyons, Barry O'Sullivan, Mats Oscarson, James E. Purpura and Cyril J. Weir).
- iii. by 25 May 2005 the committee had received and approved applications for institutional membership from 8 institutions (AKSIS, University of Bergen; Centre for Curriculum Development and Examinations of the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia; DELASO – Defence Language Solutions; DRS Data and Research Services; ISD – Staatsinstitut für Schulqualität und Bildungsforschung; Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, Directorate of Foreign Language Certification (Greece); NSI Lydproduksjon A/S; and, Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta (The Matriculation Examination Board, Finland)). A number of other applications are currently being reviewed.
- iv. the committee has also prepared a memorandum detailing the 'duties' of Expert Members.

6. Appointment of the auditor for 2005

The meeting approved the appointment of Steve Fligelstone (SF) as the auditor for 2005.

NF thanked SF for agreeing to remain as auditor for one more year.

7. Approval of changes to the Constitution

The following changes to the Constitution were approved:

Change to Article 3(f)

The sentence: 'The Conference Representatives will cease to be members of the Committee six months after the conference they are responsible for has taken place'

is changed to: 'The Conference Representatives will remain on the Committee until the conference that follows the one that they are responsible for has taken place.'

This change will mean that the Committee will always have two Conference Representatives (the outgoing Conference Chair and the forthcoming Conference Chair). The size of the committee will be stable through the year. This change will also increase the size of the Executive Committee from 4 to 5 people and will allow for a better and more manageable division of labour.

Change to Article 4.2

The sentence: 'Associate Members can attend EALTA conferences, but cannot attend the Annual General Meeting and have no voting rights'

is changed to 'Associate Members can attend EALTA conferences, including the Annual General Meeting, but have no voting rights'

This change was requested by the EALTA membership (point 7.iv of the 2004 AGM minutes refers).

8. Approval of changes to the Membership Rules and Regulations

- i. The following changes to the Membership Rules and Regulations were approved:

Article 2(1)

The sentence: 'The Expert Membership candidate is willing and able to form independent and informed judgements in areas that require specialist expertise that the person may have (e.g. plans / designs, implementation, training, analysis and reporting of projects related to language testing and assessment)'

is changed to: 'The Expert Membership candidate is able to form independent and informed judgements in areas that require specialist expertise that the person may have (e.g. plans / designs, implementation, training, analysis and reporting of projects related to language testing and assessment)'.

The EALTA Membership Committee advises that it is not relevant to comment upon a candidate's 'willingness' to form independent and informed judgements as this does not indicate expertise.

Article 2(4)

The sentence: 'The Expert Membership candidate has personal credibility with senior managers, heads of institutions and language testing / examination providers' is removed.

The EALTA Membership Committee advises that this could be used unfairly in cases of professional differences of opinion.

Article 4

The sentence: 'The Committee may deliberate by electronic means or in a face-to-face meeting, must call for references and must reach its unanimous decision within two months after receiving the application'

is changed to: 'The Committee may deliberate by electronic means or in a face-to-face meeting, must call for references and must reach its decision within two months after receiving the application'.

The EALTA Membership Committee advises that a majority decision is sufficient.

Article relating to Termination of membership

The text of this article has been re-organised to be more logical. Additionally, the procedure for appeals has been clarified. This procedure is the same as the procedure for appeals for Expert Membership candidates. It now reads as follows:

'The committee may use its discretion to terminate Membership where any of the following criteria apply:

- 1) Where a Member has by their unwarranted action brought the organisation into disrepute
- 2) Where a Member acts in serious breach of the Terms and Conditions of Membership
- 3) Where a Member is found to be uncontactable despite reasonable attempts to contact the Member with a request for up-to-date contact details.
- 4) Other reasons which are deemed to be of such a serious nature that they warrant exclusion

Only in exceptional circumstances will termination of Membership on grounds of conduct take place without there having been prior advice to the Member in question that their conduct could result in their Membership being terminated.

A Member may, within a month, appeal against the decision to the President of EALTA. The Executive Committee will consider the case and the evidence submitted to support the appeal and its decision will be final.'

- ii. Discussion of the Article relating to Termination of Membership:
AD questioned the need for the word 'unwarranted' in criteria 1 of the Article. He asked whether it might ever be warranted to bring an organisation into disrepute. After discussion by the meeting of cases in which criticism (though it results in damage to the organisation's reputation) might be reasonable and justified, AD withdrew his objection.
- iii. Proposed changes to EALTA Membership Categories, Entitlements and Fees, and Terms and Conditions of EALTA Membership
The text for these documents has been harmonised with the wording for the constitution.

Additionally, the list of countries conferring eligibility for Individual Membership has been updated to include Monaco (the newest member of the Council of Europe).

These changes were approved.

9. 2006 Conference venue and dates

NF announced that the 2006 EALTA Conference will be held on 19 – 21 May 2006 in Krakow, Poland.

10. Date of the next AGM

The next AGM will be held at the 2006 EALTA conference in Krakow, Poland.