

**IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY GROUP****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN EUROPA BUILDING, GLASGOW  
22<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2004****In attendance:**

Lucy Hunter (Chair)	John Martin (AMOSSHE)
Riona Bell (SHEFC/SFEFC)	Tom Kelly (ASC)
Lorraine McSheaffrey (SAAS)	David Coyle (Strathclyde)
Jane-Claire Judson (NUS)	Chris Graham (SE)
Steve Cockburn (CHESS)	Kimberley Daly (SE)
Alastair Hunter (AUT)	Peter Lloyd (SE)
Gerard Madill (US)	Susan Whittaker (SE)

**Apologies:**

David Caldwell (US)  
Forbes McCallum (EIS)

**Agenda Item 1: IAG role and remit**

1. Lucy Hunter explained that the IAG's role will be to assist Ministers with the practical advice required to implement policy changes in relation to the planned increase in the fee level in Scotland. Ministers wish to ensure that the necessary changes are introduced in a considered way with minimum impacts on institutional administrative systems and complications for students themselves. It was noted that while the group will be invited to comment on potential fee levels, final decisions in that area will rest with Ministers. She proposed that the group should complete its work by the end of the year. Group members agreed the proposed terms of reference.

**Agenda Item 2: Administrative systems**

2. Lucy Hunter introduced paper IAG/04/002 and invited members to set out the key issues we need to consider in this area.

3. In discussion the following points were raised:

(a) SHEFC's role with the sector should not be eroded as a result of a shift in balance of funds dispersed between itself and SAAS – its role as a 'custodian of public funds' should be maintained.

(b) Transitional arrangements would be needed while the system contained both pre and post 2006 entrants.

(c) Ministers intended that students already undertaking HE courses (including those entering HE until 2005) will not be adversely affected by the proposed changes to fee levels.

(d) There is a need to maintain transparency in accounting and distinction between any 're-badged' or new funding.

(e) In relation to FE, there is a need to be careful not to end up with a negative unit of resource.

(f) The position of UHIMI would need careful attention.

(g) The position of 'fees only' students would need particularly careful handling.

(h) The impact of a new student fee regime from 2006 onwards would give transitional difficulties to SAAS, if SAAS could not continue to operate a flat fee across all institutions.

(i) It is not clear how DfES will work administrative systems in practice.

(j) SE suggested that the SHEFC fees anomalies scheme may cope with transitional issues in an interim period, and suggested that this had been used in similar circumstances before in the transition from mean-tested fee arrangements, and noted that SE's starting assumption was that this 1998 model could be applied.

**Action: SHEFC/SAAS to produce a paper on how the system was adapted to cope with fee changes in 1998.**

(k) NUS suggested that administrative systems should be as simple as possible for students with clear user-friendly and timely guidance on how to negotiate the system; a mapping exercise is required; it should be made clear that no money is being taken from students to give to institutions.

(l) Institutions will also need early advice to assist them with forward planning. Institutions will need to know if and how they will be paid in respect of 'fees only' students. Institutions can be left to sort out the internal institutional impact on systems.

**Action: SE and SAAS to note the need for early guidance and information for students.**

(m) There is a lack of clarity over whether DfES loans would be paid direct to institutions or to students. This needs to be taken up with DfES.

**Action: SE to approach DfES regarding payment of fees to Scottish institutions, and state IAG's preference that loans be paid directly to HEIs.**

(n) There is a need to create a fee benchmark.

(o) The successor arrangements for replicating the effects of the Quigley/Final Year Fee Concession arrangements would need careful presentation. SE stated

that its assumption was that these changes overtook the need for a separate Quigley arrangement, and that there would need to be a powerful argument put by anyone preferring to keep Quigley. There would be a need to start talking about the cost of a course as a whole, rather than the fourth year in isolation.

(p) On the setting of the fee level, IAG and the Phase 3 Steering Group would be involved as sounding bodies, but it will finally be a political decision based on the principles set out in the Minister's announcement.

**Action: SE to set out more detailed project plan. One work strand should be on transitional students. Another strand should be on fees only students.**

### **Agenda Item 3: Exemptions**

4. Chris Graham introduced paper IAG/04/003, and asked the group to consider some principles for exemptions from the proposed fee arrangements, and to identify who may be exempt, or issues which may develop.

5. In discussion the following points were made:

(a) The position of HNC/D students who are not granted entry to the second year of a degree, who therefore have to pay for the first year of degree level study, and Scottish students who already have a first degree and therefore don't qualify for support, needed careful attention.

(b) The fee arrangements which will apply to those who must repeat a year would need thought.

(c) More work was needed regarding the position of part-time students, including part-time students who subsequently elect to study full-time.

**Action: SHEFC to look at the issue of part-time students.**

(d) It was noted that the position of PGCE students in England was unresolved. There may be other publicly funded post graduate students whose position would need to be looked at.

(e) It would be important to have clarity about the position of all domicile groups, including the Channel Islands.

(f) The change would not be neutral for wholly self-funded students on the home rate.

(g) Arrangements for gap year (English 2005 entry) students studying in Scotland would need to be decided.

(h) Students affected by the 'false start' rule would need to be considered.

(i) Information flow will be come highly critical. In a few weeks school children will be starting to make decisions about entering HE in 2005 or 2006. It was agreed that the timing of the discussion on exemptions was tighter than for administrative systems.

(j) It was suggested that ways of disseminating information other than just the purple booklet should be considered, such as using the web and feeding into DfES information.

**Action: SE should provide advice on range of student impacts to Ministers by October, based on discussions of the IAG.**

(k) To focus the next discussion, a matrix is required outlining various types of student, the issue in each case, how much fee would be paid by whom and effect on SHEFC and SAAS funding.

**Action: SE to create matrix.**

6. The group agreed to test against the following three principles, accepting that not all may be deliverable without any exception:

(a) No Scottish-domiciled student should be affected as a result of changes to the system.

(b) Part-time students on publicly-funded places should not be affected by changes to the system.

(c) No-one starting before 2006 should be affected by changes to the system.

**Action: IAG members who had comments on the detailed list in IAG/04/00 Annex A to provide them to SE.**

#### **Agenda Item 4: FE issues**

7. Lucy Hunter introduced paper IAG/04/004.

8. In discussion the following points were made:

(a) Changes in England are wider than funding for full-time degrees. This needs to be taken into account.

(b) There is a need to ensure that UHIMI funding isn't affected by changes to administrative systems for distribution of HE funding in Scotland.

(c) There is a need to ensure that Scottish FE places aren't opened up to fee 'bargain hunters'. There is a need to be clear on the residence rule for publicly-

funded places. Colleges near the border with England might be under particular pressure.

(d) There should be no adverse impact on the existing FE unit of student resource.

**Action: Agreed that in the first instance, FE issues should be considered separately by SE SFEFC and FE representatives, including NUS.**

### **Agenda Item 5: Medical Education**

9. Peter Lloyd introduced paper IAG/04/005, and asked for advice on who should be involved in discussions on this issue.

10. Suggestions made were BMA (Student Doctors' Committee), CHES, individual university medical schools, Scottish Academy for Health Policy and Management, Health Department.

11. In discussion the following points were made:

(a) This matter would be looked at through a more standard consultation process, and would not be a major item for this group.

(b) If there is to be a separate fee rate for medical education, there will be a need for an extra funding group in SHEFC's unit of teaching resource allocations. It was felt this was an issue for SHEFC, who should conduct discussions in parallel.

### **Agenda Item 6: AOB**

12. The proposed date for the next meeting confirmed as 30<sup>th</sup> September. Participants asked to confirm availability with Vicki Carson for this and other proposed dates as soon as possible.

**IAG Secretariat  
August 2004**