

BIC SUPPLY CHAIN EXCELLENCE AWARD (SCEA) ACCREDITATION SCHEME REVIEW TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUP PRELIMINARY MEETING – Minutes

Location: PLS, 1st Floor, Barnard's Inn, 86 Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1EN

Date and time: Wednesday 11th January 2017, 2pm

Minutes taken by: Sophia Sophocleous

Present

John Bell, HarperCollins
Simon Edwards, Consultant
Matthew Hogg, Macmillan (dialling in)
Lada Kriz, Random House
Karina Luke, BIC
Sophia Sophocleous, BIC

Apologies

Russell Evans, Simon & Schuster
John Garrould, Bertram's
David Hetherington, Klopotek
Chris Jones, Cambridge University Press
Stephen Long, Nielsen
Kate MacFarlan, Clays (dialled in)
Charly Nobbs, Supply Chain Optimisation
Chris Peck, Ingenta (dialled in)
Jim Reed, Waterstones
Alfred Willmann, Random House

Now resigned from the Group:

Mark Lincoln, Cambridge University Press

1. Welcome to the call and apologies

SE welcomed the Group to the meeting and the apologies were read out.

2. Competition Law – conduct reminder

The Group were informed about BIC's Competition Law Policy – please click here for more information regarding this policy: <http://www.bic.org.uk/149/BIC-Competition-Law-Policy/>.

3. The SCEA Review Project**- Representation on this Group**

KL speculated whether the low attendance of these meetings are indicative of a lack of interest in revising the SCEA Scheme, noting that this is the only BIC Group with such low attendance. JB noted that at HarperCollins there is interest in the Scheme. SE and KL agreed that it would not be a good idea to abandon the revision of the Scheme. SE noted that the Scheme receives many applications from varied organisations, from small independent bookshops to large publishers. He noted that the Scheme requires updating, though this may be done without face-to-face meetings, though it will need promoting to more organisations.

❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that work on revising the SCEA is important and must go ahead.

- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that it would be possible to conduct meetings for this Group via conference call from now on.

- The Questionnaires

KL stated that the application process / questionnaire for the SCEA must be reviewed, noting that some organisations submit emails stating that nothing has changed since their last accreditation, rather than filling in the questionnaire again. KL speculated whether the Scheme should run every 2-3 years, and if run annually, that organisations must be encouraged to give more information than they currently do. SE suggested that the questionnaire should be an online form. JB noted that having an online form which cannot be submitted until each area has been filled in would mandate a better response. MH asked how excellence is defined when accrediting organisations: by capability or by progress? SE agreed that a measure of progress should be included in the Scheme and speculated whether being stricter was the aim of revision. SE noted that the Award would have to be highly desired if it is to run every 2-3 years, as it could potentially lose continuity.

KL noted that the 54 currently accredited organisations comprise of various trades, such as bookshops, publishers and distributors. SE noted that the Scheme had previously been more granular, including questions relating to EDI but that it had been deemed too specific, which then led to the current self-assessment scheme. SE stated that this current self-assessment model is too general because organisations may not provide much information and organisations can overestimate and underestimate their own work. SE also noted that gold, silver and bronze awards (were the scheme to move in this direction) are difficult to award based on such general information.

- Questionnaires: Capability and Progress

JB suggested a way of incorporating MH's point regarding capability and progress would be to award a higher level of accreditation to those demonstrating progress. KL noted that assessing capability and progress is a good idea. SE agreed, noting that this must be phrased in different ways for different organisations. MH agreed stating that there should be different criteria for different organisations. He suggested that the second part of the questionnaire could focus on progress, which would be more subjective than the first part. KL noted that once the new BIC website is running this will hopefully mean that BIC can be more agile with the questionnaire.

MH stated that the BIC website would be doing the work associated with the first part of the questionnaire dealing with capability (using pre-defined rules) and that the second part dealing with progress would be more subjective, and assessed by a Panel. JB noted that the second part is not entirely subjective as an organisation's current application could also be compared to the previous years' application, and progress could be identified in this manner. SE noted that organisations could also be asked to state their goals and progress on goals. The Group agreed that it would be unfair to judge organisations on progress in all

areas of the business, as some may not operate in certain areas that others do. SE noted that any projects that organisations have underway should not have to be live but should be planned and have had some work already put into them.

- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that the questionnaire should take the form of a modular online form.
- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that both capability and progress should be assessed in the SCEA in each module, though there should be different criteria for different organisations.

- Service Providers

KL noted that the application for 'service providers' can be off putting since it is a blank sheet. JB noted that the accreditation questionnaire should have focused questions for service providers and be as little like a blank sheet as possible. SE agreed.

KL asked the Group if they were happy with the four categories of Booksellers, Distributors, Service Providers and Publishers, as they appear in the current Scheme. JB noted that publishers that have their own distribution and especially those that distribute for other publishers should be accredited separately as both 'publishers' and also 'distributors'. JB also suggested that the Service Providers category could be split into two categories, noting that Virtuales and Ingenta are specifically technology providers whereas other organisations listed are concerned with other areas. SE noted that there are companies such as Lil Packaging that specialise in cardboard production, but do other things as well. KL suggested that an interactive form with a function to show questions based on answers, as discussed earlier, would help. SE agreed that this would be worthwhile but noted that 'speaking everyone's language' may not be easy.

SE stated that the accreditation scheme is specific to BIC, and as such may not necessarily cover all functions within each organisation as it is not universal. SE suggested that this may need pointing out and that the award could specify the reasons why an organisation has been accredited. SE noted that splitting the service providers' category will be looked into, but the four categories will remain for the time being.

- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that the Service Provider questionnaire should not be a blank sheet, but should have focused questions.

- Submitting the application form

JB noted that he would appreciate a questionnaire that employees from each division within an organisation could fill in. KL noted that the 'owner' (main employee filling in the form) could nominate another employee to fill in sections, or modules of the form that they have specific knowledge about. LK added that the form could be submitted to BIC only once the owner has completed the entire form, but not before. SE agreed that the form should essentially be open to all employees (in the event that the 'owner' leaves the organisation).

KL speculated whether the BIC website would be capable of this and informed the Group that the new BIC website should be ready in March 2017. SE noted that such a form must be user friendly. JB suggested that the questionnaire format showing questions based on answers ('go to section X') could be trialled using Survey Monkey. KL stated that links to the current forms will be included on Google Docs, so that Group members can view them.

❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that each module (i.e. metadata, EDI) in the questionnaire can be filled in by the necessary departments and submitted to BIC online.

- Digital

SE noted that the current questionnaire includes a few digital questions though these are for information only at the moment, as some organisations do not produce eBooks as part of their business model. KL commented that if a publisher does produce eBooks for example, then this information should be taken into consideration. SE agreed that this information should either be measured in the accreditation or outsourced to a separate digital supply chain accreditation scheme. LK stated that digital audio is an area that is seeing a lot of growth and so accreditation based on how quickly files can be supplied and the quality of files would be worthwhile. JB noted that if the Scheme is named the 'Supply Chain Excellence Award' then it must also include aspects of the digital supply chain, otherwise be named the 'Physical Supply Chain Award'. SE noted that he will draft a questionnaire which can then be reviewed by the T&FWG using Google Docs

❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that the digital supply chain should be included in the scope of the overall SCEA and as such a module with questions relating to the digital supply chain should be included.

- Difference between TEiLA and THE SCEA

SE noted that the TEiLA (Technology Excellence in Libraries Award) Accreditation Scheme is separate to this scheme as it focuses on library suppliers downstream whereas this Scheme focuses on library suppliers / booksellers to publishers. SE confirmed that the e4Libraries / TEiLA Scheme includes the digital aspects, such as eBook lending.

- Scoring Mechanism and Weighting

KL asked the Group how the scoring system should work. The Group discussed various methods of scoring. SE suggested that a weighting could be given to certain important areas, such as EDI. SE suggested another method would be to score organisations out of 100% and that extra points for commendation could be introduced. SE noted that having 10 questions instead of 5 may be spreading results too thinly. JB suggested that this could be avoided by breaking the questionnaire down into different sections; the organisation could then be scored on each section, and be told confidentially if certain areas need improvement. KL agreed that there could (for example) be 8 sections and each could be scored out of 100%; if an organisation scores less than 50% on two or more sections (say) then they will fail the SCEA. KL added that commendation will not be necessary with this method of scoring. The

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KL stated that feedback will be more specific as a result of a more modular scoring system, which will hopefully incentivise organisations to take part in the Scheme. LK added that this would be very important for large publishers. KL noted that the modular scoring system would also mean that other departments could fill in the sections relevant to them. JB added that if there is any issue with security regarding logins etc. then the form could be broken into separate questionnaires per module. SE noted that organisations' previous applications should be made securely available (viewable only to the organisation concerned) on the BIC website. The Group agreed that having access to previous applications would be essential.

- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that there should be a number of modules and each would be scored out of 100%; if an organisation scores less than 50% on two or more sections then they will fail the SCEA.
- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that in-depth feedback on an organisation's score should be provided confidentially.

- The Modules

JB suggested that in some sense it is up to BIC (as opposed to this T&FWG) to decide the areas to be included in the SCEA. SE noted that anything concerned with standards should be included in the Scheme (e.g. metadata, EDI, web services, Tradacoms). KL noted that questions for these areas could then be expanded with sub-sections. SE noted that social media is now so incorporated within most organisations that questions relating to use of it will be unnecessary and can be removed from the new scheme. KL noted that questions on rights, permissions and royalties should be expanded and that questions relating to use of ONIX 3 should be more specific. LK noted that questions relating to ONIX 3 must be more specific than simply asking whether an organisation uses ONIX 3. KL agreed. LK suggested that similarly, in depth questions relating to *Thema* should be included. SE and KL confirmed that an organisations' engagement with BIC should also be taken into consideration during the accreditation process.

- ❖ **DECISION:** The Group agreed that questions in each module should be very specific/targeted in order to draw out as much information as possible.

- Question 11 on current scheme

SE informed the Group that question 11 on the questionnaire (requesting examples of the titles and ISBNs of 5 books / eBooks) is useful for little known publishers that may publish books for a specific audience (i.e. for the ambulance service). KL added that this question had also been included in order to deter bots/scammers from filling the questionnaire in. SE proposed that this question should remain in the questionnaire.

- Drafting the Modules

KL added that it would be a good idea to expand on what already exists, bearing in mind everything discussed to date, and take this to both the Physical and Digital Supply Chain Committees. JB noted that the next meeting of the Digital Supply Chain Committee will be

on 19th January 2017 and SE noted that he will expand the existing questions in time for this meeting.

- **ACTION:** SE to draft questions for a modular SCEA questionnaire ahead of the Digital Supply Chain Committee meeting on Thursday 19th January 2017, prioritising the questions that pertain to the digital supply chain.
- **ACTION:** SE to save this questionnaire as a Google Doc, giving access to members of this Group.
- **ACTION:** BIC to present SE's draft questionnaire to the Digital Supply Chain Committee on Thursday 19th January 2017.

4. Choosing a Chair & Deputy Chair

SE noted that a Chair would not be necessary as such for this T&FWG. KL agreed to lead the Group.

5. The SCEA Accreditation Panel for 2017 – should it go ahead?

KL noted that the SCEA which would usually go ahead in March 2017 will be put on hold, and all organisations' accreditation will be honoured until the revised SCEA is run.

- **ACTION:** BIC to contact organisations with SCEA accreditation in early February 2017 to inform them that accreditation will not go ahead as usual in March 2017, but that their accreditation will be honoured until the revised SCEA runs.

6. BIC TEC Committee

Nothing was discussed under this Item.

7. New requirements under consideration for the revised SCEA Scheme

In addition to items mentioned above, SE confirmed that questions relating to requirements such as EDItX and Web Service / BIC *Realtime* implementation should also be added to the Scheme.

8. A.O.B.

None.

9. Date of next meeting

Thursday 6th April 2017.