Dear e-bulletin readers,

It is my great pleasure to invite you to our second CercleS E-bulletin prepared by a team of CercleS members. We have achieved a lot since the first number. Members have been very active in many fields and, in my opinion, the described numerous activities show our commitments to National Associations as well as CercleS.

I would like to inform you about Coordinating Committee meeting in September this year. On behalf of all of us, I thank Language Centre staff with Dr Cristina Perez for hosting us in a prestigious university in Valencia. For the first time the Executive Com. decided to invite Focus Groups coordinators to plan new forms of activities such as seminars and workshops organized between CercleS international conferences. The more we discuss and talk, the better the organization is meeting members’ expectations.

June is the exam period in many universities. I wish you and your students successful exam period. Remember about your holidays! Enjoy, relax and find some time for private life.

E-bulletin helps exchanging ideas and information within CercleS. I would encourage all of you to contribute to the E-bulletin. Write about your projects, future events and share with us important facts from your workplace.

Enjoy the reading!

Dr Liliana Szczuka-Dorna

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**CercleS stats**

*Established 1991*
Strasbourg, France

*Number of members 2019*
Within National Associations: 345
Associate Members: 19

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**CercleS President**
Liliana Szczuka-Dorna (SERMO)

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**Elections, the new Executive Committee 2019-2021**

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**LLHE Special issue - call**

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**Leadership training Oct 2019**

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**Inside this issue:**

Hello from the CercleS President

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**Meetings**
Executive committee
Monthly online

**Coordinating committee**
Annually

**General Meeting** Biennially

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**Conference**
Biennially

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**Next conference**
Brno, University of Masaryk, Czech Republic
September 2020
CercleS Executive September 2016 - September 2019

CercleS President
Liliana Szczuka-Dorna (SERMO)

Vice-President
Carmen Argondizzo (AICLU)

Secretary General
Heidi Rontu (FINELC)

Deputy Secretary General
Catherine Chabert (AULC)

Treasurer
Marta Estella Clota (ACLES)

Deputy Treasurer
Andrea Koblízkova (CASALC CZ)
Update from Secretary General and Treasurer

This academic year, the Executive Committee has met six times (on 08/11/2018; 05/12/2018; 08/01/2019; 07/02/2019; 14/03/2019 and 12/04/2019) and will also meet on 17 & 18 June in Barcelona.

As you may know, this year, members of the Executive Committee are on ‘borrowed time’. Last September, when the Coordinating Committee met in Poznan, representatives of National Associations felt that there was little point in renewing the Executive Committee if the crucial issues of the status of our association and the opening of a new bank account were not resolved. So it was agreed that, exceptionally, the term of members of the Executive Committee would be extended by one year in order to focus on these two points.

By March 2019, the matter of the registration of CercleS was resolved with confirmation from the Tribunal d’Instance in Strasbourg that the required updating of their register had been recorded in their Registre des Associations.

Once the registration process was completed, we started working on opening a new current bank account in France in the name of CercleS. We have contacted banks which work with associations, and hopefully we will soon be able to open the new bank account. This is why we have delayed collecting membership fees till summer 2019.

Aside from this, we have managed as best as we could without a replacement for Helen Nuttall, administrative assistant to the Executive, who resigned on 01/01/2019 to focus on her new career. Administrative support is an issue which the new Executive Committee will need to look at but we didn't feel it was worth resolving this during this transitional period.

To end on a more positive note, we are pleased to report that CercleS is becoming increasingly more international with new Associate Members from Hong Kong, Israel and Hungary joining us this year!

Catherine Chabert
Marta Estella Clota
Andrea Koblizkova
Heidi Rontu
Introduction to the Association of University Language Communities in the UK & Ireland (AULC)

www.aulc.org

History and the national contexts

AULC was formed in 1999 to create a coherent body to represent all staff working in language centres. Past Chairs of AULC include such notables as Professor Ray Satchell, Dr Nick Byrne, and Dr Peter Howarth, well known to many members of CercleS. AULC represents institution wide language learning in Universities across the UK and Ireland. Membership is institutional, by membership subscription. In 2019, we have 4 Associate members, including the University of the West Indies in Trinidad & Tobago, and 68 members (62 from the UK, 6 from the Republic of Ireland), 50 of whom are also members of CercleS.

In the UK and in Ireland, there is a long tradition of Universities offering undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes in Modern Foreign Languages (itself a contested term). However in the past 20 years, applications by students to specialist degree programmes has fallen by more than 60% in the UK, also reflecting an alarming drop in the study of languages other than English in UK schools. The picture is not dissimilar in the the rest of the English-speaking world (e.g. USA, Australia). In contrast, over the same period, registrations to language courses offered as part of institution wide language programmes has almost doubled. There are now over 70,000 students taking language courses at AULC member Universities in the UK, with an increasingly diverse choice of languages available from French, German and Spanish, to Catalan, Korean, Swahili and Urdu, with a strong representation of Gaelic, Irish, Welsh and British Sign Language.
This picture has resulted in a wide variety of departmental structures within which languages are taught in our Universities. There are a number of very strong, dedicated language centres, many of which combine the teaching of “foreign” languages with the teaching of English for Academic purposes to international students. Other institution wide language programmes (IWLP) are located within academic schools of Modern Languages, either with separate programmes taught by our own teachers, or with teachers teaching across both degree programmes and IWLP. In yet others degree teaching has stopped, with only IWLP remaining. To better reflect this patchwork of practice, AULC changed its name in 2018 from the Association of University Language Centres to the Association of University Language Communities. This better represents the varied relationship between institutions and teaching staff, of whom there are estimated to be more than 1,550 working in AULC member institutions, supported on a variety of contracts from full time to hourly paid.

In addition to AULC representing instituting wide language teaching, in the UK there is also the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML) representing degree awarding institutions, and BALEAP (the British Association of Lecturers of English for Academic Purposes). There is some overlap of membership and a need for continued liaison, especially when it comes to shared or conflicting interests. This will become increasingly important as we work towards what we hope might become a new national languages strategy in England. There are also specific devolved language strategies for pre-University education in Wales and Scotland. In Ireland there is a new national languages policy, Languages Connect, which is an integral part of the Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026.

The mission of AULC is to encourage, stimulate and promote best practice and innovation in the learning and teaching of languages and the management and effective administration of resources.

Role and purpose

AULC sets out to support and encourage our members to take best advantage of the situations in which they find themselves. AULC is not established to act as an advocate for language centres and programmes nationally, although this role is evolving. In an Anglophone context, we do set out to promote and foster the value of language learning, both for learners and for senior University management. We also promote and encourage scholarship and the professional development of our teachers, especially in addressing the relationship between specialist degree programmes and non-specialist institution wide learning. Increasingly our members also support language learning in our local communities and for professional purposes, working with businesses and other external organisations.
How does AULC work?

AULC activities are organised by an Executive Committee (EC) of nine people. Mark Critchley (Durham University) is incoming Chair, taking over from Dr John Morley (University of Manchester) as of 1st May 2019. The EC meets 3 times per year in May, September, and in January, when we hold an annual conference, the last one of which took place at King’s College London with over 200 participants. Our next conference will take place in Maynooth University, Ireland in January 2020.

AULC also operates five (5) Special Interest Groups (SIG): Management, Teaching & Learning Support, Professional Development, Interculturality, and Languages for Specific Purposes. There are nascent groups in Administration and Less-Widely Taught Languages currently being established. Any individual who is working at an AULC member institution can sign up to join one or more of the SIGs to satisfy their own personal interests, and the SIGs act as a vehicle to support scholarship and research by those individuals. We also work with language specific groups representing teachers, such as ELE-UK, IFProfs, the British Chinese Language Teaching Society and a resurrected British Association for Teachers of Arabic for similar purposes.

Finally, AULC also introduced a new national language certification scheme in 2015-16. UNILANG, now also part of the NULTE network, is an evolving national language recognition scheme to help UK university students articulate their language learning outcomes in terms of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It provides a recognised certificate that runs alongside the award of credits or other HE awards by the institution concerned. UNILANG is a ‘light-touch’ scheme, designed to be simple to implement, and is currently in use in 11 AULC member institutions in the UK.
Support and Collaboration

At its heart, AULC is a collaborative and mutually supportive organisation. At recent conferences, we have received guest speakers from CercleS members in Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic. All our members remain open for collaboration, joint projects, visits and networking and we welcome contact from colleagues across CercleS.

Mark Critchley
Chair of AULC

2nd conference for the teaching of Arabic in UK Higher Education
Co-organised by AULC
April 2019.

AULC Executive Committee meeting
Maynooth University
May 2019
AKS und g.a.s.t. kooperieren bei der Entwicklung von Einstufungstests

Der AKS und die Gesellschaft für akademische Studienvorbereitung und Testenwicklung e.V., kurz g.a.s.t., werden gemeinsam Einstufungstest entwickeln. Der AKS und seine Mitgliedsinstitutionen bringen dabei ihre breite, sprachübergreifende Expertise in Unterrichtsmethodik, Didaktik und Curriculumentwicklung sowie deren wissenschaftlicher Erforschung ein. Zudem verfügt der fast 50 Jahre alte Verband über jahrzehntelange Erfahrung nicht nur in der Sprachausbildung sondern auch im Testen und (durch das UNIcert®-System) Zertifizieren von Sprachkenntnissen im Hochschulbereich. g.a.s.t. wiederum ist Anbieterin des bekannten Hochul-Sprachtests TestDaF sowie weiterer computerbasierter Tests und verfügt mit ihren 500 Testzentren in 100 Ländern über weitreichende Erfahrung und eine gut ausgebaute Infrastruktur für die Entwicklung und Bereitstellung webgestützter Sprachprüfungen, insbesondere für Deutsch als Fremdsprache.

AKS and g.a.s.t. cooperate to develop placement tests

The German AKS and the Bochum-based Society for the preparation of academic studies and test development (g.a.s.t.) have agreed to conjointly develop new placement tests. The AKS and its 150 member institutions will bring into the partnership a broad professional expertise in the fields of teaching methodology, didactics and curriculum development für a wide range of languages as well as in conducting scholarly research in these fields. The almost 50 year old association also boasts decades of experience not only in the teaching of foreign languages but also in testing and certifying language proficiency at the tertiary level. g.a.s.t., in turn, is the organization behind the well-known TestDaF, which is widely used as a language examination for foreign students who wish to study at a German university. In addition to their flagship exam, g.a.s.t offers a range of other computer-based tests and operates about 500 test centers in 100 countries, which have given them a broad experience and a well developed infrastructure for the development and distribution of web-based language examinations, particularly for German as a foreign language.

The president of AKS, Peter Tischer, and g.a.s.t. CEO Joachim Althaus signed the formal agreement in February 2019 at the Bremen Symposium. The partners plan to begin by developing placement tests, which will be based on the C-Test Principle, for French, Spanish, and Italian. The first expert panels will soon start to work on the project.

Welcome to join CercleS focus group activities!
http://www.cercles.org/EN-H32/the-activities-of-the-focus-groups.html

Language Learning in Higher Education Journal (LLHE) Special Issue CALL for Papers 2019-2020

Training for language centre managers / directors:

The European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (CercleS) has been promoting interaction and cooperation between different institutions involved in language teaching in Europe since 1991, bringing together Language Centres, Departments, Institutes, Faculties or Schools in Higher Education whose main responsibility is the teaching of languages.