

11th EALTA Annual General Meeting
Held on Saturday 31 May 2014, 15:45 at the University of Warwick, UK

Present: Conference participants who are Individual and Associate members of EALTA – European Association for Language Testing and Assessment.

Agenda

1. To approve the minutes from the last AGM
2. To review EALTA's activities and progress in 2013
3. To present Membership Committee report
4. To present the EALTA accounts for 2013
5. To appoint an auditor for 2014
6. To elect the Chair of the Membership Committee
7. To discuss new terms for the election of the President
8. To determine the date and venue of the 2015 Annual General Meeting
9. To discuss any other business that may be properly brought before the meeting

The meeting was called to order by Gudrun Erickson (GE) President of EALTA, who welcomed all participants. The members of the Executive Committee then introduced themselves. GE asked if there was any other business that people wanted to discuss. There were no suggestions for AOBs.

1. Approval of minutes from the 2013 AGM

Since no changes were requested, the minutes from the Annual General Meeting 2013 were approved.

2. President's and Executive Committee's report on EALTA activities and progress in 2013

GE commented on the 2014 conference and thanked Claudia Harsch and her team for excellent preparation and hosting of the event, which had gathered over 200 participants. She also expressed EALTA's gratitude to the sponsors for their support. Moreover, GE acknowledged the generous contributions of the pre-conference workshop leaders, the invited keynote speakers and round table participants, and the SIG leaders. Then she also highlighted some of the key novelties of this year's conference such as a call for proposals for workshops, which led to the organisation of 4 successful groups. There was also a new slot left for the exploration of research opportunities, and special time for the presentation in plenary of posters.

GE talked about the fact that there are now 3 more SIGs in EALTA (focusing on Signed Language, the CEFR and Speaking), details of which can be found on the website. She also mentioned that some existing SIGs have been particularly active with mid year meetings in Cyprus and Turkey.

GE announced that the 3rd Ealta Summer School, which takes place in Siena Italy during the last week of July, has already been a success in terms of enrolments and requests from many countries well beyond Europe's borders.

GE also reminded the audience that at the last AGM a decision had been taken to add a section D to the Guidelines for Good Practice, focusing on alignment to the CEFR. Since

then translations of this new section into almost all the already existing 35 languages have been produced.

Besides the addition of section D, some constitutional changes that were decided in the 2013 AGM have been made.

Another novelty introduced during the year was a contact form on the website, so that members now have another channel to contact the executive team.

The EALTA membership numbers at the time of the conference had increased considerably, Individual members by 29 % and Associate members by 26 %. Also Expert members had increased by 22 % partly as a result of the revised policy voted in the 2013 AGM, partly following active work by the Membership Committee.

At the time of the AGM, the EALTA membership numbers were the following:

Individual members:	1171 / 42 countries
Associate members:	153 / 36 countries
Institutional members:	57 / 20 countries
Expert members:	22 / 10 countries

3. Membership report by the Chair of the Membership Committee Angela Hasselgreen

Angela Hasselgreen (AH) introduced the members of the Committee and reminded the audience that, following the changes to some of the rules for the application for Expert and Institutional membership that had been introduced after the 2013 AGM, the Committee had been busy revising forms and procedures. AH reported an increase of 5 Expert Members since the last AGM.

4. Presentation of 2013 accounts by the Treasurer Tony Green

EALTA's Treasurer Tony Green (TG) reported on the EALTA accounts for 2013 (balance sheet included in the AGM papers, verified by the 2013 auditor) reiterating that although there is a need to keep a safety net of about 50,000 euros for the organisation of the annual conference, the balance of accounts is so healthy (just over 69,000 euros) that the membership are invited to make suggestions on how the extra funds could be put to good use for purposes in compliance with EALTA's mission. The members were invited to use the contact form on the website to make their suggestions.

The accounts were approved by the AGM.

5. Appointment of the auditor for 2014

The meeting approved the appointment of Peter Holt as the auditor for 2014. GE thanked Peter for accepting the task.

6. Election of the Chair of the Membership Committee

The Expert member profiles of the two candidates, Dina Tzagari (DT) and Norman Verhelst (NV), were read by AH. Norman Verhelst had been nominated by Barbara Blair, seconded by Hildegunn Lahlum Helness; Dina Tzagari had been nominated by Jayanti Banerjee, seconded by Anders Johannessen Fikke. The members who had the right to vote and had been allocated a ballot paper upon entering the room, cast their votes.

Dina Tzagari received 28 votes, Norman Verhelst 43. Consequently, Norman Verhelst was elected. The Executive Committee thanked Dina Tzagari for accepting the nomination and congratulated Norman Verhelst.

GE reminded the audience that in 2015 there will be two executive elections, the ones for Secretary and Treasurer (and possibly a third one for upcoming president; see item 7). Karin Vogt has accepted to chair the nomination group for 2015 elections.

Since over the last few years the rule of voting in presentia, laid down in the Constitution, has been discussed, and given there are two important elections coming up, the Executive Committee put a proposal to the AGM for putting together a group in order to investigate the various aspects of alternative voting procedures. The group will need to have access to, knowledge about the legal aspects of voting in an association like EALTA. GE invited those who would be interested in this group to get in touch with the Executive Committee as soon as possible.

7. Discussion of new terms for the election of the President

Claudia Beccheroni (CB) introduced the topic by reading out the message posted on the EALTA list and attached to the AGM papers, namely the proposal by the Executive Committee (EC) to introduce the function of upcoming president in EALTA. This would enable the upcoming president to work with the current president for one year, as a member of the EC. In addition to this, the EC wanted to suggest that after the 3 years in office the President would remain informally available for consultation without being an official member of the EC.

Two former presidents taking part in the AGM voiced their support for the change, which was considered a good way to prepare for the presidency, and also a way of strengthening the EC during the year with the upcoming president as a member.

Similar support came from other members, but some disadvantages were also mentioned. These largely concerned the aspect of making a commitment to 4 or, informally, 5 years. This had also been articulated by three members communicating with the EC before the AGM, two of which were in favour of the suggestion but suggested a two-year period of presidency, the third instead suggesting more members in the EC, if need be. Furthermore, during the AGM, one member warned about a possible increase of costs due to the enlargement of the EC for the refunding of committee members' travel and accommodation costs to attend the pre-conference meeting during the year with the upcoming president in the EC. The treasurer was able to confirm that since most of the committee had their expenses covered by their institutions, this cost was minimal. It was added, for clarity, that the EC get no remuneration for their work and regular conference costs, including travel and accommodation.

The practices of ILTA regarding term of office of president and the role of the vice president were outlined. It was pointed out that, should the EC proposal be adopted, there would be three elections during the 2015 AGM (treasurer, secretary and upcoming president), which is something that would have to be dealt with for the future.

The question of whether the constitution would have to be changed to accommodate the possible change was discussed, or if using the option mentioned in the Constitution to appoint Supplementary Members could solve the issue of the new function. No support was articulated for shortening the period of presidency; however, it was considered essential that the EC further clarify that the availability for consultancy after the three-year period would be an informal one.

A show of hands showed an overwhelming majority for the proposal of an upcoming president. It was concluded that the AGM had given support to the EC to proceed with the proposal after having checked the procedures further.

8. 2015 Conference venue and dates

The 2015 EALTA Conference will take place at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark from 28th to 31st May. The conference will be organised by Slobodanka Dimova and colleagues.

Further information about the conference will be given in due course, via the EALTA website and electronic membership list.

GE encouraged proposals to the Executive Committee for future conference venues and organisation.

9. Date of the next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM will be held during the 2015 EALTA conference at the University of Copenhagen, on Saturday 30 May.

10. AOB

There was no other business raised.

Closing of the AGM and warm thanks to Angela Hasselgreen for the work carried out as Chair of the Membership Committee over the past years, and to Peter Holt for his work as Past Conference Organiser.

Formal thanks to the conference organisers were deferred to the next day as part of the closing of the conference.

Between the 2014 and 2015 AGMs, the EALTA Executive Committee will have the following members:

Gudrun Erickson – *President*

Claudia Beccheroni – *Secretary*

Tony Green – *Treasurer*

Norman Verhelst – *Chair of the Membership Committee*

Claudia Harsch – *2014 Conference organiser representative*

Slobodanka Dimova – *2015 Conference organiser representative*