

31 To allow for an element of rotation the triennial conference of education ministers will determine which four countries, other than the largest donors, should appoint Board members. For the same reason members will be appointed for a three-year term, may be reappointed for a further term, but should not serve a longer consecutive period than six years. We have also provided in the Memorandum of Understanding for the Board to avail itself of advice from organisations or governments significantly assisting the Agency by empowering it to invite up to five persons to attend Board meetings on an advisory basis.

32 For the first Board, which needs to be established well before the next conference of education ministers, we recommend that the Secretary-General after appropriate consultation should propose which four countries other than major donors should appoint Board members and should himself, after due consultation, appoint five individual members to the Board. This will enable a properly constituted Board including both government and individual members to be set up without delay. As in para 30 we recommend that the Secretary-General, again after consultation, should nominate the first Chairman for appointment by the Board.

33 While the Board will have overall responsibility for the activities of the Agency we assume that it may wish to appoint one or more committees with specialist functions to act between its own meetings. It may, for example, wish to appoint an executive committee, especially to oversee the early stages of work. This and other possibilities will be open to the Board provided the Memorandum of Understanding empowers it to appoint committees. The recommended draft does this.

34 The Memorandum lays down the responsibilities of the Board and the president. The Board will have overall responsibility for determining principles, policies and priorities, for considering and approving the work programme, and for approving the budget. Initially it will need to adopt staff regulations and financial regulations. Day-to-day responsibility will rest with the president who will be responsible for preparing the work programme and budget for consideration by the Board, for implementing the work programme, for controlling the budget, and for reporting on the work of the Agency. The president will also be responsible for appointing the staff; in the case of the senior staff this will be after consultation with and with the agreement of the chairman.

35 The Commonwealth of Learning will need to remain in close touch with Commonwealth governments and with Commonwealth educational developments generally. In order to facilitate this we recommend that the Agency should report every three years to the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers and that it should also submit a report to the biennial meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government.

5 STAFFING

36 We have considered both the type of staff to be appointed to the Agency for the Commonwealth of Learning and the principles that should guide staffing.

37 The president as chief executive of the Agency will be appointed by the Board of Governors and will be responsible to the Board for the administration and management of the Agency and its activities. The appointee would need to be in a position to negotiate at the highest level with governments and to command immediate respect in any college or university in the Commonwealth. The appointee might thus be someone who is already a university

vice-chancellor or holding a comparable educational post but this is not necessarily the only appropriate background for the post. Our recommendation is that the successful candidate is likely to be an educational leader of international stature who combines international experience with knowledge and understanding of the application of distance education in development, excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability in government relations, management and fund-raising. The successful candidate will require the energy, initiative and innovative ability to launch the new organisation.

38 In addition to the president the Agency will require two groups of staff: professional and educational staff concerned with the Agency's main functions (information, training, research and evaluation, communication technology and course development); and administrative, technical and support staff. A proportion of the staff will be on secondment. Beyond the staff of the Agency there will, of course, be many personnel working under contract for specific projects.

39 Where staff are employed at a regional unit, appointment to these posts will be the subject of appropriate regional consultation and of agreement between the host institution at which the unit is housed and the Agency.

40 Staff policies generally will apply the criterion agreed for the Commonwealth Secretariat that, 'the paramount consideration in the selection of staff and in the determination of conditions of service will be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, due regard being paid to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible within the Commonwealth'. The Agency will offer equal opportunities to men and women. Current practice at the Secretariat and at UN agencies is generally to appoint staff on fixed-term contracts and the Agency will also follow this practice.

41 As the Agency headquarters will be in Vancouver we recommend that, following international practice, salaries should be related to salary levels for academic and public service posts in Canada. Actual salary costs to the Agency will need to take account of the tax-exempt status to be sought for the Agency and of the employment of staff on short-term contracts. Where staff are recruited from outside Canada it will be necessary to provide expatriation allowances, passages (including leave passages) for the staff member spouse and children, and transport of personal effects.

42 Where staff are seconded to the Agency headquarters, with their salaries in Vancouver paid by the Agency, a working principle is that there should not generally be marked discrepancies between their net pay and the net pay of core staff. Where staff normally based at the headquarters are employed elsewhere, the principle is that they should not be disadvantaged because of this fact. Where, however, services are provided under contract to the Agency by another institution, we assume that salaries of staff concerned will relate to local conditions and will be of no direct concern to the Agency.

6 SERVICES AND FACILITIES

43 In considering the accommodation and services needed we have assumed that the activities of the Commonwealth of Learning will be decentralised as far as possible. Where the Agency is developing or commissioning materials, much of the work will be undertaken at locations away from the headquarters office. As far as possible it will promote direct exchange between Commonwealth institutions. It will generally buy in production services rather than set up its own facilities.