

Centre for Assessment/Library Services

Customer Service Excellence

Networking Group

The Library Services CSE Networking Group was launched in May 2019 with an initial meeting and networking session at CfA's headquarters in Manchester, and has continued to meet around three times a year. Since 2020, meetings have been held online but the group is intending to resume in-person meetings in 2023.

The group has conducted benchmarking activity on topics such as library opening hours and adapting spaces in response to the challenges of Covid. This has given members opportunities to learn from good practice at other libraries and share their success stories with the Customer Service Excellence Standard. Colleagues have been able to share experiences around how to work towards attaining the Standard, and receive updates from CfA colleagues on how to prepare for assessment submissions and visits.

Membership currently comprises representatives from around 15 libraries in the academic sector along with colleagues from Centre for Assessment. Group members have reported that the networking meetings help maintain their sense of purpose and engagement with the Standard. The meetings help regenerate enthusiasm about CSE and give a sense of belonging to a friendly and open community committed to excellent service provision.

Hearing from colleagues about developments at other libraries helps give an indicator of trends in the sector. This was particularly appreciated by members during the pandemic when we were all reacting to the same set of circumstances. The group provided mutual support and advice on policies and procedures as our libraries emerged from lockdown with questions and answers on a range of topics exchanged through email. There was reassurance in knowing other professional colleagues were dealing with similar challenges, and the group offered supportive suggestions on how to overcome or deal with problems such as changes in student behaviour or study preferences. Hearing examples from elsewhere of continuous improvement and excellence in service provision enables colleagues to adapt ideas into their own context as well as providing a mutual sounding board for new ideas and initiatives.

Group members are asked to provide an update from their own institution at each meeting. Preparing this helps focus on what has been happening in recent months and can highlight initiatives, however small or large, that are relevant to the accreditation. Discussion among the group can then provoke thoughts about local service and practices, providing ideas for service improvements or prompting group members to realise that good evidence might already be there, it had simply not been thought about before.

The network is also useful for keeping in touch with Centre for Assessment and getting updates on the standard itself. Group members benefit from the opportunity to engage informally with our Assessor at the networking meetings, in addition to the formal assessment each year.





TERMS OF REFERENCE

The networking group seeks to add value to the experience of H.E libraries engaged with Customer Service Excellence certification and will serve as a forum for members to discuss issues relating to the Standard. This will be achieved through regular meetings and email discussion among the group and individual members to offer support, advice and guidance.

Objectives

- To receive and hear updates from Centre for Assessment about the Standard and other work and projects currently being undertaken by CfA assessors.
- To share best practice among group members (e.g. new service developments and highlights).
- To carry out benchmarking work to enable members to compare service delivery, practice and procedures to enable service improvements

Membership

Representatives from H.E libraries currently working with Centre for Assessment to attain or maintain CSE certification. The number per institution may vary depending on size and nature of institution to ensure representation covers the breadth of library locations and services.

Non-CSE certified organisations are welcome to attend meetings and engage with the group if they have a relationship with members or are considering achieving the Standard for their own library service.

Centre for Assessment will be represented by current assessors and other relevant stakeholders able to offer support and guidance to those engaged with the CSE standard in H.E libraries.

Within the group, a Chair/Co-ordinator and Vice-Chair will be appointed.

Frequency of meetings

The group will meet 3-4 times per year.

Meetings will either be held in person or online.