

Strategy for Action: Summary

1. Key Findings from the Consultation

1. Network membership: While most Universities and disciplines were well-represented in the survey, there has been a lower than expected response from the Universities of Stirling, Dundee, St Andrews, West of Scotland and Abertay, and in the disciplines of geography and geosciences, sociology and social policy, law and criminology, and linguistics and languages.

Action: Spread awareness of AQMeN further in these universities and disciplines.

2. Expertise and training requirements: Most people were beyond the basic skills for descriptive quantitative analysis, although a small group had very limited or no skills. There were very few experts in more advanced quantitative methods. Training is needed in basic analysis, regression methods and a range of advanced quantitative techniques.

Action: Provide a range of training events (listed in Section 2) to delegates who have pre-requisite skills. Training materials will be provided online and support made available to delegates after events.

3. Consultancy service: Requests should be prioritised to prevent the service from being overwhelmed. There should be a contact at each institution to whom requests could be passed.

Action: A consultancy service will be set up. Requests will be submitted online and one-to-one advice will be given for those that cannot be dealt with using online resources. Partners will act as the local contacts within their institutions.

4. Datasets: A central point of knowledge for Scottish datasets providing information on access and meta data was suggested. It would be helpful to have some datasets available in a form suitable for teaching.

Action: Provide guidance notes with information on Scottish datasets. Make some datasets available in a form suitable for teaching.

5. Priorities for AQMeN: Respondents rated providing advice/support on using quantitative methods as the highest priority followed by running training courses in intermediate and advanced methods.

Action: Provide advice/support and training events to as many members as possible within resource constraints.

6. Contribution to AQMeN activities: Over half the survey respondents were prepared to contribute to AQMeN by providing advice to others and by contributing to training events or seminars.

Action: Engage members in providing advice via the consultancy service and in contributing to events, both locally and nationally.

7. Documenting Scottish expertise and teaching: It would be helpful to know the expertise available in each institution and what quantitative courses were taught.

Action: Document the quantitative methods and software expertise available in each institution and the courses taught.

8. Using statisticians and attracting numerate people into social sciences: Engaging statisticians in activities would have benefits for the Network. An MSc in Social Statistics may attract numerate graduates into social sciences.

Action: Consider ways to engage statisticians in Network activities and possibilities for an MSc in Social Statistics.

9. Communication: The discussion forum and email list should be well structured and have searchable archives. AQMeN should consider the use of social networking site such as Twitter.

Action: Set up discussion forums and an email list with searchable archives. Provide regular bulletins, quarterly newsletters and updates via a social networking website (Twitter).

10. Impact: The Network should systematically document “wins” both locally and centrally. Impact should be measured on members in both academic and non-academic institutions.

Action: Develop performance indicators, evaluate the success of activities, follow the progress of selected Network members. Each institution to provide 6 monthly reports of activities.

2. Summary of Activities

The following table summarises the key areas of activity for the next 2-3 years.

| Activity | Topic | Timescale |
|--|---|------------|
| Training courses | Multilevel modelling | 2010 |
| | Regression techniques | 2010 |
| | Longitudinal modelling | 2010 |
| | Grouping analysis methods | 2011/20212 |
| | Structural equation modelling | 2011/20212 |
| | Geographically wted regression/ GIS | 2011/20212 |
| | Handling missing data | 2011/20212 |
| | Overview intermediate/advanced methods | 2011/20212 |
| | PhD training event 1 | 2010 |
| | PhD training event 2 | 2011 |
| Guidance notes | Taught course topics | 2010-2012 |
| | Overview of quantitative methods | 2010/2011 |
| | Overview of software packages | 2010/2011 |
| | Overview of Scottish datasets | 2010/2011 |
| | Steps involved in basic analysis | 2010/2011 |
| | Bayesian methods | 2010/2011 |
| | Panel analysis | 2010/2011 |
| | Event history analysis | 2010/2011 |
| | Mixed methods | 2010/2011 |
| Guidance notes using research examples | 2010/2011 | |
| Teaching materials | Generic teaching modules | 2011 |
| | Teaching datasets | 2011 |
| Consultancy service | One-to-one advice | Ongoing |
| | Register of members willing to provide advice | 2010 |
| | Guidance for using online materials in place of advice | 2010 |
| Materials from other institutions | Taught courses, eLearning materials, online learning materials, datasets | 2010 |
| Communication | Bulletins by email | Ongoing |
| | Quarterly newsletter | Ongoing |
| | Social networking websites | Ongoing |
| | Email list and online forum | Ongoing |
| Core Network activities | Awareness seminars | Ongoing |
| | Monthly management meetings | Ongoing |
| | Event organisation | Ongoing |
| | Website management | Ongoing |
| | Training strategy | 2010 |
| Local activities | Register of local information Undergraduate projects for mathematics or statistics students Internal inter-disciplinary email list Local seminars Possible MSc in social statistics | Ongoing |
| Impact | Develop performance indicators | Ongoing |
| | Evaluation of events and services | Ongoing |
| | 6 monthly report, monitor progress of chosen network members | Ongoing |