1   Introduction

This document lays out the criteria for institutional participation in the scheme. Operational information and guidance for users is available on the SCONUL website and in the Access handbook.

2   The SCONUL Access Scheme

The founding objective of SCONUL Access is to support learning, teaching and research, improving access to higher education libraries or other institutions (as laid out in the SCONUL membership criteria) and their collections. With an ethos of reciprocity, SCONUL Access is a co-operative venture offering discrete levels of participation; enabling eligible staff and students to access study space, facilities and resources; or to borrow them from other libraries in the United Kingdom and Ireland participating in the scheme at the appropriate level. Other local/regional reciprocal schemes may exist with different access/borrowing rights and where appropriate may be supported by SCONUL Access.

3   Institutional participation

Members of SCONUL do not automatically have the right to participate in the SCONUL Access scheme; applications to join SCONUL Access must be endorsed by the institution's appointed SCONUL representative and approved by the SCONUL Executive Board.

Criteria for participation in the SCONUL Access scheme are as follows:

a.   Participation of an institution should not affect the functioning of the scheme and in particular its ethos of reciprocity and cooperation.

b.   Institutions should provide the resources, training and education necessary for academic success to their own users, including users at all campuses or distance learning programmes. Where students are enrolled for campus-based learning, including satellite campuses, institutions must be able to demonstrate that they are able to support fully their own local students and staff with study space and resources and thereby provide a reciprocal service to visiting SCONUL Access users. The provision of space and resources should be sufficiently local to those enrolled or employed at a campus.

c. Institutions should allow access to their library by SCONUL Access users consistently throughout the year. Some institutions may wish to restrict or limit their availability to Access users due to building works, temporary strains on resources, or other circumstances. However, if the period will extend beyond 6 weeks continuously at any time the SCONUL Access Contact should contact the SCONUL Office (sconul@sconul.ac.uk) to discuss the closure.

d. SCONUL Access users qualify as walk-in users as defined by the Jisc Model Licence. Where feasible and legal, institutions are expected to provide walk-in access to electronic resources.

4   Institutional responsibilities

a. Members of the SCONUL Access Scheme may extend the benefits of the scheme to registered students who are either:

   i. registered and taught at the full member institution itself, or

   ii. registered on franchise programs of the full member institution, and fully supported by the institution with space and resources and included in the member institution's HESA returns.

b. Institutions applying to join SCONUL Access must agree to abide by, and support, the principles in force at the time of application; and have responsibility for any of their own staff and students making use of the scheme.

c. Institutions are required to operate the scheme according to the current operating guidelines, available on the SCONUL website. These are reviewed annually by the Deputy Director.

d. Participating libraries are required to maintain usage statistics as described on the website and submit them when requested.

e. SCONUL members with multiple campuses should inform the SCONUL Office if the number of courses or students at any one of these campuses increases. If the changes mean the institution no longer meets the criteria above, the users at the particular campus may no longer be allowed to participate in the scheme.

f. Institutions wishing to leave SCONUL Access or change provision, such as access to IT facilities, specialist collections or short-term loans, must give notice of not less than one academic term and receive confirmation from the SCONUL Office.

5   Levels of service

SCONUL Access institutional members choose to offer a level of service under the scheme by selecting an appropriate combination of the following options:

Band A: staff (both academic and support staff) and research students

Band B: part time, distance learning and placement students

Band C: full time taught postgraduates

Band R: reference access to full-time undergraduates and some other users not covered by the banding agreement.