

# Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland (HEIDS)

## Approved Minutes

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2007  
Faculty of Health  
The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen

### Present:

#### Chair

Andrew McCreath Robert Gordon University AM

#### Secretary

Kathy McCabe University of Stirling KM

Karen Anderson	APUC	KA
Malcolm Bain	University of St Andrews	MB
Paul Dean	Napier University	PD
Heidi Fraser-Krauss	University of St Andrews	HFK
Brian Gilmore	University of Edinburgh	BG
Alun Hughes	UHI Millennium Institute	AH
Simon Marsden	University of Edinburgh	SM
Robert McGregor	Scottish Funding Council	RM
Catherine McMillan	Napier University	CM
Tom Mortimer	University of Dundee	TM
Fraser Muir	Queen Margaret University	FM
Brian Mullins	University of Paisley	BM
Moriamo Oduyemi	University of Abertay Dundee	MO
Brian Robertson	University of Aberdeen	BR

### 1. Apologies were received from the following:

David Beards	Scottish Funding Council	DB
Stuart Brough	University of Strathclyde	SB
Caroline Cochrane	RSAMD	CC
Louise Garden	Glasgow Caledonian University	LG
Frazer Greig	University of Abertay Dundee	FG
Peter Kemp	University of Stirling	PK
David Rundell	Heriot-Watt University	DR
Colin Watson	Glasgow School of Art	CW

### Action

### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held at University of Glasgow were approved.

### 3. Matters arising:

#### *Forensic Investigation Procedures*

This remained work in progress. There had been an email from UKERNA seeking to clarify their position. It was suggested that it would be useful to have a future agenda item on the legislative aspect of IT security.

AM/LG

KM

There followed some discussion about public access to JANET and the general confusion in the sector about acceptable use of JANET, as a private network. AM agreed to clarify the position with Bob Day at JISC and circulate the outcome. AM

*Oracle licences*

It was noted that there was now a national discussion under way about Oracle licences and that the outcome was awaited.

*HEIDS website*

The logo remained work in progress. TM reported that he no longer had access to the web team. Volunteers to pick up on this were sought. All

*Disposal service*

CC had circulated the previously discussed email to HEIDS

*Scottish-based initiative on energy consumption*

This remained work in progress. PD/DB

**4 Framework issues**

There was a round the table discussion on the status of framework agreement outcomes within individual institutions. Most institutions were well advanced with the process and had worked through appeals, although many had a number of residual issues to address. PD noted that he would welcome information from HEIDS on salary levels for different IT staff. All

BM reported that Paisley now had in place new terms and conditions for staff, which allowed 24/7 cover. New contracts had shifts and 'on call' payments written into them. Anyone willing/able to share information on this type of agreement was invited to do so. All

**5 APUC**

Karen Anderson of APUC was welcomed to the group. She gave an update on APUC and outlined her role within it. APUC will enhance the role of Proc SNI to take on a collaborative procurement role across the HE/FE sector. Her key aims for attending the meeting were to agree a means of communication with the sector, to outline the way forward and to receive suggestions on how best to collaborate.

KA outlined the arrangements for CAT A items, and noted that PK was a member of the CAT A Forum. KA was now looking for ideas about how to secure the appropriate input at the HE/FE UIG level and how to articulate between the two groups. She asked whether there ought to be a separate national group or whether HEIDS would be the most effective point of contact for this. The UIG needed both IT and procurement representatives. She also sought suggestions about frequency of meetings of such a group.

There was some discussion covering issues such as the definition of national and how this would relate to existing national mechanisms such as CHEST.

It was reported that e-procurement Scotland had just been implemented at Dundee University and is being rolled out across the HE/FE sector. E-procurement Scotland is one branch of APUC. E-Procurement would simplify the purchase-to-pay process within institutions and help monitor contract

compliance. E- Procurement will enable institutions to have access to collaborative contracts with content provided through either electronic catalogues or punch-out to supplier websites displaying contracted products and prices.

The role of APUC would be to look at what is currently available by negotiated contract, identify any gaps to be filled and enhance any existing contracts.

KA confirmed that APUC were seeking voluntary involvement from the sector and particularly sought specification and evaluation specialists.

Following a wide-ranging discussion of a number of issues and clarifications, it was suggested that there might need to be a number of smaller specialist groups feeding into the UIG. It was felt that there needed to be more information coming forward about the structure and mechanisms so that potential volunteers could gauge the level of commitment required.

KA/PK/SM

It was agreed that KA would work with PK and SM in the first instance and bring forward an initial set of proposals to the next HEIDS meeting.

There followed some discussion on the SFC survey into the systems and software used at each HEI. There was now a working group being set up to consider how to use the information which emerged from the Newell and Budge survey. It was noted that there were a number of overlapping requests for such information, leading to much duplication of effort. HEIDS agreed that the appropriate forum to gather, manage and share this data would be UCISA. HFK and CM agreed to push this item at the forthcoming UCISA CISG meeting.

HFK/CM

KA reported that the NTG contract was due to end in October 2007. There are a number of procurement options available. APUC will be contacting institutions shortly to discuss how the HE/FE sector will take a joint informed decision on how to respond to this situation.

## **6 Authentication**

BG led a discussion on authentication issues.

This was the last free year of ATHENS provision. A number of HEIs planned to move to Shibboleth, whilst others would simply pay to continue with the ATHENS service. There was disappointment that JISC had not provided the promised tool-kit to ease conversion: a number of pieces were in existence but had not been collated into a cohesive tool-kit. Individuals had to search for them.

There was resistance from some providers to move to Shibboleth, but there would be gateways to handle this. TM noted that the HAERVI report was about to be published. This was a report produced in conjunction with UCISA, JISC and SCONUL and considered provision of service, available collections, federated access management etc. Recommendation nine was mentioned as particularly relevant. TM agreed to circulate the report.

*(Secretary's note: this was circulated via the UCISA-Directors mailing list on 18 September 2007.)*

## **7. JANET Roaming Service**

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BG led a discussion on JANET Roaming Service. He reported his experiences of being able to connect to his home institution from a number of overseas places such as Australia, Spain and the Czech Republic. Any problems experienced tended to be from sites closer to home.

The main recommendation from the discussion was that it was best practice to get the JANET roaming service to work in one's own institution first before attempting to use it from other sites. It was noted that UKERNA are in the process of developing a simple client for this. It was believed to be currently in beta test phase.

## **8. Reports**

### **8.1 SFC (RMcG)**

RMcG reported that SFC has some funding available to support a study into energy use, jointly with colleges. However there needed to be more discussion about what this might entail. There is existing EMS data on energy use (<http://www.heestates.ac.uk/strategy/MI/EMS/>); and the CaSPr project has also tried to gather such data. However this was considered to be incomplete. SFC sought input from HEIDS to help work up a specification. PD agreed to work with SFC on this.

PD

It was noted that there is a study under way to look at shared services and SFC were keen to have HEIDS input to this. This tied in with recent HEIDS requests to discuss this in relation to business continuity/disaster recovery provision. It was agreed that this item would be added to the next agenda, to be led by HFK/LG/TM. Any suggestions or information on existing arrangements should be passed to HFK.

HKF/LG/TM

All

### **8.2 Universities Scotland (PK)**

In PK's absence, there was nothing to report.

### **8.3 JISC**

There was some discussion about the divergence of funding of capital projects across the border. SFC was channelling funds into buildings ie true capital projects. SFC had no specific ICT budget and this approach had the backing of Scottish Principals who did not wish to see an expansion of top-slicing for this purpose. There was a suggestion that it might be useful to convene a meeting of Scottish JISC committee members. RMcG would raise this at the forthcoming JISC Committee meeting in London in November.

### **8.4 JANET UK (AM)**

AM and MB reported on issues affecting the UK MANs Negotiating team, namely: funding, out of hours cover, branding and how the contract is put together. There had been some lively discussion at JANET UK covering topics such as value for money, out of hours cover for Scottish holidays and the implications of the situation where MANs did not sign the new contract. There had been a benchmarking exercise on current spend, comparing current vs expected but this did not include out of hours top-up. There would be a further benchmarking exercise in 2008. The new contract needed to be signed by the end of the year but there remained some lack of clarity over costs.

There was a clear potential irony should some MANs disband given the current moves towards shared services. MidMAN planned to hand operation of their services to JANET. AH reported that UHI would have a separate agreement as many of the hours of hours requirements were unachievable due to geographic

circumstances.

JCN would play a bigger part in the future of the development group. There was a new SLA following a root and branch review.

The JANET Talk service had been built to cope with 50,000 users and was initially proposed to be available as a free pilot. The concept behind the service was to reduce the cost of conference calls. However there is now a proposed cost of £6 per head as a connection charge and some members expressed concern as to how this might affect take-up.

#### **8.5 RSCs (CC)**

In CC's absence, there was nothing to report.

#### **8.6 SCURL/SCONUL (PK)**

In PK's absence, there was nothing to report.

#### **8.7 UCISA CISG (CM)**

HFJ noted that the meeting was due to take place the following week so there was no feedback available.

#### **8.8 UCISA Executive**

TM reported that UCISA were looking at shared services with a specific focus on providing support for smaller institutions. This was defined as any institution with fewer than 6000 students. UCISA wanted to get such institutions together to open the discussion and were looking for input from small Scottish institutions. Anyone eligible and interested should contact Peter Tinson.

UCISA aimed to launch any initiatives arising from this at the March conference in Glasgow,

There had been some discussion about the HE relationship with the NHS and the increasing number of projects with joint input. HE staff did not currently have access to any NHS networks although the reverse was not the case.

#### **9 AOCB**

AM drew attention to the recently circulated offer from Microsoft for students to buy Office at a knock down price.

MO reported that Dundee City Council had launched a smart card initiative and wanted all HEIs to participate. MO will circulate information. MO

#### **10 Date and agenda for next meeting**

The next meeting would take place in January at the new Queen Margaret University site in Musselburgh. Attendees were urged to travel by public transport in line with the University's green travel aims. KM will co-ordinate the date by email. KM

The topics for the next meeting would comprise:

Framework – All

APUC - KA/SM/PK to bring forward some plans for HEIDS input and to lead the discussion

Shared services – HFK/LG/TM to present information on existing arrangements and to lead the discussion

Janet Roaming Service. – BG to give a demonstration.

Any member of HEIDS who wishes to add an agenda item should notify KM.

*Secretary's note: The attendees would like to thank the Robert Gordon University for hosting the event, for lunch and for the facilities.*

**11 Presentation**

HEIDS attendees were given a demonstration of the Radio Studio at Aberdeen Business School.

K McCabe 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007