



Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland (HEIDS)

Draft Minutes

Friday May 14th
Aberdeen University

Present:

Chair

Alun Hughes UHI Millennium Institute AH

Secretary

Fraser Muir Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh FM

Malcolm Bain St Andrews University MB

Paul Dean Edinburgh Napier University PD

Frazer Greig Abertay University FG

Paul Healey University of Aberdeen PH

Richard Lynch The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen RL

Kathy McCabe University of Stirling KM

Catherine McMillan University of Strathclyde CM

Brian Mullins University of the West of Scotland BM

Dean Phillips University of Aberdeen DP

Brian Robertson University of Aberdeen BR

Fraser Ross RSAMD FR

Mark Toole University of Stirling MT

1. Apologies were received from the following:

Gerry Dougan SFEU GD

David Beards Scottish Funding Council DB

Gerry Costello SAC GC

Heidi Fraser-Krauss St Andrews University HFK

Darren Gibb APUC DG

Peter Glennie The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen PG

Andrew McCreath The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen AM

Sean McDonald Heriot-Watt University SMcD

David Rundell Heriot-Watt University DR

Caroline Cochrane RSAMD CC

Brian Gilmore University of Edinburgh BG

Tom Mortimer University of Dundee TM

Stuart McFarlane Edinburgh College of Art SMcF

John Maher UHI Millennium Institute JM

Simon Marsden University of Edinburgh SM

2. Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh on Monday 8th February 2010 were approved.

3. Matters arising:

All matters arising were handled elsewhere in the meeting.

4. JANET UK catch-up

MT reported on the recent JIR meeting and referenced his email to HEIDS members dated 26 April 2010 and elaborated on issues discussed around 3 strands for JANET funding; short term priority for SuperJANET 5, funding for SuperJANET 6 and the ongoing funding for JANET itself.

The working group agreed to look at funding to which DB referred in his email forwarded to HEIDS dated May 7 2010.

MT then reported on the Business Committee group which primarily discussed the AUP and connection policies in particular the use of JANET connection with business partners and knowledge exchange. It was felt that case studies on the KE use of JANET within universities would be useful to overcome misinformation on what is and isn't acceptable. Greater clarity on the AUP was very welcome by HEIDS members.

PD then reported on the JANET stakeholder meeting that he attended representing SFC/HEIDS. Discussions ranged over shared services, resilience, the JANET SLA. With presentations from RUGIT and NERC there was a concern over the predominant research focus.

Malcolm Read asked UCISA to perform a survey of resilient connections to institutions

MB reported his understanding that the JANET SLA is actually an agreement between JISC and JANET.

FM briefed the group on a meeting at QMU with Frances Neilson, JANET Account Manager for Scotland. It was agreed that Frances would be approached to participate in HEIDS.

BR

MT then introduced the email from DB dated 7th May 2010, detailing questions raised by DB for the HEIDS group. FM will feed back comments to DB:

FM

- Facebook/illegal downloading. HEIDS members felt that JANET should concentrate on illegal downloading as social use of sites such as Facebook is unmanageable. FM, PD, MT and DP reported experience with Facebook usage in their institutions. Greater clarity on how JANET will investigate student illegal downloading was sought.
- BCE use of JANET. As discussed earlier, better understanding on appropriate use for KE is welcomed but necessary to accept that HEIs need to commercialise and engage with businesses. All KE needs to full cost use of JANET connection to ensure there is no "state aid"
- The group questioned whether a separate research network would also be separately costed and charged. Would this be a separate physical or logical network. Would a separate network lead to a diluting of the core network for non-research intensive HEIs or to a two-tier infrastructure
- Network changing. What is the purpose of this? Should there be charging at all? Group welcomed the opportunity to feed back to JANET
- Threshold review. Clarity is sought on whether JANET considers the

FM

current provision to be over generous. Is there a desire to take capacity closer to the wire before expanding?

- Resilience. Considered absolutely essential and non-negotiable, however there is concern over expensive rural connections, who pays for the connection and an acceptance that a resilient connection of equal capacity is not necessary
- All above relate to network, what about services? Security is core. What about support – 24/7/365 support is considered essential but reduced if all sites are resilient

BR then reported on the AbMAN experience as an early adopter of the new agreement with JANET. Agreed to report more fully at the next meeting of HEIDS

5. Introduction of extended characters (Unicode)

KM reported on Stirling's recent experience in migrating to Unicode compliant SITS student record system detailing the reasons behind the move, some of the pitfalls they had uncovered and the costs involved. BG

The group then discussed the introduction and plans to introduce Unicode at UCAS and UKBA and the possible implications for institutions.

KM and CM reported on the related UCISA seminar they had attended. Two updates were reported; UCAS will provide two streams of data from next summer and Tribal will delay a Unicode only version of SITS until the end of this year.

6 Shared Services

MT introduced the shared services paper circulated with the agenda. The group then discussed the contents and agreed that a draft proposal to SFC should be produced. MT and TM agreed to prepare. MT/TM

7 Commercial advertising on student portals

FM reported on a recent approach from agency called CML to pilot the use of portals within universities to advertise to students. BM also reported an approach by agency.

The group discussed the proposals and options and also the possible backlash from students. FM agreed to forward contact details to members on request.

8. Reports

8.1 SFC (DB)

FM reported an email update from DB to the group. SFC very supportive of shared services item and paper. In addition:

- SFC have confirmed JISC budget at last year's level
- RSCs will continue; JISC Advance will conduct a procurement for the future provision of the service in Scotland
- JANET is reviewing the additional funding SFC pays for college connections (in parallel with the broader JISC discussions on future funding for networks)
- Green IT project (managed by EAUC) going well and showing good scope for savings

8.2 Universities Scotland (MM)

No report from US as MM has now left. New temporary representative is Pauline Ward who has been added to the HEIDS circulation list.

8.3 JISC (AH/MT)

MT reported on the meeting of Scottish JISC in Edinburgh; shared services and RSC dominated. Scottish HEIs well represented generally at national level. Participation on JISC bids discussed but SFC only able to fund on programme level. The group discussed how difficult it was to decide which programmes they would be able or willing to bid for.

AH reported that funding is essentially flat and that a review of activities would potentially allow scope for investment in new services.

8.4 JCN/JANET UK (AH/MT)

This was handled elsewhere in the meeting

8.5 RSCs (CC)

FR reported that there would be a meeting of the steering group the following week.

8.6 SCURL/SCONUL (FM/MT)

MT reported on the discussion in SCURL business committee on a joint NHS electronic procurement – SHEDL for NHS. RIN will complete an impact assessment of SHEDL in August. The SDLC will be undertaking a shared procurement of shared resource discovery tool. MT also updated group on status of the SCONUL shared LMS project.

FM updated the group on it's implementation of a new LMS at QMU.

8.7 UCISA CISG

CM reported on HESA and Student Loans seminar and advised the group of the Research Information Systems seminar in June. The next COISG conference will be in Brighton.

8.8 UCISA Executive

The group congratulated KM on her appointment as Secretary and TM as vice-chair.

KM reported that she will be looking at revising the communications strategy for UCISA and welcomes all input from HEIDS members.

9 AOCB

There was no other business raised.

10 Date and agenda for next meeting

The next meeting would be in September at Strathclyde University.

Agenda items:

BI update from Stirling and Heriot-Watt

JANET UK

Shared services

Two-minute slot for each institution

Abman Progress

AH thanked Aberdeen for hosting the event, providing the catering and facilities and for the presentation

2.00 Presentation

BR presented and demonstrated the use and implementation of Microsoft Office Communication Server.

Fraser Muir
21/05/10