



Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland (HEIDS)

13th June 2025 | University of Edinburgh & Microsoft Teams

Action Items

Chair: Clare Taylor

Welcome		
		Claire Taylor opened the meeting, thanking our hosts Real Staffing for last night's hospitality reshuffle the agenda to accommodate speaker availability.
Real Staffing – Jennifer Collier – Sthree – Service Delivery Manager Stuart Bell – Real Staffing – Sales Solutions Partner Ian Robotham – University of Aberdeen		
1		The meeting opened with introductions from S3, a global STEM workforce consultancy, outlining their sector-specific brands and long-standing engagement with UK universities. S3 operates across multiple brands, with Real Staffing focused on public sector and education. They have shifted from traditional recruitment to consultative, outcome-based delivery using of Statements of Work (SoW) to define deliverables, timelines, and utilisation days. Project Services Team supports onboarding, progress tracking, and offboarding. Emphasis on flexible resourcing, shared services, and strategic planning. Two case studies were highlighted, one via a recorded video and the second via a live discussion The benefits identified included the rapid access to skilled interims, cost-effective utilisation planning, re-engagement of known resources and the strategic support for change and transformation projects.
EDiNA – AI for Higher Education Anne Robertson – Director of EDiNA Jim Killough – Sales Manager		
2		ELM is a secure, institution-wide generative AI platform offering access to commercial and open-source LLMs. Provides browser-based, university authentication, chat interface and API access for research and teaching. Designed to ensure equity of access, data security, and ethical compliance.



		ELM also provides API access for advanced use cases and support for custom chatbot deployment (e.g., AskEd Help). The service has developed training programmes and drop-in sessions for staff and students. Data is secure, not used for training purpose and the mix of LLMs avoids vendor lockin. AskEdHelp Student facing ChatBot built on ELM >95% response accuracy across 500 knowledge items, Library & IT, Student Finance & Administration Available to other Universities as a subscription model – Jisc banded pricing Free access – try before you buy – Pilot ACTIONS: Those interested in piloting ELM can contact Edina for trial access and pricing discussions.
Insurance Roundtable Discussion Guilherme De Sousa (Heriot Watt)		
3		It was noted that there is a high level of sector risk with mixed levels of adoption across institutions: some have cyber insurance, others are exploring or have opted out. Insurance often led by governance/finance, with IT providing technical input. Benefits include: -Financial protection (recovery, legal, PR). -Access to incident response expertise. -Improved compliance posture. Challenges: -Complex onboarding and renewal processes. -Concerns over control during incidents. -FOI exposure and reputational risks. -Cost vs. technical mitigation trade-offs. Recommendations: -Consider sector-wide procurement or guidance via APUC. -Explore workshops with insurers -Share best practices and policy templates. Action: HEFEISTS and APUC to explore coordinated cyber insurance strategy and potential sector engagement with insurers.



Meeting		
4		The minutes of the last meeting were approved without amendment. Outstanding actions from the last meeting Formation of a Scottish AI Working Group remains pending. Mark Johnstone is discuss with the Board of Trustees CGI lecture capture metadata extraction use case discussed; no progress reported. ACTION: Clare agreed to take the lead on these points. Bruce to report back from the International Senior Leaders Forum – Action remains open.
Group updates and Feedback		
5		Jisc – Jason Miles Campbell, David Batho (Director of Security) & Paul Knee (Head of Security Operations) Jisc shared a written report in advance of the meeting with Jason introducing David and Paul who gave a presentation on the Jisc Security Operations Centre Jisc SOC launched March 2025, co-designed with sector institutions integrating with Microsoft Defender and CrowdStrike. Offers 24/7 threat detection, response, and recovery. Jisc provided detail on the mechanics of how their service works and provided an overview of the onboarding process. Pricing based on full staff FTE; including a base data ingest. Action: Slides to be shared with membership.
6		HEFESTIS – Brian Henderson, HEFESTIS continues to grow in service provision and sector engagement and they are about to issue customer survey - please give them feedback 😊 Working with AWS on new service and continuing to take member concerns back to funding bodies CISO – New customer in the College sector being onboarded SOC Partnership – Napier have joined Acuman and many other discussion ongoing



		Unidesk – onboarded two new customers – talking to TOPDesk FOI Service – Good addition to the service James Nock (Head of DPG Share) – Data Protection and FOI Service FOI and Data Protection services offered as shared services, with an emphasis on cost-effectiveness, independence, and sector expertise. IRO service is also offered. The value of the FOI service supporting complex requests and appeals was highlighted.
7		APUC – Michael McLaughlin APUC shared a written report in advance of the meeting resulting in a discussion around Academic Integrity. Michael highlight upcoming Microsoft pricing and rebate changes resulting in sector-wide cost impact. ACTION: Institutions to share top licence breakdowns to support sector-wide cost reduction.
8		Schoms – Mark Dunlop Annual conference in Belfast next week with international participation. Challenges in attendance due to budget and staffing constraints. In discussion with FES to move Schoms under their management platform. MOU signed with US and Australian AV bodies.
USECEC Update Victoria Dishon ((Heriot Watt) Ulrike Peter - Universities Scotland		
9		Budget Bid for 2026–27: 3% uplift to SFC resource budget (teaching). 4% uplift to capital budget (research). Proposal for a £10M fund split into: -£1M for shared services capacity. -£9M “Invest to Save” fund for institutional efficiency projects. Future Funding Programme: Aims to redefine HE funding post-election. Two-phase approach: budget gap analysis and post-election funding model review. Cross-party engagement and public discourse encouraged. UUK Task Force Initiatives: (Jason Miles-Campbell) Focusing on managing technical legacy, extending licensing capabilities and secure digital research infrastructure USECEC Workshop Outcomes:



		Two Priority Streams: -AI & Automation: Sector-wide consultancy and operationalisation. -Software licensing: How are we leveraging existing expertise. ACTION: APUC to lead sector-wide review on Software Licensing. ERP Implementation Challenges There was an example of ERP & Systems Alignment: Sharing Lessons learned, shared frameworks, and potential for shared ERP systems. Gain better understand of requirements to build frameworks Common themes: -Change management is critical. -Sector maturity and strategic ownership lacking. -Need for shared lessons learned and pre-procurement frameworks. Volunteers from multiple institutions offered to contribute to a sector-wide ERP lessons learned initiative ACTION – Pull together lessons learned to pull out themes & volunteers Edinburgh public report on their ERP – Jen The University of Edinburgh External Post Implementation Review of the People and Money Programme GET LINKS FROM THE CHAT Is there a gap in the early phase to agree that we are adopting not adapting, agree change control It was noted that the University of Edinburgh now have a strategic change team embedded
AOCB		
10		It was also discussed if we would move every second meeting to be held online, it was agreed that we will poll the membership for their views.
11		Future meetings:

Attendees in person

Stuart	Bell	(Real Staffing)	Michael	McLaughlin	(APUC)
Allan	Cameron	(Royal Conservatoire)	Catherine	McMillan	(Strathclyde)
Jen	Collier	(Real Staffing)	Jason	Miles Campbell	(Jisc)
Guilherme	De Sousa	(Heriot-Watt)	Jason	Miles-Campbell	(Jisc)
Victoria	Dishon	(Heriot-Watt) Vice Chair	Jen	Milne	(Edinburgh)



Alastair	Fenmore	(Edinburgh)	Fraser	Muir	(Heriot-Watt)
Brian	Henderson	(HEFEITIS)	Ian	Robotham	(Aberdeen)
Mark	Johnstone	(Glasgow)	Claire	Taylor	(Napier) Chair
Iain	Macpherson	(Fife)	David	Telford	(Stirling)
Gavin	McLachlan	(Edinburgh)	Tony	Weir	(Edinburgh)
			Mike	Whymant	(Aberdeen) Secretary

Attendees On Line

Jill	Martin	(UHI Perth)
Kenji	Lamb	(College Development Network)
Mark	Lloyd	(Dundee)
Richard	Lynch	(RGU)
John	Maher	(UHI)
Mark	Dunlop	(Abedeen)