



JISC cetis

centre for educational technology
& interoperability standards

The JISC CETIS SIGs

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JISC CETIS Special Interest Groups: Communities of Practice (CoP)

- Community: “A group of people having common interests ”
(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/community>)
- Practice: a way of doing things
- Community of Practice: “the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations”
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_of_practice)

Wenger definition of CoP: very relevant to the way SIGs work

- “A community of practice...defines itself in the doing, as members develop among themselves their own understanding of what their practice is about...As a consequence, the boundaries of a community of practice are more flexible than those of an organizational unit. The membership involves whoever participates in and contributes to the practice. People can participate in different ways and to different degrees. This permeable periphery creates many opportunities for learning, as outsiders and newcomers learn the practice in concrete terms, and core members gain new insights from contacts with less-engaged participants.” (From Communities of Practice: Learning as a Social System by Etienne Wenger:
<http://www.co-i-l.com/coil/knowledge-garden/cop/lss.shtml>)

The JISC CETIS Special Interest Groups

- The JISC CETIS SIGs each gather together communities of people working in similar areas of e-learning
- As indicated by the quote on the previous slide, these communities are fluid and flexible: some people remain members of a SIG for a long time, others come to a SIG for support when they are working on a particular project, each SIG meeting contains a mixture of regular faces and new members
- The SIGs broadly divide into 2 areas, those engaged with e-learning content, and those which we group together under the heading “people and systems”

The Content Team

- Educational Content SIG (ECSIG), run by Sheila MacNeill (Strathclyde): for people working with educational content related interoperability standards
- Pedagogy SIG, run by Lisa Corley (Bolton): for people interested in ensuring that the 'learning' is put into learning technology specifications
- Accessibility SIG, run by Sharon Perry (Bolton): for people interested in supporting a learner's individual needs and preferences
- Metadata SIG, run by Phil Barker (Edinburgh): for people interested in the process of describing and sharing educational resources
- Assessment SIG, run by Rowin Young (Strathclyde): for people interested in electronic assessment of student knowledge and learning

The People & Systems Team

- Portfolio SIG, run by Helen Richardson & Simon Grant (JISC CETIS / Centre for Recording Achievement): for people interested in e-portfolios and e-PDP (Personal Development Planning)
- Enterprise SIG, run by Vashti Zarach (Bolton): for people interested in learner data, course information and educational systems integration
- Assessment SIG, run by Rowin Young (Strathclyde): for people interested in electronic assessment of student knowledge and learning

SIG Communication & Activity: Meetings

- The core communication of the communities of practice is done at the regular meetings which SIG coordinators organize a few times a year, which are a mixture of presentations and discussions
- Some speakers ask to present their work at a SIG, e.g. to raise awareness about a new project they are beginning; to get help/collaboration/opinions from the community on a project area or issue; to keep the SIG updated on a project's development; or to present a completed project or toolkit or domain map, etc to the community
- The SIG coordinators also ask people engaged in work of interest to the community to speak at SIG meetings
- Meetings are advertised on the JISC CETIS website and discussion lists

SIG Communication & Activity: Blogs, Discussion Lists and Wikis

- Blogs: SIG Coordinators now have workblogs, where they can post in depth about meetings they have run or attended, items of general interest, thoughts on a particular issue, and so forth
- Discussion lists: Each SIG has a JISCMail discussion list which are used for posting news, events and items of interest, and also for discussions between SIG members about technical issues or general items of interest; anyone interested is welcome to join the relevant SIG discussion list/s
- Wikis: SIG Coordinators have recently moved from using websites to having a section for their SIG on the JISC CETIS wiki, where various info, links and meeting agendas can be found

Summary of the Uses of SIGs

- SIGs enable people to:
- **Meet other people** working on similar projects / dealing with similar issues / using the same educational technology specifications
- **Avoid re-inventing the wheel** by liaising with people who have previously worked on similar projects / issues / specs
- **Develop useful collaborations** with others trying to do similar things in their institutions / organizations
- **Keep aware of news, events and developments** in the area they are working in
- **Present their work** to others

Forthcoming SIG Meetings

- **Wed 25th April: Joint Pedagogy & ECSIG Meeting, Liverpool**
- **Mon 4th June: Accessibility SIG, York**
- **Thu 7th – Fri 8th June: CETIS Codebash**
- **Thu 28th June: Assessment SIG, Strathclyde**
- **June / July (date to be arranged): Next Enterprise SIG**
- **Tue 24th July: Accessibility SIG, Wolverhampton**
- **Sept (date t.b.a): XCRI Showcase (Course Information)**
- **Sept / Oct: People & Systems Meeting (Assessment, Enterprise & Portfolio)**

Final Slide

- JISC CETIS Website with links to all SIG wiki sites and info on SIG meetings:
<http://jisc.cetis.ac.uk/>
- CETIS Blogs: <http://blogs.cetis.ac.uk/>