

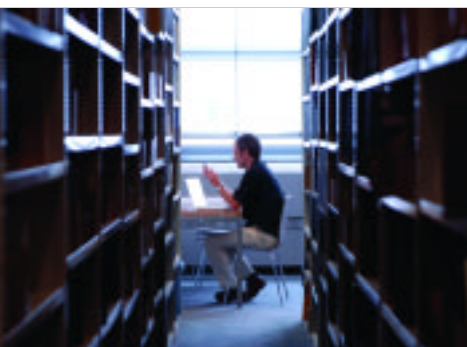
JISC

Issue 21 Spring 2008

inform



Lord Puttnam – on the journey of a lifetime



Libraries of the future – the debate begins



How green is our ICT?



Conference
2008 Issue



10 ▲

'Imagine what you could do with a network ten or even 100 times faster than current network speeds'.

Out of the dark



15 ▲

'Download, edit and use footage from the JISC / BBC Motion Gallery'.

BBC video premiere



20 ▲

'Attitude and enthusiasm matter more than any previous experience'.

Timeline to the future

'I'm on a learning journey because I think I've remained absolutely open to new ways of looking at things'

Lord Puttnam looks forward to the JISC conference
A life of learning, p6

Contents

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 3 | Lest we forget
The public encouraged to submit memories for digitisation | 15 | BBC video premiere
An image gallery for educational use |
| 4 | News
The latest news from JISC and its services | 16 | Identity matters
JISC supports institutions in their management of identity |
| 6 | A life of learning
David Puttnam discusses his life and education | 18 | How green is our ICT
Environmental concerns about our use of ICT |
| 9 | 'Prepare to be amazed!'
JISC Conference 2008 | 20 | Timeline to the future
Case studies show how ICT supports education |
| 10 | Out of the dark
The latest on JANET's high speed network | 22 | Find your way around e-assessment
A beginner's guide to e-assessment and feedback |
| 11 | Libraries of the Future
The debate begins | | |
| 14 | Beyond the boundaries
JISC and SCONUL collaborate | | |

Lest we forget

A JISC-funded project is creating a rapidly growing archive of the First World War from memorabilia sent in by the general public, writes Stuart Lee

On 11 November, 1918, the guns fell silent as the First World War – the 'war to end all wars' – drew to a close with the signing of the Armistice. For four years the nations of the world had been involved in the bloodiest war yet fought, at the cost of millions of lives.

Both those who died, and those who lived through it, left evidence of their experiences in the form of letters, diaries, photographs, drawings, and countless other small mementoes. However insignificant, each of these items has a part to play in helping today's generation to understand what the War meant to ordinary people: the soldiers, their families and the workers back in Britain who kept the country going.

Many memorabilia, however, are hidden away in private homes, with families perhaps unaware of their historical value. Some, too, may be in a fragile condition after 90 years, and are at risk of being lost forever.

The Great War Archive is an initiative being run by the JISC-funded First World War Poetry Digital Archive, a project that is digitising the manuscripts of some of the major poets of the First World War. Whilst the poetry archive is focusing on the literary canon, The Great War

Archive is tapping into the potential for amateur digitisation, asking the general public to send digital surrogates of any items they hold originating from the Great War such as letters, diaries, photographs, sketches and memorabilia.

The Great War Archive thus captures the alternative literatures and silent voices of the First World War, acting as a community collection to gather together and preserve, in digital form, everyday objects that reflect the experience of soldiers on the front line and those on the Home Front alike.

Members of the public can submit digital files (eg image, audio, video or text) via The Great War Archive website, or if they prefer type in a transcript of an item such as a letter or a story that has been passed down through their family, along with some simple information about what it is they are contributing.

Once received, subject experts add further metadata and approve items for inclusion in the final collection. The initiative was launched at the beginning of March and in the first few weeks has already attracted over 1,500 submissions, unearthing a vast array of diaries, letters, photographs, and much more that

'the archive captures the alternative literatures and silent voices of the First World War'



otherwise would have stayed hidden away in the country's attics and bottom drawers.

The submission website will be available initially until June 2008 and the final collection will be launched alongside the poetry archive on 11 November 2008, the 90th anniversary of the Armistice. All items will be made freely available on the web for teaching and research in schools, colleges and universities, both in the UK and worldwide.

Further information

www.thegreatwararchive.org

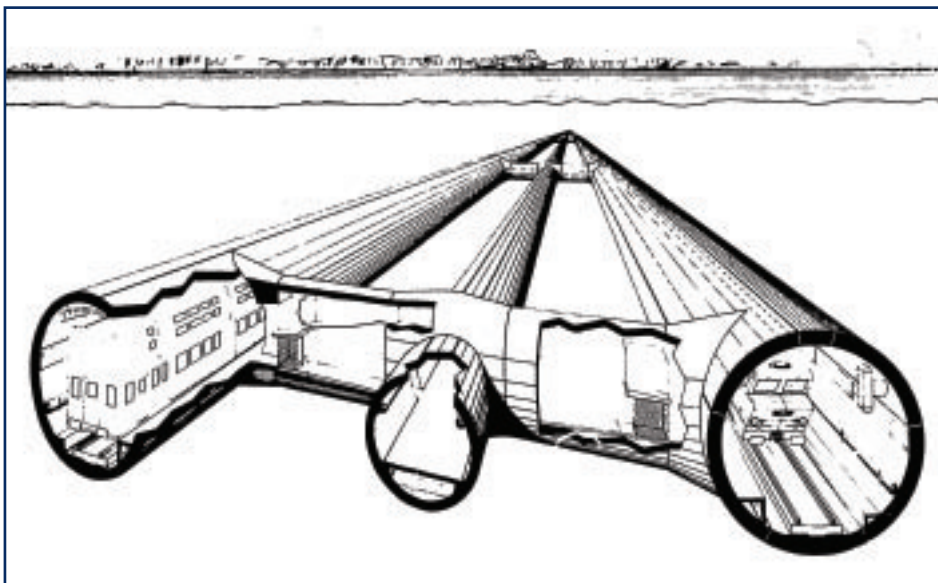


Image of the Channel Tunnel from the 20th Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers published with permission of ProQuest. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

20th-Century Parliamentary Papers

The House of Commons Parliamentary Papers 1901-2004 have been made freely available to all staff and students in colleges and universities in the UK through funding from JISC Collections.

The online resource, comprising 187,809 individual papers containing over 9.5 million pages, is among the richest and most detailed primary sources of 20th century history, and is considered vital to an understanding of the UK's modern development. The agreement extends the partnership between JISC Collections and ProQuest, which began in 2006, to make the 19th-Century House of Commons Parliamentary Papers available to the UK academic community.

UK Access Management Federation

Membership of the UK Access Management Federation has more than doubled in under six months, as academic institutions across the country adopt new technologies that give students and staff simplified access to content and resources. The Federation's membership consists of colleges, universities, local authorities, Regional Broadband Consortia and service providers such as publishers of online resources.

For further information please go to: www.ukfederation.org.uk

Hairdressing training goes mobile!

Hairdressing Training is an online learning package developed by industry professionals as a vocational resource for classroom support of hairdressing and barbering. It includes photographic step-by-step guides to styling, colouring and cutting techniques that encourage the benefits of interactive learning. The new development enables students' access to these learning technologies wherever they may be, via their mobile phone.

The resource was developed by Mimas to bridge the gap between learning in the college and the experiences of the workplace. As an unobtrusive learning tool, it was found that the capabilities of mobile technology effectively supported a new style of learning, which promoted the concept of the mobile phone as a learning device.

Further information on Hairdressing Training can be found at:

<http://hairdressing.mimas.ac.uk>



The changing learner experience



An Independent Inquiry has begun its work to explore how the 'Google Generation' could drive change in higher education. The Committee of Inquiry into the Changing Learner Experience will assess the widespread use of new technologies by university and college students.

Chaired by Professor Sir David Melville CBE (left), former Vice Chancellor of the University of Kent, and backed by the leading bodies in UK higher and further education including JISC, the Committee will consider the impact of the newest technologies, such as social networking and mobile devices, and the behaviour and attitudes of learners to higher education.

The Committee, with membership drawn from the university, college, school, student and employer communities, will run for around 9 to 12 months and will work to produce a final report by the end of year.

For further information please go to: <http://changinglearnerexperience.pbwiki.com>

In search of excellence

For the second year running JISC is sponsoring an award that will showcase the most innovative and potentially far-reaching ICT initiatives across the UK. The award, one of the Times Higher Awards 2008, will 'recognise and reward an institutional ICT initiative which has demonstrated an innovative and strategic use of ICT in support of the goals of that institution.'

The award, for which all higher education institutions, teams or departments in the UK are eligible, is now open for entries until 12 June 2008. The award will be presented at an event on 23 October.



Capital programme

JISC has announced the recipients of successful bids to secure funding under its Capital programme. Representing an investment of around £3.5m, the 46 projects have been funded under Enterprise Architectures, Users and Innovation, e-Infrastructure and the Repurposing of e-Learning strands.

Also awarded funding under the capital programme are five digitisation projects under a transatlantic collaboration between JISC and the US's National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The aim of the projects is to unite scholarly collections split between the two countries, explore innovative approaches to digitisation and match expertise in one country with collections to be digitised in the other.

For further information on the capital programme, please go to: www.jisc.ac.uk/capital

A life of LEARNING

Lord Puttnam is a champion for education. Chancellor of the Open University and founder of the National Teaching Awards, he is also the keynote speaker at this year's JISC conference in Birmingham. In this exclusive interview, he talks about his remarkable career, the state of higher education in this country and why good teaching is vital to the future of the UK



There is only one person who could compare the National Teaching Awards with the Oscars and not only speak with authority on the subject, but say something utterly compelling about UK society in the process. That person is David Puttnam.

Winner of an Academy Award – for *Chariots of Fire* in 1981 – and founder, ten years ago this year, of the National Teaching Awards, Lord Puttnam has had a career that has seen him reach the pinnacle of achievement in the film industry, education and much else besides.

'If I had to look for any specific shift in the ten years I've been in education,' he says, speaking in his Westminster club almost within the sound of the division bells of the Houses of Parliament, 'there is now an acceptance that excellence is a wholly desirable commodity. I'm not sure ten years ago there was that feeling.'

Coming from an industry which, he says, was 'hugely dependent on an awards culture', he not only defends that culture, but actively celebrates it. 'People forget the Oscars are not just a sort of annual slap on the back of filmmakers. They are the only qualitative criteria by which cinema is judged. If you took the Oscars away, then the only basis on which films would be judged would be their box office appeal. Remove that and you remove a very great deal.'

What became clear to him, he says, when he entered the world of government and education – he was knighted in 1995 and ennobled by the new Blair government in 1997 – was that this sense of excellence was missing from education. 'There was no way once a year of celebrating the very best that was taking place. In fact, it was worse than that.'

There was an overwhelming feeling that, somehow or other, by celebrating the good you were denigrating the bad. Well, there is no other area of human existence where that is true.'

A lifelong journey

It was the extremes of academic experience at school that led to David Puttnam's, in his words, 'slightly obsessive interest' in education. Excelling in some subjects but failing in others, he was, he says, strongly influenced by teachers, both good and bad. He believes his grammar school, to a certain extent, 'lost interest' in him and so he left school 'having been almost convinced by the school that I was a stupid person.'

'I remember the last interview I had when I left school was with the careers master and he was encouraging me to be a rep, and I didn't even know what a rep was. But there was an extremely dismissive attitude to the whole thing – that if you weren't going to one of "the better universities," that you'd probably slightly wasted their time. I don't think it's like that anymore. I do think today that someone who displayed my rather my peculiar trait at being very good at some things and hopeless at others,

'We're living in a world of access to information and I was very lucky to be chancellor of a university that believed in that'

would probably get a little bit of extra attention and someone would at least ask the question "Why?"

It was at night school where Lord Puttnam came to realise he had a love of learning and, while lecturing at the London School of Printing, that he realised he was a good teacher.

David Puttnam Fact File

- Educated at Minchenden Grammar School
- Night classes at City and Guilds, London
- 10 years in the advertising industry
- 30 years as an independent film producer
- CEO of Columbia Pictures 1986–88
- Knighted 1995
- Appointed to the House of Lords 1997
- Founder National Teaching Awards 1998
- Appointed President of UNICEF UK 2002
- Chancellor of Sunderland University 1998–2007
- Chancellor of the Open University 2007 to present

Source: Open University

'Certainly,' he says, 'I am a passionate teacher; I am certainly a convinced teacher. I've got no illusions at all that the future of our society is entirely dependent on the quality of teaching in the next 10, 20, 30 years. There is no other possible way for us unless we are able to create and genuinely sustain a very high level of teaching and learning.'

'Reinventing the world of learning'

An important part of Lord Puttnam's 'learning journey' has been his retraining of himself in ICT. A pioneer of technology in the film industry, he nevertheless found he needed to learn new skills in the late 1990s.

He believes ICT is 'a phenomenal asset, an asset that to people of my age and, to go back 20 years, was almost unthinkable, inconceivable.'

He put this strong belief to the test, he recalls, during his ten years as Chancellor of Sunderland University: 'We're living in a world of access to information and I was very lucky to be chancellor of a university that believed in that. We were a brand new university, where our mission was to, as it were, reinvent the world of learning in a part of the world which

was ironically one of the first worlds of learning.

'We were literally on the site of the Venerable Bede. So there was nothing new to learning in that particular part of north-east England, but as a region that part of the north east had very severely fallen behind. So we were able to start from a point where there were no misconceptions or wrong attitudes towards technology.

'I think frankly if I had become chancellor of one of the more established universities it would have been much more of an uphill struggle. As it was, I found myself in a university which saw the opportunities in technology and which saw that technology was a bridge to its own constituency, which was a constituency which needed all the help it could get.'

The nature of creativity

Now chancellor of the Open University, Lord Puttnam plays an active part role in the House of Lords, calling it 'one of the most interesting places I've ever been lucky enough to fetch up.'

One of a group of around two dozen chancellors of universities currently

'We have always been a highly innovative nation'

sitting in the Lords, he is able to make direct interventions on a number of issues across education: 'Higher education fees was probably the sharpest single division that cropped up and was very well debated in the House of Lords. I think in the House of Lords we've done a pretty good job of holding the Government's feet to the fire. I hope so.'

Innovation is another subject Lord Puttnam is passionate about. A former chair of NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts), he has strong views on creativity and

the challenges of nurturing creativity in a country that doesn't always value it. 'We have always been a highly innovative nation', he says. 'But we're not very good at exploiting our innovative capacity.'

He talks of 'clusters of talent' and gives a striking illustration: 'An example of a cluster in my lifetime would be the group of young filmmakers that came out of California and New York in the mid '60s – the Scorseses, the Copollas, the Brian de Palmas, and eventually Spielberg. Unfortunately they tend to be

interpreted as individual spectacular successes rather than being seen as cultural movements which feed off a combination of confidence, good teaching – *very good* teaching – and a sense that they have something to say.'

Keynote speaker

Innovation and creativity are out there, Lord Puttnam believes, but the trick is to find them and to be receptive to them. For these reasons Lord Puttnam is looking forward to the JISC conference this month at which he'll be the keynote speaker: 'I think the important thing is to keep an open mind. Be prepared to be amazed, is a very, very good lesson in life. Always be prepared to be amazed. To a remarkable extent my life has been blessed by the fact that I go to events thinking, "well, I know all this," and come away thinking, "you know what? – I know almost nothing!"'

It is this natural curiosity, almost wonder, at the power of learning that has inspired David Puttnam's passion for education from his early days as a 'failed student' at grammar school: 'It goes back to the first question you asked me about the learning journey I've been on. I'm on a journey because I think I've remained even at my advanced age, absolutely open to new ways of looking at things and new ways of solving problems.'



For a podcast and full transcript of this interview, please go to: www.jisc.ac.uk/news/stories/2008/02/podcast31lordputtnam

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/events/2008/04/jiscconference08/keynoteputtnam

'Prepare to be amazed!'

'Enabling innovation' is the theme of this year's JISC conference and, in different ways, it's a theme that pervades all the sessions, debates, demonstrations and exhibition stands that make up this year's event.

As if to illustrate the theme, it is also the first year in which those unable to attend the conference in person will be able to follow the conference online, through a number of interactive web activities, including live video streaming of keynote sessions, micro-blogging, shared images from the conference, and podcasts of interviews and sessions.

A full record of all sessions, with presentations will also be available for people to refer to after the event.

e-Learning is an important strand of the programme, with sessions exploring the benefits of e-learning and the changing student experience. The winner and shortlisted entries of the JISC/Times Higher ICT award are also being showcased, providing exemplars of some of the most innovative work being done across the sector.

JISC's work to support the creation and development of virtual research environments provide a focus for the e-research community, while those interested in future developments in the field of e-resources will be interested in the session on the Strategic Content Alliance, a cross-sectoral collaboration looking to free up access to online content across the public sector.

Libraries of the Future' is launched at today's conference, and for John MacColl, European Director (RLG) of OCLC, the main sponsor of this year's conference, these sessions will be particularly exciting: 'The JISC-funded e-Lib programme had such a terrific buzz about it... It would be great if some of that could be reinvigorated through the conference and through the Libraries of the Future theme... It's so important for our community – probably more important than for decades.'

JISC's Users and Innovation programme, intellectual property rights, identity management and Business and Community Engagement are among the other subjects being explored during the conference, while open source demonstrations, launches of new resources and dozens of exhibition stands ensure that even free time during the day will be busy and challenging.

Lord Puttnam and Angela Beesley are keynote speakers this year, and both will undoubtedly provide rich and varied perspectives on the role of ICT in education and research. As Lord Puttnam himself suggests when asked about today's conference (see left): 'drift around and discover that there are amazing people doing amazing things... The important thing is to keep an open mind – prepare to be amazed!'



Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/jiscconference08

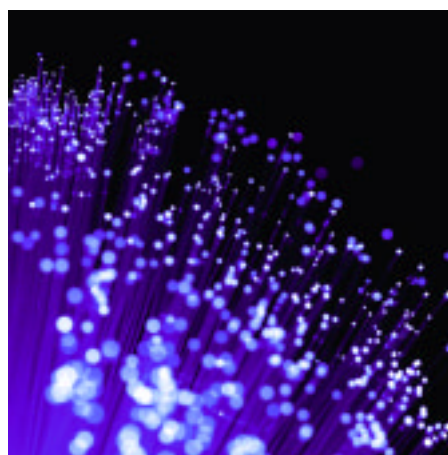
Out of the dark

To keep well ahead of demand, JISC is funding the JANET Aurora project, a so-called dark fibre facility that is pointing the way to even higher-speed next generation networks, writes Judy Redfearn

Imagine what you could do with a network four, ten or even 100 times faster than current network speeds – 40,100 or even 1000 Gbits/s compared with the present 10Gbit/s. Today's applications that involve the transmission of large amounts of data across the network – such as sophisticated heart modelling, detailed simulations of complex molecules, or collaborative dance or music performances among remote partners – would be available to all rather than a few pioneers.

'JANET Aurora is a substantial new infrastructure to enable collaboration between optical networking specialists and their colleagues, researching ways in which future optical networks might be used by very demanding projects,' says David Salmon, JANET(UK)'s Research Support Unit Manager.

Most data are now transmitted across networks on a light wave that travels along an optical fibre.



However, bottlenecks that limit network speed and capacity occur because optical signals must be converted to electrical signals for routing and processing and back again for onward transmission.

JANET Aurora is putting the UK at the forefront of network research by enabling the design and testing of all-optical switches and new network architectures that minimise the need for processing at network nodes. It is linking three sites at the universities of Cambridge, Essex and University College London with 350km of high quality optical fibre. The fibre is supplied with no light shining down it (hence dark fibre), leaving researchers free to experiment with all-optical routing equipment at a variety of wavelengths.

'We'll populate the network with our own technology and form an online distributed research environment, a UK virtual photonics laboratory,' says Professor Dimitra Simeonidou, who is leading the project at the University of Essex.

The UK has the advantage of very strong research groups in advanced networking technologies that are physically close enough to link together with the dark fibre, she says. Other groups in the UK will also be able to use the facility by connecting to it via JANET Lightpath, with its connection to Europe and North

'Reliable network performance will be needed to form an image of a celestial object almost instantaneously'

America through the GÉANT 2 European network. A number of projects are already planned with international partners.

Some initial projects will explore the demands on the network of potential future users, such as radio astronomers who are preparing to build the world's largest radio telescope, the Square Kilometre Array. Very high data rates and reliable network performance will be needed to pool data from widely-dispersed receivers and form an image of a celestial object almost instantaneously.

'Another application we're looking at is ultra-high performance video where you need to transmit uncompressed images in real-time, making it possible to watch a full length feature film over the internet with no loss of quality, sound delays or awkward gaps as the data download,' says Professor Simeonidou.

Further information

www.ja.net/services/aurora



Libraries OF THE FUTURE

Although libraries have long been at the heart of academic life, technology has been transforming the ways we interact with resources and, for some, challenging the very concept of the library. A JISC campaign explores the issues and begins a debate on some of the challenges facing academic libraries

The recently published Google Generation report, commissioned by JISC and the British Library, made a number of highly publicised recommendations. But its call for libraries to respond urgently to the changing needs of users and to understand the new means of searching and navigating information were among its most pressing suggestions. Learning what researchers want and need is crucial, the report warned starkly, if libraries are not to become obsolete.

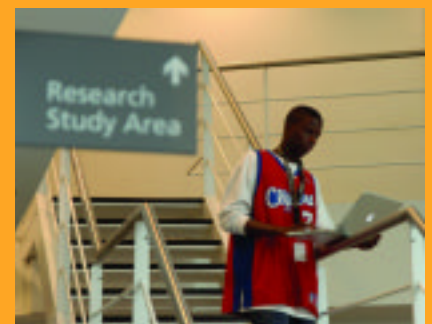
Where libraries once provided a 'walled garden' within which users could be sure of the quality and provenance of resources, now the web provides a wealth of information, and one unbounded by the concerns about quality central to the traditional library and the role of the librarian.

“Libraries of the Future” is designed to explore some of these questions, to open up a debate about the future of the academic and research library'

In such circumstances, bypassing the library becomes a possibility for users and, although this means the information users access can be of doubtful origin or of limited use for learning or research, it is, according to the Google Generation report, increasingly the case that users are expecting open, seamless and unhindered access to resources – and are increasingly less mindful of where they access them from. The report went on to suggest that those traits most commonly associated with younger users – impatience in search and navigation, and zero tolerance for any delay in satisfying their information needs – are now the norm for all age-groups, from younger pupils and undergraduates through to professors.

The implications for colleges, universities and their libraries are clear enough. And although academic and research libraries are undoubtedly rising to many of the challenges, rapidly transforming themselves into technology-rich spaces with the needs of users at their heart, and, in many cases, *increasing* the number of users and visitors, important questions remain.

Launched at the JISC conference in April and running for some



months, JISC's 'Libraries of the Future' campaign is designed to explore some of these questions, to open up – with partner organisations and librarians themselves – a debate about the future of the academic and research library.

The theme will encompass a variety of activities and communication vehicles – events, printed resources, interactive Web 2.0 services, podcast interviews and so on – but encouraging debate and discussion will be at the heart of all of them.

None of us yet knows what our libraries of the future will look like, but one thing is sure – libraries will continue to be essential to academic success and the future of education and research. Let the debate begin!

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/librariesofthefuture

Libraries of the future

What they're saying...



Senior figures in the library community look to the future and offer their thoughts on the future of libraries

What is a library?

Libraries have never been more interesting, difficult and challenging! What is a library and what should it be in 2012, 2020 and beyond are questions that require thought and debate.

In a world of personal digital empowerment; a world where content can be delivered, created and mixed in socially networked virtual communities all over the globe; and where everyone manages information; the future existence and shape of the library is ripe for analysis and open debate.

I would encourage the debate to ask hard questions about how well all of us really know, let alone anticipate and respond quickly to the needs of users. I would like to see an articulation of the values of libraries and their relevance today, and where can information professionals really add value in the future?

These same questions can and should be asked of course to the academic and research community, for the future of many libraries is set squarely in the future shape of our universities and colleges, similarly challenged in a globally competitive world. I'm delighted that JISC is up

for the task, and look forward to collaborating with them in this important debate.

Dame Lynne Brindley
CEO, British Library



'We need a conversation'

Libraries worldwide are finding it difficult to plan their futures in a rapidly changing environment. Powerful economic, social and technological forces, most of them hard or impossible for us to influence, press down remorselessly.

For major research libraries like the National Library of Wales the future is both digital and analogue. As the gap between the number of our physical and online readers grows

ever wider, it is important that a national library remain relevant by offering its readers the information they want.

We badly need a conversation on the way forward for libraries, and it's both timely and welcome that JISC is starting its communications theme on this very issue.

Andrew Green
Librarian,
National Library of Wales



Advocacy role

Research libraries have a very exciting future. The traditional corpus of print materials will continue to be of critical importance to scholarship but data management and curation will be an essential part of the future of the research library. It does require a more exciting skill set, and we'll be working with staff to develop that.

I think we also recognise that librarians have a key advocacy role to play in demonstrating the importance and value that they can bring to researchers.

I hope this Libraries of the Future debate will not only be good for advocacy but will also provide an informed strategic framework for libraries to engage with and to possibly set a clear set of partnership agendas, so that bodies like RLUK can work proactively with other organisations, including JISC.

Anne Poulson

Executive Director,
Research Libraries UK

Transforming the landscape

Until recently academic libraries operated within a stable, print dominant environment. Their brand as a key and trusted player in the information supply chain was unchallenged and users had little choice but to visit the library in order to access what were scarce resources. The introduction of the World Wide Web, the rapid and ongoing development of digital technologies, and new market entrants have swept away the old order, transforming the landscape beyond recognition.

These changes have brought significant advantages. Users can now access many information resources via their computer, regardless of time and place. Academic libraries can now deliver



new services never previously contemplated. They bring significant challenges too, for example the concern that instant access has led to students not always recognising the need to be discriminating when presented with resources of varied provenance.

SCONUL welcomes the debate JISC has initiated and looks forward to contributing and working with JISC in a range of common interest areas.

Anne Bell

Chair, SCONUL



Leadership in libraries

I think it's wonderful that JISC is launching Libraries of the Future because it's so important for us as a community to be engaged in thinking really hard about what libraries of the future are going to look like and how they're going to operate. So it's very timely that JISC is launching this communication theme.

I'm interested in a genuine community-wide engagement on this theme, which informs leadership. I think leadership is a key issue we should be focusing on at the moment as we need it more than ever, to maintain the quality of our profession.

I would like to see an emphasis placed upon collaboration, with strong and good leaders in our profession being recognised for their willingness to genuinely collaborate, while also seeing the notion of being a collaborative leader as being something that emerges quite strongly from this whole debate.

John MacColl

European Director (RLG),
OCLC

Beyond the boundaries



Joint work by JISC and SCONUL (Society for College, National and University Libraries) is exploring what library systems of the future could and should deliver. Anne Bell, Chair of SCONUL, reports

For librarians, their Library Management System can be a bit like wallpaper. It provides part of the backdrop to our working environment and it's important to get it just right.

One of SCONUL's strategic priorities is to investigate developments that have the potential to benefit all academic libraries. That is why we instigated a joint project with JISC to improve our understanding of current Library Management Systems (LMS) and the related systems landscape in UK higher education.

Another key driver for the project was JISC's long-term objective to develop an online Information Environment that provides secure and convenient access to a comprehensive collection of scholarly and educational material.

The report of that project, now published, reveals the extent to which the present library systems

environment is meeting user requirements – including the need for speed and immediacy of information discovery, one-stop access to aggregated services, user-generated open content, and personalised delivery to the desktop.

It also considers how universities are developing 'Library 2.0' applications – those that deliver interactive services – and the further opportunities for linking our library systems with corporate systems and learning environments.

The report confirms that four principal vendors dominate the UK HE systems market with what can be seen as relatively little product differentiation. There is clearly, then, a discussion to be had about whether this reduces the opportunities for dramatic growth in the market as well as the sector's ability to keep up with the rapid and radical changes many predict for the coming years.

SCONUL is aware that many of its members are increasingly focused on exploring issues around the future nature and role of the academic library, and many are finding new institutional and user contexts for both their systems and services. With JISC it is issuing guidance for libraries in this area and organising an event later this year to explore, with the vendors themselves, possible ways forward.

In keeping with one of the major findings of this work a clear message to SCONUL members is to consider exploring services beyond the traditional library systems boundaries to achieve greater network effect. They may also want to consider implementing value-added LMS modules.

The challenge for both SCONUL and JISC is to work together with all the relevant stakeholders to meet the challenges of Library 2.0 and ensure we get our academic library systems right for the 21st century.

Anne Bell
Chair, SCONUL
Librarian, Warwick University



Further information

www.sconul.ac.uk
www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/resourcecovery/libraryMS

A BBC video premiere

If you're looking for the perfect image or video clip, how do you know if you have the appropriate rights to use it? How can you get your point across, without resorting to clichés or clip art? Brian Mitchell explores a new resource that answers these questions



A new resource has just been launched, which draws on the BBC's rich video archive spanning 70 years.

For modest subscription fees, the JISC BBC Motion Gallery – licensed by a JISC Collections agreement – enables staff and students in colleges, universities and research councils to access and use around 20,000 video clips from this rich collection for educational purposes.

The flexible licensing terms and conditions for the JISC BBC Motion Gallery mean that the resource can be used in a variety of ways to enrich teaching, learning and research.

'students can download, edit and use the footage in assignments, projects, showreels, resumés and competition entries'



For example, students can download, edit and use the footage in their assignments, projects, showreels, resumés and competition entries. Teaching staff can incorporate clips in their presentations, course packs and Virtual Learning Environments and deposit them in learning and teaching repositories such as Jorum.

Matt Holland, Subject Librarian for the Media School at Bournemouth University, explains why the JISC BBC Motion Gallery will be an essential resource across a range of disciplines: 'The JISC BBC Motion Gallery provides fantastic pictures from key moments in political history – Tony Blair on the death of Princess Diana, Margaret Thatcher on the sinking of the *Belgrano* and footage from the Brighton bomb. Click-through keywords provide an excellent backup to the search facility.

'The Inspiration section also addresses themes that will go a long way to answering the question

"Have you got any footage on ...?"

It is very elegantly put together with realistic usage rights for students and staff built in. At last UK HE/FE has access to a high quality moving image library.'

The JISC BBC Motion Gallery has already been recognised as a resource with enormous potential in learning, teaching and research, and not only in subjects such as journalism, media production, media studies and visual arts, but also in a wide range of other subjects, from agriculture, the built environment and engineering, through to life sciences, medicine, social sciences, sports science, war and defence studies and tourism.

The JISC BBC Motion Gallery draws from the BBC's content collection as well as a number of additional archives, including: ABC (Australian Broadcasting Company), CBS News, CCTV (China Central Television), Huntley film archive, Hy Gardner (American interviews from 1950-1970), Index Stockshots, Nippon Hoso Kyokai (Japanese broadcaster), Nugus/Martin (history from 1896), Rapido (music), Ripcurl (surfing and lifestyle), Save Our Seas (High Definition footage of the ocean), The Princes Trust and The Urban Freestyler (football tricks & skills).

Further information

www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/bbcmotion

Identity MATTERS

One of the most popular sessions at the JISC conference is one on identity management. Guest journalist Kim Thomas explains some of the issues around this highly topical subject and looks at JISC's recent work to push the agenda forward

Thanks to the proposed introduction of national identity cards, and recent high profile cases of poor security, such as HMRC's loss of CDs containing child benefit details, the issue of identity management is now at the forefront of public debate.

In the wake of these developments, staff and students in further and higher education increasingly want to know how their college or university handles identity management, and to be confident that the procedures they use are secure and reliable.

'The ideal is that someone new gets employed by your university,' says Rhys Smith, engineering consultant: identity and access management, at Cardiff University, 'and when they sit down at

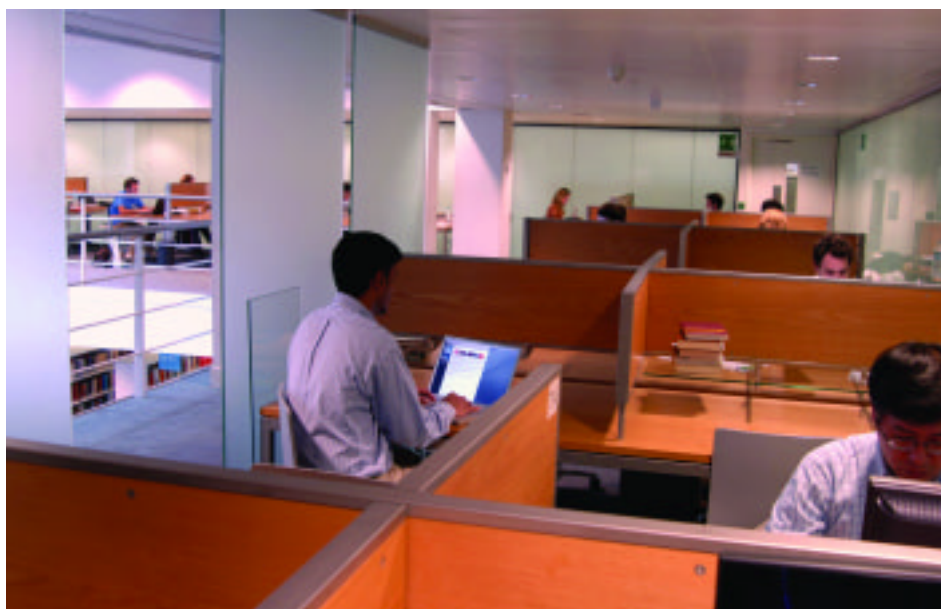
their desk on the first day, the identity management system has automatically given them an email account, given them a username and password, and set up authorisation to all the systems they need.'

In practice, that ideal is rarely achieved. Identity management – which is about assigning an identity to individual members of an organisation, and assigning particular rights to that identity, depending on the person's role – is a headache for most organisations. The problem is worse in universities, where it is not always easy to determine who is a member of the university, and who isn't, and where people's roles frequently change. But now is a good time to tackle that problem head-on. Good processes

will not only reduce the administrative burden and create a more secure infrastructure for managing identity, they will also serve as a solid foundation for introducing new services based on users' identity credentials.

Recognising that, for many institutions, identity management is a complex business, JISC launched the Identity Project, managed by Cardiff University and the London School of Economics (LSE), with the aim of working out what exactly the problems were and how institutions were tackling them. The project, which was completed in November 2007, initially carried out a broad survey asking how institutions managed their identity processes, and followed it up with an in-depth look at how identity was managed in ten representative institutions across the UK.

Rhys Smith, who carried out the investigation of Cardiff's procedures, says that approaches to identity management 'varied widely' between institutions. Many institutions were struggling with the use of several different identity management systems, making it all too easy for the same person to be registered under slightly different names on different systems, or for two people to be registered under the same name. At Cardiff, he says, there is a central identity management system, linked to



'Good identity management builds student and staff confidence in their institution's ability to manage their data'

its staff and student record databases, but there are other processes that happen outside that system. When a member of staff needs access to the payroll system, for example, a member of the payroll department adds him or her manually.

Like most institutions, Cardiff has groups of people who are difficult to identify clearly as members of the university. Because the university has a medical school, attached to the teaching hospital, medical students are often taught by NHS staff who have no formal connection to the university but who need access to university resources. Most licences specify that access to particular resources is available only to members of the university, so Cardiff has to go through a formal process of giving the NHS staff honorary titles before they can have access to particular resources.

The Identity Project's final report recommended that JISC develop a set of best practices for identity management that will enable universities to adhere to common standards. This means that there will be guidelines, for example, for dealing with categories like distance-learning students, part-time staff or NHS staff.

Because some resources require greater user authentication than others, another JISC project,

the E-infrastructure Security: authentication Levels of Assurance (ES-LoA), has looked at how to assign different levels of assurance to different types of resources.

Among the findings of this report is that 70% of respondents think that more valuable or sensitive resources should be protected by a stronger form of user identification and authentication than they currently have. Furthermore, almost all respondents (92%) were willing to respect national or international standards in this area, underlying the importance of national approaches and the interoperability of standards.

JISC is also focusing on the transition to federated access management, which will enable both students and staff to access a variety of external resources through a single username and password, which will be authenticated by the institution to which the member of staff or student belongs. One of the reasons it's important for institutions to develop good identity management processes is so that they can apply this single sign-on to all internal resources, such as the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and library catalogues, as well as external resources.

Other projects follow on from the move to single sign-on. One is the Shibboleth

Access to Resources on the NGS (SARoNGS) project, which will create a gateway to provide access to the National Grid Service (NGS). JISC programme manager James Farnhill explains: 'Previously, if a researcher had to process some complex statistics, it could take three weeks on their desktop machine. They had to go through quite a complex process to access grid resources that could do that in a day.' Once the gateway from the UK federation is in place, however, users will be able to enter their single sign-on username and access the NGS directly.

For most institutions, sorting out the tangled mess of identity management is going to be a major housekeeping job. But the gain will be worth the pain, says JISC's James Farnhill: 'Good identity management builds student and staff confidence in their institution's ability to manage their data. It also opens the door to new services and new, more flexible, ways of carrying out learning, teaching and research. So it's worth the initial effort to get it right.'

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/programmes/einfrastructure/tidpfinalreport.pdf

www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/programmes/einfrastructure/finalreport.pdf

How GREEN is our ICT?

With concern for the environment and fears about climate change never far from the headlines, our use of ICT is coming under increasing scrutiny. Philip Pothen reports on JISC's work with funders, partners and institutions themselves to provide support in an area of growing importance

There are few areas of our lives untouched by concerns over the environment. With the publication of the Stern report on Climate Change and with the UK signed up to ambitious Kyoto targets, public policy imperatives are providing an increasingly important backdrop to a growing sense of our personal and collective responsibility in this area.

It is unsurprising, then, that our massive reliance on ICT should have become the focus of attention. According to Peter James, Professor of Environmental Management at Bradford University, the 'digital economy' – which includes our use of telecommunications – is responsible for around 10% of total energy consumption. 'And this figure is rising all the time,' he says.

Associate Director of SustainIT, the world's first independent research centre on environmental issues, Professor James is undertaking an initial study for JISC, to be published in late April, which will explore questions of 'foot-printing' and energy consumption with a view to making recommendations and sharing good practice.



'There are claims that ICT can reduce the need for travel and therefore energy consumption'

'There's a lot to debate about all this,' he says, 'so our approach will be a broad-brush, pilot approach. With the issue of energy price rises now a reality, there are not only environmental reasons for our looking more closely at these issues, but also serious financial reasons for doing so.'

One of the areas Professor James is looking at is the massive energy consumption of data centres. 'With more circuits packed in and much greater power density,' he says, 'data centres create a great deal of heat, which then need special cooling systems. This means two bills, one for the computing itself and another for the cooling. There are solutions and good practice out there, such as water cooling systems, better lay-out of systems and concentrating what needs to be cooled in one spot. So we're working closely with data centres themselves to uncover best practice.'

Another area being explored is that of 'thin client technology' – the concentration of processing power centrally and the greater use of virtual servers and dumb terminals which, some suggest, run on less energy. 'Thin client servers can reduce energy consumption,' says Peter James, 'but the net impact is not cut-and-dried and there's a lot of work to be done to interpret and evaluate findings.'

We can't solve all the issues, but we can set out the problems and begin an informed debate.'

JISC programme manager Rob Bristow agrees, suggesting that some of the claims being made for the environmental benefits of certain technologies 'don't add up' but that JISC's work in this area, as in others, is concerned with providing independent advice and guidance, based on expert opinion and the latest research.

He points to other projects – in JISC's Institutional Exemplars programme – that are looking, amongst other things, at the use of thin client for e-assessment and 'location-independent' working. 'There are claims that ICT can reduce the need for travel and therefore energy consumption,' he says, 'but there are complications with this and, again, we need further research.'

Also on the horizon is work being undertaken by the JISC-funded TechWatch service. Responsible for a number of highly acclaimed reports in the past, TechWatch has brought together experts from academia, the commercial sector and the Environment Agency to undertake research on the possible impact of energy-reduction technologies, such as automatic powering-down systems.



For Gaynor Backhouse, director of TechWatch, this is central to the 'horizon-scanning' role for which TechWatch has become well known: 'Our report will be looking ahead to the technologies that are likely to come to market within the next five to ten years and thinking about what the implications of those might be.'

All of which, says Rob Bristow, amounts to an important start for JISC's work in this area. 'We're hoping to do more work to look at these issues,' he confirms, 'linking with HEFCE's work around sustainability and working with other partners. This work is really timely and the next few months will see some important outputs.'

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme_jos/susteit

Timeline to the FUTURE

Newly-published case studies from the Distributed e-Learning programme show how ICT is supporting progression and widening participation across all education sectors. Excerpts from two of the case studies by Paula Taylor and Sara Castleton-Bone provide vivid examples of how technology is opening up opportunities for learners



FE learners found completing an online life timeline really made them think about what they were going to do with their future. They enjoyed recording the details of their life and sharing this information with their friends.

The system was developed on the basis of research into the issues that contribute to non-participation in HE. This highlighted that lack of information about educational opportunities and a perception that options are 'not for me' were key.

The concept of a life timeline was based on Vannevar Bush's 1945 trails concept, which outlines the benefits of individuals recording a chained sequence of links, along with personal comments, resulting in the creation of personal trails that can be shared with colleagues.

Therefore, it was decided to design a system based on a web portal that would provide information on work-based, FE and HE courses, at the same time as incorporating the life timeline. This was to be offered along with personalised support and advice on learning and personal development pathways.

What distinguished it from similar projects was the way in which it encouraged learners to take a holistic view of their life experiences and commitments by portraying these visually on the life timeline. Users found the visualisation helpful.

Reflecting on how their past experience had influenced their decisions helped learners to make more informed decisions about their future. It also encouraged them to be more realistic about how their current life commitments might impact on their present and future learning.

'It was only when I actually saw all these things on my life timeline, that I realised that it would be better to start the course next September, rather than this one', one student said.

The life timeline was piloted with Teacher Education students from the Institute of Education, Birkbeck IT

Applications learners and FE learners from Community College Hackney. All groups agreed on the value of the work and its potential to support otherwise excluded learners, with the FE learners being particularly positive.

The system will now be used to support learners in a wider variety of contexts, as it is going to be embedded into the infrastructure of the Linking London Lifelong Learning Network.

There are plans to integrate it with an e-portfolio and, as part of the MyPlan project, the current system will be adapted to incorporate a game-based application to give learners a better understanding of the implications of their career decisions.

George Magoulas, the project leader, commented, 'this is an exciting opportunity to allow learners to use skills that they are already using at home via live chat and social networking and apply these to helping them make decisions about learning and life.'

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme_edistributed/l4all

'The e-portfolio was introduced as an integral part of the course, rather than an add-on that could be seen as simply causing more work'

Making a difference

The University of Wolverhampton has found that one of the keys to success in introducing e-portfolios is working out how to gain and maintain the interest of the people involved.

Working with three local FE colleges and a school, they have been testing how e-portfolios can help trainee teachers to reflect on their learning more effectively.

Rachel Challen, who supported the module leaders at the colleges, found that it really made a difference if the e-portfolio was introduced as an integral part of the course, rather than an add-on that could be seen as simply causing more work. She also found that the tutor's approach to the

idea of using an e-portfolio is critical, and that mentoring them was an important aspect of her role. Their attitude and enthusiasm mattered more than any previous experience they might have had – and they were able to work on acquiring the skills as they went along. Her conclusion is that 'the people side is as important to its success as the usability of the technology... learners need to feel that using an e-portfolio doesn't make the task harder than it need be.'

The trainee teachers used the e-portfolio for everything from recording meetings and action plans to uploading photos and processes. They liked being able to include items like these in their portfolios, and felt that it opened up opportunities and helped them to develop new skills.

A number of students started out as sceptics when first presented with the concept of creating a web-based portfolio, but soon found that it could help them to structure and record what they had learned in a much more memorable way. James, who admits that initially he was a sceptic, is now an avid user of the software, using it to record his references and readings list.

And Theresa, one of the college tutors, remarked that 'the essence of the web folio is that what used to be a very one dimensional approach to reflection, through a diary or



journal, has now become multidimensional and also utilises a range of multimedia.' Since the end of the pilot, the university has kept in touch with the colleges, and they are pleased that work on e-portfolios is continuing at all of them.

Learners on other courses have seen what these trainee teachers have been doing, and are keen to try out e-portfolios for themselves. In fact, one of the colleges was sufficiently impressed with the results that they are now doing a full rollout of the e-portfolio across all subject areas.

Rachel feels that one of the most encouraging aspects to come out of the pilot is that learners who were involved in the pilot have since become 'champions' of the process, which should help it to become an accepted part of the learning environment.

Other case studies now available:

- e-Portfolios narrow the gap between FE and HE
- e-Portfolios gives personal touch to key skills
- Teachers and learners look for 'attractive' resources
- Technology supports collaboration in Nottingham
- Students learn news skills through social networking

For further information, please go to: www.jisc.ac.uk/regionalstories

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme_edistributed/epistle

Find your way around e-assessment

Assessment is an area where staff value support in easily accessible forms. But where does a busy teacher or lecturer start? Jo Smedley has some suggestions

Evaluating students' knowledge through online assessment provides insight into what they know and how they can develop their understanding. While students might quickly adapt to this new approach, engaging academic staff in unfamiliar practices can be more challenging. There's a wealth of guidance available in assessment, and JISC services are in the forefront of provision and support in an area of growing importance.

For Jacquie Kelly, senior adviser at JISC infoNet, the infoKit on Effective Use of Virtual Learning Environments should be a 'first port of call for managers, tutors and support staff'. Introducing the reader to the various techniques and types of system available, the infoKit also provides access to materials appropriate to those already familiar with assessment techniques as well as those new to the field.

'There are many benefits of e-assessment for the learner, the tutor and from the institutional point of view,' explains Jacquie. 'But before excitedly moving headlong into e-assessment, it's important to take a step back and consider why you want to move in this direction, what are the policy and practical considerations... But why reinvent the wheel, so the infoKit points readers to the available resources.'

Ensuring that all students are catered for by assessment methods is vital, and that means practitioners factoring in considerations of accessibility and inclusion at the outset. Simon Ball, senior adviser at TechDis, says that this is 'simply good practice.'

He suggests that resources produced by TechDis can provide guidelines for practitioners to address different stages of assessment design: 'By using the Accessibility in e-Assessment Game as a starting point they may be able to build in a lot of access considerations without thinking of it as a separate agenda. The Guidelines Report will be of interest to staff involved in parts of the e-assessment process other than teaching – such as question design, software design and so on.'

For Danny McAtominey too, effective planning is vital. Consultant trainer at Netskills, which runs training and staff development courses, he says: 'To get the best out of technology in assessment depends on the effective planning and design. A workshop – 'Assessment solutions for e-learning' – concentrates on linking assessment methods to the online environment, relating to learning levels and the role of feedback.'

With plagiarism never far from the headlines and a major challenge for practitioners, JISC i-PAS has been in

the thick of providing support, guidelines – and the development of plagiarism detection software, Turnitin, an online tool for verifying coursework authenticity. This software identifies the heritage of a document from a vast database of stored content as part of the assessment process.

The tool has also proved to be a catalyst for generating a real dialogue between academic staff and students about the whole process of choosing, understanding and attributing sources. More than this, says Will Murray, director of i-PAS, its widespread use has generated a support network across institutions: 'The fact that so many institutions are using common solutions is allowing a real community of practice to support and influence future technology development.'

JISC Regional Support Centres also provide guidance on assessment while a growing body of information is coming from JISC's innovation projects in this area, and especially in areas of emerging interest, such as the formative use of e-assessment and its quality aspects.

Further information

www.jisc.ac.uk/aboutus/partnerships/he_academy/assessment



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This issue of inform *plus+* includes:

- A podcast interview with Lord Puttnam of Queensgate, Chancellor of the Open University and keynote speaker at the JISC Conference 2008
- Images from the BBC Motion Gallery
- A full length article on identity management by journalist Kim Thomas
- Podcast interviews with JISC programme managers Sarah Davis, Rob Bristow and James Farnhill

Print and Electronic Publications



The Use of Technology to Support Admissions in Higher Education



Connecting People to Resources: Federated Access Management



Federated Access Management: Version 2



Technology-Rich Physical Space Design: An overview of JISC activities



Tangible Benefits of e-Learning: Does investment yield interest?

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Design Episode One Ltd

JISC inform is produced by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) to raise awareness of the use of information technology (ICT) to support further and higher education in the UK. Contributing Authors include members of the JISC family of services and initiatives, JISC's partners and staff working in the FE and HE sectors. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of JISC. ISSN 1476-7619

JISC receives funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Scottish Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills in Wales and the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland. JISC works in partnership with the Learning and Skills Council and the Research Councils.

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