

Joint Information Systems Committee

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JISC announces the development of a new access-management system for the UK

In September 2006, JISC will launch its UK Access Management Federation for UK higher (HE) and further (FE) education institutions. Educational institutions throughout the UK will be invited to join the UK Federation and adopt new technology such as Shibboleth. This will provide institutions with a route to single sign-on to resources for users through the implementation of federated, devolved authentication.

The Athens service in its current form will not be funded by JISC after July 2008. JISC has established a transition programme with clear choices to minimise disruption to end-users. The programme will operate from August 2006 until July 2008, enabling all organisations which wish to migrate to the new service, to do so before the end of JISC support for the current Athens service.

Benefits of the new system to service providers are that:

- *It fulfils customer need:* educational institutions are demanding a single sign-on solution across all resources, based on institutional authentication methods;
- *It is standards based:* there is no tie-in to one provider for software and implementation support;
- *There is international take-up:* meaning that Service Providers can build a skills-base on one technology that will support a wide range of customers.

JISC is asking Service Providers to consider:

- Ensuring that they are 'gateway' compliant. This will allow institutions that adopt Shibboleth to access resources protected by Athens. Sites continuing to use Athens will also be able to access Shibboleth-protected resources.
- Joining the UK Federation. Full information is available in the attached guides.

JISC will be providing the community with support in the form of bulletins, events and training over the transition period. A range of information including a detailed timetable for the transition is enclosed. If you would like further details, or more copies of the leaflets, please contact Nicole Harris (n.harris@jisc.ac.uk; tel: 020 7848 1802). Further information on the roadmap for Athens services will be sent to you directly from Eduserv in the very near future.

We look forward to working with you.



Dr Malcolm Read
Executive Secretary, JISC

Enc: briefing paper, publisher roadmap.