

September 2010

UK Access Management federation for Education and Research

Policy and Advisory Board

Terms of Reference

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The UK Access Management federation for Education and Research (“the federation”) is a service funded by JISC and the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) to provide a federated access management infrastructure for the education and research sectors in the UK. (Funding for schools participation in the UK federation is provided by Becta for schools in England only.)
- 1.2 Formal responsibility for the federation is shared (through the offices of the JISC and Becta) by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Learning and Skills Council, the Scottish Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Department for Education Lifelong Learning and Skills and the Department of Employment and Learning Northern Ireland. In practice, all parties have delegated this responsibility to JISC, through a Memorandum of Understanding between JISC and Becta.
- 1.3 The Policy and Advisory Board will advise the JISC and Becta, (through their committee structures) and the JISC Executive, on federation policy, strategy, development and high-level operational issues.
- 1.4 The contract for the day-to-day operation of the federation is placed by the JISC with a federation Operator.
- 1.5 It is recognised that the parties responsible for the federation may change from time to time. References to any funding bodies in this document should therefore be taken to cover their successors where appropriate.

2 Remit and responsibilities

Governance and policy

- 2.1 The Board will ensure that policy decisions are made and enforced in a timely manner so that federation members have confidence in the operation of the federation and the direction in which it develops.
- 2.2 The Board will define the overall policies and obligations for membership of the UK federation. (These are codified in a legal agreement - the “Rules of Membership” - between the federation operator and each member of the federation.)
- 2.3 The Board will ensure that the federation’s policies can be implemented within the operator’s legal framework. (Areas requiring urgent consideration from the policy perspective include:
 - the sustainability of the federation
 - charging for federation membership
 - interfederation and relationships with other national federations)

Strategy and implementation

- 2.4 The Board will be responsible for defining and updating a strategy for the federation, for overseeing its implementation and for ensuring that:
- it is aligned with the requirements of its stakeholders and emerging user needs;
 - it takes advantage of relevant technical developments;
 - it takes account of the changing environments in which federations operate.

Developments

- 2.5 Developments fall into two broad categories: those associated with enhancements to the operation of the federation Service and those contributing to significant advances in line with the federation's strategy. Service enhancements are concerned with rectifying inadequacies or improving efficiencies in the provision of existing federation facilities. Strategic developments are intended to take the federation into significantly new areas.
- 2.6 The federation operator will be responsible for specifying service enhancements, integrating them into the federation service and routinely submitting a Service Enhancements Report on these activities to the Board.
- 2.7 Regarding developments towards the realisation of the federation's strategy, the Board will be reliant on receiving the best advice both from technical experts on access management and from senior representatives of educational institutions on the evolution of their communities' access requirements. To this end the Board will appoint a Technical Advisory Group (to be convened by the Operator) to discuss technical aspects of strategic issues and to submit to the Board proposals and options appraisals for appropriate strategic developments. In the light of its deliberations on these Plans for Strategic Developments, the Board will make recommendations to its parent bodies for the funding of approved proposals.
- 2.8 The operator will submit progress reports to the Board on the implementation of approved strategic developments.

Operations

- 2.9 Oversight and monitoring of the federation's operations will take place through formal procedures between JISC and the federation Operator. The Board's role in this area will include the definition of key performance indicators and the observation of performance trends. The Board will receive routine reports from the JISC Monitoring Group on any SLAs which relate to the federation.

Coordination

- 2.10 JISC and Becta fund many activities in areas relevant to the federation. To ensure coherence, the Board may request reports on any of these activities and will consider how best these could be coordinated in order to meet the federation's strategic objectives.

Dispute resolution

- 2.11 In the event of a dispute which cannot be resolved between the federation operator and a member, the dispute may be referred to the Board by either party. If the dispute cannot be resolved between the Board and the member in a timely manner then either party may refer the dispute to a mutually acceptable independent expert whose opinion will be final and binding.

3 Board Membership

- 3.1 Membership of the Board will be drawn from representatives of the funding bodies, initially JISC and Becta, and from interested communities (IT, Libraries, Schools, FE, publishers). JISC and Becta will each nominate three members to the Board and will agree the appointment of the Chair. As the Legal Entity for the federation, the federation operator will nominate one member to the Board.
- 3.2 Each Board member, including the Chair, will serve for a period of three years (except the representatives of the funding bodies and the operator whose positions on the Board might be tied to their formal roles) . This may be extended by a further term of two years with the approval of the Chair and the funding bodies. Members will be invited to accept shorter terms of office to achieve continuity through an overlap of old and new members. If a member misses three consecutive meetings then, subject to the Chair's discretion, they may be asked to stand down.
- 3.3 A meeting will be deemed to be quorate if attended by the Chair and half the members (rounded up to the next whole number if appropriate). However, if fewer than half the members are present or if there is not sufficient representation from all interested communities, the meeting is deemed inquorate and will be unable to take any formal decisions. Members present at an inquorate meeting may discuss urgent issues and request that formal approvals are obtained via email on issues that cannot wait until the next meeting.
- 3.4 A representative from the federation Operator and, when necessary, appropriate programme directors from the funding bodies will attend Board meetings to bring forward any issues of policy, uptake and liaison.

4 Frequency of Meetings

- 4.1 The Board will meet as often as required to conduct its business (normally three times a year). Matters can be progressed between meetings by Chair's action which may involve email contact among Board members.

5 Expansion of the federation and the Board

- 5.1 Should a new partner contribute funding to the UK federation to enable its constituents to receive the services of the UK federation, then that partner will be entitled to Board membership. The number of Board members from any funding partner will be proportional to the amount of funding contributed, but capped at three members.