# Jisc Scholarly Communications Advisory Group

1st Meeting, April 2014. Notes

[The group met twice to allow as many members as possible to attend. These notes reflect the discussion at both meetings, as a combined record]

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## Jisc structure and the place of scholarly communications in Jisc

Since the Wilson review of Jisc there has been a reorganisation. Four directorate areas have been formed:

* Network and Technology Infrastructure, which includes Janet, and access and identity management
* Content and Discovery: SCAG falls under this directorate and the focus is mainly, but not exclusively, on OA. The emphasis is on near term implementation of services and infrastructure
* Customer Experience: this covers communications, stakeholder engagement, market research and advisory services
* Futures, focusing on trends and technology in next three to five years, using the co-design methodology

Jisc is now an independent non-profit charity. Note Jisc’s financial model is changing and will be moving towards membership model with direct funding from institutions in the next 3 years. Jisc’s customers are universities and colleges.

### Related groups

The Jisc Electronic Information Resources Working (EIRWG) provides advice to Jisc on licencing with publishers, collection and development priorities. There is an overlap with SCAG here with hybrid Open Access Journals, and overlapping membership between the two groups should help manage that.

The Open Access Implementation Group is an independent group of organisations that support OA, and who wish to share knowledge, experience and plans, with a view to greater coordination in the implementation of OA in the UK. Jisc is a member of OAIG, as are several members of SCAG. <http://open-access.org.uk/>

Universities UK has agreed to set up a cross-stakeholder group to coordinate the implementation of the recommendations from the Finch Report across all stakeholders. Jisc is a member of this group, as are several members of SCAG. The group first meets in May 2014.

An action from a recent G8 meeting was to set up a working group to investigate the feasibility and value of an international observatory to monitor moves toward OA.

### Research data

NJ proposed that, as most Jisc work on research data sits outside the remit of the Content and Discovery directorate, it should therefore not fall under SCAG’s remit – that the focus SCAG be on infrastructure for research papers and journals. The following points were made:

* From an institutional / repository perspective, research data and publications are closely related and Jisc risks perpetuating siloed approach.
* From the perspective of the scale of work on which Jisc is asking advice, SCAG might do better to focus only on traditional publications, especially as data is considered in other groups / elsewhere.
* Jisc will need to ensure that the advice it receives on data and publications is joined up; options include ensuring
  + cross-membership of groups
  + overlapping remits so that SCAG does cover data as it is relevant to publications
  + holistic institutional voice including libraries, research managers, finance managers and others
  + strategic view within Jisc covers both data and publications (and software, etc).

**Action: Jisc to circulate a short paper describing its approach for the next SCAG meeting**

## Introductions from the sector

### Aston / ARMA

There is now a requirement to focus on the collective academic impact of scholarly communication; the repository can be used to gain figures for citation counts for researchers and the whole institution. Following the HEFCE announcement, staff should deposit the pre-print into the repository and provide metadata, although this has had limited success so far. Accurate metadata is needed, and best obtained early in the workflow, as is a way later to deal with versions and duplications, and reliably identify researchers. Professionals and support staff will need to engage with academics earlier, providing advice on OA, and helping the institution manage expenditure on OA publication. The institution also needs to keep up-to-date on advances outside, eg in OA monograph publishing; are alternative publishing methods possible?

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

* Alternative methods for publishing (blogs etc) are as yet not attractive as there is no way of measuring citation and there is still a migration towards high impact journals. There is also low uptake of open peer review.
* QR funding does impact on Central Research Office practice. (REF is an important aspect for planning and prioritisation).

### RLUK / journals

A key issue is the relationship between APCs (Article Processing Charges) and subscriptions i.e. “double-dipping”. It is important to develop fully functional markets for APCs, and RLUK is working with Jisc to develop models for these markets. The HEFCE mandate has refocused attention onto repositories, but may highlight the fact that repositories are not always working effectively; Jisc should make sure repositories are fit for purpose for the mandates. Also, new workflows need to be worked out e.g. for the payment of APCs while developing a functional market; for publication itself between authors and publishers; and ensuring OA materials are discoverable.

### SCONUL

On electronic books: it is vital that any emerging model for electronic books does not have the same failings as the journals market, e.g. a lack of simple standardised licensing; multiple platform fees and payments etc. Issues to address include archival access, and poor user experience (due to DRM, lack of knowledge, etc).

SCONUL shared the concern of RLUK over APC costs and members have extreme concerns over possible budget implications; if Jisc only does one thing, it should address this issue.

In the long term, Jisc should not see systems delivery and content procurement separately. Jisc should develop an integrated vision for content and systems (eg above campus).

The Group agreed on the importance of getting more finance directors more involved in OA and scholarly communication generally.

## Jisc scholarly communications portfolio: general

### Status of plan

The plan will go to Jisc Leadership Team for approval in May, though revisions will be possible thereafter.

It was agreed that members of the Group could share the draft workplan or summary of activities (Annex 1) with immediate colleagues such as relevant working groups within their (inter)national communities, for further comment.

**Action: SCAG members to provide further comment to Jisc on the workplan as soon as possible.**

### Scale of work

There was a concern that the scale of the portfolio and number of activities would be challenging to deliver.

### Impact

The Group was asked what evidence of impact would be persuasive. While financial savings and support for researchers would be relevant, the Group noted that this was not just libraries but also research, finance directors etc; the questions being addressed are relevant across the HEI

While Jisc needs to reflect back to HEIs (as its customers) that Jisc is effective, cost-benefit is not always effective as it is viewed sceptically, and qualitative evidence also important.

Jisc has always quantified savings to community, but needs to provide real workable services rather than pilots and prototypes etc that save time, money and effort.

**Action: Jisc to provide a paper on this topic to the next SCAG meeting**

## Jisc scholarly communications portfolio: specific issues

### Hybrid journals

With regards to hybrid journals – total cost of expenditure discussions are very “live” (subscriptions and APCs and how discounted costs and offsetting cost are calculated). A one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to work here; the situation is very dependent on institution and subject area.

### Gold OA

There is a concern that the independent scholar will be locked out of the Gold OA landscape as they will have no access to RCUK funds to pay APCs.

Many institutions are not in support of Gold (APC) OA at the moment. While recognising the long term policy direction, Jisc responds to the demands and requirements of its customers, which implies support for both Gold and Green OA – a mixed economy as recognised in the Finch Report and one year review.

### Green OA

If Green OA is going to work, then versioning and citation issues need to be resolved. Green OA articles are not citable. The CORE aggregation could perhaps “tally” citations for Green OA.

One avenue worth pursuing is improving the flow of information between publishers, CRISs and repositories. There needs to be more interoperability between platforms.

Accurate metadata is required to link the author’s accepted manuscript (AAM) to the version of record. Data need to be captured at point of submission (this had been difficult in the past) and shared appropriately, so that ways are needed to link institutional systems to publisher submission systems. Jisc has started discussions with some publishers on this.

### Infrastructure: general

A view was expressed that there seems to be a collection of disparate technology, and there needs to be more integration into software platforms including journal and research management systems. Awareness need to be raised among those platform communities / developers of the services and infrastructure being developed by Jisc.

The recommendation from the Open Mirror report to undertake a systematic mapping of infrastructure and services was supported.

Jisc proposes to support a piece of work to gather requirements for CRISs and reviews of systems. There are about 125 institutions using repositories and about 65 institutions with research management systems. The Group noted reservations about this work, including whether it would be of value to HEIs and whether a realistic and practical set of requirements could be created.

### Infrastructure: metadata

The quality of information needs to be improved in Sherpa-RoMEO, and this might be helped if policies were expressed in a structured way. There are nuances in policies and OA is dynamic so sometimes this is hard to capture and interpret. Controlled vocabularies and machine encoding for publisher policies would be beneficial. The PA is not in a position to impose this on its members, but can recommend good practice. The Sherpa-FACT advisory group has recommended a meeting between Jisc, Sherpa and publishers to explore options and requirements, and this will take place in May. Any group working on standardisation and vocabularies needs to have multi stakeholder representation to get the agreements required.

International negotiations/ratification around standards happen through standards bodies such as NISO and the Vocabularies for Open Access project has been inputting into NISO discussions and agreements on OA identifier (Free to Read Tag) and Versions. But standards/policies around APC payments may have a national focus as they are related to RCUK funds.

Ubiquitous use of ORCID and FundRef are ways to improve metadata consistency and quality. These need to be integrated into platforms and institutions involved in uptake and integration.

While efforts to develop agreed metadata and vocabularies is important, the following points were also noted regarding implementation:

* The situation is, and is likely to remain, dynamic, so that some consensus needs to be communicated soon on “good enough” metadata to be implemented, to meet a reasonable range of requirements. RIOXX and CASRAI initiatives are intended to do this.
* While standards are useful, they often do not necessarily lead to better data quality. Controlled vocabularies help, but more effort is needed in workflows that lead to better data quality, eg using authoritative data sources.
* HEIs will assess benefit / cost in deciding what to implement.
* Jisc is best placed to bring the information and resources together and communicate it clearly to all; this should be a priority.

### Infrastructure: services

With respect to Sherpa-FACT, the Group noted that huge resource would be required for a sophisticated service which could associate funder and journal policy with a particular article, and so a balance needs to be struck with where you prioritise funding/resource.

While there was support for CORE, the OA aggregation service, the proposal for pilots to explore its value received less support. It was not clear what value this could provide based on a partial aggregation, that might contain less full text than (eg) EuropePMC, with uncertain licensing conditions on that content. The recommendation was rather to focus on improving the licensing of OA content, get more of it into repositories, and perhaps articulate an agreement of shared liability, roles and responsibilities between repositories and an aggregation. Pilots might be pursued through Jisc’s Futures activities, as they are higher risk than usual for service-oriented Jisc work.

**Action: CORE and Jisc to draft a paper on potential terms of agreement between repositories and an aggregation service.**

The value of a UK-focused aggregation, the Open Mirror, was less clear.

**Action: Jisc and CORE should seek to articulate this more clearly, in the context of related activity such as Jisc Monitor.**

The Group emphasised the actual or potential value of:

* IRUS-UK. The Group sought clarification on versions of papers whose use was being counted, joining up data on different versions (there was support for revisiting an earlier initiative, PIRUS, proposed clearinghouse for usage data from publishers and repositories), and the standards being used (NISO, RIOXX, COUNTER, etc).
* Repository Junction Broker (with name change). While RJB is currently focused on publications, in principle it could be used for research datasets.
* Sherpa services.

**Action: Jisc to prepare a paper for the next SCAG meeting on the future of, and issues with, Sherpa RoMEO/Juliet/FACT**

### Jisc Monitor

Jisc Monitor was supported as an example of compliance and monitoring tools (cf SHARE and CHORUS), though the Group noted continuing uncertainty among HEIs about what they might be asked by funders to monitor. The Group also noted that it was unlikely, and perhaps unnecessary, for Jisc Monitor to be a service that would be used by all HEIs. In that case, though, a clear statement of target audience was needed, and a plan to address that specific audience’s requirements.

International liaison was important. Jisc is already in discussions with SHARE and OpenAIRE, and should engage with CHORUS.

**Action: AW to introduce NJ to Howard Ratner**

Detailed comments on the plan were not possible at the moment, as it is an exploratory project.

In the UK / HEFCE context, it will be important for Jisc Monitor to cover data at the point that an AAM is accepted by a journal / conference and, if possible, record the DOI. Again, SHARE and CHORUS are relevant.

The technical component will need to scope and test integration with institutional systems and how these meet different use cases such as compliance monitoring, tracking APCs etc.

There is a need to support universities as they explore how to use the data from Monitor. The Jisc ORBITAL project (research data management infrastructure) was mentioned as it used the data gathered as to populate researcher profiles; an interesting use case. The Jisc OA Implementation Community will be relevant here (see below).

### Open Access Implementation Community (“OA Good Practice”)

It will be important that the outputs from this project are shared as soon as they are available, not at the end of the two years, as this will be too late for other institutions to implement any changes.

It would be a good idea to have a review point in the plan to look assess the outputs and direction.

The main audiences are library staff, research and repository managers. Authors are not the direct audience for this work.

There could be a more explicit mention of working with publishers to implement OA policies in the requirements (to improve interoperability between services) but this would be very much up to the individual institution, and publishers could participate as additional unfunded partner.

HEFCE are also thinking about producing support for good practice and would happy to be a part of this work.

The work could also look to the example of the University of Liege as they implemented OA in two years. Perhaps Jisc could invite Bernard Rentier to participate in a webinar, to talk about the lessons learnt, advice and guidance etc.

Jisc needs to engage with repository platforms early with regards to RIOXX (Note that there will be conversations with repository platforms and early adopters through RIOXX).

### eBooks

The Group noted that the plan did not include work on the standardisation of licensing, especially around e-books. Workflows for the publication of eBooks are also unclear. There are a significant problems here for libraries, which should be addressed in the context of the National Monograph Strategy initiative.

### HEI as publisher

The Group noted that there is substantial interest from UK HEIs in becoming more involved in journal, monograph and textbook publishing, and proposed Jisc work in the area of platforms to enable this has strong support from Jisc customers. The Group did, however, acknowledge the power of existing brands in maintaining author loyalty.

### Licensing

Licensing remains an issue (see elsewhere in these notes). While not supporting work to promote authors use of a licence to publish with publishers, the group did support promotion of the “Harvard model” whereby institutions require a licence from authors prior to any publication. However, the Group did note that Harvard authors are increasingly being asked to opt out from this, eg by Nature.

**Action: Jisc to prepare a short paper outlining work that might be done to communicate this approach and associated issues.**

### Peer review

The proposal for work in this area seemed low priority, and it might be better for Jisc to consider its particular remit in the context of work being taken forward by Wellcome, Royal Society and others.

## Communication

Ways need to be found to ensure that researchers are more aware / less confused and mis-informed than they currently are.

Jisc needs to adopt a much more “push” model of communications with its target audiences. For example, an expanded version of Annex 1, overview of activities, with a narrative outline of rationale, would likely raise awareness of and support for Jisc work in these areas.

**Action: Jisc to consider communications in this area in the light of these comments.**

Members of the Group agreed to expand SCAG’s terms of reference so that members could be asked to contribute in various ways to the communication of Jisc’s work in this area. When asked, it would be important to be clear in what capacity members were being asked to contribute. Members would only contribute as time and availability permit.

**Action: NJ to revise SCAG’s terms of reference.**

## SCAG Terms of Reference

The Group welcomed the news that John MacColl of St Andrews has agreed to chair SCAG in future.

NJ clarified that SCAG members had been invited to represent a constituency, rather than individual initiatives or services.

Jisc was asked to consider whether UUK and GuildHE should be invited to join the group. Jisc was also asked whether IT specialist institutional representatives might be invited, eg Chris Keene (Sussex) or Graham Stone (Huddersfield).

The Group agreed that it could ask for specialist contributions as needed from non-members.

**Action: Jisc to revise terms of reference and membership accordingly**

While the discussions had not been directly relevant to learned societies, the Group strongly felt that the learned society voice should be heard in the Group.

**Action: MB to consider how this might best be achieved.**

## Next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should be longer, given the amount of business to be covered. Hence, the next meeting will be 11th September, 1030-1330, including a working lunch.