2022-23 Jisc / SFC outcome agreement

Introduction

Jisc is the UK higher, further education and skills sectors' not-for-profit organisation for digital services and solutions. Further information about Jisc is available at https://www.jisc.ac.uk/about

Jisc is funded by the UK higher education (HE) and further education (FE) funding bodies to deliver essential UK-wide digital infrastructure. We are a critical part of building both the capability and capacity of Scotland's further, higher and vocational educational sectors, using grant-in-aid from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

The UK funding bodies have agreed a shared funding model for Jisc based on a two-thirds contribution from HE and a one third contribution from FE. Proportions are then divided between the respective nations across the UK. The funding provided by the SFC (£8.07m) is approximately 20% of Jisc's total core grant funding. HE institutions in Scotland provide a contribution of approximately £1.05m. It is noted that SFC may, from time to time, provide Jisc with capital funding for critical infrastructure investment, such as the Janet access programme currently underway in Scotland.

Jisc strategy

Jisc's is reviewing its strategy for 2022-25 and this will be published shortly, progressing from the 2019-22 strategy.

Jisc plans its work around three sector strategies:

Further education and skills
Jisc's three-year FE and skills strategy 2022-23 aims to provide digital services that elevate the further education and skills sector's ability to serve people as lifelong learners. It was developed in response to member needs, the strategy will help steer and support further education providers across the UK on their digital journey.

Higher education
Jisc's Higher education strategy 2021-2024: powering UK higher education is where Jisc shares its future priorities using four strategic themes, developed from sectoral needs and priorities: empowering culture and leadership, reimagining learning, teaching and assessment, reframing the student experience, and transforming infrastructure. Those themes demonstrate how our current advice and guidance, training, thought leadership, innovation projects and products and services support the HE sector.

Research
Jisc's Research and innovation sector strategy 2021-2023 sets out the key priorities identified through engagement with the sector. It sets out Jisc's strategic approach to supporting the sector, around seven key themes, and is the basis on which Jisc will continue to support research and innovation.

Summary of outcomes

In support of SFC's strategic framework, and Scotland's National strategy for economic transformation, Scotland's digital strategy, the Enterprise and Skills Board strategic plan, and the recommendations of the SFC review of coherent provision and sustainability, Jisc will achieve the following outcomes:

Outcome 1 – **Network**

Recognising that the Janet Network is vital to the underpinning of the digital transformation of universities and colleges in Scotland, Jisc will continue to provide a highly available network service, seeking to implement improvements where possible, including upgrade of the Janet access infrastructure.

Outcome 2 – **Cyber security**

Scotland's universities and colleges will be more cyber-resilient and able to align with the Scottish Government's Cyber Resilient Scotland strategic framework.

Outcome 3 – **Research and innovation**

Scotland's universities will be supported with data, digital and technology services to achieve their research and innovation priorities and so that science and research remain cutting edge and excellent in global terms.

Outcome 4 - **Learning, teaching & assessment / student experience**

Scotland's colleges and universities will be supported and feel empowered on their journey to embed digital at the heart of their culture and will have access to digital services that will elevate their ability to serve people as lifelong learners.

Outcome 5 - **Net zero**

Jisc will be on the way towards achieving net zero in terms of its estates and all operations, including service provision. Jisc members will understand their energy consumption and be closer to meeting their emissions targets.

Outcome 6 – **High standards of efficiency and effectiveness**

Jisc will operate at high standards of efficiency and effectiveness for its owners, funders, and members.

Outcomes

Outcome 1 – Network

Recognising that the Janet Network is vital to the underpinning of the digital transformation of universities and colleges in Scotland, Jisc will continue to provide a highly available network service, seeking to implement improvements where possible, including upgrade of the Janet access infrastructure

To achieve this outcome, Jisc will:

1. Provide IP connectivity services to Scotland's colleges and universities at a level at or above the relevant Janet IP connections – availability & service level commitments

2. Complete the Janet access programme in Scotland (Covid lockdowns and supply chain issues allowing) by December 2023, providing better network coverage, more resilience, lower costs, and faster provisioning of additional connectivity services.

3. Review the base Janet package to Scotland's colleges in light of mergers that have occurred in recent years and the critical underpinning nature of network services to encourage resilient connectivity to Janet, agreeing a consistent eligibility for Janet IP connectivity of two 1 Gbit/s connections where feasible.

4. Engage with European and international bodies such as European open science cloud and GÉANT, to ensure that Jisc, Scotland and the UK continues to lead and coordinate NREN-related international activity as appropriate.

5. Extend the ability for learners to access post-16 education in Scotland, by means of increased eduroam coverage (including through cellular devices), and secure, authenticated access to systems and resources.

Outcome 2 – Cyber security

Scotland's universities and colleges will be more cyber-resilient and able to align with the Scottish Government's Cyber Resilient Scotland strategic framework

To achieve this outcome, Jisc will:
1. Offer an effective, managed firewall service (subject to successful pilots with early adopters).
2. Develop a managed security operations centre (SOC) product working closely with members and customers. The initial offering will include a 24/7 monitoring option. We will add an increasing range of related cyber security products and services over time.
3. Develop and enhance the cyber threat intelligence service by Q1, AY 2023-24.
4. Increase uptake of cyber security products and services by members including Janet network resolver, penetration testing, Cyber security assessment and critical services protection to improve the cyber security posture of our member institutions.
5. Continue to deliver, implement, and operate the self-service cyber security portal for our member institutions in Scotland.
6. Liaise, consult, and collaborate as appropriate with NCSC, Scottish Government, HEFESTIS, and Police Scotland to support colleges and universities to use the Scottish public sector Cyber Resilience Framework.

Outcome 3 – Research and innovation

Scotland's universities will be supported with data, digital and technology services to achieve their research and innovation priorities and so that science and research remain cutting edge and excellent in global terms

To achieve this outcome, Jisc will:

1. Deliver on the broader benefits of open research including sustainable agreements that increase the volume of UK research output made open access on publication

2. Coordinate the development of open research products and services:

   a. Drive an open, federated approach to the management of Jisc and sector-wide data about research by transitioning Open Data About Research to beta phase by September 2022

   b. Position the new Sherpa platform (providing tools to access and comply with archiving policies) as a key open research policy data supplier for the sector.

   c. Develop and deliver an open research reporting and monitoring platform (Monitor Open) as a leading out-of-the-box solution for HEIs and funders, with a target of 6-8 members in Scotland. The solution will enable block grant management, consolidate and centralise workflows and enhance publication data accuracy.

   d. Grow and develop Octopus into a well-known, well-used and well-liked platform for publishing and discovering research outputs.

3. Through our existing capabilities: the Janet Network, our cyber security, identity and access management solutions, the OCRE cloud framework, and our software licence agreements and partnership arrangements, Jisc will bring together flexible, trusted components to support research. We will explore an expansion of frameworks, and our software licence agreements and partnership arrangements, building a coherent presentation both internal and external of our research related data, digital and technology tools, and a gateway where currently there is none.

4. Provide digital support for the research estate including:

   a. Develop a stakeholder group-led report focused on the management and impact of research infrastructure and estate assets, detailing the current state of the art, including case studies showcasing innovative approaches. It will also address the opportunities and challenges for optimising the UK's research infrastructure assets for the future.

   b. Refresh the equipment.data platform which enables access to UK HE research equipment for sharing and collaboration and helps to meet UKRI's condition of funding around registering equipment valued over £138k.

5. Continue to engage through the Jisc PVC-Research group, including Scottish representation, to focus on research opportunities and challenges in 2022-23 and beyond.

6. Provide the SFC with advice and thought leadership on future research technologies and best approaches to investment in such technologies.

7. Enable members in Scotland to apply for pathfinder innovation consultancy and training to assist them in solving a problem or seizing an opportunity, with the eventual solution being shared for sectoral benefit.

Outcome 4 - Learning, teaching & assessment / student experience
Scotland's colleges and universities will be supported and feel empowered on their journey to embed digital at the heart of their culture and will have access to digital services that will elevate their ability to serve people as lifelong learners

To achieve this outcome, Jisc will:

1. Provide a programme of support for Scottish colleges and universities to adopt a national Standard for online/blended learning in cooperation with relevant sector agencies.

2. Continue to develop the national centre for AI in tertiary education to lead the way for artificial intelligence in tertiary education, coordinating the efforts at Scottish universities, and later colleges, with a focus on practical help and implementation.

3. Offer Scottish colleges and universities hands-on experience of cutting-edge virtual classroom technology at the University of Stirling, with digital pedagogy support for effective use.

4. As part of a national digital consultancy service for Scottish colleges and universities, provide training, services and thought leadership to support the development of digital leadership, digital capability, and digital pedagogy in Scotland.

5. Following our review of assessment across HE, provide guidance and support for Scottish universities in reimagining assessment using digital and online tools and services.

6. Continue to develop and build our consultancy and research working with Scottish universities to embed digital transformation across existing institutional strategies and embed digital at the heart of their culture.

7. Increase uptake of Jisc's national learning analytics service by Scottish universities through direct and sector engagement.

   Continue to explore and develop new data integrations and functionality to ensure that the service has parity with, or greater feature sets than, competitors.

   Explore the potential for wellbeing analytics (using digital and data to support the mental health and wellbeing of students) to inform innovation development.

   Explore the potential to extend learning analytics into curriculum analytics to support digital curriculum transformation across Scotland.

8. Deliver a national content, search and discovery platform pathfinder to provide better access and use of high quality, relevant digital resources, in cooperation with Colleges Scotland.

9. Embed the digital elevation model – supporting all Scottish colleges to use the Jisc [digital elevation tool](#), giving a clear picture of their digital elevation journey with access to resources and services to support next steps.

10. Provide support on digital assessment in further education in consultation and collaboration with relevant present and post-reform accreditation and sector bodies.

11. Provide the SFC with advice and guidance, in a form to be agreed, around developments in educational technology relevant to the Scottish post-16 sectors.

Outcome 5 - Net zero
Jisc will be on the way towards achieving net zero in terms of its estates and all operations, including service provision. Jisc members will understand their energy consumption and be closer to meeting their emissions targets

To achieve this outcome, Jisc will:
1. Commit to achieving net zero for our scope 1 and scope 2 emissions by 2030 and achieving net zero for our scope 3 emissions by 2040.
2. Work to develop a decarbonisation plan to achieve our targets across scopes, with all emissions and future plans reported, including all the entities under Jisc's operational control.
3. Update our published carbon reduction plan in line with our baseline emissions and decarbonisation plan as that develops.
4. Include aspects of carbon impact (e.g. of some of our web pages) in our impact in numbers reporting.
5. Allow Jisc members to understand their digital energy consumption and associated digital carbon emissions in support of meeting their emissions targets.
6. Explore the development of an Internet of Things service allowing members to collect and analyse their sensor and building data and act appropriately to improve their energy consumption (upon successful completion of the pilot project).

Outcome 6 - High standards of efficiency and effectiveness
Jisc will operate at high standards of efficiency and effectiveness for its owners, funders, and members

To achieve this outcome, Jisc will:
1. Run ourselves efficiently, ensuring that costs are controlled and aiming for an annual operating breakeven position, using our reserves to develop new products and undertake projects which will deliver additional value to our members.
2. Conduct annual leadership surveys to measure the satisfaction of our members, working to achieve and maintain a 90% plus measure of member satisfaction.
3. Host the annual stakeholder strategic update for Scottish members on 6 December 2022, providing feedback on Jisc's strategy and performance.
4. Periodically review our core subscription and product/service portfolio.
5. Maintain ISO accreditation for information security management and quality management systems for our key services.