

Jisc update 2015 - Background Appendix

1. The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) was established in 1993 as an advisory committee to the HE and FE funding bodies across the UK in recognition that information systems, and IT in particular, is an area where a central body can be particularly effective in providing value for money and in stimulating worthwhile developments which might otherwise not take place.
2. The scope of JISC's activities expanded over the years in response to increased demands from funders and institutions, and in response to technological developments, with corresponding evolution in the organisation's structure and the formation of a number of subsidiary companies. Amongst these activities was the Joint Academic (Janet) network, which provides a network infrastructure for UK Universities, FE Colleges, Research Councils, Specialist Colleges and Adult and Community Learning providers, under the .ac.uk domain. Activities also include the Jisc Regional Support Centre for Wales.
3. A review of JISC in 2011 made a set of recommendations including more focussing of JISC activity; JISC funding through a combination of grants and subscriptions/user charges, and Jisc becoming a separate legal entity. The aim of this was to focus Jisc's work more closely, improve efficiency and control, and make cost savings. In January 2011 Council delegated authority to the Chief Executive to agree actions in response to the review recommendations, subject to agreement with the other funders .
4. At its March 2013 meeting Council was informed that legal changes to existing JISC companies and the transfer of staff to the new business took place on 1 December 2012 to form a parent company called 'Jisc' and a subsidiary company called 'Jisc Collections and Janet Ltd' (item HEFCW/12/18 refers).
5. The full Janet6 backbone was 'switched on' in May 2013, with full transition to the new backbone by the end of summer 2013. Janet continues to work closely with Welsh Government on the Public Sector Broadband Aggregation (PSBA), to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of Welsh HE and other education providers, as well as the needs of the public sector more broadly.
6. Subsequent to changes to the Jisc governance arrangements, a Jisc liaison post was established to provide expert support to the funders (except the Scottish Funding Council and the Research Councils). This has been very helpful. Costs are shared on an academic year basis.
7. Jisc's core funders have signed a memorandum of understanding. This includes an indication from the funders that they will seek to broadly fund Jisc through agreed percentage contributions. The percentages are as follows:

	HE Only	FE Only	When Combined	
			HE Share	FE Share
England	81.0%	85.0%	54.3%	28.1%
Scotland	12.0%	8.0%	8.0%	2.6%
Wales	5.0%	5.0%	3.4%	1.6%
Northern Ireland	2.0%	2.0%	1.3%	0.7%
	100.0%	100.0%	67.0%	33.0%

8. Jisc developed a VAT cost sharing group which minimises irrecoverable VAT by the time the Jisc subscriptions were levied in 2014/15.