

JISC ADVANCE ACCESS MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Monthly Report: September 2010

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Welcome to the first monthly report from the JISC Advance Access Management Focus. Whilst primarily intended as a management report to update stakeholders on the activities of the Access Management Focus, these reports will be made publicly available for general interest. If you have any questions or queries please contact Nicole Harris (nicole.harris@jiscadvance.ac.uk).

■ Watching Brief:

September has been a very busy month in the world of access management, and there are several activities that it will be worth keeping an eye on. The top three areas of interest:

1. eduGAIN

Of primary interest to the UK Access Management Federation are the developments within the eduGain framework, which intends to provide the first pan-european interfederation. More information is available on the website: <http://www.edugain.org/>, and within the review section below. This will be of interest to the UK federation Board members, the Federation Operator, the federation TAG and providers of software within the UK federation such as Eduserv. Thought will need to be given on how to communicate this complex area effectively to Identity Providers and Service Providers who may wish to use the interfederation metadata.

2. Project COIN

Project COIN in the Netherlands, along with COManage in the US, is working to achieve an environment in which virtual organisations can effectively operate. The concept of a virtual organisation is very close to the Virtual Research Environment work in the UK but with a closer emphasis on the complexities of permissions and access for members of collaborative projects. The document: [http://www.surfnet.nl/Documents/indi-2009-07_020%20\(Report%20Collaboration%20Infrastructure\).pdf](http://www.surfnet.nl/Documents/indi-2009-07_020%20(Report%20Collaboration%20Infrastructure).pdf) will be of interest to those involved in the VRE programme (Frederique Van Till was previously involved in this project) and those involved in the AIM programme. More information is available on the COIN website: <https://projectcoin.surfnet.nl/>.

3. Project BEER

Although rather flippantly named at the moment, project BEER could be very important in terms of achieving a future vision of a distributed metadata process for federated access management. BEER essentially works at the opposite end of the scale to eduGAIN, effectively offering a ‘bucket’ in to which any SAML metadata can be place, with only minimum verification. More information is available on the Access Management Focus blog.

■ Reviewing:

Access Management Focus has been involved in reviewing the following documentation in September:

1. Review and comments on UK federation Change Management process – informal, as part of the work of the UK federation TAG.
2. Review and comments on eduGAIN policy. Formal review process, the outcomes of which can be found here: <http://www.edugain.org/policy/>. It is vitally important that the UK take a lead role in reviewing the eduGAIN policy to ensure that the UK federation and its entities are able to effectively participate in the interfederation process. Concerns remain over the current drafts, which are being fed through to the eduGAIN team on an iterative basis.
3. Review and comments on eduID documentation – informal as part of the project management for the ‘eduID’ project. For more information about the project please contact Nicole. These documents are publicly available at: https://refeds.terena.org/index.php/EduID_Working_Group.
4. Review and comments on Kantara Assurance framework – formal review of the Kantara ‘Federation Operator guidelines’ from an educational perspective.

■ Documentation:

As part of the work that the Access Management Focus role is carrying out for the Shibboleth Consortium and REFEDS, the following documents have been prepared:

1. Programme plans v5 and v6 for Shibboleth Consortium and a draft Consortium Agreement for the Shibboleth Consortium. These documents are currently confidential, please contact Nicole if you would like further information.

2. REFEDS: website content strategy document. This is publicly available at:
https://refeds.terena.org/index.php/REFEDS_Planning_Documents.

■ Meetings:

The Access Management Focus has attended the following meetings:

1. UK federation TAG meeting, 3rd September 2010.
2. Federation Board meeting, 20th September 2010.
3. TF-EMC, 22nd – 23rd September 2010 (see: <http://access.jiscinvolve.org/wp/middleware-coordination-coperation-and-copenhagen/>). One of the interesting things to come out of this meeting not mentioned elsewhere in this report is the GEANT work on ‘Federation Labs’. At its recent meeting, the UK federation Board expressed some concern over the lack of diagnostic tools in the federated environment. ‘Federation Labs’ should go somewhere to solving this problem. More information is available here:
http://rnd.feide.no/geant_identity_federations_work_plan_year_2/.

■ Blog Posts:

The following posts have appeared on the Access Management Focus blog:

1. When Security is Insecure: <http://access.jiscinvolve.org/wp/when-security-is-insecure/>.
2. Middleware Coordination, Coperation and Copenhagen:
<http://access.jiscinvolve.org/wp/middleware-coordination-coperation-and-copenhagen/>. Tiered
3. Login: <http://access.jiscinvolve.org/wp/tiered-login/>.
4. Consuming Beer: <http://access.jiscinvolve.org/wp/consuming-beer/>.