EDINA Vision for 2020
Director's Introduction

Welcome to our vision for EDINA in 2020.

At EDINA, we develop and deliver shared services and infrastructure to support research and education in the UK in our role as the Jisc-designated centre for digital expertise and online service delivery based at the University of Edinburgh. The customers and consumers of Jisc services enjoy cost-effective access to high quality mapping, multimedia, reference and research data services. Our confidence in this role is grounded in the knowledge and expertise we have gained by working with support staff in universities, colleges, research institutes and educational organisations since 1995/6 when EDINA was first established.

This vision for 2020 presented here has drawn inspiration from having listened to and learnt from members of our Management Board as well as from our staff and other experts. It is firmly founded on the excellent feedback and critical insight from users of the services we now deliver on behalf of Jisc. That has prompted the (sometimes speculative) inclusion of new services in the Vision, based on our track record and international and national reputation.

We are releasing a number of ‘personas’ over the coming months within which we attempt to ‘inhabit the thoughts of our users’: researchers, students and their teachers; developers; customers and stakeholders. If you would like to help us in road testing these, would like to help derive further personas or have other comments on this 2020 Vision, please contact edina@ed.ac.uk.

We are intent on continuing to learn through innovation and R&D activities, sharing the outcome and transforming the products of such research into services. Our reason for being has its focus on the quality and productivity of UK research and education. That has global context and we envisage a future in which the international reputation we have established will broaden the base of funded activity, in addition to those services we gift to the sector. We also recognise the benefit that we can bring to the learning that takes place in schools and in the variety of post-compulsory education and skills acquisition.

Continuing to be based within Information Services at the University of Edinburgh enables Jisc to gain leverage from the expertise and ICT resource base of a well-found university for the benefit of the whole of the UK. Our links to Edinburgh University Data Library, from which EDINA was initially formed, provides us with insight that we can build upon when we engage with all universities and colleges.
EDINA in brief

Our Mission

We develop and deliver online services and digital infrastructure for UK research and education. Contributed as part of the Jisc family, these are both high quality and cost-effective, drawing upon knowledge and expertise gained through research, innovation and development.

Our Vision

To be integral to the quality & productivity of research & education, in the UK & beyond

Our Values

- *Innovation* for the benefit of research, education and the wider society
- *Engagement* with stakeholders, customers and partners, nationally and internationally
- *Expertise* and *Understanding* gained from the deployment of staff and technology in one of the world’s leading research and teaching Universities
- *Trust* deriving from a record of honest performance, being of and for the research and education sector which we serve
- *Excellence* in our work and the work of others, making the imagined possible.

Our Strategic Priorities

*Activity and Value Proposition:*
We develop and deliver shared digital services and infrastructure that are essential to the functions of the research and education sectors on behalf of Jisc, the University of Edinburgh and related bodies such as the UK Research Councils.

*Resources and Context:*
We actively manage and enhance our resource base of talent, data and technology.

*Finance and Sustainability:*
We work to ensure sustainability into the long term.

Our Strategic Aims and Objectives for 2013-2016 and specific objectives for 2014 are detailed in our most recent Strategy\(^1\), a staging post towards 2020.

\(^1\) http://edina.ac.uk/about/strategy/strategy_plan2013-16.pdf
Meeting the strategic objectives of Jisc

Now a registered charity owned by Universities UK, Guild HE and the Association of Colleges (AoC), Jisc is reshaping its governance, structure and processes and has published\(^2\) its Strategic Vision for 2013/16.

EDINA enables Jisc to address sector priorities and support national strategies in the following areas:

*Simple and fast access to digital content and discovery* – We develop and deliver online services to staff and students in over 150 universities and 120 colleges in the UK. We also provide high quality, well-regarded helpdesk, online documentation, training, webinars and other support.

*The best deal on digital network and IT services* – We provide a world-class infrastructure for geospatial mapping and data, for multimedia discovery and content, and for scholarly communication, including components for national and international e-journal archiving & open access repositories; access management; and middleware for interoperability across the UK’s digital library.

*The best advice, guidance and hands-on assistance* – Across our services, we provide advice and assistance to help our customers and users. At Jisc’s request, we represent it in the geospatial UK Location Programme. Having experience as technical lead for the UK Access Management Federation, we provide consultancy on access management issues for the community, and expert guidance to Jisc as required.

*Gaining and improving competitive advantage* – We have a proven track record in cutting edge technological investigation and delivery. We act as a centre of excellence for research and development in key strategic areas for Jisc, responding positively to policy direction.

EDINA delivers support for research enablement, teaching and the digital student experience, the open agenda for research and education and the exploitation of ‘big data’. We contribute towards significant gains in efficiency and effectiveness at sector and enterprise level, and we work collaboratively with national and international groups, including work in digital standards and policies.

\(^2\) [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/jisc-strategy-2013-16](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/jisc-strategy-2013-16)
Vision for 2020 and how we plan to get there

Researchers, teachers, students and pupils will be confident users of EDINA services and continue to recommend them to others; customers and stakeholders will be delighted with what is provided in support of their education, research, and administrative responsibilities.

EDINA will offer flexible and responsive services across the business needs of our customers and consumers. We shall support universities, colleges and learning providers in their research, teaching and organisational/administrative needs. By our commitment to constant improvement, we shall enable researchers, teachers, students and pupils to easily find, understand and use all of our resources.

We believe that digital technologies are and will remain key enablers of the changes necessary to support flexible delivery of education, of research that contributes to economic growth and prosperity, and of engagement with business and the community. Jisc and EDINA offer services that assist colleges and universities in dealing with many of their most pressing concerns, including research excellence, improved student outcomes and expectations, reducing costs and achieving competitive advantage.

This section describes the context in 2020 nationally, internationally and locally, and EDINA’s plans for services to be offered in 2020 at each level. It also describes potential services that EDINA will investigate in the interim.

National - the context across the variety of agenda for universities and colleges in the UK

Universities and colleges will be working in a funding context in which the current changes to student finance, and tighter public funding constraints, are embedded.

Changes in the structure of the workforce will lead to the college sector being more tightly focused on the delivery of skills and apprenticeships.

The shift to open access for all new research outputs will be embedded, with the European Union mandating open access for all Horizon 2020 outputs, and the UK funding bodies having done so over a five-year transition period.

Increasing competition and continuing public funding restrictions will result in continuing mergers in both higher and further education and there will be fewer in total than there are today. Library and repository resources will be shared across consortia. The outcome of the 2014 Referendum in Scotland will be known; EDINA continues as part of the Jisc family to support all the countries of the UK.

There will be much increased demand for individualised learning and high quality, cost-effective teaching and learning opportunities, many of which will take place outside the traditional campus, including via MOOCs or their successors.

Mobile and cloud technologies, and technologies to support researchers and universities in managing massive data, will be ubiquitous by 2020.

Data protection and freedom of information legislation will be employed increasingly to demand better outcomes from public authorities, including universities and colleges.
Further understanding of intellectual property and laws against piracy will be in place, with copyright legislation amended to be more helpful for researchers and educators.

### Evaluating potential EDINA services for the UK in 2020

**Added value, online data and content services**
The development and delivery of these services defines what we do currently and are core to our offering in 2020.

**Enabling open data sharing for research and learning**
Currently something we also do; this area also has great growth potential for the future.

**Middleware, machine-to-machine services**
These services are core to our remit and will continue to be so.

**Ensuring long-term continuity of access to data and resources**
This is an area of acknowledged leadership and expertise, into which we plan to keep investing; has good growth potential.

**Tools and application development**
An area of expertise in which we plan to make our expertise more evident; prospect of growth and greater revenue.

**E-learning products and support**
EDINA has track record in this area; plans to re-state and have an established role by 2020.

**Access management**
An area in which EDINA has excelled; led to technical management of the UK Access Management Federation. Demand for this expertise now coming from other sectors, and always required ‘internally’.

**Platform and applications management**
An essential ‘internal’ function that is done well. Some experience in offering external hosting; will continue to monitor this space to establish ‘value add’ to Cloud provision.

**Helpdesk services**
Currently another ‘internal’ function that is acknowledged as done well; have provided external helpdesk services for 3rd parties; could do so again.

**Universities and colleges as customers**
New opportunities will open up as universities and colleges, as new owners of Jisc, turn to Jisc for new ‘shared services’ in the UK; focus more attention upon supporting institutional needs.

**Students as customers**
A range of added value services could be provided directly to students; would be dependent upon policy direction from the sector.
Consultancy and/or paid-for advisory services  
Currently not mainstream activities, having high opportunity cost for key EDINA staff; could be grown.

Other business sectors  
UK research and post-compulsory education is our main sector; we plan to investigate other business sectors and opportunities.

Global – the context beyond the UK in Europe and the rest of the world

Communications are improving all the time. Ubiquitous technology, especially mobile, is an enabler for less developed countries to improve their global standing and education systems. The knowledge economy in economic power terms is crucial. Despite the risk that the UK will fall behind other countries, which are investing heavily in their education sectors, the UK research outcome continues to be globally significant, attributed in part to the productivity shared services provided by Jisc, and the number of students attracted to the UK remains high.

Realignment of global power is taking place. Europe and the US are less dominant, and the emerging BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India and China) are increasing their influence. The economic advantages of the West are decreasing and financial centres shifting. Demographic changes are also taking place. Questioning of the role of the UK in the European Union increased, but the threat of enormous negative impact on inter-university projects and research funding for universities was averted.

Potential services offered internationally in 2020

Open access services  
We will have secured the issue of sustaining these services e.g. we could provide a basic service to all and charge for added value extensions.

Academic and business sectors outside the UK  
We will look at academic and business sectors outside the UK to see whether revenue raising opportunities exist there.

Local - the context within our host University and its locality

The University of Edinburgh will continue to be a “truly international university, firmly rooted in Scotland”3. It will have increased its global impact and contribution to society, in line with its strategy and commitment to excellence in education, research and innovation. (The University of Edinburgh has merged with the Edinburgh College of Art, the Roslin Institute and the Medical Research Council’s Human Genetics Unit, and is in a “strong and positive position” to face the demands of the future.)

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The FE sector in Scotland will have fewer separate colleges as regionalisation takes place; Edinburgh College has already been formed from the merger of three former city colleges.

**Potential services offered to the University of Edinburgh by 2020**

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<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>EDINA will give greater focus on a publication trail that contributes to Research Excellence.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project work</td>
<td>We shall establish channels to identify and work on more joint projects and proposals with colleagues in Information Services and the wider University, including strategic partnerships with key research groups and national and international funders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>We shall continue to contribute to the University’s Internationalisation Strategy through our activity and partnerships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Data Management</td>
<td>Expertise and achievement from Data Library will have contributed to the success of the University’s Information Services, including that of the Digital Curation Centre.</td>
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