

SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT LIBRARIES ARE DOING ABOUT WALK-IN ACCESS

(Responses to JIBS Committee member John Smith's email request on lis-link, April 2008)

University of Liverpool

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We provide walk-in access. See: http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/info/libinf03_ref.html
Users must be a member of the library (so we already have a record of their contact details) and they must complete a form each time they want to use the designated PC. The form sets out the basic acceptable use guidelines and specifies some resources that they definitely are NOT permitted to use. A member of library staff then logs them in, so the walk-in user never knows the username and password. The accounts used are the same as the ones that our computing service sets up for short courses and expire daily. Printing goes to a printer behind the counter and is charged per page.

Our computing service didn't object to any of this on JANET acceptable use grounds, which say:

"11.2. It is acceptable for a User Organisation connected to JANET to extend access to others on a limited basis, provided no charge is made for such access. For example, it is acceptable that a visitor to the Organisation be permitted to gain access to JANET for the purpose of maintaining contact with his or her home organisation. It is intended that such use be regulated by the User Organisation in the same manner as it would regulate occasional use by third parties of its other facilities, such as its telephone and IT support systems."

As an alternative, users can ask for print-outs of articles from the enquiry desk, as licences also typically permit us to "provide single printed or electronic copies of single articles at the request of individual Authorised Users". We charge double the normal rate for such 'mediated' printing!

Our designated PC in each site is within view of the enquiry desk so we can (notionally) keep an eye them!

Roehampton Institute

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We are only allowing access to e-resources for SCONUL Access users as we know they have a genuine educational need.

When people join they sign an IT form which tells them what the Janet regs are and that they must not breach them.

Middlesex University

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I notice that the service in public libraries themselves is suffering. They are naturally replacing hard copy reference books by on-line which is accessible only to library members on logging in. Reference libraries have always provided in the past a service to everyone regardless of origin, but this principle is being eroded.

As far as your problem is concerned we have not solved it. Our alumni in particular are very disappointed. Our IT department won't allow them network access to start with.

University of Wolverhampton

Frances Machell, Hybrid Collections Co-ordinator

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We have visitor access to e-resources at the University of Wolverhampton. We have several 'visitor' computers in 3 Learning Centres. The only software available is that for which we have checked the licences very carefully by our copyright librarian. The visitor has to provide ID, and is logged into the machine by a member of library staff. The visitor also signs a booking sheet so we have a record of who has used which computers.

If you see our web pages

<http://asp.wlv.ac.uk/Level3.asp?UserType=6&Level3=823>

or <http://asp.wlv.ac.uk/Level4.asp?UserType=6&Level4=1818>

you will be able to check the information there and on the links enclosed.

We obviously record our visitors carefully, checking their identity, and so far - it has been running for several years - all has gone well.

University of Nottingham

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We have implemented a Walk-in User service at the University of Nottingham, which has been running now for about 18 months. For more information see our webpages at: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/library/walkin-users.php>

We have 2 PCs which are just for the WIU service - these are located in 2 of our libraries. All WIUs have to register and sign a code of conduct to use the service, they also sign a log each time they use the service. Registration and signing the log, is in effect authorising these users. The log means we would be able to identify who had been using the WIU PC at a specific time should we need to. The WIU PCs are logged in automatically using a proximity device. The proximity device is lent to a user to allow them to use the machine, which they then return when they have finished.

As part of the project, we checked the licences of our eResources to see whether they allowed WIU access and contacted individual providers if we were unsure. I also contacted JISC to clarify some aspects of the way we were providing the service. We only provide access to those resources which have IP authentication. We also restrict the PC to those particular resources using a "white list", so that individuals aren't able to use the web generally or go onto resources which don't have the relevant walk-in user clause.

London South Bank University (part of WAM25)

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Within LSBU our Electronic Resources Officer has created a page of information directing visitors to this sort of information:

http://www.library.lsbu.ac.uk/006_services/visitors/visitor_eresources_atoz.htm

There is currently a feasibility project investigating walk-in access across M25 libraries - WAM25: They are at the very initial stages of discussion with potential pilot institutions - an organisation called Curtis and Cartwright have been awarded the contract to manage the pilot on behalf of the M25 group.

SW Regional Library Service

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Your enquiry below was passed to me and I thought you might like to know that recently I have been surveying our HE SWRLS (SW Regional Library Service) members, with a view to seeing how we can improve access for walk in users / public. At least a couple of them have set up “thin client” or dedicated PCs, to provide use of resources that allow walk in access on the licenses without the need to use the university IT network. Many of the others are also trying to come up with solutions which seem to centre round the university network security issues as much as licenses.

If you would like to be put in touch with individual contacts please let me know and I will ensure they are made aware of your query.

Sheffield Hallam University

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1. Entitlement

Entitlement is, broadly, the range of services and resources that a range of stakeholders can reasonably expect to be provided to them by Sheffield Hallam University. Such stakeholders might include; staff, enrolled students, registered students, staff at partner organisations, researchers at other organisations, alumni, members of the public, the Governors of the University, external examiners, etc. The needs of the different stakeholders are quite diverse and a project was initiated to try to explain and clarify/enhance entitlements. The project has also identified, during the course of the last year, that we have a considerable variety of ‘entitlement’ depending on the course of study even for our enrolled students.

A complicating factor in relation to students is the distinction between:

- enrolled students, who are studying an award-bearing course at SHU and are recorded by the University to enable us to include them in our ‘return’ to HEFCE and therefore receive the funding for them. This would also include students studying for Postgraduate awards at SHU regardless of whether we receive partial or no HEFCE funding for them.
- registered students, who are studying for a SHU award delivered by a collaborative partner, and where they are usually (but not always) enrolled at that institution (who therefore receive the funding for that student).

2. Entitlement Project

The project is led at senior management level, working primarily with a group of staff from across the University. At present, the Entitlement project is wrestling with the challenges of providing access to resources (provided via electronic means or in

digital form) to registered students from Collaborative Provision partners. These students are enrolled with partner organisations, which are usually but not always colleges, where they are studying for a SHU award.

To date, the project has identified:

- a mechanism for supporting differentiated access to electronic resources (through links to the separate but complimentary Identity Management project)
- key entitlement priorities as expressed by collaborative partners
- a baseline of entitlement to be used to inform staff across the University, particularly where they work directly with current and prospective partners. The baseline is a starting point only, and will be used to build on and refine overall entitlement offers.
- some key questions that the Executive of the University need to address in terms of priorities, planning, policies and key relationships

Work is continuing on testing the third of these, the baseline, with a particular key partner organisation, which will validate or otherwise the assumptions about what is critical to their delivery. This will, it is hoped, form the basis for agreeing requirements with other similar partner organisations.

The baseline is actually an improvement on the minimum entitlement, bearing in mind the key priorities our Collaborative Partners identified for us, but still falls short of meeting all the different demands we believe our various stakeholders have.

3. Access to learning resources

Sheffield Hallam University learning centres operate an accessible reference service for printed resources and we have some licences for walk-in use of digital resources, however at present we have no way to enable access to those digital products. The 1st barrier is semi-technical – we don't/cannot allow anonymous login on the network because of restrictions in the terms of use of JANET, and without that there is no access to the resources. Beyond that, the issue is one of resource management – even if we resolved the login issue, our resources are not managed in a way that differentiates the licence type so access is granted pretty much to everything, on the basis that the only people allowed access to the network are also entitled to access those digital learning resources.

The joint SCONUL/UCISA HE Access to e-Resources in Visited Institutions (HAERVI) project, which SHU contributed to, looked to offer a solution to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in terms of access to walk-in licensed resources for 'visiting' students from other HEIs but it is unlikely to provide an easy answer for us. The same issue hampers us in terms of this as with Entitlement, that is, resulting from the very thing that's made things easy for all our enrolled students for some time, the transparent way they can move through resources on the basis on their SHU login. We don't currently differentiate resources so opening up access to one opens access to pretty much all. Until we find a sensible way to differentiate access, we end up with all on/all off scenarios or halting progress at best.

We would need to have a much more sophisticated system that granted access to resources on an individual resource basis so that we would allow (or not) access as

appropriate to specific individuals/groups. A Collection Management system would allow us to identify individual resources and their restrictions and then apply them to specific users via the Identity Management system, i.e. allowing access to resources according to pre-determined but differentiated groups. At present, SHU has no such system in place although work is beginning to consider whether there is a requirement for it, bearing in mind the costs of purchasing and implementing such a system, and helping to resolve issues around better managing entitlement to digital learning resources is likely to be a major driver in that.

As well as supporting users from other HEI's, Walk-in licences actually help solve some of the problems for entitlement to digital learning resources generally – if we have walk-in access we can provide that to specific groups who might otherwise not have any rights to the resources, saving us buying more expensive licences. For example, it would allow us to enable partner college students (registered with us) having access to appropriate electronic material, so long as it was accessed in accordance with the licences. This is however, something that we may wish to consider making a charge for, as there would be other costs associated with it.

4. Possible pitfalls

We could easily resolve most of our electronic resources entitlement issues if we were able to have all the students enrolled and all staff contracted to us. We would then legitimately be able to allow access to resources. However, aside from the obvious issues of having other organisations students enrolled with us (and not their 'home' institution, to avoid double-accounting to the funding body) it also would lead to increased licence costs as many software and learning resources are provided on a per capita licence.

Walk-in access really only becomes an issue if we move from 'print' or 'print and digital' to 'digital only' for some resources – the reference access we are proud of will be eroded as people simply will be unable to access material because it is digital only and we've not enabled a means for them to legitimately access the resource. It's little bit like the way that we've improved things for our students by linking our printing management system into the photocopying system and forgotten that our reference users don't have a print management account with us and therefore cannot photocopy material that previously they were able to.

Responses to a similar question asked earlier on lis-link

From lis-link 10 April 2008

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Off campus access to e-resources

Back in March I e-mailed the list enquiring about your experiences of accessing electronic resources from off campus and dealing with 'techy' queries. I would like to thank every one who took the time to reply to my e-mail. It's reassuring to know that I am not alone in dealing with these type of problems!!

All replies were very informative and for the benefit of the list I have summarised these below:

On the issue of off campus access:

- Two institutions have taken the EZProxy route. (The issue of the negative effect on usage statistics was by-passed by receiving stats direct from publishers.) One institution has found that this has not been the total solution as not all Athens resources are accessible through EZProxy.
- It was also suggested that a VPN (virtual private network) may get around some of the problems, although users would need to have a high degree of IT literacy.
- Another institution provided a separate 'off-campus' access page, which provided AthensDA activation instructions and links to all available off campus resources (Athens and generic username & password) for resources not accessed via Metalib.

On the issue of user support:

- One institution provided detailed handouts on each resource giving instructions on how to access content.
- Whilst another institution provided screenshot based instructions to walk users through the activation processes.

And finally on dealing with 'Techy' queries:

- One institution gave general advice to users on how to check their P.C./firewall/anti-virus software set up.
- Two institutions advised students on how to delete cookies, & allow pop ups

In light of this feedback we have decided to continue with the EZProxy 'solution'. Hopefully it will prove to be the right step, only time will tell, but judging by the decrease in the number of off campus queries we have received over the last few weeks it looks promising.