University of Edinburgh

Job Description

1. Job Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job title:</th>
<th>Metadata coordinator</th>
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<tr>
<td>School/Support Department:</td>
<td>Information Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit:</td>
<td>EDINA</td>
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<td>Line manager:</td>
<td>EDINA IT Team Manager</td>
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2. Job Purpose

To provide the principal point of communication with H&FE institutions who wish to join the Shibboleth federation operated at EDINA. This provides new technology for authentication and authorisation in the UK educational sector, under the JISC Core Middleware Programme. The main output of the job is a full technical record of members of the federation in the form of the federation metadata file.

3. Main Responsibilities

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<th>Main Responsibilities</th>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>To interact with senior administrative and technical staff in H&amp;FE institutions and assist their induction into the federation.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>To vet all communication with institutions, including email, letters of authority, PKI certificates, and phone calls to verify the authenticity of these communications.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>To maintain the federation metadata file which provides a complete technical record of federation members and is key to federation operation.</td>
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<td>To maintain federation guidance documents and the wiki to ensure federation policy and advice is clearly communicated to members.</td>
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<td>To support the JISC Outreach programme by producing introductory material and use cases, and making presentations at roadshows and other events.</td>
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4. Planning and Organising

The goal is to provide clear, accurate and complete advice to institutions over a range of issues:

- requests from non-members to join the federation;
- requests from existing members to amend details of their institution’s deployment;
- questions from members about technical or policy matters.

The job holder is responsible for ensuring that all enquiries are answered within one working day after consultation, where necessary, with other colleagues.

Longer-term planning is necessary for outreach work.
5. Problem Solving
Typically, the problem is to resolve misunderstandings about the technology, to identify potential problems arising from questionable configuration data, and to communicate clear and non-judgemental advice to institutions.

6. Decision Making
The job holder is responsible for making the day-to-day decisions affecting routine federation operation, and for determining when issues should be referred for special resolution and by whom.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships
Interaction with colleagues in other institutions is the central focus of the job.
It is also important to maintain relationships with staff in institutions working on related projects, and with colleagues investigating adoption of the technology for use in other services within the University of Edinburgh.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
Knowledge of authentication and authorisation technologies including Shibboleth is essential. This entails a thorough understanding of XML and SAML.

Wide experience of the H&FE sector and an understanding of the collaborative as opposed to the centrally-directed model for inter-institutional working is essential.

Experience in service promotion, organisation of outreach events, and presentation skills would be an advantage.

9. Dimensions
The establishment of a new national access management scheme for UK H&FE will have a significant impact on computing services, MIS, and Library personnel across the sector. It will also greatly simplify the way in which users access external resources.

The development federation created under the project will form the basis of the UK national production federation which goes live in September 2006.

The target is for 100 institutional members of the federation by the end of academic year 2006-7.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
The job requires interaction with a range of staff in institutions, including senior personnel and front-line technical officers. Sensitivity to the appropriate form of communication in each case and to the collaborative nature of the common endeavour is essential.

In the internal context, Shibboleth technology is certainly complex and still undergoing substantial change.