University of Edinburgh
Job Description

1. Job Details
Job title: Head of User Support
Planning Unit: EDINA
Unit (if applicable): EDINA User Support
Line manager: Director of EDINA

2. Job Purpose
Leadership and functional management of the EDINA User Support Team with responsibility for the planning, formulation, development and provision of detailed and comprehensive specialist support of Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) funded national services to the UK academic community.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. Functional team management of EDINA User Support including staff management, recruitment and staff development, securing appropriate resources including software and expertise. 20%

2. Oversight with respect to the user support aspects and interface design of the implementation and development of EDINA’s on-line information services. 20%

3. Overall responsibility for the provision of: a National Helpdesk Service for EDINA’s online information services; an expert specialist geographic information and bibliographic and multimedia user support service; training courses and context sensitive online help for services; marketing and promotion for EDINA services; online and paper documentation for the support and promotion of services; and the EDINA website. 30%

4. Responsible for ensuring that all Users Support services are in compliance with contractual SLAs, as governed by Funding Agreement. 10%

5. Contribute to the leadership, overall success, strategic development and management of EDINA as a JISC National Data Centre. Member of Management Team. 10%

6. Annually, negotiate, and agree, the EDINA SLA and SLD contracts with the JISC Services Manager and the JISC Monitoring Unit. Oversee and produce the EDINA Operational plan, all specified in the Funding Agreement between the University and HEFCE. Contribute to the rolling three year EDINA Strategy Document and oversee the production of the EDINA Annual Report and Community Report. 10%

4. Planning and Organising
The post-holder is required to strategically plan and oversee the activities of the User Support team and contribute to overall strategic planning within EDINA. Forward planning of between 6 months and 3 years is required for the effective management of new service roll-out or existing service improvements and prior to the expiry of service agreements.

5. Problem Solving
Large-scale 24/7 operation and delivery of national online services means that the unusual/unwanted does happen. This includes possible breaches of licensing agreements. Ensuring high quality services in place requires effective inter-working with EDINA management colleagues.

All problems associated with management of staff and support for management colleagues: recruitment, motivation, deployment and retention.

6. Decision Making
High level, ranging from overview of day-to-day to executive and strategic; having access to advice from specialist technical staff, decisions have to be taken independently and with authority and timing – with respect to operation of services, service roll-out, overall strategy.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships
The post-holder works closely with all staff within the User Support team, with colleagues from Service Delivery and Infrastructure within EDINA, particularly other senior managers and the Director. Liaison with the JISC Services and Content Development teams and the JIBS (JISC Internet-Based Sources) User Group (Senior Academic Librarians) and service partners is a significant part of the post.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
The skills set required is broad and deep-ranging from considerable practical experience in supporting online, specialised services, the ability to communicate (both written and orally) at all levels within the organisation and proficiency at organising and planning, staff management skills through to a thorough grasp of user requirements in the provision of online information services. As important are the skills of leadership, with evident customer-focus and service-orientation, and the ability to manage relationships effectively.

Significant relevant practical experience is required, supported by relevant honours degree is essential and, preferably, a post-graduate qualification; the post-holder should have 10-15 years experience of managing and delivering services in either in an IT or library/publishing environment. Knowledge and understanding of the purposes and practices in higher education is highly desirable.

9. Dimensions
Client base is staff and students in all UK universities, colleges and research institutes; primary services affecting 400+ institutions with over 400,000 user sessions per annum. Head of services with staff and resource management, c.12 FTEs overall; Significant national dimensions, through engagement with formal partners or collaboration with other organisations.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
The job context is provided by the role of the organisation as a National Data Centre that services the whole UK higher and further education sectors. The job has national impact with implications beyond the local, Edinburgh context, but also with impact upon the University.

Consequences of error either in achievement of service levels can be great affecting the reputation of the National Data Centre and ultimately the University of Edinburgh.

Out of hours work required at times due to the business critical nature of some aspects of the job.