

The University of East Anglia



Library Open Athens / Web Proxy Project Priority: A

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v0.1	11 th Feb 2013	First draft

Project Proposal

Project Title :	Open Athens / Web Proxy Implementation
Proposed Project Sponsor:	Nicholas Lewis
Proposed Project Board:	Project Sponsor: Nicholas Lewis Project Manager: Andrew Barker / Paul Hooper Other relevant personnel: Jonathan Richardson, Thompson Zulu, Allison Carroll, Matthew Stevenson Reporting to ISDMT
Proposed Project Manager:	Andrew Barker (until April) Paul Hooper (from April)
Target start date:	December 2012
Target completion date:	October 2013 (Phase 1) TBC (Phase 2)
Outline business case:	
Background & Rationale	<p>The complexity of accessing electronic resources from off campus is cited regularly by our users as an area requiring improvement by the library.</p> <p>Comments in the recent ISD survey on this subject include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Off site journal access can be troublesome as though some articles are on reading lists it is impossible to access them from home.” • “Greater ease of access to electronic journals to access PDFs of papers, when logging in remotely from outside campus.” <p>It is clear that by making off campus access as seamless an experience as on campus access we will impact significantly on user experience.</p> <p>In addition to this need to improve off campus access, the traditional Athens authentication is being retired by EduserV in favour of Open Athens, a SAML compliant authentication which will allow for a more seamless route through to our resources via the UK Access Management Federation.</p> <p>Therefore the rationale for doing this project is to improve off campus access. It is imperative that this project provides our users with seamless access to our electronic resources at a granular level. It may well prove that this requires more than one approach to authentication.</p> <p>As part of the initial investigation we have talked to other HEIs about their approaches to authentication. Some of the information they have provided is included as appropriate below.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision to our users of an obvious and seamless route through to the authentication of electronic resources • Access to these resources at an article level
Options	<p>We have three options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing nothing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of authentication via Open Athens only • The provision of authentication via Open Athens and a web proxy server
<p>Benefits</p>	<p><i>Doing nothing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Eduserv are planning to retire traditional Athens, doing nothing is not an option. <p><i>The provision of authentication via Open Athens only</i> Although in many cases authentication via the UK Federation may be a superior experience to the current route of authentication, it will still require a high level of navigation via a variety of log in boxes to steer a course through to authentication.</p> <p>Based on the experience of other HEIs, it is clear using Open Athens alone will not provide us with a sufficiently seamless experience to resources at an article level.</p> <p>A quote from the University of Huddersfield illustrates both these points:</p> <p>“EZproxy is a better fit for article level linking from our discovery service. Given the confusing variety of ways in which databases prompt users to log in, we felt providing a consistent IP authenticated method that allows students to quickly get to the full-text was more important.”</p> <p><i>The provision of authentication via Open Athens and a web proxy server</i> Offering access via both Open Athens and a proxy server will enable us to use whichever authentication tool is better for the specific resource.</p> <p>A quote from the University of Lincoln supports this point:</p> <p>“Horses for courses - we'll use whatever tool is most appropriate for the job. Federated authentication is naturally the most powerful tool for authentication where personalisation is needed but with EZproxy it's much easier to create reliable, straightforward deep links to e-journal content (e.g. to the individual article) without the user having to negotiate complicated login procedures”</p> <p>Those universities that use both federated access and a proxy server all report a significant drop in reported problems with authentication.</p> <p>As the University of Lincoln described the impact that maintaining a proxy alongside a federated route had on user experience:</p> <p>“The number of enquiries from users about how to access full text via our e-journals portal / link resolver has dropped to basically zero. Authentication to full text is now a non-issue!”</p>

	It is the aim of this project that we make authentication to full text resources at UEA ‘a non-issue’.
Outline Costs:	All costs and resources are already allocated.
Key Deliverables:	<p>The first deliverable is migration to federated access via Open Athens from traditional Athens as phase one of the project. The timescales for this are laid out in the attached.</p> <p>The second deliverable is the installation of a proxy for all applicable resources as phase two of the project. The timescales for this phase are to be determined.</p>
Key Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library and CIS colleagues will have a role in this project • All members of the community who use electronic resources from off campus will be impacted by the end results of the project
Key Resources	<p>Library: Andrew Barker (until May), Allison Carroll, Jane Helgesen.</p> <p>CIS: Jonathan Richardson, Thompson Zulu, Matthew Stevenson</p>
Considerations	
IT environment	N/A
Security policy	I confirm that the Information Security policy will be complied with.
Long-term support arrangements	TBD
Other considerations	As Andrew Barker – listed as the initial project manager – is leaving UEA in early May, another project manager will be required to ensure the completion of the project.

Appendix A: Phase One Timescales

