Jisc

The Jisc/OCLC Transitional National Metadata Agreement

Detailed Information for Subscribers

Version 2

February 2022

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The Context of the Agreement

This agreement represents new territory for UK academic and specialist libraries. We have been in discussions for at least the last five years about how to try and open up library data and how to make adjustments to a UK bibliographic data ecosystem that is constrained, inefficient and complex. Solving the entirety of that challenge will take time and a multiplicity of approaches, but this agreement represents progress on the journey towards a more open data ecosystem. It enables the UK library community to better exploit the value of the National Bibliographic Knowledgebase (NBK), and puts in place a transparent, fairer and potentially more sustainable charging framework for the use of OCLC's WorldCat Participation and Cataloguing services.

Plan M and the RLDM Project

Following extensive work to establish requirements and get buy-in for implementing transformative changes to the UK bibliographic data ecosystem/marketplace, Jisc set out the Plan M objectives. (See **Appendix 1** for a concise view of those objectives). The overall stated aim was "*To implement a more efficient bibliographic metadata supply model for UK academic & specialist libraries using the Jisc NBK/Library Hub as core infrastructure.*"

In 2020, Jisc commissioned Research Consulting Ltd. to take an objective view of community requirements. They undertook a six-month exercise entitled 'Remodeling the Library Data Marketplace' (RLDM). One of their recommendations (based on input from libraries) was that Jisc should approach key data suppliers to explore agreements that would facilitate changes to the current data ecosystem, and longer-term transformation of the library data supply chain.

Consultation on National Metadata Agreements

In a subsequent Jisc consultation (April/May 2021), 98% of respondents thought that records should be open and reusable; 93% of respondents agreed that the objectives of Plan M were worth pursuing; and 67% of responding institutions (n=99) indicated they would be interested in participating in a national agreement with OCLC. There was insufficient support for pursuing the proposed national agreement with BDS.

Based on this input and with estimates from institutions on the level of spend they might be willing to contemplate, Jisc proceeded into negotiation with OCLC. The negotiation principles that

underpinned discussions are set out in **Appendix 2**. After an extensive and protracted period of negotiation, Jisc and OCLC signed an Agreement in early February 2022.

What is covered by the Jisc/OCLC National Metadata Agreement?

The Jisc/OCLC National Metadata Agreement (hereafter referred to as 'the Agreement') has practical enabling components that cover *Functions and Services*; as well as *Positioning and Strategic Elements* that will support change and innovation over time.

The Agreement will begin with a transitional phase; and will evolve and adapt over time as it provides a foundation for Jisc, OCLC and UK academic libraries to work together on shared challenges.

Functions and Services

With a national agreement in place, the following functions and services are available to all eligible libraries (see **Eligibility** p.9).

Full OCLC record download from Jisc Library Hub Cataloguing

Records from library contributors that have been ingested into the National Bibliographic knowledgebase, and that are designated as originally being downloaded from WorldCat, were <u>not</u> previously available to users of Library Hub Cataloguing. Having the Agreement in place between Jisc and OCLC changes that. All records that have come from WorldCat (identified by a 994 $a OCLC transaction code in the MARC record) will now be available for download via Jisc Library Hub Cataloguing by any Jisc UK HE member institution. The records will also be available to non-HE NBK contributing organisations who subscribe to the Agreement, and are compliant with any additional conditions relevant to their category of organisation. (Fees and additional specific arrangements for organisations who are not Jisc members are set out in **Non-Jisc Member Charges** p.11)

Eligibility to access the WorldCat Cataloguing service

Those institutions that subscribe to the Agreement (see **Pricing** p.10) will be eligible to access the OCLC WorldCat Cataloguing service and download records. For a number of institutions, the Agreement will be a replacement for existing agreements that may have been in place for many years, and we acknowledge that some libraries may face significant cost increases. In cases where the increase is most pronounced, we would like to work with libraries to discuss potential options. Please contact the Jisc Library Hub team by sending an email to: nbk@jisc.ac.uk. (See **Problems this agreement solves** p.8, for information explaining why the price will be an increase for some libraries, and a decrease for others).

Data synchronization to WorldCat via the NBK

The data from libraries subscribing to the Agreement will be eligible for synchronization to WorldCat as an extension of sending data to the NBK – *if the data meets the format and quality criteria for inclusion into WorldCat*. (It is perhaps worth clarifying that when data is ingested into WorldCat, it then becomes subject to OCLC terms of use.) Having a single export route for data was one of the original stated benefits of the NBK and many institutions are currently taking advantage of this simplified workflow. (See **Viability of the Agreement** p.11, for an explanation of the impact of not achieving a sustainable agreement beyond the transitional phase).

Data synchronization direct to WorldCat (WorldCat Participation)

Subscribed libraries will be able to continue, or commence, sending their catalogue data directly to OCLC for inclusion into WorldCat. The Agreement covers new loads, reloads and updates, but note that WorldCat reloads do not result in the deletion of holdings that are no longer in the library collection. For a WorldCat reload to accurately reflect library holdings OCLC will charge an additional fee for carrying out a 'reclamation'. In practice this means that where libraries would like all of their existing data to be removed from WorldCat, and for an exclusively current version of their catalogue to be featured (with no legacy data also visible), this is not covered by the Agreement.

As stated before, the Agreement will be a replacement for existing agreements that may have been in place for many years. (See **Problems this agreement solves** p.8, for information explaining why the price will be an increase for some libraries, and a decrease for others).

Workflows

Whilst libraries are open to incorporating efficiencies into their operations, it is also clear that there is limited capacity to disrupt established workflows and system configurations that enable the flow and delivery of library data. The Agreement is designed to ensure that where libraries wish to carry on working directly with OCLC, and have workflows in place to facilitate that, they will continue. Data will be obtained from WorldCat directly. Libraries who are using Connexion and First Search can continue to engage with WorldCat using those tools under this agreement. OCLC have committed to ensuring that customers will not pay twice (which is also the case for WMS customers, see **Libraries using the OCLC WMS** p.10).

Likewise, where there is an expectation that data will be routed to WorldCat via the NBK, that will continue under this national agreement. The terms of the Agreement will not have any impact on existing arrangements for contributing data to the NBK.

As we work through the transitional phase of the Agreement and get clarity on its viability and sustainability, it may then become possible to discuss enhancements to workflows where they will add value. If a sustainable and reliable level of funding can be established, it becomes less problematic (from a service provider point of view) where data is hosted, and through which route it is made available.

OCLC have confirmed that there is no issue with libraries being reliant on workflows and processes and systems that are supplied by other LMS providers.

OCLC state:

"[We] already work with the providers noted at an international level. On the back of a newly coherent national licence to WorldCat, we would be happy to review those national relationships and sit around the table with ProQuest, Ex Libris etc."

Positioning and Strategic Elements

The Agreement defines how specific components of OCLC services (Cataloguing and Participation) will be offered and financially sustained in future. But it also introduces related and additional elements for libraries to consider as part of the overall influence that the Agreement will exert in a number of areas.

Publisher and eBook Records

Records created or enhanced by OCLC for supply directly to publishers represent a valuable source of data and many of the world's largest publishers have a transactional relationship with OCLC for this purpose. Obtaining comprehensive access to these records in WorldCat through participation in the Agreement would help to address the second Plan M objective,

"To design a data supply chain that delivers 'fit-for-purpose' records as early as possible in the creation cycle."

OCLC state:

"OCLC continues to create metadata on behalf of content providers (Taylor and Francis, CUP, Wiley, Elsevier etc.) whilst using WorldCat as a metadata distribution channel, which would be extended to Jisc Library Hub Cataloguing. This means that the rate is growing in which a new title description is already created before it is needed by the first library. In essence, we continue to adjust the OCLC business model and workflows with the new requirements of the Open Access movement – to best meet the value of OCLC to the overall (and evolving linked) metadata landscape."

Shareable Data

One of the key purposes of the Agreement is to enable all eligible libraries to have access to full OCLC records in the Jisc Library Hub Cataloguing service. The objective of making these records available to the whole NBK community is to drive efficiencies across the sector. It means that wherever libraries are customising, enhancing and/or correcting a bibliographic record, they can then reshare it via the NBK for others to take advantage of that work.

The opportunity that then presents itself is to devise a nationally coordinated approach that manages out duplication and takes full advantage of the distributed network of cataloguing teams that are adding such value to the national aggregation.

In response to questions about whether this agreement could enable records that originate from WorldCat to be fully and globally open,

OCLC state:

"A national WorldCat subscription would enable Jisc and UKHE to share all data retrieved from WorldCat on platforms with national access, like the NBK. Every library using Alma can download records from WorldCat and or from NBK, but WorldCat data cannot be uploaded to the Alma Community Zone for re-use. This should not limit the value for individual UKHE libraries."

In cases where libraries have created data from scratch, we will work with libraries and OCLC to ensure that provenance statements in the bibliographic records are maintained and that they are flagged as openly licensed records.

Where agreements are already in place to release collection metadata as CC0,

OCLC state:

"A national WorldCat agreement will not change any such arrangement. The OCLC data use policy is asking that the data provided includes the OCN for reference – this does not imply ownership. It is a tool to keep the connection to the other representations of the data intact, as one of the bedrock principles of linked data."

Linked Data and Next Generation Metadata Environments

One of the overriding purposes of establishing a National Metadata Agreement is to foster change. There is a growing appetite within libraries to move faster and more determinedly towards a future where bibliographic data is not siloed in library management systems. Most researchers and learners start with Web searches rather than in library catalogues to find the resources they need. Library data needs to be published in Web-friendly ways that enable users to make connections, deductions and inferences. The Agreement will set out concrete enabling actions that OCLC will undertake (in collaboration with Jisc) to help UK libraries move faster towards this goal.

OCLC state:

"A contractual commitment can be made regarding formalising the creation of a Jisc sponsored UK working group – focusing on the anticipated roll-out of OCLC linked data services for libraries. An initial practical benefit could be an early insight into progress of the Mellon supported (with matching OCLC funding) [Shared Entity Management Infrastructure](#) work; which will ultimately make UK library's scholarly materials more connected and discoverable on the web and will help the libraries to create the metadata more effectively.

… We recommend, to bring elements around linked data, CONSER CCP work, or NACO funnel discussion into the working group agendas.

… We can commit to an expectation of discounts [on future linked data tools and services] - *associated with economies of scale around the national WorldCat license - but are unable to put specifics on the table today."*

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Catalogues and Collections

Libraries are currently being challenged to ensure that catalogues and collections are being properly scrutinised and analysed to identify where they might contain offensive, biased, racist or culturally misrepresentative materials. As with the linked data area, the Agreement will set out some concrete enabling actions that will commit OCLC to using their extensive research capability and their ability to implement solutions to support UK libraries with making progress in this complex and sensitive area.

OCLC state:

"As with [the linked data element], *a contractual commitment can be made regarding formalising the creation of a Jisc sponsored UK working group. We would very much like to bring UKHE (more centrally) into the rapidly progressing equality, diversity and inclusion work. The timelines for reporting output from the [reimagining respectful description](#) project are scheduled this September and then January / February 2022."*

Training

OCLC have confirmed that they can provide targeted training for libraries to make the most of the services that are on offer.

Value and Benefits

Libraries are operating in a very constrained financial environment and they are acutely sensitive to changes in demand on areas of budget that have previously supported year-on-year reliable

operational processes. Jisc and OCLC acknowledge that this agreement represents a significant price uplift for some institutions. It is also worth noting it represents a decrease for others.

The immediate additional value to libraries this agreement delivers

As soon as the Agreement becomes applicable, eligible libraries will be newly positioned to acquire WorldCat-originated records that may have been enhanced, customised and uploaded to the NBK by peer institutions. The added value may come from any institution, irrespective of whether they have subscribed to the Agreement.

The strategic objective of a better-coordinated national cataloguing ecosystem starts right away with an agreement in place. With OCLC data more widely visible to all NBK libraries, the prospects improve for there to be a virtuous circle of data flowing out to libraries and back into aggregations that are serving up data that is more fit-for-purpose and requires less intervention. Jisc is committed to working with the community to ensure that as many academic and specialist libraries as possible participate in the NBK community.

The overall goal is to establish a cataloguing environment that is more effective and less duplicative across the sector. Whilst the reality is that it will take coordination and collaboration to fully achieve this goal, the foundation on which this can move forward is better access for more libraries to data that is more fit for purpose. Jisc is highly motivated to work with the sector to support this coordinated effort.

The Agreement also puts more focus on access to data held in WorldCat that OCLC creates for many of the world's leading publishers. It is not currently clear whether all subscribing libraries have access to the same comprehensive view on this data, or whether bespoke agreements and arrangements have been made at different times with different libraries. One of the principal objectives is to seek as much transparency as possible with both the pricing and the nature of the services that are on offer from OCLC. The Agreement provides leverage on these issues.

The opportunities this agreement puts in place

The Agreement is being framed as *transitional* in the first instance because it is not possible to fully predict all of the implications and potential outcomes from the outset. What is clear, however, is that the declared goals of the community as set out in Plan M are more likely to be achieved if the library community works together in a spirit of mutual cooperation and with shared investment.

The Agreement establishes a basis for libraries and Jisc to start working out how much benefit can be derived. Given that some institutions will be working at scale and working fast, both to acquire records and to send updates to the NBK, there is a strong likelihood that new records that become available in WorldCat will quickly become available in the NBK. The more libraries that join the NBK community, and the more they commit to keeping their data current, the better the prospects are for a richer overall dataset to become more freely accessible in a timely manner.

The onus will be on Jisc to work with libraries to get the clearest possible understanding of what workflows look like around the acquisition of new resources; how metadata requirements cluster across groupings of institutions; and how niche and specialised records can deliver value to libraries.

Some institutions will be able to redeploy their in-house data specialists away from duplicative cataloguing tasks and onto the challenge of making their hidden collections more visible. Other

institutions more focused on teaching collections will be able to redeploy staff (who perhaps only spend a portion of their time focused on metadata issues) onto other emerging and evolving issues.

For institutions that are almost entirely invested in shelf-ready records and see the main challenge as achieving standardisation and reliability in the delivery of those records, the Agreement aims to bring more transparency to the UK data ecosystem. It is currently not always straightforward to understand where bibliographic records (for print or eBooks) originate or where value is genuinely being added across the supply chain. Putting a national agreement in place gives Jisc a remit to continue to pursue these questions with OCLC (and by implication, their extensive partnership network - https://www.oclc.org/en/partnerships.html). The purpose of this pursuit would be to ensure that the marketplace for data supply to libraries is as efficient and as lean as possible.

Having a National Metadata Agreement in place binds the community together and puts an expectation in place that Jisc and OCLC will work energetically and in a problem-solving way to achieve strategic goals. These would include an accelerated shift towards implementing linked data approaches; and the further development of methodologies to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion in catalogues and collections.

The problems this agreement solves

In addition to defining a number of services that will be delivered and actions that will be undertaken, this agreement additionally represents a transformation in the way that the cost of OCLC services is presented to institutions and can be openly accounted for across institutions. By setting out the charges according to a Jisc banded model, and clearly laying out the terms of agreement for all libraries, it provides a new nationally agreed and universally understood basis for taking future collective action.

With the existing charging model for OCLC services, if you apply a Jisc-banded lens to the pricing, it becomes clear that there are anomalies within and across all levels. This is not surprising given that the historic pricing has not been formulated to correspond to that banding. The current pricing for RLUK libraries is arbitrary because the price levels for their agreement with OCLC were set many years ago based on print spend.

Bringing together all of the charging from across the sector into one place reveals a complex and sometimes very uneven picture. The Agreement is designed to provide a mechanism to introduce a more equitable way forward so that those institutions who have been carrying a heavier financial load are able to put some of it down. For the Agreement to work and for this transitional phase to succeed (and for it provide a launch pad for future activity), we must ask other institutions who have been carrying a lighter load to pick some of it up. In cases where the disparity is greatest, we are happy to work with institutions to discuss options during this transitional phase.

We are seeking the most transparent and balanced model possible to take the community forward into a new phase of working with catalogue data, and into a new partnership agreement with OCLC. They are a key provider of global library infrastructure and it is a strategically sensible to find a financial model for UK libraries that sustainably and proportionately supports that infrastructure. If institutions can look across the sector and feel confident that they are working together equitably with their peers, it will foster a sense of group mission to realise national strategic goals.

Eligibility

The National Metadata Agreement is between OCLC and Jisc. For its initial phase, the Agreement will be regarded as transitional, and consequently may be subject to adjustment in any subsequent phase. We will seek input from all eligible libraries during the transition phase to try and ensure success and sustainability.

Categories of eligible library

Category	Description	Current Number	Note
A	UK HE Libraries (Jisc members)	165	All UK HE libraries are eligible, irrespective of whether they contribute to the NBK
B	National Libraries	3	British Library, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales
C	RLUK Specialist Libraries	2	Wellcome, Trinity College Dublin
D	Specialist Libraries (NBK Contributors)	69	Only libraries that contribute data to the NBK are eligible
	Total	239	

Category A – UK HE Libraries

All UK HE libraries that pay an annual Jisc subscription and wish to take advantage of the services on offer; and/or wish to participate in and contribute to the operational and strategic progress it is designed to catalyse, can subscribe to the agreement at their banded price (see below).

Category B – National Libraries

The three national libraries are included in the scope of the Agreement and all are eligible to participate. Discussions are in progress to settle on a reasonable level of pricing for these libraries to acknowledge the size of their collections and their intensive use of cataloguing services in relation to their assigned Jisc banding.

Category C – RLUK Specialist Libraries

These libraries are members of RLUK and valued contributors to the NBK. They are eligible on both counts and are encouraged to subscribe to the agreement at the banded price (see below).

Category D – Specialist Libraries (NBK contributors)

Libraries in this category are encouraged to take advantage of the agreement if it affords them benefit and/or they wish to participate and contribute to the strategic direction of travel. Libraries in this category will need to either already have affiliate membership of Jisc, or will need to apply to become affiliate members. (To check your institutional status, please refer to the Jisc banding page on the Jisc License Subscriptions Manager). Affiliate status means that an institution will be allocated a band, which can then be used to determine the correct level of fee in relation to the Agreement.

In order to account for the different status of these libraries in relation to Jisc, and the absence of a financial contribution to Jisc via the core subscription, a non-member surcharge may be added to the cost of the banded agreement in any future phases of the Agreement. However, during this first transitional phase (up to July 31st 2022), no surcharge will be applied.

Please note that if Category D libraries simply wish to continue to contribute data to the NBK and use the Library Hub services in the ways that they are currently entitled to use them, then no payment or fees are applicable. The above detail is only relevant to those specialist libraries that wish to subscribe to the Agreement and take advantage of the OCLC cataloguing and sync services.

Libraries using the OCLC WMS

There are a number of libraries, both HE and non-HE who are currently paying fees to use the OCLC WMS system. The use of WMS provides those organisations with access to the cataloguing and sync services that this agreement covers. OCLC have committed to ensuring that no element of the fees incurred for WMS and the cost incurred for participation in the Agreement will be duplicated.

Pricing

The pricing of this agreement has taken into account a number of different factors. It represents the best attempt on the part of Jisc to set out a pricing structure that considers:

- the different perspectives and agendas within libraries,
- the guidance received by governance and steering groups,
- input from libraries via the consultation exercise,
- the need for transparency,
- comparability of pricing structures with other Jisc license agreements,
- the complexities of eligibility,
- the imbalances in the existing charging model,
- the current and future financial context,
- the incentives for OCLC,
- OCLC's perceptions of risk,
- the sustainability of the agreement

Jisc banded pricing

Eligible libraries can view the pricing by logging into relevant page on Jisc Licence Subscriptions Manager platform.

https://subscriptionsmanager.jisc.ac.uk/catalogue/2699

The pricing uses a standard Jisc banding approach.

Libraries should note the following:

- The costs are exclusive of VAT
- They are annual costs and the first payment will cover the period 01/08/2021 – 31/07/2022
- Libraries will subscribe to the agreement using the Jisc License Subscription Manager
- Acceptance of the conditions on Jisc License Subscription Manager will indicate acceptance of OCLC terms and conditions of service
- Invoices will be issued by OCLC
- Jisc and OCLC will enter into a contractual agreement that will seek to maximise the chances of this agreement being successful and sustainable.

UK National Libraries

Separate discussions have been conducted with National Libraries in the UK to set an appropriate charging level given the size of their collections and their likely metadata requirements in relation to other libraries in their band.

Non-Jisc Member Charges

Organisations that do not pay an annual core Jisc subscription but wish to take advantage of this Agreement will need to have Jisc affiliate member status. This incurs an annual fee and is a separate transaction to this subscription process.

To check whether your organisation is listed, please consult the [Jisc Licence Subscription Manager.](#)

Please note that only non-Jisc member libraries that are NBK contributors are eligible to subscribe to the Agreement. For more information, or to get advice about applying for affiliate membership, or for any query related to the Agreement, please contact the Jisc Library Hub team.

Contact – nbk@jisc.ac.uk

Viability of the Agreement

As noted at the beginning of this document, this agreement breaks new ground and will redefine the three-way relationship between UK academic & specialist libraries, Jisc, and OCLC. In particular, it allows for the more liberal use and sharing of data that originates from WorldCat.

At the time of launching the Agreement, the likelihood of this new approach being successful is unknown. It will entirely depend on the perceptions that libraries have about the value proposition of OCLC services, their interest in the opportunities that have been discussed, and their appetite for collegial and cooperative working. As well as their willingness or ability to pay.

If it becomes apparent that there is insufficient buy-in for the Agreement, then the following outcomes are likely.

- Jisc and OCLC would not enter into further phases of an agreement and would terminate the partnership using pre-agreed contractual mechanisms
- A new basis for the provision of OCLC services to UK academic libraries would need to be negotiated
- All WorldCat originating data would return to the status of being suppressed in the Jisc Library Hub Cataloguing service
- Synchronisation of data to WorldCat via the NBK would cease

OCLC and Jisc have discussed at length what level of revenue would allow this Agreement and this partnership to be sustainable through and beyond the first transitional phase. We are committed to working together creatively and flexibly to make it a success.

Appendix 1

Aims and Objectives of Plan M

Aim

To implement a more efficient bibliographic metadata supply model for UK academic & specialist libraries using the Jisc NBK/Library Hub as core infrastructure

Objectives

1. To establish a fair and sustainable 'pay to share' bibliographic data ecosystem for UK academic and specialist libraries who are Jisc members and/or NBK contributors

2. To design a data supply chain that delivers 'fit-for-purpose' records as early as possible in the creation cycle.

3. To streamline workflows for libraries and suppliers to reduce duplication of effort across the community

4. To ensure that all records are available to all Jisc members and/or NBK contributors at the point of need with permissive licensing for sharing and re-use

5. To provide an infrastructure that allows institutions to easily acquire and then re-share enhanced records

Jisc

Appendix 2

Negotiation Principles for Jisc/OCLC National Metadata Agreement

On behalf of the UK HE academic library sector and other libraries that contribute data to the NBK, Jisc is seeking to establish agreement with OCLC around the following principles:

1. The current charging framework for WorldCat Participation and Cataloguing must provide cost transparency for services delivered and fees that are equitable and based on an agreed cost allocation mechanism.

2. The agreement must provide clarity on the nature of the services covered and the allocation of payments within a subscription fee for those services.

3. The agreement must recognise the financial pressures on institutions and the need to curtail costs and demonstrate value for money.

4. The longer-term sustainability of the agreement must be based around subscriptions from participating institutions and should not be dependent on additional funding from any third party nor make individual institutional fees dependent on the participation of their peers.

5. Libraries that value the service being offered will pay for it. Those that don't value the service will not use it.

6. New thinking and new strategies are required from service providers to effect change on a national scale. The pandemic has demonstrated the resolve of the sector and its desire to abandon legacy approaches that are no longer fit for purpose.