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Introduction

The SCONUL Access scheme is a reciprocal agreement benefitting thousands of students and researchers each year by providing access to space and resources in libraries across the UK and Ireland. The participating institutions represent the diversity of the SCONUL membership, each operating in a unique way. This Handbook provides both the definite requirements for institutional participation and technical instruction for the website, as well as guidance which recognises that local practice will vary. The Handbook is reviewed periodically by the SCONUL office to ensure it reflects current practice and policy.

About the scheme

SCONUL has run a large, national access scheme for academic libraries in the UK and Ireland for many years. Over 60,000 students and staff in institutions around the British Isles use the scheme annually to access space and resources to support their research, teaching and learning. The scheme is run on the principle of reciprocity and relies on a strong commitment from library staff at participating institutions.

Institutions choose which bands of users they are willing to accept as visitors. This also indicates which of their users will be able to visit other institutions. Universities can join as many bands as they wish. The bands are defined as:

Band A: staff (both academic and support staff) and research students

Band B: part time, distance learning and placement students

Band C: full time taught postgraduates

Band R: reference access to full-time undergraduates and some other users not covered by the banding agreement.

Definitions for the different groups of users are below, though we recognise that there can be exceptions and grey areas. Please refer to the membership criteria or speak with the SCONUL office if you are not sure. Groups of users are defined as:

Staff are both academic and support staff employed by the University on open or fixed term contracts.

Research students are postgraduate students registered for a PhD, MPhil or similar qualification usually awarded purely by research, though may include some element of teaching as well.

Part-time students are undergraduate and post-graduate students registered on a course or research programme running for a minimum of one year and leading to a university award.

Distance learning students are undergraduate and post-graduate students registered on a course or research programme intended to be completed remotely and running for a minimum of one year, leading to a university award.

Placement students are temporarily removed from their regular campus for a placement of six weeks or more and on a course running for a minimum of one year, leading to a higher education award.

Post-graduate students are registered for a full-time, taught course offering awards at Masters and Certificate level.

Full-time undergraduates are registered for a full-time, taught course running for a minimum of one year, leading to a university award.

Privacy and data

SCONUL has a privacy policy on the Access website that outlines the data collected and held on each student and our retention schedule: https://access.sconul.ac.uk/privacy-policy . Our full privacy notice for all SCONUL services is available here: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/privacy-policy.

Satellite campuses

A number of our members have satellite campuses, largely in London. In order to ensure fairness in terms of student movement, any satellite library will be treated as a main member library and must have adequate study space and collections for other students to be able to access them. If these facilities are not in place, the students from the satellite campus are not eligible for the scheme.

Responsibilities for institutions

The scheme is governed by the Deputy Director, working with the Executive Board, and supported centrally by the SCONUL office, but it is the work of staff in member institutions that makes the scheme a success at a local level.

The core responsibilities for SCONUL directors, SCONUL Access Contacts, and systems staff are listed below.

SCONUL Directors

Directors should:

- Be committed to the smooth working of the scheme and ensure that their institution's participation meets the membership criteria.
- Determine the desired level of participation (i.e. choose which bands to join)
- Designate a named SCONUL Access Contact and inform the SCONUL office.
- Provide your SCONUL Access Contact with appropriate resources for training staff involved with the scheme.
- Ensure that the requirements for registration and statistics collection under SCONUL Access are carried out by systems and frontline staff.
- Ensure debts of SCONUL Access users are paid and, where appropriate, discipline users from your institution who are in default under the SCONUL Access scheme.
- Give one academic term's notice if resigning from the scheme or changing the level of participation.

SCONUL Access Contact

SCONUL Access contacts should:

- Ensure their contact details are registered on the institution's SCONUL Access page of the website
- Subscribe to the Access mailing list (sconulaccess-contacts@jiscmail.ac.uk).
- Provide induction and training to staff involved with the SCONUL Access scheme
- Liaise with systems and frontline staff about SCONUL Access procedures, including registration, entry and access entitlements.
- Ensure that library and institutional security staff recognise the entry and access entitlements of SCONUL Access users.
- Disseminate information about SCONUL Access to library staff, academic and support staff and users.
- Ensure that information about the scheme, including a link to the SCONUL website, is available on the institution's website.
- Provide the required SCONUL Access statistics to the person in your institution responsible for the main SCONUL Annual Statistics collection.

- Ensure that mechanisms exist to pay debts promptly if users are in default at a host library.
- Ensure that mechanisms exist to withdraw SCONUL Access membership of home users who are no longer eligible for the scheme.
- Ensure that there is a mechanism for recording bad behaviour of users, and supporting frontline staff by suspending or withdrawing local library privileges and reporting behaviour to user's home institution and SCONUL Access Contact.
- Promote good behaviour by encouraging home students to be positive ambassadors for their home institution and informing them of the consequences of bad behaviour.
- Develop local procedure for dealing with home students losing their good standing, either at the home or host library.

Systems Managers

Systems staff should:

- Ensure that the borrower records of SCONUL Access users can be encoded to differentiate between the different Bands of users for statistical reporting purposes.
- Ensure that the borrower records of SCONUL Access users can record the home institution of the user.
- Liaise with the SCONUL Access Contact to ensure accurate data entry is carried out by frontline staff.
- Liaise with the SCONUL Access Contact to ensure SCONUL Access statistics are collected and submitted as required.

Guidance for closures

Background

In the past libraries have posted restrictions to SCONUL Access students when:

- The library is closed for building work or other major projects.
- The staff are under pressure and concentrating services on their own users, so can't process Access users.
- There is not enough space to accommodate Access users.

Though SCONUL recognises that closures and restrictions are sometimes necessary, these restrictions can cause negativity among participating institutions by testing the boundaries of what is intended to be a reciprocal agreement. The membership criteria states that restrictions lasting longer than six continuous weeks should be discussed with the SCONUL Executive Director. To support our members, we have provided some advice on how restrictions can be minimised to maintain the ethos of reciprocity which underpins the scheme.

Recommended actions

- Try avoiding blanket bans for Access users. By taking the least restrictive action possible, your institution is demonstrating its commitment to the reciprocal nature of the scheme.
- Communication is essential, so please be clear in communicating your restriction by updating your library website and your SCONUL institutional page on our website, communicating with staff, and informing the SCONUL Access contacts email list.
- If, unfortunately, you find you are unable to participate in the scheme over a long period of time, please contact the SCONUL Deputy Director to discuss the possibility of your institution temporarily withdrawing from the scheme.

Good standing and the recovery of debts

Students admitted to the scheme should be in good standing with their home library. That is, they have no outstanding debts, no record of bad debts and no history of bad behaviour; they should also understand that they are an ambassador of their home libraries. We understand that with many libraries moving to automatic renewals that fines have become less of an issue than in previous years.

Behaviour jeopardising a user's good standing

The most common instance of offending behaviour is where a visitor has not paid fees for replacement books. Host libraries should follow their local procedures first of all to ensure payment. If the user does not co-operate, the home library should be contacted. Home and host libraries should work together to encourage the offending student to honour their obligations. Suggestions include:

- Blocking the student's home library account until the student has paid the fine or paid for the replacements.
- Contacting the academic department to inform the relevant tutor of the student's fines.

- Informing the student that if they do not co-operate, they could lose SCONUL Access privileges.

If the student does not respond, the home library must then cover the cost of replacements, which may include an admin charge. Home libraries are not expected to pay library fines to host institutions, should this arise.

Other bad behaviour may include behaving rudely or aggressively toward host library staff or amending the acceptance email or using credentials that do not belong to them. The host library should bring instances of such behaviour to the immediate attention of the home library or the SCONUL Deputy Director.

Banning users

Admission to libraries is always at the discretion of the host library, and a host may choose to ban a user, whether or not Access privileges have been completely withdrawn. For instance, if a student refuses to pay for lost books, the host library may revoke local library privileges. Where the home library is forced to accept financial responsibility for their students, they may decide that issues over fines and missing books are serious enough to result in the student losing their 'good standing', and thus being banned from the SCONUL Access scheme.

SCONUL Access users can lose their good standing and have their SCONUL Access privileges revoked if they behave in a rude or aggressive manner in a host library or attempt to enter a library with documentation that has been amended or credentials that belong to another person. The decision to withdraw privileges and ban a user from the scheme would lie with the home library, though it is anticipated that home libraries will take seriously and act appropriately when host institutions report bad behaviour.

A complete ban from SCONUL Access is suggested for a minimum of one year, but can be for the whole period of the registration (i.e. up to three years). The length of the ban is at the discretion of the home institution.

If institutions are unclear about actions to take with regards to bad behaviour, they should get in touch with the SCONUL Office to discuss.

SCONUL Access Complaints Policy

SCONUL has recently published an Access Scheme complaints policy, available on our website, which allows access users to make a formal or informal complaint if they feel they

have been unfairly treated, either by a host library, their own library or with the scheme itself. Complaints will be handled by the Deputy Director and every attempt will be made to resolve at a local level in the first instance. Users also have the right of appeal, which will be handled by a nominated SCONUL Executive Board co-chair.

Reasonable adjustments and visitors with additional needs

SCONUL does not mandate specific adjustments for users with additional needs, however all libraries must comply with the Equality Act 2010. It is the responsibility of individual institutions to interpret 'reasonable adjustments' relative to their context and make this information available on their institutional page on our website.

Procedures for frontline staff

Answering queries

Frontline staff are often the first to receive a query about eligibility or applications, whether via email, chat, on the phone or in person, so it's important that all new staff are made aware of the scheme during their induction period. They are able to make use of training materials and the FAQs on our website for basic queries: https://access.sconul.ac.uk/frequently-asked-questions . It is important that Access users are not turned away in error, as this can result in complaints. Most other queries, particularly around the application process, should be directed to the SCONUL Access Contact rather than the SCONUL office in the first instance. If a student does contact the SCONUL office, they will usually pass them on to their Access contact.

Processing applications on the website

1. Login to the SCONUL website and click on the 'Pending Applications' link under the 'Members' section of the menu. You will then see a list of pending applications. If you want to check approved or denied applications, click instead on the 'Completed Applications' link on the same menu.
2. Click on the 'edit' button next to an application to check the applicant's details against those in your Library Management System; note the expiry dates of the user's library access and check that they are of good standing. They should have no outstanding debts or record of bad debts and no history of bad behaviour.
3. Check to see if the application is a duplicate. If so, reject it and send a message to the user explaining that they need only apply for the scheme once.

4. Check that all of the application details are correct and determine whether the application should be approved or denied.
5. If denied, ensure that the name and email address is free from typing errors before changing the status to 'Denied' and clicking 'Submit'. A basic email will be generated which can be edited to give appropriate information as to why the application is being denied. You may choose to also archive denied submissions at this point.
6. If approved, ensure that the name and email address are free from typing errors and that the library user type is correct (as defined above).
7. Next add the Band and expiry date to the application form. The expiry date should be:
    - the duration of the user's library registration, or
    - the duration of the user's institutional ID card validity, or
    - the duration of the user's placement, or
    - three years (whichever is the shorter period).
8. Change the status to 'approve' and submit the form.
9. The automated approval e-mail can be edited if you need to add any local information. If you want to keep a copy of this email, fill in the bcc field with the appropriate email address.
10. Press submit.

Processing applications from visiting users

Nearly all incoming SCONUL Access users will be in possession of the email introducing them to host libraries, as well as their home institution ID or library card.

In most instances, frontline staff will be responsible for processing applications from visitors. Though the precise practice will vary between institutions, the general process is as follows:

1. Staff should check the user's SCONUL Access email introduction and home library/ID card to confirm the following details: (Please note that the home ID and the email are both necessary for the registration to proceed.)
    - The names on the email and the ID are the same.
    - The ID card and the expiry date are valid.
    - The band is valid within your library.
    - The user is eligible for the band their email states.

* If the student does not have a physical student ID cards with a photo, other forms of ID (including virtual IDs) are permissible in lieu of, as long as they include a photo and is brought alongside the student's Access Scheme approval email.

Acceptable photographic ID:

- Passport
- Driving licence
- National ID card
- Student card showing expiry date
- Staff card showing expiry date (i.e. NHS, University)
- Police / Customs / Home Office Warrant Card
- Forces ID card
- Photocard from another UK Legal Deposit Library (BL, National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, Bodleian Libraries, TCD)

2. Register the user on your library system ensuring that the user record notes:
    - The SCONUL Access Band into which the user falls (A, B, C or R)
    - The home institution of the SCONUL Access user (in case you need to recover any outstanding debts from their home institution library.)
    - The period of registration, which should coincide with the period of registration shown on their printed email. This will normally be for
        - the duration of the user's library registration, or
        - the duration of the user's institutional ID card validity, or
        - the duration of the user's placement, or
        - three years (whichever is the shorter period).

3. If you have any doubts about the validity of the email or need further proof of a user's eligibility, login to the SCONUL Access website and click on 'Institution Dashboard'
    - Enter the Library / Student ID into the search box at the bottom of the page and click 'Find'.
    - Check the details on the database against those on the user ID
    - Check the status to ensure that they are still eligible and not 'Denied'

- If everything is satisfactory, proceed with the application.
- If there are irregularities, inform the student that the application cannot be processed and refer them to their home library.
- In case of suspected fraud, pass their name and ID number to your SCONUL Access Contact. They will then inform the home library of the problem.

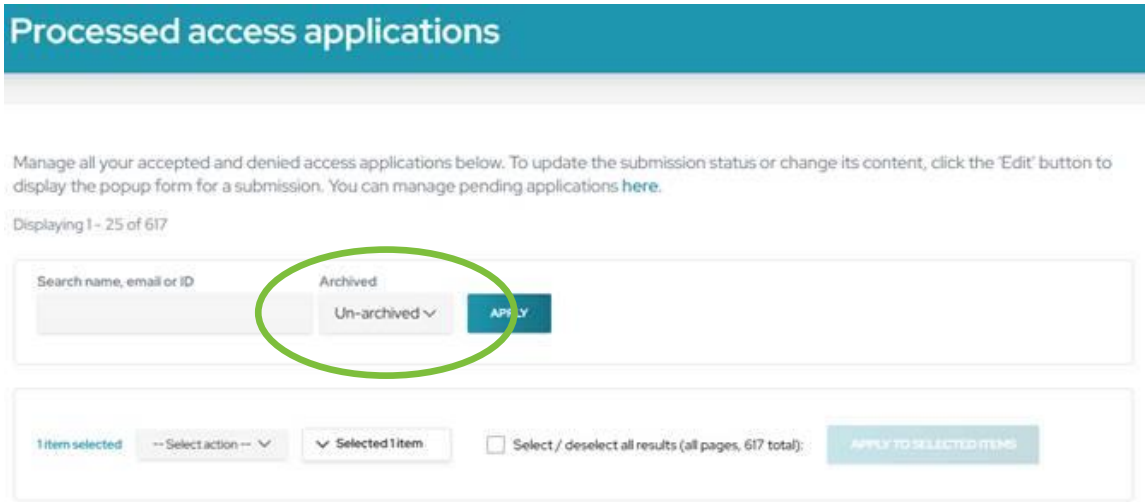
If this process needs to be carried out online, ahead of any visit, this information should be clearly visible on your institutional page on our website and also your own website. Access users should be advised of the time it will take to process applications.

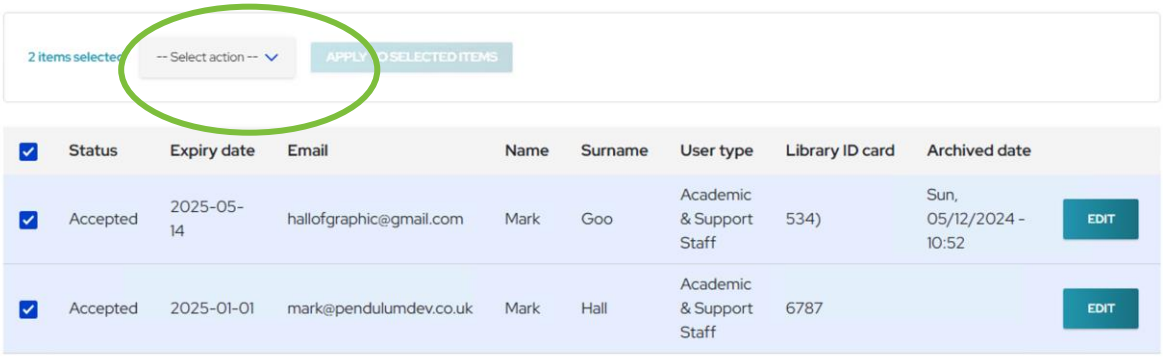
Archiving Applications

As records are held for up to 3 years, you will need to archive applications periodically remove expired or denied applications. This can be done by individual application or in bulk.

In order to undertake a bulk archive, you may wish to sort applications by expiry date or created date, which should allow you to find the applications more quickly. If you only want to archive one record, you can undertake a search by name, email or student ID number.

To archive the selected records, simply tick them on the left hand side and under 'select action', choose archive (you can also do the opposite and unarchive at any time).



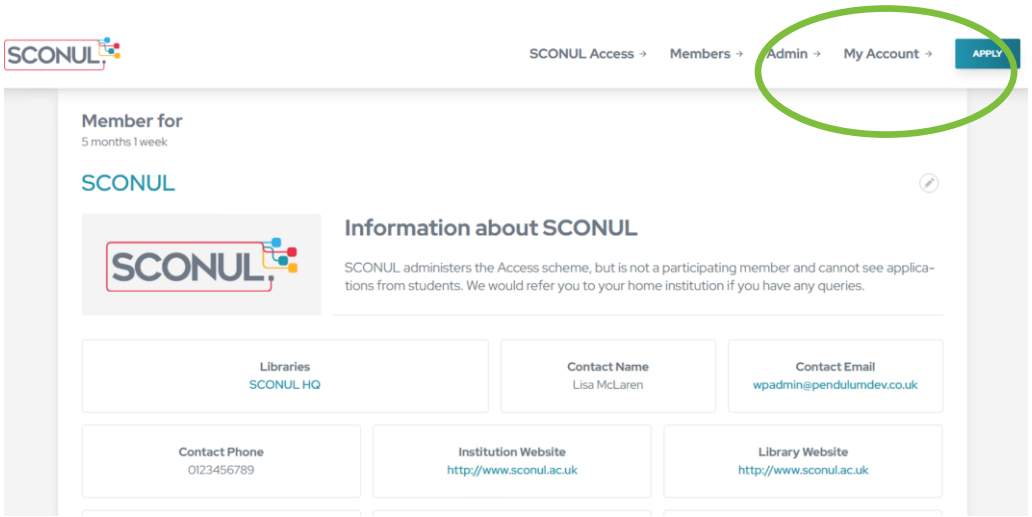


Updating information on the SCONUL website

Registering library staff

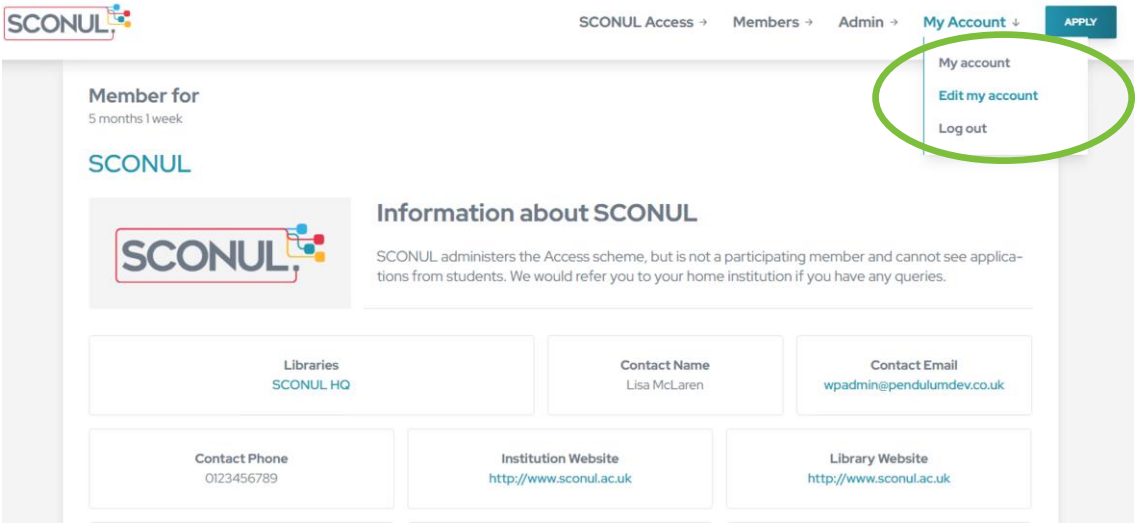
All library staff involved in approving or editing applications will need to have individual logins to the site. Please provide full names and email addresses of staff to sconul@sconul.ac.uk as well as whether you want them to have Institutional or Access Scheme access. The former allows editing rights over the library details and the former only allows access to applications. Institutions can have as many institutional admins as they want. The office is happy to set up new accounts for staff and they can also deactivate any staff who leave.

An automated email is sent to new staff with a username and temporary password. Once logged in, staff are directed to the welcome screen where they will see their profile information. Staff can return to this screen from any part of the site by clicking on the 'Account' menu.



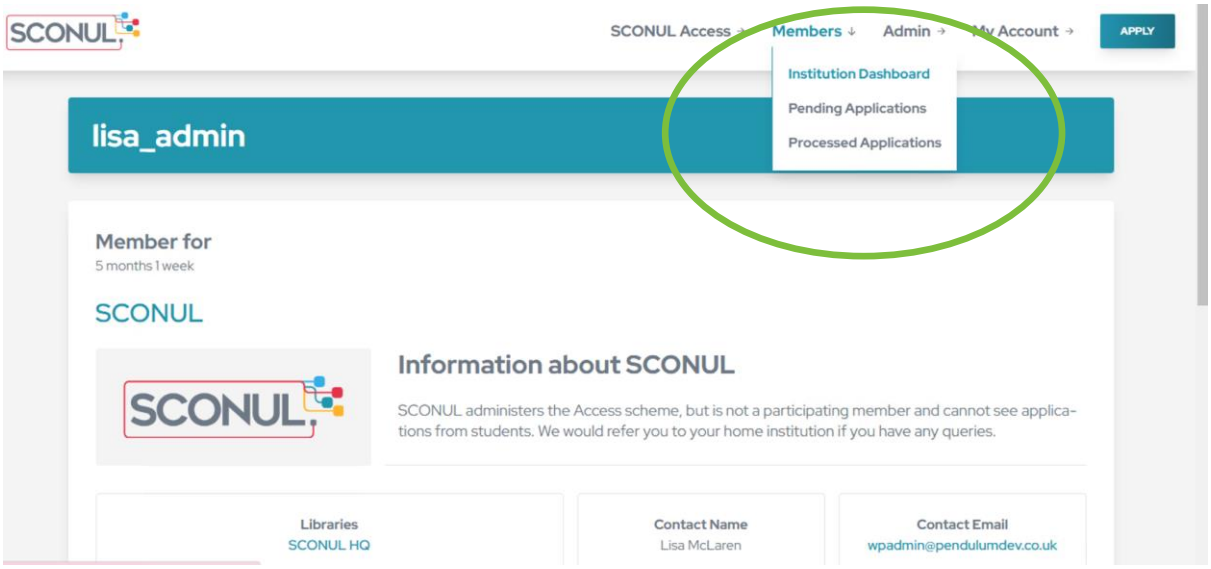
Updating your user account

1. Navigate to the SCONUL website at www.access.sconul.ac.uk Click on 'login' and enter your username and password. This will take you to your profile information.
2. Go to 'Account' and 'edit account' to change your password, email address or username.
3. Remember to press 'save' at the bottom of the screen to update the database.

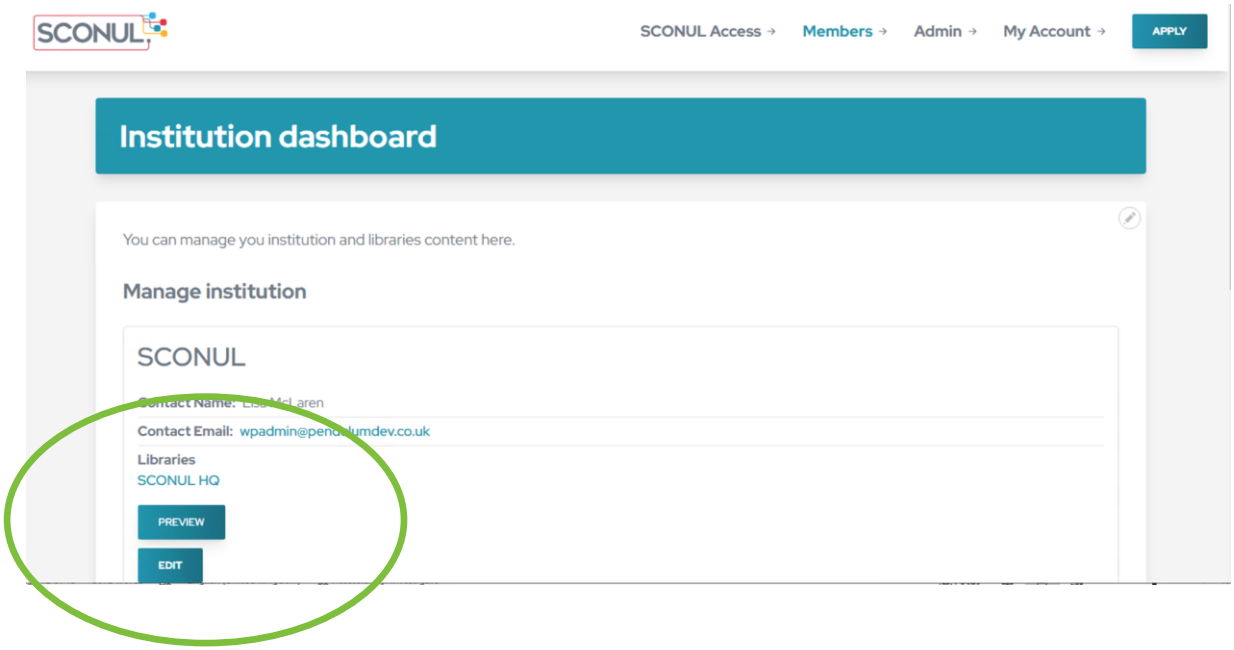


Updating your institution profile

The SCONUL Access Contact is responsible for maintaining the local details related to the scheme on the Institution record. You can update this information by clicking on 'Members' and 'Institution Dashboard' from the top menu. You must have Institutional Admin rights applied in order to do this.



1. You can then create or edit a webpage that outlines your institution's facilities and procedures for access. Click on 'Manage Institution' and 'edit' and you can add these details under 'description'. We ask that you follow our template when creating the page:
   - Facilities offered in a bullet list.
   - Opening hours for your library, noting any difference for SCONUL users, if applicable.
   - Information on how to access your library for the first time, including details of obtaining a card and accessibility guidance.
   - Any other information you think might be relevant for Access users.
2. You can also update contact details, web addresses associated with the institution and library and the bands you accept. You will also be able to edit individual libraries for services with multiple libraries.
3. To make any changes to your record, simply edit the relevant box and press 'save' to update the database.
4. The library record is an abbreviated version of the Institution record and contains information that the users see when they search for a library. The search results can be displayed as a map, so it is important that contacts update the postcode field.



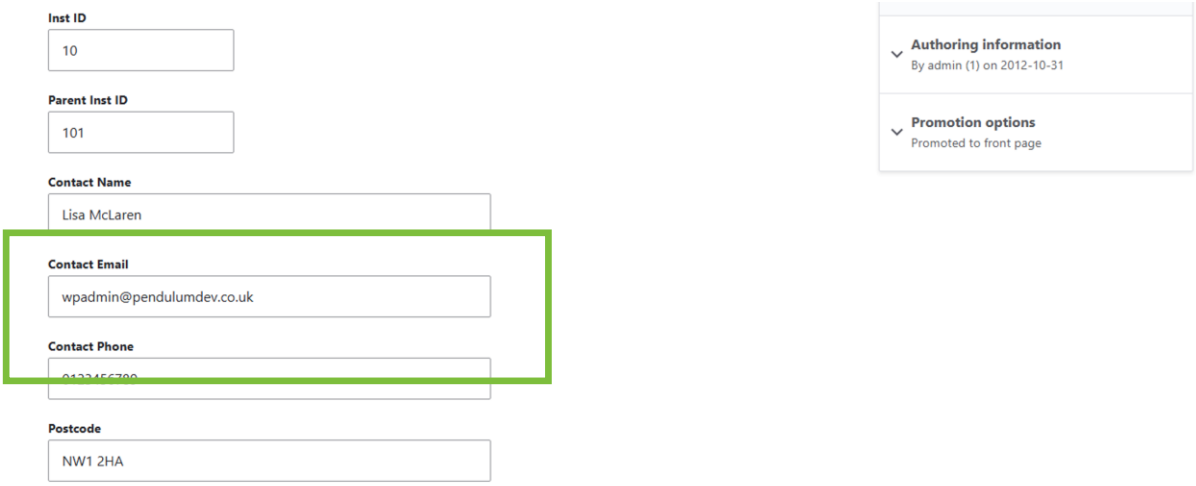
Accessing application alerts and other system emails

The SCONUL Access website provides alerts when applications are submitted and when users send a query to a library. System alerts and user queries are sent to the email address registered on the website as the official SCONUL Access contact. These details can be found in the Institution record (see above).

Member libraries can choose to direct all communication from the website to the designated SCONUL Access contact, or to a group email address that many people in their institution are able to access.

The details of this email address must be entered on both the institution and library record.

1. Go to 'Manage your institution' and click edit.
2. Edit the '*Contact email*' field to be the email address where you would like alerts to be sent.
3. Don't forget to scroll to the bottom of the screen and click 'Save'.
4. Next, go to the 'Manage your library', just below institution, and repeat steps 2 and 3.



The mailing list

The closed access Jiscmail list provides an invaluable tool for dissemination of standard information, discussing relevant issues and sharing information on topics of mutual interest. The email address is sconulaccess-contacts@jiscmail.ac.uk. The archives of the list can be searched by logging into your Jiscmail account here: http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/.

We have introduced standard subject headings for common topics. Please use the standard headings below to facilitate searching of the list archives.

- No longer entitled to access.
- Incorrect band issued.
- Defaulting user.
- Reinstated user.
- Restrictions to access (e.g. closure for refurbishment).
- Data missing from SA user record.

Queries

If you have any queries about the day-to-day running of the scheme please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.