

Plus Steering Group. We are represented on Working/Steering groups for both schemes.

#### **ARCHIVE SERVICES**

ISLS continues to add new accessions to the archive and to receive a growing number of reader visits and research enquiries. A preservation management consultant has advised us on suggested improvements to the archive storage areas and these are being implemented where possible. Recently we purchased an automated management system, CALM2000 Plus for Archives, to improve access to the contents of the archives.

The archivist has continued in her role as deputy director of the AIM25 Project, funded by the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) to provide networked access to descriptions of archives of more than 50 higher education institutions, royal colleges and learned societies in London. The database can be searched from the project's web site at [www.aim25.ac.uk](http://www.aim25.ac.uk). University of Westminster data will be added later in 2001.

We have embarked on a records management pilot project from September 2001 under the direction of the archivist and a project steering group. The proposal to investigate the management of student records within the devolved structure was supported by the Trustees and a records manager, Charlotte Brunskill, has been appointed for two years. One campus and the central departments will be reviewed during the project and it is expected that issues such as legislative requirements, records storage, long-term preservation of digital records and retention schedules will all be explored.

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## **News from JISC (the UK higher education funding bodies' Joint Information Systems Committee)**

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The Resource Discovery Network (RDN) has launched a new service called RDN-include. This allows ResourceFinder, the RDN search engine, to be added free of charge to higher and further education institutions' websites.

The great value of this new service is that students and staff can now use the RDN search facilities and discover high-quality web resources while remaining within the familiar look-and-feel of their university or college's website. It also means that users can now access the resources provided by their own institution alongside those that are nationally-provided, such as the RDN's, adding value to both sets of resources.

Over the last few years the RDN has built up a strong reputation within further and higher education through the quality of its work in discovering, cataloguing and making available high-quality web resources for the benefit of learning and teaching. We currently give access to around 35,000 web resources all of which are hand-picked by subject specialists, quality-assured and freely available to all within further and higher education in the UK. Both research and the experience of many suggest that this service is needed more than ever as students and staff become more and more familiar with information technology and the internet and its uses to support their work.

RDN-include is important because it will bring the RDN and its services to educational institutions themselves, enabling users to access quality-assured resources within a familiar web environment. For example Manchester Metropolitan University currently use RDN-include on their institutional website and their staff and students have

found it of great benefit in accessing high-quality web resources.

Further details are available from:  
<http://www.rdn.ac.uk/rdn-i/>  
or contact [rdn-support@rdn.ac.uk](mailto:rdn-support@rdn.ac.uk)

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## New dimension to Oxford reference works

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Finding answers to tricky questions in Oxford's famous reference works will soon take just seconds. In March 2002 Oxford University Press will publish its core language and subject reference dictionaries online for the first time. A two-year collaborative project between OUP Oxford and OUP New York will make 100 titles available as a subscription service to academic, corporate, and specialist libraries, schools, colleges, universities, businesses, and government offices around the world - from San Francisco to Sydney.

The service, Oxford Reference Online: the Core Collection, comprises well over one million dictionary definitions, facts, figures, people, places, sayings, and dates from a hundred of Oxford's central English and bilingual dictionaries, usage, quotation, and subject reference books all combined to create one integrated knowledge resource.

A key benefit of the service will be regular updating from Oxford's extensive programme of new references and regular new editions of works on core subjects. With around 30 new and revised works due between now and 2004 on subjects such as statistics, tourism, sport, archaeology, and business, expanding a reference collection and keeping it up to date will be quicker and simpler than ever before. It will also be more reliable. With so much unchecked information on the internet, the fact that every Oxford reference work is written by experts and extensively checked for quality before publication, will be an additional reason to 'Ask Oxford'.

The initiative to put Oxford's reference texts online has already meant the digitisation of tens of millions of words, and the complex and extensive restructuring and tagging of texts. From 'Aale-nian' in the *Dictionary of earth sciences* to 'ZZ Ceti star' in the *Dictionary of astronomy*, material equivalent to over 60,000 book pages is being turned into more than 500Mb of data.

Director of the project, David Swarbrick, says: 'ORO is the perfect complement to the Oxford