



The
Geological
Society

-serving science & profession

Acronym / Organisation Guide

A guide to the tangled web woven by acronyms in the fields of Earth science, computing, the education industry, and government.

Visit the Education and Careers section of the website to [view a list of University Departments](#) of geoscience in the UK and Ireland.

Links to geological surveys websites throughout the world are maintained by [Universitat Mainz / ETH Zurich](#) and [Geological Survey of Japan](#), along with a comprehensive [listing of geoscience societies](#) worldwide.

If you need to contact a Geoscience Organisation in another country, see the [Directory of Geoscience Organisations of the World](#). The directory is good reference material and includes major governmental and quasi-governmental organisations throughout the world.

A

AAAS – [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#) (see BA). AAAS still uses the full acronym, since to shorten it (as BAAS has done in the UK) would cause confusion with Alcoholics Anonymous.

AAG – [Association of Applied Geochemists](#)

AAPG – [American Association of Petroleum Geologists](#)

ABHPC – Advisory Body on High Performance Computing

ACN – [Advisory Committee on Networking](#), a sub-committee of JISC.

AEG – [Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists](#)

AEGS – [Association of European Geological Societies](#)

AFRC – Agricultural & Food Research Council - Now the BBSRC, q.v.

AGI – [American Geological Institute](#)

AGI – [Association for Geographic Information](#)

AGU – [American Geophysical Union](#)

AOCG – Advisory Committee on Computer Graphics, based at Loughborough

University.

AHDS – [Arts and Humanities Data Service](#). The Executive for this distributed service is sited at King's College London, which was selected in June 1995 as a result of the call for proposals in JISC Circular 5/95, issued on 9 May 1995 (a JISC funded service).

AHUA – [Association of Heads of University Administration](#)

ALT – [Association for Learning Technology](#)

ASE – [Association for Science Education](#)

B

BBSRC – [Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council](#) (formerly AFRC).

BERR – [Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform](#)

BGS – [British Geological Survey](#)

BIDS – [Bath Information and Data Services](#) (a JISC funded service)

BIRON – Bibliographic Information Retrieval Online - ESRC Data Archive's online catalogue and topic index, based at the University of Essex.

BRGM – France's leading public institution involved in the Earth Science field for the sustainable management of natural resources and surface and subsurface risks, www.brgm.fr

British Science Association – advances the public understanding, accessibility and accountability of the sciences and engineering, www.britishscienceassociation.org

BUBL – [Bulletin Board for Libraries](#), run from Strathclyde University, hosted on the UKOLN computer at the University of Bath (a JISC funded service).

C

C&IT – Communications and Information Technology

CAI – Computer Assisted Instruction

CAL – Computer Assisted Learning

CASE – [Campaign for Science and Engineering](#)

CASTLE – Computer Assisted Teaching and Learning (still available but not updated)

since 2005)

CBA – Computer Based Assessment

CBL – Computer Based Learning

CBT – Computer Based Training

CCAA – Computer Aided Assessment

CCW – [Countryside Council for Wales](#)

CEBE – [Centre for Education in the Built Environment](#)

CHES – [Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences](#)

CEI – Committee for Electronic Information. Later the [JISC Integrated Information Environment Committee](#)

CERT – Computer Emergency Response Team (See UKCERT).

CHEAD – [Council for Higher Education in Art and Design](#). The principle forum for those involved in the strategic management of UK Art & Design in Higher Education. It comprises the most senior person with management responsibility for art and design in each of its member institutions.

CHEST – [Combined Higher Education Software Team](#) - negotiates deals for software and datasets for the higher education and research community, based at the Universities of Bath and De Montfort (an JISC funded service).

CHMS – Committee of Heads of University Medical Schools ("the CHUMS", informally)

CHUGD – [Committee of Heads of Geoscience Departments](#)

CIWEM – [Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management](#)

CLUES – Centre for Computer Based Learning in Land Use and Environmental Sciences

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

COSHEP – Committee of Scottish Higher Education Principals.

COUSNS – Committee Of UK Subject-based Network Services. COUSNS provides a forum for the subject-based network services funded by JISC to identify shared interests.

CPC – [Circum-Pacific Council](#) [for Energy and Mineral Resources]

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

CSE – [Centre for Science Education](#) (Sheffield Hallam University)

CTI – Computers in Teaching Initiative. CTI comprises 24 subject-based centres working to encourage the use of learning technologies in UK higher education. (Defunct)

CURL – Consortium of University and Research Libraries. Now RLUK Research Libraries UK, q.v.

CVCP – Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals. Defunct name for Universities UK (qv)

D

DCSF – [Department for Children, Schools and Families](#)

DECC – [Department of Energy and Climate Change](#)

DEFRA – [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#)

DENI – [Department for Education in Northern Ireland](#)

DfES – Department for Education and Skills. Superseded by DCSF, q.v.

DIAG – Datasets Inter Agency Group, made up of representatives from higher education and the Research Councils. (Defunct)

E

EA – [Environment Agency](#)

EAGE – [European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers](#)

EEA – [European Environment Agency](#)

EARN – European Academic and Research Network – See TERENA.

EDINA – [Edinburgh Data & Information Access](#). The Datacentre selected in June 1995 as a result of the call for proposals in JISC Circular 5/95, issued on 9 May 1995. This is based at Edinburgh University (a JISC funded service). eLib Electronic Libraries Programme, resulting from the Follett report (see JISC below).

EFG – [European Federation of Geologists](#) (FEG to francophones)

EGU – [European Geosciences Union](#). Formerly EGU – European Union of Geosciences

EI – [Energy Institute](#)

EN – English Nature. Now NE – Natural England, q.v.

EPSRC – [Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council](#) (formerly SERC, Science and Engineering Research Council).

ESA – [European Space Agency](#)

ESCALATE – [Education Subject Centre Advancing Learning and Teaching in Education](#)

ESRC – [Economic & Social Research Council](#)

ESEF(EW) – [Earth Science Education Forum for England and Wales](#)

ESEU – [Earth Science Education Unit](#) (Keele University)

ESTA – [Earth Science Teachers Association](#) (based in UK)

EUG – European Union of Geosciences. Now EGU – European Geosciences Union, q.v.

EuroCAIRN – [European Co-operation for Academic and Industrial Research Networking](#). (Project ran 1993-1996)

F

FDTL – [Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning](#) (a HEFCE programme)

FE – Further Education

FLAP – [Flexible Learning Approach to Physics](#) (a TLTP project). Site no longer current.

FOLLETT – Sir Brian Follett, former VC of Warwick University, chaired the review team that produced a report for the Joint Funding Councils on Libraries and IT in the higher education community (December 1993) which has come to be known as the [Follett Report](#).

FIGIT – Follett Implementation Group for Information Technology, a sub-committee of JISC. Their programme is called the Electronic Libraries Programme, eLib.

G

GA – [Geographical Association](#)

GA – [Geologists' Association](#)

GC – Generic Centre (part of the LTSN)

GDN – [Geography Discipline Network](#)

GEES – [Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences](#) (the Subject Centre's discipline remit)

Geoscience Australia - Provides geoscientific information and knowledge to the Australian Government and community, www.ga.gov.au

GF – [Ground Forum](#)

GIS – Geographical Information System

GNU – Geography for the New Undergraduate (an FDTL project)

GNVQ – [General National Vocational Qualification](#)

GPS – Global Positioning System

GSA – [Geological Society of America](#)

GSL – [The Geological Society \(of London\)](#)

GSI - [Geological Survey of Ireland](#)

GSI - [Geological Survey of Japan](#)

H

HE – Higher Education

HEA – [Higher Education Academy](#)

HEFCE – [Higher Education Funding Council for England](#)

HEFCW – [Higher Education Funding Council for Wales](#)

HEI – Higher Education Institution

HEQC – The Higher Education Quality Council. Now replaced by QAA, q.v.

HERDSA – [Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia](#)

HESDA – Higher Education Staff Development Agency. Now LFHE – Leadership for Higher Education, q.v.

HILP – Hertfordshire Integrated Learning Project (an FDTL project)

HTML – hypertext markup language

HPCG – High Performance Computing Group.

HTTP – hypertext transfer protocol

I

IAEA – [International Atomic Energy Agency](#)

IAEG – [International Association for Engineering Geology and the Environment](#)

IAG – [International Association of Geoanalysts](#)

IAH – [International Association of Hydrogeologists](#)

IAHS – [International Association of Hydrological Sciences](#) (or AIHS to the French)

IAVCEI – [International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior](#)

ICE – [Institution of Civil Engineers](#)

ICSU – [International Council for Science](#). Formerly International Council of Scientific Unions (name has changed but abbreviation has stayed the same)

IGC – [International Geological Congress](#)

IGCP – [International Geoscience Programme](#). Formerly International Geological Correlation Programme (name has changed but abbreviation has stayed the same)

IGEO – [International Geoscience Education Organisation](#)

IGME – [Greek Institute of Geology & Mineral Exploration](#)

IGME – [Institute of Geology & Mineral Exploration](#) (Spain)

IGY – International Geophysical Year

ILT – Institute for Learning and Teaching. Now part of the HEA, q.v.

IMAGE – [Interactive Mathematics and Geoscience Education](#) (an FDTL project)

IMMM – (I triple M) [Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining](#). Formerly IMM. Commonly referred to as IOM3, q.v.

INLT – [International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education](#)

INHIGEO – [International \[Commission on the\] History of Geological Sciences](#)

[INTUTE](#) – Formerly RDN – Research Discovery Network

IOB – [Institute of Biology](#)

IOM3 – [Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining](#). Sometimes referred to as the IMMM, q.v.

IOP – [Institute of Physics](#)

IP – Institute of Petroleum. Incorporated within the EI – Energy Institute, q.v.

IPA – [Indonesian Petroleum Association](#)

IPY – [International Polar Year](#)

ISSG – Information Strategies Steering Group, a sub-committee of JISC.

IUGG – [International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics](#)

IUGS – [International Union of Geological Sciences](#)

IYPE – [International Year of Planet Earth](#)

J

JANET – [Joint Academic Network](#)

JESEC – Joint Earth Science Education Committee - now defunct talking shop for organisations remotely connected with education

JESEI – [Joint Earth Science Education Initiative](#)

JIBS – [JISC Bibliographic Service User Group](#) (before 1996 was known as the BIDS User Group).

JISC – [Joint Information Systems Committee](#) of the Higher Education Funding Councils

JNCC – [Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#)

JNT – Joint Network Team - replaced by UKERNA.

JSPS – [Japan Society for the Promotion of Science](#) (gives grants for both students and staff not previously associated with Japan to do science research there). Contact your nearest Embassy of Japan or Consulate for more information. Both the Royal Society and the British Academy promote JSPS programmes.

K

L

Linnean Society - [The Linnean Society of London](#) is the world's oldest active biological society which promotes the study of all aspects of the biological sciences, with particular emphasis on evolution, taxonomy, biodiversity and sustainability.

LTS – [Learning and Teaching Scotland](#)

LTSN – Learning and Teaching Support Network. Now part of the [Higher Education Academy](#)

M

MAC – Management and Administrative Computing, a sub-committee of JISC. Central funding ended 31 March 1995. Mailbase The service, (formerly known as NISP, the Networked Information Services Project) based at Newcastle university, enables electronic mail based discussion lists for special interest groups (a JISC funded service).

MIDAS – Manchester Information Datasets and Associated Services

MIMAS – Manchester InforMation and Associated Services (a JISC funded service).

Miner Soc – [Mineralogical Society](#)

MRC – [Medical Research Council](#)

MSA – [Mineralogical Society of America](#)

N

NAGT – [National Association of Geoscience Teachers](#) (based in USA)

NaMS National Mirror Service, jointly hosted at the University of Lancaster and Kent

and funded by JISC to replace and extend the two HENSAs (Higher Education National Software Archives). This database of acronyms is pleased to acknowledge its debt to NaMS.

NCT – National Co-ordination Team (for FDTL and TLTP)

NERC – [Natural Environment Research Council](#)

NESTA – National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. It was set up by Act of Parliament in 1998.

NHM – [Natural History Museum](#) - formerly the British Museum (Natural History) or BM(NH)

NISS – National Information Services and Systems (for UK education and research) based at the University of Bath (a JISC funded service).

NTFS – National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS)
www.ilt.ac.uk/news/n20000414.html

NTSC – New Technologies Sub-Committee, a sub-committee of JISC. At the end of 1995 it was replaced by TASC.PPARC Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (formerly part of SERC, Science and Engineering Research Council). NTSC is also the US colour TV technology, jokingly referred to as "Never Twice the Same Colour"

O

OCSLD – [Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development](#)

OU – [Open University](#)

OUMNH – [Oxford University Museum of Natural History](#). The Museum houses the [Geology Collections](#) and [Mineralogy and Petrology Collections](#).

P

PAD – [Petroleum Affairs Division](#) (Republic of Ireland government department)

PADSHE – Personal & Academic Development for Students in Higher Education (an FDTL project) www.nottingham.ac.uk/padshe/

Pal Ass – [Palaeontological Association](#)

PBL – Problem Based Learning Q QAA Quality Assurance Agency (for Higher Education) www.qaa.ac.uk/

PESGB – [Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain](#)

PPARC – Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council. Now part of the [Science & Technology Facilities Council](#)

Q

QCA – [Qualifications and Curriculum Authority](#)

QRA – [Quaternary Research Association](#)

R

RAE – [Research Assessment Exercise](#)

RARE – Reseaux Associés pour la Recherche Européenne - See TERENA.

RAS – [Royal Astronomical Society](#)

RBL – Resource Based Learning

RDN – Resource Discovery Network. Now Intute, q.v.

RGS-IBG – [Royal Geographical Society \(with the Institute of British Geographers\)](#)

RIGS – Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites. See UKRIGS below for web reference.

Rotunda Museum - Part of the Scarborough Museums Trust, the [Rotunda Museum](#) (aka William Smith Museum of Geology) is the oldest purpose built geology museum.

RS (or RSL) – [Royal Society](#) (of London)

RSC – [Royal Society of Chemistry](#)

RSNC – Royal Society for Nature Conservation. Since 2004 the RSWT, q.v.

RSWT – [Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts](#)

S

SAPHE – Self Assessment in Professional and Higher Education (an FDTL project)

SBS – Save British Science Society. Now CASE, q.v.

SC – Subject Centre

SCL – Student Centred Learning

SCONUL – [Society of College National and University Libraries](#).
(formerly Standing Council on ...)

SCOP – Standing Conference of Principals, now [GuildHE](#)

SEDA – [Staff and Education Development Association](#)

SEED – [Science Education Enhancement and Development](#) (a University of Plymouth based FDTL project - Archived site)

SEG – [Society of Exploration Geophysicists](#)

SEPM – [SEPM \(Society for Sedimentary Geology\)](#) (formerly the Society of Economic Palaeontologists and Mineralogists. The name was changed but not the acronym).

SERC – Defunct - see PPARC

SESEF – [Scottish Earth Science Education Forum](#)

SFC – [Scottish Funding Council](#)

SHEFC – [Scottish Higher Education Funding Council](#)

SIMA – Support Initiative for Multimedia Initiatives, run by AGOCC and funded through the New Technologies Initiative.

SINC – Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. See also RIGS and UKRIGS

SOSIG – Social Science Information Gateway - see "Intute"

SPARC – [Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition](#)

SPAT – Student Progression and Transfer Project

SPE – [Society of Petroleum Engineers](#)

SRHE – [Society for Research into Higher Education](#)

SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest

STEMPRA – [Science, Technology Engineering and Medicine Public Relations Association](#)

StoMP – [Software Teaching of Modular Physics](#)

SWG – Standards Working Group, a sub-committee of JISC.

T

TALESSI – [Teaching and Learning at the Environment-Science-Society Interface](#) (an FDTL project)

TASC – Technology Applications Sub Committee, a sub-committee of JISC.

TAU – Technical Advisory Unit (for UKERNA).

TC – Technology Centre (part of the LTSN)

TecDis – [Technology for Disabilities Information Service](#)

TERENA – [Trans-European Research and Education Networking Association](#), created by the merger of RARE and EARN.TLTP Teaching and Learning Technology Programme, funded by the Funding Councils.

TLTP – Teaching and Learning Technology Programme

TQA – Teaching Quality Assessment. (The previous title for Subject Review, and which is now called Academic Review).

TRIADS – [Tripartite Assessment Delivery System](#) (an FDTL project)

U

UCAS – [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service](#) (formed by the merger of UCCA and PCAS, the admissions systems for "old" universities and the former polytechnics)

UCISA – [Universities and Colleges Information System Association](#).

UCoSDA – Universities' and Colleges' Staff Development Agency. An Agency of the Universities UK (formerly CVCP); a national membership body for universities and colleges. Based in Sheffield. (now HESDA)

UCSG – Universities and Colleges Software Group, a sub group of UCISA.

UCTLIG – Universities and Colleges Teaching, Learning and Information Group, a sub group of UCISA (qv).

UKERNA – United Kingdom Educational and Research Network Association (formerly the JNT, Joint Network Team). Now JANET, q.v.

UKESCC – [UK Earth Science Courseware Consortium](#) (an ex-TLTP project)

UKOOA – [United Kingdom Offshore Operators Association](#)

UKRIGS – [Association of UK RIGS](#) [Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites] groups

UNESCO – [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation](#)

UUK – [Universities UK](#), formerly CVCP

UKOLN – The United Kingdom Office for Library and Information Networking, based at the University of Bath (funded jointly by JISC and the British Library).

URL – Uniform Resource Locator (i.e. Web-site address)

USGS - [United States Geological Survey](#)

V

VLE – Virtual Learning Environment
W3C World Wide Web Consortium: a global industry consortium run jointly by the Laboratory for Computer Science at the Massachusetts Institute of technology and INRIA in France. It exists to develop common standards for the evolution of the World Wide Web. JISC have joined W3C.

W/X/Y/Z

WIM - [Women in Mining](#)

WWW – World Wide Web

YGS – [Yorkshire Geological Society](#)