

Connecting to SSC for University Budget Holders

This document summarises the steps needed to access SSC from off-site.

There are two main hurdles in accessing SSC. Firstly SSC only allows access from a limited number of what it considers to be secure sites - in the case of STFC these are the various STFC site networks including RAL and Daresbury. Secondly SSC password policy differs from that of STFC, expiring your password after 90 days (so just short of three months...).

This document consists of two main sections, the first dealing with making your web session to SSC appear to come from a 'secure site' and the second how to actually manage your SSC Oracle account and change your password.

In the first instance, we have only one officially sanctioned method of providing remote access to SSC, namely using a VPN to RAL. We accept that this is not ideal for everyone.

Details of what you can actually do once logged into SSC are beyond the scope of this document.

Finally, do not forget that SSC password policy is that your SSC password expires after 90 days.

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Connecting to SSC via VPN to RAL

This method involves establishing a VPN session to RAL (or Daresbury) and then routing the connection to SSC over this VPN.

In order to do this you require a Federal ID at RAL and to have this account enabled for VPN.

Managing your Federal ID password

The file http://www.stfc.ac.uk/PPD/resources/pdf/stfc_password.pdf gives advice on what is allowed for federal passwords (these rules are stricter than many sites) along with information on two web sites accessible from outside which allow you to manage your password. This document is primarily aimed at STFC staff, so ignore the advice to contact your local IT Service Desk team.

The first web site, <https://testpassword.stfc.ac.uk>, allows you to compose and test your password and the second, a QUEST server at <https://access.stfc.ac.uk>, allows you to change your password. These are both accessible without going via VPN (however at the time of writing the testpassword site only works with Internet Explorer – the intention is that this is fixed).

The QUEST server also provides a means of discovering your Federal ID should you forget – click the link ‘Forgot your user name?’ on the home page and then enter your forename and surname (you need to be as specific as possible as it only returns a single hit).

We recommend that you first test your password on the testpassword site where the reasons for failing a password are given, before setting it on the access site, where no explanatory error message is given. However there are dictionary tests that the latter performs which are not tested on the former so it is possible that a password acceptable on testpassword may subsequently be rejected.

Configuring the VPN to RAL (or Daresbury)

Instructions for configuring the VPN and web proxy are given in the file <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/PPD/resources/pdf/offsiteaccess.pdf> (again this document is primarily aimed at STFC staff). By default you should configure the VPN to send all traffic via the tunnel (so that traffic to SSC goes via RAL) and the web proxy to use the RAL automatic configuration script (otherwise you will not be able to access any other external web pages when connected via the VPN tunnel). This however could preclude access to network printers and other network resources at your local site – this is certainly the case at CERN.

If you have reasons for not having the VPN as default route then you need to ensure that traffic to SSC, specifically the network 194.66.176.0/22, is sent via the tunnel. You will need to ask your local IT experts for advice on this.

Testing network access to SSC

Using whichever method of routing your web session to SSC you choose, attempt to access the page <https://portal.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/> – it should look similar to the following.

RCUK SSC Oracle Portal

04/11/2010 15:22

Welcome to the RCUK SSC Oracle Portal



Applications

Oracle E-Business Suite

This is the link to the E-Business Suite Production Environment.

Oracle Grants

This link is not yet available.

Service Delivery KnowledgeBase

This is the link to KnowledgeBase: the reference site for policies, processes and e-learning guides.

<p>System Status - 08:00 GMT on 04 November 2010</p> <p>The system has undergone a major upgrade and there are still some known issues: please see below.</p> <p>Should you have problems accessing your Oracle account, please e-mail servicedesk@rcuk.ac.uk or call the ISS Service Desk on 01793 867006.</p>	<p>Scheduled Maintenance</p> <p>The SSC Oracle system is unavailable every second Tuesday from 18:00 - 24:00 (BST) for scheduled maintenance and upgrades.</p> <p>We hope that scheduling this outside the working hours of most Oracle users will inconvenience as few of you as possible.</p> <p>Please remember that our Contact Centre is available to answer your queries from 08:30 - 17:00 (BST) Monday - Friday. You can contact them on 01793 867000.</p>
<p>The SSC Oracle system has moved.</p> <p>You have successfully accessed the new SSC Oracle supported address. Please delete all SSC Oracle system bookmarks that you have previously saved and bookmark this URL. To access the system please click the link at the top of the page "Oracle E-Business Suite"</p> <p>Known Issues</p> <p>Please be aware that some users are experiencing blank pages when trying to sign onto Oracle. This may also be accompanied by a message saying "Page could not be displayed - HTTP 500". If this is the case please try to clear the cache within Internet Explorer by completing the following:</p> <p>Go to Tools > Internet Option > Delete browsing history. In here, select both "Delete Cookies" and "Delete Temporary Internet Files".</p> <p>Once complete, please close down all Internet Explorer windows before trying again.</p> <p>If you are still unable to access try again in approximately half an hour. We are investigating the matter and will endeavour to resolve the issues as soon as possible.</p> <p>Forms and Professional Interface users</p> <p>When you launch forms or the professional interface (java component of the application) for the first time, you will see two dialogue boxes where you must tick the checkbox and click OK. If you do this, you will not see the dialogue boxes again.</p>	<p>STFC, BBSRC and NERC employees - password expired or forgotten?</p> <p>Your password to access the Oracle systems will expire every 45 days. If you are experiencing an error message which reads "Authentication Failure" this is due to inputting your username or password wrong, or because your password has expired.</p> <p>If your password has expired or you experience issues logging into your Oracle account, please reset your password in the QUEST password management console using this link: https://letmein.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/QPM/User/Identification and selecting "Forgot My Password". Be ready to answer the security questions you provided when you first set your password for Oracle.</p> <p>Should you still have problems accessing your Oracle account, please e-mail servicedesk@rcuk.ac.uk or call the ISS Service Desk on 01793 867006.</p>

Managing your SSC Oracle account

Acquiring your SSC Oracle account details

Acquiring an SSC Oracle account in the first instance requires a number of exchanges between STFC and SSC and is well beyond the scope of this document. Therefore you should first contact Jane Bruffell in PPD, phone 01235 445342, email Jane.Bruffell@stfc.ac.uk, to initiate the process. SSC should notify you once your account has been set up – please let Jane know when you reach this point.

Managing your SSC password

Like STFC, SSC use QUEST to allow remote password management with a server, unfortunately only accessible via VPN, at <https://letmein.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/QPM/user>. A one-page guide from SSC is available at http://www.stfc.ac.uk/PPD/resources/PDF/Quest_Password_Manager.pdf.

We strongly advise you to register on this service and set up the list of questions (and keep a record of your answers, including case) as this will greatly simplify resetting your password if you forget to change it at least every 90 days.

In addition to resetting your password the server also provides a means of discovering your SSC Oracle user name – click the link 'Forgot your user name?' on the home page and then enter your forename and surname (you need to be reasonably specific as it only returns a maximum of 5 hits).

Finally do not attempt to change your password within the SSC Oracle system itself – it does not work and will almost certainly cause you problems!

Registering on the SSC QUEST server

To change your password you will need to register with, and then use, the SSC Remote Password Service as follows.

Using whichever method of routing your web session to SSC you choose, access the page <https://letmein.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/QPM/user>

Find your account by entering your SSC username (i.e. **STFCnnnn**) into the text field marked *User Name* (do not add **@ph.rc** to the end of your username).

Select *My Questions and Answers Profile*. You should then be prompted to enter your current SSC password. Click on *Next* after entering your password.

You will be prompted to answer seven questions from a choice of twelve (these questions and answer pairs will be used in future by the password service to ensure that you are who you say you are). After choosing the first question, enter the answer twice taking note of case and then select the next question (see http://www.stfc.ac.uk/PPD/resources/PDF/Quest_Password_Manager.pdf for details). When you have answered all seven questions, click “Finish” at which point you will be registered to use the SSC Remote Password Service.

Changing your SSC password

At least every 90 days (so say bimonthly) access <https://letmein.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/QPM/user>

Find your account by entering your SSC username (i.e. **STFCnnnn**) into the text field marked *User Name* (do not add **@ph.rc** to the end of your username).

Select what you want to do. Registered users will see the following relevant options:

- “Forgot My Password” – To set a new password if you’ve forgotten it
- “Manage My Passwords” – To change a password you know
- “My Question and Answers Profile” – To update your questions/answers

Should you forget your password and not manage to reset it with the QUEST server you can phone the SSC Helpdesk on 01793 867006 (be warned they will probably issue you with a password of very limited validity, perhaps only 30 minutes). You should therefore make sure that you register on the SSC QUEST server and set a new password promptly so that you do not have to call them again!

Test that you can login to SSC

Using whichever method of routing your web session to SSC you choose, access the page <https://portal.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/>.

Click on the link *Oracle E-Business Suite* at the top and it should take you to the actual login page.

Type your SSC Oracle username in the form **STFCnnnn@ph.rc** and your current SSC Oracle password into the appropriate boxes.

Hopefully this will let you in and the SSC home page should appear.

Assuming it does you should see a list of your allowed 'responsibilities' in the bottom left-hand corner. For project spend enquiries and project authorisations these should include *STFC PA Project Enquiry (SS)* and *STFC PA Project Manager (SS)* respectively.

If you get this far you deserve a break so logout using the logout button to the right at the top of the page.