Reading List Policy

1: Introduction

Clarity on the availability and accessibility of learning resources supporting their students in their studies is important, particularly within an increasingly complex information environment. While there are many factors which contribute to providing appropriate access to learning resources, reading lists are often the starting point for students so it is imperative that library and academic colleagues work together to get this right.

2: Purpose and scope of this policy

This document sets out the University's policy on reading lists and articulates the roles and responsibilities of Library Services and the course convenors/list creators.

3: Aims

Library Services uses the reading list management system *Talis Aspire* to:

- Enable academics to quickly and easily create and edit online reading lists.
- Ensure students have ready access to essential reading materials and are aware of further reading which may be required.
- Ensure that purchasing and provision of resources is cost-effective and that resources are available in the right format, at the right time and in sufficient numbers to meet the learning and teaching objectives of the course of study.
- Maximise the value of electronic and print resources purchased by the Library.
- Ensure a positive experience for students by helping them be aware that the University provides the resources necessary for the successful completion of their studies.
- Making library resource acquisition workflows more efficient.

Reading lists are most helpful to students if they are:

- Realistic: so that resources are available in digital form where possible and appropriate or, for physical resources, that they are in stock, with sufficient copies and appropriate loan periods.
- Accurate: so that students can find the correct resource, including correct editions.
- Annotated with levels of importance: so that students understand what is expected of them and the library understands what it needs to provide.
- Clearly laid out: so that students can distinguish the different types of resource on the list.
- Updated regularly: so that students are working with the latest information. From the academic side, the optimum interval for a full review will vary between disciplines. From the Library side, lists need to be checked for the availability of new/electronic editions and that weblinks continue to be valid. It is therefore

important that academic colleagues confirm the list by using the 'review' option to forward lists to the Library each year, even if they are not changing their content. New items, either in stock or for purchase, can be added to lists at any time. Updates to lists will be picked up automatically.

- Provided to the Library in good time: to ensure the Library can acquire the required resources.

4: Purchasing guidelines, terminology and parameters

In order to ensure that students have ready access to books on their reading lists and for Library Services to make informed decisions about how many copies to purchase, information is needed on how many students are taking each module and how important the resources are for those taking the module. Wherever possible (subject to available funds), Library Services acquisition of reading list books will be based on the parameters specified in the table in Appendix A.

When ordering reading list books for the Library, academic colleagues should indicate whether the books are for **core, essential, recommended** or **further reading** as this will enable us to apply purchasing formula outlined in the table in Appendix A. Reading list revisions submitted without one of the categories outlined will be returned to the requester for further clarification and will therefore be subject to delay. To mitigate this, Academic Liaison Librarians will, to prevent detriment to the student experience, use their professional judgement and knowledge of the modules/programme to move the process along. The default position (in the case of no additional information coming from the module team) is to treat all items on the list as **recommended**.

5: Expectations

The Library will:

- Purchase online content where available, as this offers a high level of accessibility to resources for students. The Library acknowledges that 'accessibility' means different things to different people, and we are always happy to discuss the specific needs of individuals in consultation with the Student Wellbeing department.
- Actively source and purchase new editions of core titles on reading lists, depending on subject requirements, unless specifically requested by the addition of a note, or as set out in criteria agreed with your Academic Liaison Librarian.
- Endeavour to purchase out of print or overseas material, but this will be dependent on cost and availability, can take longer to obtain and potentially may not be available, or available in sufficient quantities. Alternative recommendations may be required or core chapters of a text or a journal article may be digitised, subject to current copyright legislation and licencing requirements.
- Monitor usage and purchase extra copies as required.

- Consult with academic colleagues through the Academic Liaison Librarians to ascertain if adjustments to these parameters are more appropriate for particular disciplines (including appropriateness to available funding).
- Ascertain the number of students expected on a module through the VLE or SITS.

Module convenors/list creators in Colleges will:

- Familiarise themselves with the reading list management system and refer to training and guidance material.
- Submit and update reading lists in sufficient time for student needs. Academic colleagues should allow at least 6-8 weeks for the supply and processing of print items and at least 2 weeks for ebooks and digitised chapters. The purchase of new databases and journal subscriptions will require longer lead times in consultation with the relevant Academic Liaison Librarian.
- Review and refresh reading lists frequently.
- Add lists to the module hierarchy, to ensure the list can be found by students.
- Assign importance to each reading list item i.e. Essential, Recommended or Further so library staff can purchase copies to the agreed formula.
- Include (and date) any relevant notes to Library staff.
- Include as much detail as possible – editions (where relevant) for books, author/title/specific chapter or pages for digitised sections.
- Send the reading list for review so that library staff are notified that the list is ready for checking/purchasing.
- Send for re-review lists which have been edited, to let library staff know you have added more items to the reading list for checking/purchasing.
- Indicate to the Library if a module does not require a reading list.
- Consult generally with their Academic Liaison Librarian.

6: Monitoring, review and development of the policy

Reading list metrics and qualitative feedback will be reported to Colleges and their departments formally through CMBs, but may also be fed through other reporting channels as deemed appropriate (BoS, DMB etc.). CMBs will receive data on the level of engagement for each department and for the College as a whole, and are asked to encourage, facilitate and support engagement with the reading list management system as the primary means of supplying module reading lists to students and associated purchase requests to Library Services.

The effectiveness of the Reading List Policy itself will be monitored and evaluated every two years, taking into account usage statistics or resources and student/staff feedback.

7: Acknowledgements

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Appendix A – Library Services' Book Procurement Guidelines for Reading Lists by Type

Reading list terminology for the purpose of Library purchase	Maximum length of reading list (for Library purchase)	Standard Library purchasing formula
Core reading *A textbook or textbooks which students are required to purchase and use extensively throughout the course.* **Other key items should be designated 'essential'**	Generally, up to 3 per module. Certain types of programme, e.g. English Literature, may require additional titles in this category.	1 copy, print or e-book (multi user if available). Items in this category are either necessary purchases for students or are provided as etextbooks on the 1-2-1 model.
Essential reading *All students should read this text/these texts, or as specified in the module.*	**Up to 10 titles plus journal articles and digital/digitised articles etc., subject to CLA licence** **More than 10**: the relevant Academic Liaison Librarian will contact the academic to discuss this further. Decisions will also be made by relevant Academic Liaison Librarians based on their professional judgement and knowledge of the needs of the module/programme.	**If e-book available**: 1 e-book per 25 students. If a multi-user ebook is available, this formula will be adjusted appropriately (applies to all sections). Where appropriate, the purchase of one or more print copies may additionally be considered. **If no e-book available**: 1 print copy per 10 students (max 40 copies) All sections can contain other materials such as digitised chapters (subject to CLA licence), journal articles, open access materials and other types of digital resources.

Reading list terminology for the purpose of Library purchase	Maximum length of reading list (for Library purchase)	Standard Library purchasing formula
		Where a text is used by several modules or programmes, or across several levels of study, this will be considered (usage data will be used to inform any decisions).
Recommended reading *Students should read this/these texts (in addition to any essential reading) in order to gain a better understanding of the subjects being studied, and specifically for a seminar or essay.*	**Up to 25 titles plus journal articles and digital/digitised articles etc., subject to CLA licence** **More than 25**: the relevant Academic Liaison Librarian will contact the academic to discuss this further. In some discipline areas this number may be revised upwards as a matter of course.	**e-book available:** 1 e-book (multi user if available). Where appropriate, the purchase of one or more print copies may additionally be considered. **No e-book available**: 1 print copy per 20 students (max 20 copies.
Further reading *Students should read these texts for a wider and deeper understanding.*	**No limit**	Single copy purchases will be made as funds allow. The purchase of ebooks will be prioritised, as per the 'digital first' policy.