

## Reading List Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with *Reading List Implementation Timetable*.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. In 2015 the University introduced a reading list management software (Talis Aspire) to improve the student experience and learning opportunities by providing lecturers with tools to create flexible, accessible and multimedia resource lists.
- 1.2. Lists created on [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) have had positive feedback from individual students and from student reps in course committees, particularly with regard to the clarity of the reading lists and the efficiency of accessing resources. There has also been positive feedback from academic staff who have found that creating an online reading list has been well-received by students, with fewer complaints about resources and the transparency of access ensuring that students take responsibility for their own reading and learning. See **Appendix B** for the benefits of using [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk).
- 1.3. In September 2017, with the agreement of the University Executive Board, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Student Experience) identified eight core actions to enhance the learning experience and satisfaction of students at University of Westminster. These actions include the **mandatory implementation** of the [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) online platform **for all taught modules where reading lists are appropriate by 2019** and all new modules/ courses submitted for validation (see the ***Reading List Implementation Timetable***).
- 1.4. This policy sets out the principles and good practice for the creation, maintenance and use of reading lists (that might also include videos, podcasts and other resources) and what is expected for academic staff, students and the Library. It also contains an annual timetable of events, actions and deadlines (see **Appendix A**) to support academic staff in the timely creation and updating of reading lists.

## 2. Reading List Principles

- 2.1. Reading lists contribute to a positive student experience when:
  - 2.1.1. The quality of reading lists is consistent across modules.
  - 2.1.2. Readings are available when students need them.
  - 2.1.3. Students understand what is required of them.
  - 2.1.4. Students consistently engage with reading/ learning activities each week.
- 2.2. Reading lists are most helpful to students if they are:
  - 2.2.1. **Realistic**: lists contain a manageable number of resources so that students utilise the list effectively and the Library can provide all listed resources - in digital form where possible and appropriate and with sufficient copies and appropriate loan periods for print resources.

- 2.2.2. **Accurate:** so that students can find the correct resource, including correct editions. Reading list items **should all be available**, *either* in print/e format via the Library (this includes requests for the Library to purchase items not in stock) *or* because it is freely (and legally) available on the web. Any item that cannot be made available via these routes should be removed from the list.
- 2.2.3. **Prioritised:** Indicating essential or further reading so that students understand what they are expected to read and the Library knows what it needs to provide.
- 2.2.4. **Clear:** so that students know what is relevant to each part of the module.
- 2.2.5. **'Scaffolded':** lists are annotated with guidance as appropriate to the student level (e.g. chapter recommendations, explanatory annotations and questions for specific readings) so that students are encouraged to develop active reading skills.
- 2.2.6. **Updated regularly:** so that students are aware of the latest research and information.
- 2.2.7. **Timely:** so the Library has sufficient time to acquire the required resources.

### 3. Good Practice (academic staff)

#### 3.1. Setting Expectations - Accompanying reading list guidance for students should include:

- 3.1.1. What the purpose of the reading list is and how students should approach using it (particularly for level 3 and 4 students).
- 3.1.2. How students will access the materials e.g. all essential items will be available online; recommendation to purchase the core textbook etc.
- 3.1.3. Reminder that students have access to reading lists all year round at [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) in addition to the link from the Blackboard module.
- 3.1.4. Information on advice and support from the [Academic Liaison Librarian](#) to develop library/research/information literacy skills and go beyond the reading list.
- 3.1.5. Information on who they should contact for further advice and support – e.g. the [Academic Liaison Librarian](#)/ Tutor/ Module Leader.

#### 3.2. List Structure

- 3.2.1. Reading lists should be clearly structured in the most appropriate way for the module, for example, weekly, thematically, by importance or a combination of these. [Readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://Readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) can be used to create any of these structures and there are basic templates provided by the Library that can be copied and used as a starting point.
- 3.2.2. The automated table of contents can be used to navigate a longer list.

### 3.3. Number of Resources

- 3.3.1. There should be realistic expectations about how much students are able to read and what the Library can supply. The number of resources will vary by academic discipline and module particulars, however **it is recommended that a reading list covering 12 weeks of teaching *does not exceed* 180 items.**
- 3.3.2. If a significant number of new materials are being added and/or there is a large cohort, the relevant [Academic Liaison Librarian](#) should be contacted in advance to discuss whether there is the available budget.
- 3.3.3. List owners can use the learner analytics dashboard feature on their reading list to see the number of clicks on individual items and the number of students who have set a reading intention or added notes. This can contribute to an assessment of how students are using the list. For more information about the dashboard, contact your [Academic Liaison Librarian](#).

### 3.4. Selecting Resources

- 3.4.1. When selecting resources, maximum use should be made of existing library collections and subscription services. Consult your [Academic Liaison Librarian](#) regarding requirements for accessible formats for students with RAF.
- 3.4.2. Select material that is available digitally: e-journal articles, e-books, audio-visual sources from *Box of Broadcasts* and *Lynda.com*, authoritative internet sources.
- 3.4.3. If a required book is not available as an institutional e-book, a digitisation request can be made for one chapter or 10% of the hard-copy book (whichever is greater). This will be supplied subject to licence and copyright restrictions.
- 3.4.4. If a required journal article is not covered by the Library's subscriptions, a digitisation request can be made for one article per journal issue. This will be supplied subject to licence and copyright restrictions.
- 3.4.5. If a core textbook is required each week (and has not been published as an institutional e-book), the Library will only hold limited copies in print. The module leader should manage the expectations of students accordingly.

### 3.5. Setting Item Importance

- 3.5.1. All resources should be assigned with either **essential** or **further** importance using [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk). Setting importance helps students to prioritise their reading and - combined with student numbers - is the basis on which the Library makes purchasing decisions (for more information on Library purchasing formulas, contact your [Academic Liaison Librarian](#)).
- 3.5.2. **Essential readings** provide the foundation for understanding the main themes and topic of the module. They must be accessible and simultaneously available to *every* student on the module. A maximum of two essential readings per week is recommended.
- 3.5.3. **Further readings** are recommended to further knowledge on a particular topic and provide a starting point for assignments. These items will not necessarily be simultaneously available and students should plan their reading and work accordingly.

### 3.6. Out of Print books

- 3.6.1. The Library does not usually purchase out-of-print books, although exceptions are sometimes made in certain circumstances. All out-of-print requests are referred by the Library Acquisitions Team to the relevant [Academic Liaison Librarian](#) who will make the final decision.
- 3.6.2. The Library will inform the list owner if a requested title is out of print and whether a second-hand copy will be purchased. If the book cannot be obtained and is not in the existing collection it will be removed from the reading list to avoid confusion for students.
- 3.6.3. It is recommended that books that are out-of-print are not assigned as essential reading unless there is sufficient existing stock in the Library. However, a digitisation request can be made for one chapter or 10% of the book (whichever is greater). This will be supplied subject to licence and copyright restrictions.

### 3.7. New Editions

- 3.7.1. It is recommended that module leaders review their reading lists on at least an annual basis and update any titles where a new edition is available in the library.
- 3.7.2. If an earlier/ specific edition is required this should be indicated to Library staff by adding a **Library Note** to the specific item in the list.

3.7.3. The Library will normally retain the most recent two editions of a title. Exceptions to this include specific instructions to retain earlier editions (3.7.2) and classic works, works of literature etc where the edition is not necessarily related to the currency of the work.

### 3.8. Websites

3.8.1. Links to websites should be checked annually and broken links fixed or removed.

## 4. Good Practice (students)

4.1. At the start of a module, look at how the reading list has been structured and read any accompanying guidance to check you understand the requirements e.g. weekly reading.

4.2. Create a study timetable to manage the weekly reading across multiple modules.

4.3. Plan well in advance if you need to read books that are print-only or e-books with a cap on simultaneous usage. Do not leave this to the last days or even weeks if you plan to use a source for an assignment.

4.4. Prepare for each class by reading at least the essential items and be ready to raise questions and discuss with peers.

4.5. Practice **active reading skills**: engage with questions/ activities set by the module leader for particular readings. Try formulating questions of your own as you read.

4.6. Get in touch with the [Academic Learning Development](#) team for advice on time management, academic reading techniques and notetaking strategies to enhance your engagement with your reading lists.

4.7. Keep track of reading on [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) by using the “reading intention” settings and notes function with the online reading list (students can log in with their IT username and password to access these features).

4.8. Report any problems with access to E-resources or availability of print items to the relevant [Academic Liaison Librarian](#), who will investigate and try to resolve the problem. Provide your student number, the module code and title (or send the URL link of the reading list), and details of the problem. For E-resources, if possible, email a screenshot of any error message etc. Copy in the module leader to make them aware of any issues.

4.9. Return books on the reading list on time if they have been reserved by another student.

## 5. Appendix A: Annual reading list timetable of events and actions

| Date                                                                                                                | Events                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Module Leader/List Owner                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learning week 12 (April)                                                                                            | End of teaching. Two week UG student vacation followed by assessment and marking period.                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Begin reviewing or creating reading lists for the next academic year.<br><br>Contact your <a href="#">Academic Liaison Librarian</a> for advice and training.                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>First half of July</b> (exact dates will be communicated by your <a href="#">Academic Liaison Librarian</a> )    | <b>Reading List Rollover:</b><br>Existing published lists are rolled over to the next academic year (IT systems team).<br><br>Any published list with draft changes must be republished by 30 June or they will be lost.<br><br>Draft lists that have never been published remain in draft. | Check your existing, published reading lists and ensure that any recent changes are published by <b>30 June</b> .<br><br><b>Do not</b> add items or amend existing published or draft lists in the rollover period.<br><br>Draft lists that have never been published can remain in draft form and retrieved after rollover. |
| <b>Second half of July</b> (exact dates will be communicated by your <a href="#">Academic Liaison Librarian</a> )   | New time period set for Reading Lists<br><br>Existing digitisations in published lists will be rolled-over.                                                                                                                                                                                 | Continue to create/amend list.<br><br>Request new chapter/article digitisations.<br><br>Add time period to new lists.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>01 August</b>                                                                                                    | <b>New financial year. DEADLINE for Semester 1 modules</b> (or first half of year-long modules).<br><br>New additions to reading lists are ordered by the Library: allow <b>6-8 weeks</b> for print materials to arrive.                                                                    | Check your list has the correct title, is linked to the module code on Talis Aspire and has accurate student numbers.<br><br>Publish (or republish) your list to alert the Library that your list needs to be reviewed.                                                                                                      |
| <b>End of teaching week 10</b> (Nov/Dec)                                                                            | <b>DEADLINE for Semester 2 modules</b> (or second half of year-long modules)<br><br>New additions to reading lists are ordered by the Library: allow <b>6-8 weeks</b> for print materials to arrive.                                                                                        | Check your list has the correct title, is linked to the module code on Talis Aspire and has accurate student numbers.<br><br>Publish (or republish) your list to alert the Library that your list needs to be reviewed.                                                                                                      |
| April<br>(subject to change – exact dates will be communicated by your <a href="#">Academic Liaison Librarian</a> ) | Cut-off date for ordering materials for the Library in preparation for the end of the financial year in July.                                                                                                                                                                               | You can continue to create draft lists or amend existing lists. Any purchase requests will be actioned when the new financial year begins in August.                                                                                                                                                                         |

## 6. Appendix B: Benefits of [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk)

### 6.1. Student Experience

- 6.1.1. Increased awareness of the range of resources available.
- 6.1.2. Consistency across modules of reading list platform interface and access.
- 6.1.3. Students can access lists all year round at [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk)
- 6.1.4. Interface is easily accessible from computers and mobile devices from any location.
- 6.1.5. Automatic table of contents helps students to navigate longer lists.
- 6.1.6. Direct link to all digital resources.
- 6.1.7. Digitised chapters/ articles automatically embedded in the reading list.
- 6.1.8. One-click real time information on availability and location of print-only items.
- 6.1.9. Add reading intentions and notes to reading list items.

### 6.2. Learning and Teaching

- 6.2.1. Easy to incorporate sources (**including multimedia**) into an integrated list.
- 6.2.2. Flexible system – create a structure to suit the structure of the module.
- 6.2.3. Quickly add, move, amend or remove individual items or sections.
- 6.2.4. Add notes and guidance to sections or individual items.
- 6.2.5. Make new resources available during the module.
- 6.2.6. Lecturers can use learner analytics provided by the dashboard to assess how a reading list is being engaged with by students.

### 6.3. Efficiency

- 6.3.1. Library's Collections team receive automatic notification when a list is published.
- 6.3.2. List owners receive automatic confirmation when list review is completed.
- 6.3.3. Issues with e-resource access can be identified and resolved more efficiently.
- 6.3.4. [Academic Liaison Librarians](#) can spend more time teaching and supporting research/ digital and information literacy skills.

### 6.4. Value for Money

- 6.4.1. Improve the visibility of the Library's digital resources.
- 6.4.2. Maximise use of existing print and online collections.
- 6.4.3. Improve accurate collection of statistics on use of e-journals and databases.

## 7. Appendix C: Library Acquisitions Process

### 7.1. Publishing List

- 7.1.1. List owner creates the list (this is usually the module leader but can be another staff member and there can be joint list editors), links it to the relevant module code and checks that the student numbers are correctly indicated.
- 7.1.2. If specific chapters are required for essential readings, these can be requested from within the list.
- 7.1.3. List owner publishes the list.



- 7.1.4. The Library Acquisitions team is automatically notified and reviews the list, purchasing books where appropriate using the purchasing formula set by the [Academic Liaison Librarian](#).
- 7.1.5. The Library E-services team monitors and actions any requests for scanned chapters/ articles that are not available electronically in the library's collections.
- 7.1.6. Any issues that arise in these processes are referred to the relevant [Academic Liaison Librarian](#), who will investigate and liaise with module leaders as necessary to resolve the problem. Module leaders who have questions about any aspect of provision for their reading list should contact their [Academic Liaison Librarian](#) in the first instance. Alternatively, technical issues can be reported via the feedback form on [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) or by emailing [readinglists@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:readinglists@westminster.ac.uk).

## 7.2. Purchasing Policy

- 7.2.1. Materials are purchased from August to April each financial year. This includes new additions to reading lists, new publications and editions or extra copies of high demand resources.
- 7.2.2. E-books are usually available via Library Search within a few days of ordering.
- 7.2.3. Print books usually take a period of weeks before they are available in the library.
- 7.2.4. In order to obtain the majority of materials in time for the beginning of a module, the Library recommends that requests are made at least 6-8 weeks in advance (see Appendix A for further details of deadlines).
- 7.2.5. The Library uses approved suppliers who are part of the London Universities Purchasing Consortium. These suppliers provide discounted prices and shelf-ready materials. For items not available through the approved suppliers, the Library will select the most appropriate alternative supplier.

## 8. Appendix D: Useful contacts and links

- 8.1. Academic Liaison Librarian team: [www.westminster.ac.uk/academicliaison](http://www.westminster.ac.uk/academicliaison)
- 8.2. Reading List guides: <https://myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/my-tools/online-reading-lists>
- 8.3. Reading List online platform: <http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk>
- 8.4. Blackboard: <https://learning.westminster.ac.uk>

## 9. Appendix E: Basic reading list templates for staff use

- 9.1. [Weekly template for semester-long list](#)
- 9.2. [Weekly template for year-long list](#)

## Reading List Implementation Timetable

**This timetable should be read in conjunction with the *Reading List Policy*.**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. In 2015 the University introduced a reading list management software (Talis Aspire) to improve the student experience and learning opportunities by providing lecturers with tools to create flexible, accessible and multimedia resource lists.
- 1.2. In September 2017, with the agreement of the University Executive Board, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Student Experience) identified eight core actions to enhance the learning experience and satisfaction of students at University of Westminster. These actions include the mandatory implementation of the [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) online platform for all taught modules where reading lists are appropriate by 2019.

### **2. Mandatory reading list implementation from the beginning of the academic year 2019-20**

- 2.1. All taught module reading lists must be available via [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk) and be linked with the relevant Blackboard module using the Reading List tool link.
- 2.2. All requests for the purchase of new library materials for taught modules must be made by creating/ publishing, or revising/ re-publishing a reading list on the online platform.
- 2.3. All requests for digital scans of book chapters or journal articles must be requested through the online reading list by using the request digitisation function.
- 2.4. All proposals for new modules/courses submitted for validation must have an indicative reading list created on [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk).
- 2.5. Module Leaders are responsible for ensuring the creation and maintenance of reading lists on [readinglists.westminster.ac.uk](http://readinglists.westminster.ac.uk).

### 3. Timeline for mandatory implementation of *readinglists.westminster.ac.uk* by 2019-20

Advice and training is provided by your [Academic Liaison Librarian](#). This timetable includes a lead-in time for staff unfamiliar with using *readinglists.westminster.ac.uk*. Staff who want to publish their semester 1 lists in time for the 2018-19 academic year should contact their Librarian for an early training/ refresher session.

| Date                   | Event                                                            | Library Responsibility                                                                                                                                    | School Responsibility                                                                                                   |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March-April 2018       | Identify gaps in coverage.                                       | Provide Schools with up-to-date report of published, draft and no list.                                                                                   | Communicate with relevant academic staff re. progress on creating reading lists.                                        |
| April-August 2018      | First round of reading list software training                    | Offer group and individual sessions for staff new to using reading list software and staff needing a refresher.                                           | Attend training and refer to training and guidance material.                                                            |
| August – December 2018 | Creation of missing Semester 2 reading lists                     | Offer advice and troubleshooting support to module leaders creating new lists. Provide standard templates that can be used for list creation if required. | Academic staff to create, populate and publish list according to best practice outlined in <b>Reading List Policy</b> . |
| January 2019           | Semester 2 reading lists go live                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                         |
| February-April 2019    | Second round of reading list software training                   | Offer group and individual sessions for staff new to using reading list software and staff needing a refresher.                                           | Attend training and refer to training and guidance material.                                                            |
| April – August 2019    | Creation of missing Semester 1 reading lists (for 2019-20 start) | Offer advice and troubleshooting support to module leaders creating new lists. Provide standard templates that can be used for list creation if required. | Academic staff to create, populate and publish list according to best practice outlined in <b>Reading List Policy</b> . |
| August 2019            | Semester 1 reading lists go live.                                |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                         |
| August 2019 onwards    | Switch to standard annual timetable for all reading lists        | Responsibilities and timetable outlined in <b>Reading List Policy Appendix A</b>                                                                          | Responsibilities and timetable outlined in <b>Reading List Policy Appendix A</b>                                        |