University of
Reading

EFFECTIVE READING LISTS

Why is this important?

A well-presented, well thought out reading list can enhance the student experience; help them manage their academic reading more effectively; ensure that all students are able to locate and have access to the materials you are recommending to them; improve inter-Library/departmental communication; and raise student satisfaction rates overall.

Reading lists are most helpful to students if they are:

- **accurate** - so that they can find each reference on the catalogue
- **annotated with the level of importance assigned to each title**. We recommend:
  - **essential reading** – students are required to read these titles (**must** read)
  - **recommended reading** – expands on a specific topic; useful for increasing a student's knowledge of the subject (**should** read selectively)
  - **further reading** – useful and relevant background to a subject, if there is time (**could** read). Liaison Librarians will feed back to module convenors if certain texts are out or print or difficult to obtain. It is strongly recommended that such titles be removed from reading lists in order to manage students' expectations of Library resources. If, for pedagogic reasons, you wish to recommend texts which cannot be stocked by the Library, then please annotate your list to reflect this, and advise students to make use of the inter-library loans service, or ask their liaison librarian for help.
- **clearly laid out**, distinguishing between different types of publication e.g. articles, chapters, websites
- **updated regularly**, taking into account feedback from students and library staff on the popularity, currency and availability of resources
- **consistent in approach**, e.g. modelling good practice by using the department's preferred referencing style and using consistent annotations across departmental reading lists
- **free of unfamiliar abbreviations**, or with a glossary of commonly used terms included
- **made available to your liaison librarian in good time** to ensure all the books are in the Library, and with sufficient copies
- **'scaffolded'**- by linking to resources appropriate to the level of study, see our example list at: https://reading.rl.talis.com/lists/595AAF8C-CB15-32C2-D7D9-9A8F1BE54AE7.html

Further considerations

- Organise reading lists by theme and/or by date, to guide students in their preparation for their next lecture/seminar/lab session, so they know what is expected of them.
- The level of the module for the list you are creating, i.e. Part 1 students may need more guidance and a more prescriptive list than students at a later stage in their course.
- Recommend to your students the advice about understanding reading lists and managing academic reading on the Library and Study Advice websites: www.reading.ac.uk/library/finding-info/guides http://www.reading.ac.uk/library/study-advice/lib-sa-guides.aspx Involve your liaison librarian in modules exploring subject resources - primary and secondary.

POINTS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
Have you been set up with an account on our online Reading Lists system?	The University has invested in Reading Lists software (Talis Aspire) to create dynamic online reading lists linking to a wide variety of scholarly resources. Contact your Liaison Librarian to set up your account and arrange training on the system. For more information see our guide for academic staff: http://libguides.reading.ac.uk/reading-lists/staff
If the list is for a new module, have you alerted your liaison librarian to this?	There are no separate funds for resourcing new programmes or modules: materials have to come from existing School Library allocations. If you are planning new programmes or modules, please contact your subject liaison librarian well in advance to discuss your needs: reading.ac.uk/library/liaison
If the list is for an existing module, have you checked the currency of the items cited?	Where possible, always cite the latest edition of a text, or alert your liaison librarian to the reason for recommending a particular edition. Earlier editions swiftly go out of print and may cause problems for students trying to access these items.
Have you allowed enough time?	The Library needs 4-6 working weeks to process your reading lists and ensure, where possible, that all the items are available to students - and in sufficient quantities - to meet demand. We cannot guarantee that reading list items will be available for the start of term if lists are received after this deadline. If you cannot meet this deadline please contact your liaison librarian as soon as possible.
Have you annotated your list to provide guidance for your students?	Use the headings provided within the Reading Lists system, and ensure your students are clear about what you mean by 'essential', 'recommended', 'further' reading. Think about: must read / should read / could read. Allocating an 'importance' to each item on your list will also alert the Library to any items that may require a copy placed in to the Course Collection (6-hour loan), or the 7-day loan category.
Have you requested scanned extracts of readings which may be in high demand?	Scanning extracts (i.e. up to one chapter or one article from the same source material) and linking them to your reading list may be an option for high demand items. To ensure copyright compliance, these must be processed by the Library's scanning service. For further information on our scanning service, see: reading.ac.uk/library/contact/info-for/staff/lib-scanning.aspx Please note: Scans provided by the Library must not be uploaded directly to Blackboard, they should be requested and linked via your reading list.
Have you published your reading list on the Reading Lists system?	Have you uploaded your reading list to reading.ac.uk/library/readinglists and published the list so your students can access it and the Library can review it, check links, and purchase resources as required?
Have you linked your list to the 'reading lists' tab on the content menu for your Blackboard module?	Where possible, we would ask that you give the Library sufficient time to ensure the items are in stock, before linking them to Blackboard from where the majority of students will access their lists. Linking your online list to Blackboard is a simple process, see our guide: http://libguides.reading.ac.uk/reading-lists/staff/blackboard