



University of Edinburgh

Improving Library
Productivity While
Strengthening the
Student Experience



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Library staff at the University of Edinburgh wanted a better way to manage course resource lists and ensure that library collections support teaching more effectively. They found the right solution to their needs in Leganto, resulting in greater efficiency and a better experience for both academics and students.

“In our first year of moving to Leganto, we managed to increase the number of resource lists we were supporting by 67 percent.”

Library Learning Services Support Officer, Sarah Ames



About University of Edinburgh

A member of the elite Russell Group of universities, the [University of Edinburgh](#) is a world-leading center of academic excellence. With a history dating back to 1583, it is one of the UK's oldest universities and Scotland's largest. Edinburgh's graduates have been awarded Nobel prizes, won Olympic medals, traveled into space, and written some of the world's most-read books. Among former students are naturalist Charles Darwin, philosopher David Hume, and Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Innovations linked to Edinburgh include the thesaurus, the tuberculosis vaccine, and Dolly the Sheep, the world's first cloned mammal.

Edinburgh provides a high-quality learning and teaching environment for almost 26,000 undergraduates, more than 9,700 taught postgraduates, and 5,500 research postgraduates. The library's holdings consist of over 3.8 million books, e-books, and e-journals, with print resources housed in the purpose-built eight-story [Main Library](#) building at George Square.

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Delivering Course Resource Lists at Scale

When academic libraries are involved in the creation and management of course resource lists, everyone benefits.

Librarians can ensure that course materials are accessible to all students by making enough print or digital copies available as needed and securing the necessary copyright permissions. This means that teaching staff can be assured that students will have access to the materials they were assigned on day one of the course, so students are immediately engaged and are able to follow along with assignments. Such service enables the library to demonstrate more value to the institution.

However, these benefits are only realized if librarians have an efficient way to manage course resource lists. At the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, the library teams responsible for supporting course resource lists were using a resource list tool that did not integrate with their library management system. As a result, they found themselves having to enter data in multiple places—and they were struggling to keep up with the needs of course organizers.

“We wanted a system that would allow us to deliver our resource list service at scale,” says Library Learning Services Support Officer, Sarah Ames.

Streamlining Workflows

The university found a solution to its needs in Ex Libris Leganto, an online system for creating and managing course resource lists that integrates seamlessly with the Ex Libris Alma library management system.

At Edinburgh, course organizers have the option to build their own resource lists or submit their requests to the library, and library staff set up the lists. Using Leganto for this process has allowed multiple library teams at the University of Edinburgh Library to work on the course lists simultaneously, thereby avoiding bottlenecks and creating efficiencies in service provision.

“We now have an end-to-end Alma-Leganto workflow,” Ames says. “Prior to using Leganto, we had a very linear workflow. Every team was waiting for other teams to complete a task before it could start the next task. Now, we're able to move much more quickly.”

"Providing access to online reading lists through Leganto is helping our library contribute to the university's aim of improving the student experience."

Library Learning Services Manager, Angela Laurins

As the Library Learning Services team is building reading lists, for instance, they can submit purchase requests directly to the Acquisitions team. At the same time, the E-Reserve team can begin providing copyright-cleared scans of reading material, and the High Use Books team can move books to different loan periods in the library.

Creating Efficiencies

By streamlining its workflows, the library has cut down on the amount of time it takes to build course resource lists, submit purchase requests, manage digitization requests, and ensure that students have access to critical course materials.

This expediency is important. "We try to make resource lists available to students four weeks before the start of a course," explains Library Learning Services Manager, Angela Laurins. "That doesn't give us a lot of time to provide all of these services."

Before using Leganto, library staff struggled to meet these demands in the required amount of time. But now, "we have no bottlenecks in our workflows," Ames notes. "Our average time to hand back a completed list to a course organizer has halved."

The efficiencies that Edinburgh's library has gained by using Leganto have allowed it to scale up its support for academic colleagues.

"In our first year of moving to Leganto, we managed to increase the number of resource lists we were supporting by 67 percent," Ames says. The university currently has more than 1,800 resource lists for the roughly 6,000 courses it offers.

Developing Collections More Effectively

Aside from being able to support more course resource lists, University of Edinburgh Library staff now have more time to focus on other tasks they couldn't get to before. One way they plan to use this additional time is by exploring analytics to understand how course materials are being used. Leganto tracks the usage of course materials. Library staff can gain understanding of how students are using the collections and this information can be used to inform policy.

"We now have oversight over what resources are used for teaching, so we can address specific gaps in our collections," Laurins says. "We can fill those gaps and set expectations around the services that our library provides, so students and course organizers can feel confident that the materials used in teaching are fully available." She concludes: "Providing access to online reading lists through Leganto is helping our library contribute to the university's aim of improving the student experience."



About Ex Libris

Ex Libris, a ProQuest company, is a leading global provider of cloud-based solutions that enable institutions and their users to create, manage, and share knowledge. In close collaboration with its customers and the broader community, Ex Libris develops solutions that increase library productivity, maximize the impact of research activities, enhance teaching and learning, and drive student mobile engagement. Ex Libris serves over 7,500 customers in 90 countries. For more information, see our [website](#) and join us on [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).

