

What students really think of their reading lists: reading list software at the University of Huddersfield

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UKSG Forum
November 2015



MyReading The background

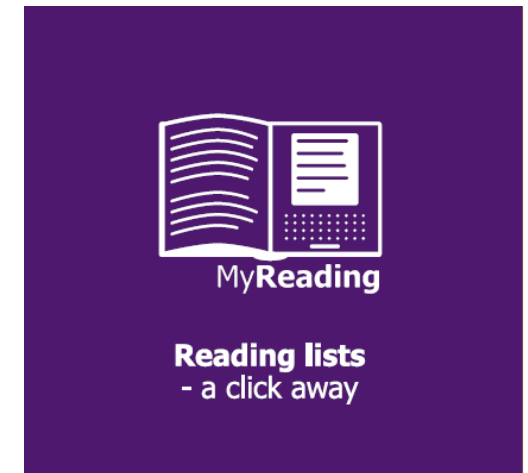
- 2008: Library received reading lists for only 40% of modules
- Many lists contained out of date or inaccurate information
- Manual processes for reading list management were laborious and outdated
- A systematic, automated approach was required



MyReading, an in-house system

Developed in-house & is fully integrated with Uni systems

To ensure the provision of reading lists is a managed, positive experience for staff and students



MyReading launched summer 2011

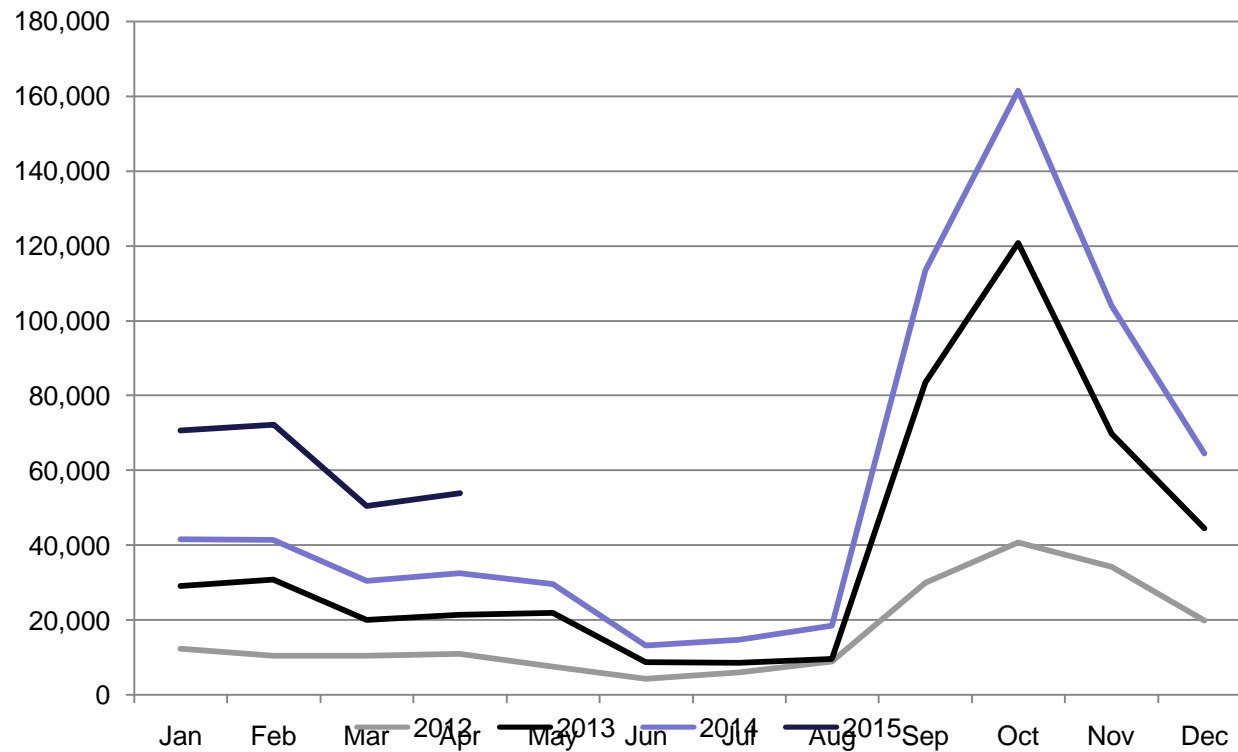
Academics create and maintain their own lists

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Chart showing MyReading use from Jan 2012 – April 2015

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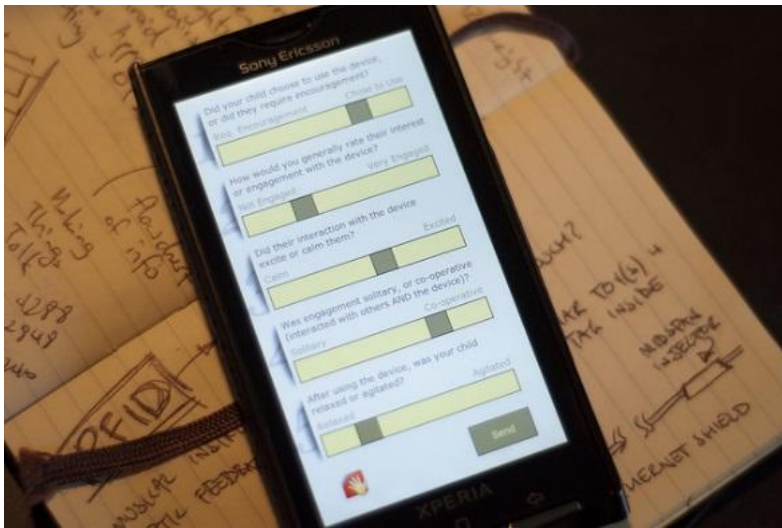
Evaluate

- Evaluation phase in 2015: need to evaluate MyReading in terms of impact on student experience and usability
- Next steps for development – what do students *really* want from their reading lists?



Building an even bigger picture

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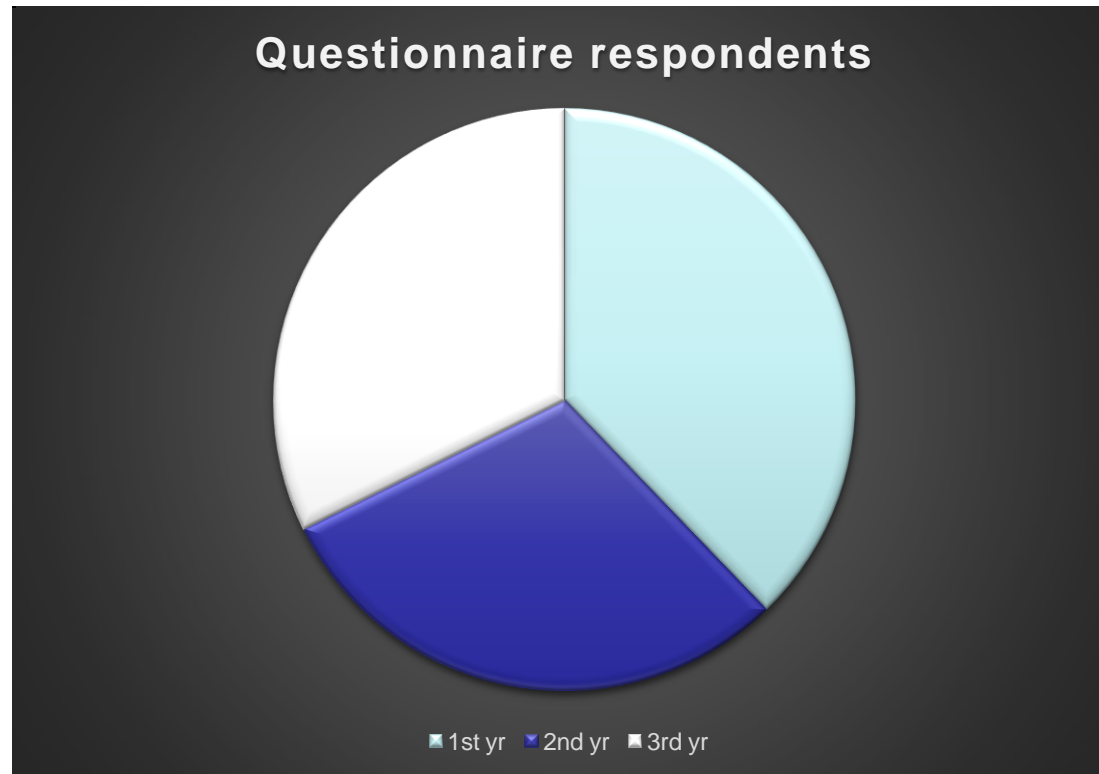
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/kodamapixel/5656712570/>

Survey to gather data
on students use of
MyReading
Survey ran for 4 weeks
Embedded into
MyReading software
Prize draw to incentivise
students to complete it

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772 Questionnaire Responses



Split between Schools

University School	Percentage
Applied Sciences	9.8%
Art, Design and Architecture	4.4%
Business	25.6%
Computing and Engineering	1.7%
Education and Professional Development	9.6%
Human and Health Sciences	28.6%
Music, Humanities and Media	20.3%

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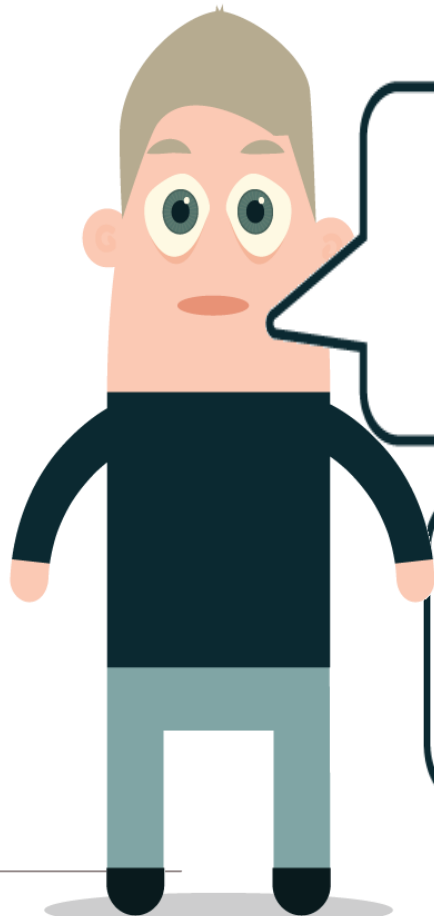


Students asked to qualify their answer and say how MyReading could be improved



1. Students found the lists helpful

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I find the reading lists useful because they help me identify and narrow down the specific areas I need to study to better grasp information and complete my assignments

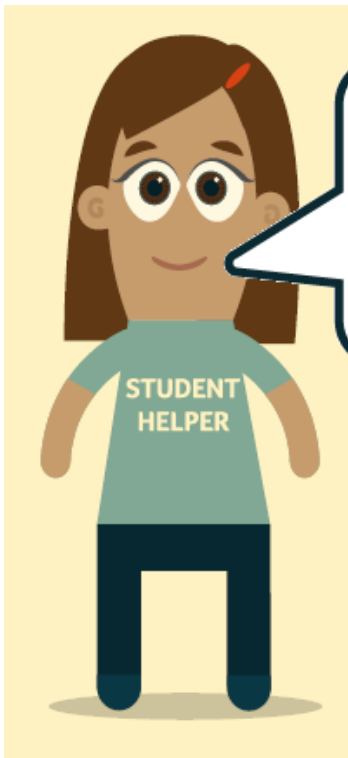
I find that some lectures provide the bones of a particular subject, the reading list provides the context for subject areas



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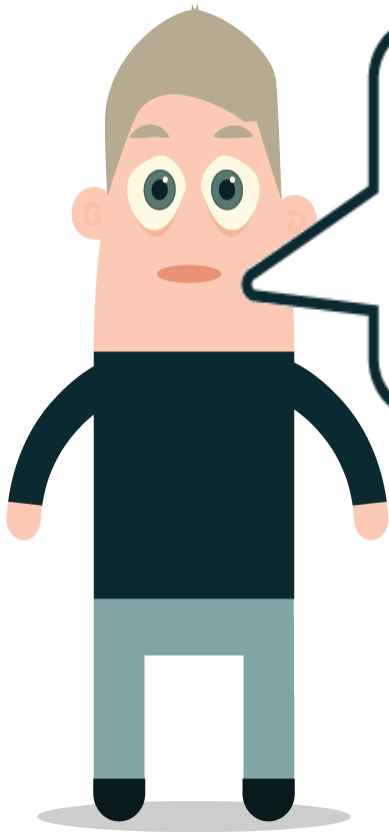
2. Students like to use lists as a starting point for research



Fabulous starting point by people who have done wide ranging preliminary research

3. Ease of use/saves time

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It allows me to easily find all relevant books in one place that are specific to my course and recommended by my tutor. It saves time and ensures I'm not reading irrelevant material.

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4. Quality of the lists



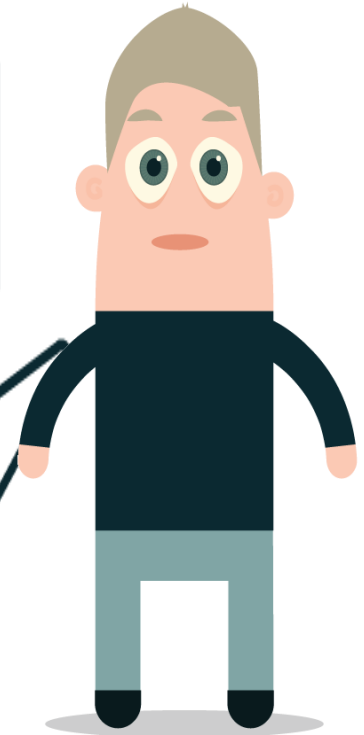
I am getting expert advice from my lecturers about relevant reading material

5. Different categories provided by the software



I like the fact they are split into essential reading and recommended so I can target essential texts first.

Make them all like the XXX reading list ...- organising the list by week makes everything 100 times easier!



6. Students used the lists as a basis for further reading



They allow you to read further into the subjects you have covered in lectures and seminars. They also help in my academic research for essays.

What students would really like to see their lecturers do

Reduce the length of lists!

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I sometimes feel like they are revisited to be added to, but **are rarely pruned back**. As a result there are an **overwhelming amount of suggested texts**, some of which might have been suggested years ago for a really particular reason.

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Make them well-structured and annotated



Probably using more headings and adding a little description about the book on the page. Having tutors write a small summary of what we will be using a particular item for would be really useful for organisation.

Maintain and update the lists

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Some of the books on the reading list seem to be either a bit dated, or standard texts. There is nothing specific and directed for certain lectures or areas of interest. They should be regularly maintained.

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Include more than books.

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Reading lists made up entirely or even mostly of basic textbooks are very unhelpful... Even though there can be value in reading the same thing explained or described in different ways from different perspectives that doesn't change that the opportunity cost is too large compared to just a few textbooks and a good list of focused research papers.

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Improve and enhance the software

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27% of respondents thought improvements could be made

1. Design and structure of the software: needs updating; colour coding; use of book covers; topic tags
2. Better functionality: e.g. access through an app that you could download to a phone; email alerts
3. Location: Link from the student portal; University App

What have we done since?

- Promoted changes staff can make at various university events
- Created a leaflet
- Added a link from the student portal



Why not take a look at the prize winning
MyReading list from 2014/15 for inspiration:



Applied Sciences
Jane Bradbury
Sport Health Exercise and Nutrition
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/SHF4009>



Art, Design and Architecture
Jane Ritchie
Context and Communication
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/TFD1122>



Business
Julie Drake
Governing Risk: Ethics and Audit
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/BMA0070>



Computing and Engineering
Colin Venters
Modern Database Applications
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/CHI2550>



Education & Professional Development
Sonia Munro
TESOL and Young Learners
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/DMY2130>



Human and Health Sciences
Pete Woodcock
Democracy and Democratisation
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/HIX2001>
** Overall winner 2014/15 **



Music, Humanities and Media
Merrick Burrow
Extraordinary Gentlemen
<http://library.hud.ac.uk/my/AHE3210>
** Overall winner 2013/14 **

MyReading

Help your students to take their
degrees to the next level with
your reading lists



The
Library
LEARN
CONNECT
EXPLORE

**“It makes my job
loads easier”**
and other reasons
to use MyReading



University of
Huddersfield Library
@hudlib

We created the MyReading software
to work with library resources so you
can create reading lists in a few minutes.

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



The Library
Tel. 01484 473888
Email. library@hud.ac.uk
Fax. 01484 471307
Web. www.hud.ac.uk/library

15204
Sept 2015

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2013
THE AWARDS
AWARD WINNER
UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

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MyReading is bespoke software that was built in-house; it was developed to work with our library resources which means you can compile a reading list for your modules with just a few clicks!


- In the Library, we run regular reports to see what new items have been added to MyReading so that we can:
 - Buy any new books or copies of existing books
 - Get access to any journal articles we don't already have
 - Scan in book chapters that have been added to reading lists
- MyReading is really flexible - you can customise your lists to suit the structure of your modules, whether that's organising them by topic, date or assignment.
- Students love MyReading! A survey and focus groups held in 2014/15 found that students view MyReading as a one-stop-shop for high quality academic resources that gives them a sound starting point for their research.

A few responses from students

...really useful, a great idea and very helpful. My previous university had nothing like this! It really cuts time down searching for books, journals etc. relevant to the course leaving more time for actual study.

It allows me to easily find all relevant books in one place that are specific to my course and recommended by my tutor. It saves time and ensures I'm not reading irrelevant material.

It gives me an idea of where to start when I am researching for projects, and also helps when it comes to revision as it gives me more resources than just the lecture slides.

- The Library can digitize specific book chapters for you and this can help to increase students' access to high demand materials. We will obtain copyright cleared copies for you so that students can link directly to them with no legal risk. The completed digitized version will be copyright cleared and added to your list on your behalf.
 - In spring 2014 it was agreed by QSAG (the Quality and Standards Advisory Group) that all reading lists should be transferred to MyReading. Except in a few agreed cases, no lists are now to be maintained in module handbooks or any other resource.
 - Want to get started? You can add items in Summon to your lists with just one click! When you are logged into Summon you will see the MyReading button . Simply click the button next to the item you require and then select the reading list you want to add it to.
 - If you need assistance with using MyReading you can either contact your subject librarian for individual help, by emailing library@hud.ac.uk or use the online support available on the iPark.
- This includes short videos, most no longer than 3 minutes, which show you clearly how to perform different activities in MyReading.
- The iPark support can be found at <http://ipark.hud.ac.uk/content/myreading>
- As well as helping your students to find useful resources, a well-managed list can save you time and even win you a bottle of wine*!

[* The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching & Learning gives a prize each year to the lecturer with the most used and well-maintained reading list!]

Ways to make your MyReading lists appealing to students

- Feedback from students has shown that they prefer it when lists are structured and in sections, as they find long, disorganised lists overwhelming.
- Organise your list in a variety of ways, but students appreciate it when they are structured or reflect the teaching programme for that module.
- Assign a variety of readership levels to items on your list - background, recommended, essential or recommended for purchase.
- Add annotations to the items on your lists - let students know which chapters or sections of a resource are most useful.
- Link to a variety of resources - it's not just about books! (e.g. you can embed videos into your reading lists).
- Rate items using the stars and encourage your students to do the same.
- Edit your lists regularly to keep them fresh, adding new material and cutting out any 'dead wood'.



MyReading

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MyReading



New Business School Post

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Reading List and Collection
Development Librarian in
post

Funded by the Business
School

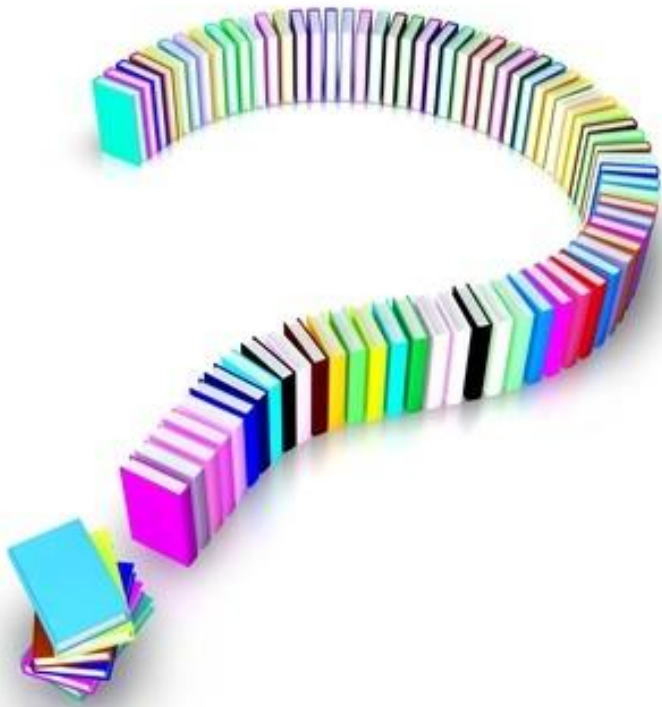
Started with Economics as
a pilot, will then roll out to
other subjects

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Any questions?

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