

**LTC16D108**

**Title: Mandatory adoption of TALIS Aspire as the default Reading List service**

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## Issue

To consider the case for mandatory adoption of TALIS Aspire as the default Reading List service for the University to ensure there is a consistent institution-wide approach to reading list provision.

In June 2016 LTC considered and approved a policy which requires all reading lists, regardless of format, to be submitted to the Library. A *preference* was noted for reading lists to be provided in an online format and ideally using the Talis Aspire software<sup>1</sup>.

This paper recommends a mandate for TALIS for essential course texts, i.e. core reading, across all schools to effectively tackle the issues the students have raised about the inconsistencies of the current process.

## Recommendations

- 1. To ensure a consistent institution-wide approach to reading list provision, the fairer provision of library resources across all disciplines, and to accelerate the growth of embedded digital learning at UEA, TALIS reading list software be mandated across all modules where reading lists are relevant.**
- 2. To support the mandate, the TALIS system be reconfigured with consistent nomenclature to denote 'Core' and 'Further' reading, with the minimum requirement being to provide the 'Core' .**

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<sup>1</sup> LTC15M006 LTC-M3 22.06.2016 Min.150

- 3. That academics be asked to comply from the 2017/18 academic year, with an indicative target of 31st July 2017 for new lists, and rollover of existing lists, to enable sufficient time for new items to be ordered.**

### **Resource Implications**

Although TALIS is a predominantly self-service system, there is a case to be made to retain a Reading List administrator to assist with list setup, staff training & support and annual rollover of lists.

### **Risk Implications**

Reading lists help to ensure the adequate provision of books, e-books and articles to support teaching. If reading lists are not presented consistently to students, there is a risk that the student experience will be undermined and there will be inconsistency in resource provision between disciplines.

Without greater take-up through a mandate, UEA will continue to offer TALIS for Reading Lists as an 'opt-in' service. This will perpetuate the current, uneven model of resource provision for courses that has arisen as a result of the partial adoption of TALIS.

Reading lists have become a 'hygiene factor' across the HEI community. Whilst having a consistent online system for essential course readings may not always provide a radical increase in satisfaction, only having around a third of University reading lists in this format may lead to an increase in dissatisfaction.

### **Equality and Diversity**

Equality and diversity issues are considered for all aspects of Library services. Online Reading Lists are covered by an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Widening Participation**

Compared with a static Word or PDF based reading lists, consistent use of TALIS would place all students on a level playing field in terms of access to reading. This makes a contribution to UEA's widening participation activities demonstrating an inclusive approach with common standards across disciplines.

## Executive Summary

1. This paper recommends the use of TALIS online reading lists system for core course readings across all disciplines.
2. This is because academic-provided static reading lists, even if they are uploaded on Blackboard, are rarely provided to the Library in a timely fashion.
3. This can lead to some readings not being available via the Library at all or to insufficient copies to meet student needs.
4. This has a knock-on effect in terms of students having to purchase their own copies, an issue which adds to their living costs.
5. In addition they would like core reading identified, reducing the likelihood of having to spend money on anthologies or books where only a chapter or individual article is needed.
6. As well as reading lists, TALIS also provides digitised readings of individual chapters or journal articles<sup>2</sup>. This is particularly helpful as only approximately 1 in 3 books are available in e-book format for university libraries to purchase, so digitised readings can provide a useful substitute when only a specific chapter or article is needed.
7. Improved availability and presentation of reading lists and readings helps academic and students alike, with students potentially better prepared for lectures and seminars having read the core texts.
8. TALIS has highlighted areas of the University where core reading list provision is simply not happening consistently; previously this institutional problem has been hidden.
9. Having all disciplines use a standardised reading list system across the institution would allow for greater continuity of module and induction information for students.
10. Although initial set-up of a TALIS list can seem more time-consuming in the short term, benefits accrue in each subsequent year as the TALIS system records all changes automatically and can then roll over for the following year. In contrast, paper based lists must be printed and rechecked in their entirety every year.
11. TALIS also provides a platform for contributing to institutional learner analytics work. Use of TALIS will provide meaningful data to feed into the TEF institutional, and subsequent subject submissions, providing evidence of a quality learning environment.
12. TALIS also helps students with additional needs or those studying 'at a distance' or on placement, who may find conventional print-based materials more limiting.
13. In comparison with other HEIs, there is evidence of lower usage of subscribed online library resources at UEA. Direct linking via TALIS should help to surface those resources more often and help deliver a better return on investment for the University from materials already paid for.

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<sup>2</sup> TALIS is now the only assured mechanism for the University to offer digital chapter scans that is fully compliant with the CLA HE license.

## Discussion

### 1.0 The student perspective.

Students from across all faculties are feeding back through several channels about their experience with reading lists. For example, reading lists and the themes in this paper have been raised at the Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) for CMP, BIO, ENG, PPL, PSY, HIS and AMA.

There are clearly several factors that lead to student dissatisfaction around course texts and a university-wide approach through TALIS would help in all the areas outlined.

The SU, on behalf of its constituents, strongly advocates the use of TALIS for essential course texts, or core reading, across all schools to effectively tackle the issues raised by students.

There is also an element of hygiene factors with digital provision. Having online systems for essential course readings may not dramatically increase satisfaction, but not providing systems may increase dissatisfaction.

A full summary of student perspective, combined with demonstrable evidence and analysis of data from Quality Conversations, is detailed as Appendix B. This provides clear evidence of student feedback and opinion on reading list provision at UEA, and discusses how TALIS could tackle student concerns and improve the student experience, especially at times of induction.

The analysis considers the key themes of availability, timeliness and costs, in the context of student feedback from the NSS, the SU Annual Survey, Quality Conversations Flash Reports from the SU and a hidden course costs activity by the SU.

**1.1 What is the current policy and level of compliance?** In June 2016 LTC considered and approved a policy which requires all reading lists, regardless of format, to be submitted to the Library. In addition, LTC's preference was minuted as "reading lists to be provided in an online format, and ideally using the TALIS Aspire software"<sup>3</sup>.

Following this mandate, during the 2016/17 academic year the Library has now received 787 print-based or online reading lists, estimated to be 42% of the 1,854 taught modules at UEA. (see Appendix A).

The remaining 58% of modules may have reading lists in print or online format, but these are not being provided to the Library and this can affect adequate resource provision for the students both in terms of titles and numbers of copies.

549 of the lists received (70%) are now on TALIS Aspire. This paper makes the case for the University to aim for all of its reading lists to be provided on TALIS Aspire. As a minimum, each list should provide the core reading.

To fully secure the full return on investment from the TALIS system, it is recommended that its use be mandated for core texts from the 2016/17 academic year.

We recognise that it will not be possible to secure full compliance by this date, but the Learning and Teaching Service view is that, if a mandate is delayed any further, any potential benefit would be delayed until the 2018/19 academic year.

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<sup>3</sup> LTC15M006 LTC-M3 22.06.2016 Min.150

## 1.2 What does TALIS offer over the current status quo?

Many reading lists at UEA are already provisioned online, but only as static word documents, PDF documents, or entries on a slide or in a Blackboard page. There is currently no preferred consistent approach. By contrast:

- TALIS has enhanced tools for linking to e-books and online articles. For e-books, links will be checked by library staff to ensure they work with UEA's authentication systems.
- TALIS shows live availability of print books (including copies and shelf-marks).
- TALIS can be cleanly embedded into a Blackboard site in a way that appears seamless to the end user.
- Digitised readings of individual chapters or journal articles are also very helpful for scenarios where the Library would never be able to afford or have shelf space for sufficient copies for all students on the module.
- TALIS also has processes and checks in place to ensure that digitised copies of learning resources have appropriate copyright clearance, that dynamic links are maintained and thus that there is minimal risk of them being taken down.
- TALIS enables the library to check stock and order new online and print material in the most timely fashion, reducing the chances of students having to purchase their own texts because the library does not hold the item. This process is 4x faster on TALIS.
- As well as alerting the academic and the Library to what is 'not in stock', TALIS better promotes the use of existing Library resources, ensuring better return of investment from the money the University is investing in them.
- 90 other institutions in the UK have invested in TALIS which costs the same whether 33% of the University is using it, or 100%, so leveraging the best value for money from the system and keeping up with our competitors are other good reasons for maximising its use.
- All TALIS lists have in-built reporting on high and low use digitised readings which will potentially provide useful data to academics for improving teaching quality. For example, TALIS functionality also enable students to feedback to module conveyors and their peers on how useful they have found the reading.
- An annual update process, meaning only items that have changed need to be updated, with the vast majority of the list simply rolling over, thereby saving academic time

## 2.0 The detailed proposal

For core reading, it is a reasonable expectation that a TALIS-based list should be provided for any module where a reading list could normally be expected.

The minimum level of compliance would be a reading list containing the core readings for each week<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Core readings are defined as the materials students are expected to read over the duration of the module in order to be able to fully participate in lectures and seminars, and will obviously vary across disciplines.

Obviously if further readings are also recommended as part of the reading list, academics should also be strongly encouraged to include these on TALIS as well.

The only exceptions to using TALIS would be lengthy bibliographies (c. 75+ items per module) which would be very time consuming to enter on TALIS and so would continue to be acceptable as Word or PDF files. However, in such circumstances, the mandate would still expect the provision of a basic core reading list for that module as well, made up of a subset of the readings listed in the bibliography.

### **3.0 Support for academics**

Feedback consistently shows there is still considerable academic resistance to using TALIS, especially a desire for a less time consuming way of setting up the initial lists. Although TALIS is the main reading list solution in UK HEIs, we do acknowledge that not every aspect is intuitive and that academics will require some support in setting up lists for the first time, completing the annual rollover process, and embedding their lists in Blackboard. The nuanced nature of the software and the fact that many academic users only use it 2-3 times within a year means that an 'expert user' needs to be available to provide training and support.

In response to feedback from academic staff about the ongoing need for this kind of support, the library will explore options for retaining its Reading List administrator post (currently fixed term) with a view to locating this in the Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning on the main Walkway, so as to be as accessible as possible for academics. To be clear, this post would continue to work alongside and support academic staff but not create the reading lists for them. Academic self-service remains the only way for this reading list service to be scaled and sustainable for the long term.

In the meantime, the 'quick guides' for academic staff on how to create lists are available at: <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/library/resources/reading-lists> with further streamlining of these pages planned in time for this year's rollover.

A summary of potential benefits to academic teaching and Academic Case Studies are given as Appendix C.

### **4.0 Conclusion**

As well as being critical for identifying books for the library to purchase, reading lists are increasingly viewed by students as a basic hygiene factor for their learning.

Academic-provided static reading lists, even if they are uploaded on Blackboard, do not tend to be provided to the Library in a timely fashion, leading to some materials not being available at all or to insufficient copies to meet student needs.

This has a knock-on effect in terms of students having to purchase their own copies, an issue which adds to their living costs.

Not using Talis also increases the risk of inadvertent illegal uploading of content onto Blackboard by academic staff, which is a significant institutional issue in terms of both copyright and license breaches.

#### **4.1 What are the service implications if there is no mandate?**

Without greater take-up through a mandate, UEA will continue to offer TALIS for Reading Lists as an 'opt-in' service. This may perpetuate the current, uneven model of resource provision for courses that has arisen as a result of the mixed format and the partial adoption of TALIS.

There are two factors underpinning this:

- Firstly, as explained above, TALIS is a more effective and consistent solution for presentation of online resources to students than either Blackboard or a static Word / PDF document.
- Secondly, checking print-based lists to order new books and e-books takes 4 times longer than using TALIS. Also print-based lists have to be checked again from scratch every year to see what has changed. By contrast, TALIS automatically tracks any changes, removing the need to check from scratch every year, and providing cumulative benefits year on year.

In short, the mandate needs to extend beyond print-based lists to avoid unnecessary delays in items being ordered and to maximise the cumulative benefits of the TALIS online system for students, academics, and the University as a whole.

## Appendix A) Lists made available to the library in academic year 2016/17 to date

The following data show the rates of compliance with the reading list mandate for 2016/17. A total of taught modules (UG & PG) per school for is included for comparative purposes along with an indicative % indicator of compliance with the mandate.

This figure in particular should be used with caution as **there is not a direct 1-1 list to module correlation**. To explain further, some modules make use of multiple reading lists and sometimes a single reading list will be shared across multiple modules. Furthermore, many modules listed in SITS are not likely to have a reading list (field work, year abroad, long form essay). E.g. Law module totals have been adjusted to represent their feedback on which modules actually have a reading list.

		2015/16	2016/17			2016/17 Summary	
Faculty	School	TALIS lists published by end of July 2016	Modules taught 2016/17	TALIS lists published as of 20/4/17	Print lists as of end of 20/4/17	Total lists received by library 2016/17	Indicative % compliance with LTC mandate
FMH	HSC	51	112	34	3	37	33%
FMH	MED	19	44	17	5	22	50%
<b>FMH</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>38%</b>
HUM	AMA	72	170	21	20	41	24%
HUM	HIS	28	93	9	10	19	20%
HUM	LDC	24	200	7	11	18	9%
HUM	PPL	106	266	47	172	219	82%
HUM	IIH		14	6	0	6	43%
<b>HUM</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>41%</b>
SCI	BIO	53	103	20	0	20	19%
SCI	CHE	47	54	21	0	21	39%
SCI	CMP	78	70	18	0	18	26%
SCI	ENV	71	78	45	1	46	59%
SCI	MTH	33	58	17	0	17	29%
SCI	PHA	22	36	18	0	18	50%
<b>SCI</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>35%</b>
SSF	DEV	75	91	50	3	53	58%

SSF	ECO	37	50	17	1	18	36%
SSF	EDU	87	96	58	5	63	66%
SSF	LAW	9	92	22	1	23	25%
SSF	NBS	109	147	67	4	71	48%
SSF	PSY	29	35	21	2	23	66%
SSF	SWK	24	45	11	0	11	24%
<b>SSF</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>47%</b>
<i>Lists published with no school / module code</i>				<b>23</b>			
<b>Grand Totals</b>		<b>974</b>	<b>1854</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>42%</b>

## Appendix B) The student perspective

This section provides clear evidence of student feedback and opinion on reading list provision at UEA, and discusses how TALIS could tackle student concerns and improve the student experience, especially at times of induction.

It includes student feedback from the NSS, the SU Annual Survey, Quality Conversations Flash Reports from the SU and a hidden course costs activity by the SU.

Student feedback around reading lists provision follows the key themes of:

- availability
- timeliness
- costs

These themes are raised through the various channels in different ways, depending on the focus of the channel. For example specific questions around costs are covered in Quality Conversations.

### 2.1 Availability of Reading Lists

In the **SU Quality Conversation flash report on reading lists**<sup>5</sup> students were asked:

To what extent to do you agree with the following statement: "I have been able to access/afford everything on my reading lists."

SU Staff surveyed students 336 students at random between Monday 27th February and Friday 3rd March 2016. When looking at the responses in NSS style we can see there is just 48% positive satisfaction with this area.

<b>Definitely agree</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Mostly agree</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Mostly disagree</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Definitely disagree</b>	<b>8%</b>

<sup>5</sup> 27/2/17 to 3/3/17

Comments reveal the details behind this score.

*"The new modules are very badly organised, wasn't ready a week before - couldn't get the book."*

*"Books go quickly in the library."*

*"My books are never in the library and they are quite expensive."*

*"Not enough copies of textbooks in library."*

*"It was hard to find some books because they are quite obscure and there aren't many places to get them."*

*"There is a good supply online but not enough physical copies of books in the library."*

*"There were multiple times I was unable to get a book from the library."*

*"Books are expensive, and limited digital copies."*

*"Not all of them are accessible through UEA and textbooks in the library are in short supply in a 200+ cohort."*

### **2.1.1 NSS Comments**

NSS 2016 comments reveal that student are reflecting on the availability of texts in the library.

*"There isn't enough space in the library, bad air and lack of books in the required reading." - PPL*

*"It would be great if we could get more copies of standard philosophy books into the library as often course recommended books take a long time to get a hold of because they are continually on loan." – PPL*

*"Books needed for assignments are often always borrowed." – AMA*

*"Library space is lacking and there is a high demand for core textbooks. Not enough of them." – ECO*

*"The online library resources (namely, institutional journal access) are very poor, and are often worse than the access available via Google Scholar." – ECO*

*"The library does not always have adequate number of books, particularly for new modules." – HIS*

*"Need more online materials and eBooks." – HIS*

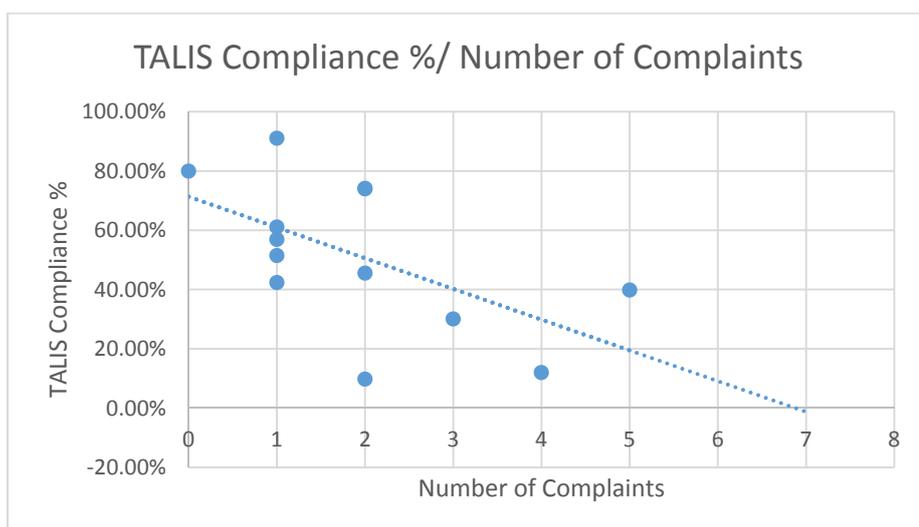
*"Demand for particular books in the library is very high & there are not always enough copies of particular medical/A&P/Allied health books in the library." – HSC*

*"Also, not enough books or people checking out books that were in high demand for long periods." – LDC*

*"We don't have enough books. Always on loans." – NBS*

There is also some correlation between TALIS compliance and the number of complaints that mention reading lists.

School	TALIS lists published as of end of Jul 2016	Number of Complaints	TALIS Compliance %
AMA	72	1	42%
BIO	53	1	51%
ECO	37	2	74%
Env	71	1	91%
HIS	28	3	30%
HSC	51	2	46%
LAW	9	2	10%
LDC	24	4	12%
MTH	33	1	57%
NBS	109	2	74%
PHA	22	1	61%
PPL	106	5	40%



### 2.1.2 TALIS and availability of reading lists

Students are clearly relating this issue to the resourcing of the library. While an increased uptake in TALIS would not solve these issues overnight, it would allow the library to appropriately respond to students needs on different course through hard copies or online texts.

### 2.2 Timeliness of reading list provision

Students have expressed that they are receiving their reading lists with not enough time to do pre-reading to make a head start or find reasonably priced copies. There are two key issues here:

- students genuinely are not receiving their reading lists in time

- particularly for incoming students, they are struggling to find their list because there is not one university wide approach to reading lists. It is therefore difficult to be clear about reading lists in induction information.

The flash report on reading lists showed student opinion on the timeliness of receiving reading lists. Students were asked:

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I obtained reading lists for my modules this year in good time"

<b>Definitely agree</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Mostly agree</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Mostly disagree</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Definitely disagree</b>	<b>6%</b>

In NSS style that means there is circa 55% positive satisfaction with this area which is quite poor; note this **falls** to 46% when only Year 1 students are surveyed.

Student comments:

*"Got reading list after term started."*

*"Did not get reading lists in time, only a couple days in advance had to buy very quickly to stay on top of work."*

*"Every module is different. It depends on the leader."*

*"Reading lists were not obtained until week 2."*

*"We got given them online, but we were not told they had been put online and so lots of people didn't find out about the reading lists in enough time to read the material for the first week."*

*"I'm a fast reader so it was time enough to get started on the reading, but when you are trying to order cheap copies off Amazon, it wasn't really enough time."*

*"Some universities get their reading lists before the summer holidays, which is crazy early, but I think UEA was a little delayed in getting them out."*

### 2.2.1 TALIS and Timeliness

Having a standardised system that is across the institution would allow for greater continuity of induction information for students.

This is evident when considering that student satisfaction about receiving reading lists in a timely manner **drops** for year one students.

On average, library staff can review and order stock from 4 TALIS lists a day compared with 1 list per day to review a Word or PDF document. Wholesale adoption of TALIS would allow for the removal of a time-consuming paper based workflow for checking Word/PDF based lists, making books available for students in a much more timely fashion.

Efficiencies will improve over time as the TALIS system records all decisions and highlight changes to lists meaning subsequent rechecks of the same lists are also much shorter. In contrast, paper based lists must be printed and rechecked in their entirety every year.

## 2.3 Costs

Student feedback shows that many students are struggling to cover the cost of texts required for their course. This is either due to students not expecting the costs and therefore not financially planning appropriately, or simply prioritising basic living costs over course texts at a time of increased student poverty.

The key theme around costs identified in the flash report on reading lists summarised that:

*'In addition, far too many students report that the lists are unnecessarily long with context on which elements are critical. This is particularly important given the costs of accessing the material and we think that assessing the cost of accessing material is therefore an important facet of module design.'*

Further comments on this through the QC revealed some of the detail behind this score.

*"Been asked to buy very expensive out of print editions. One cost £100 on amazing and there was only 1 in the library."*

*"Books are too expensive do not need all of the book also just a chapter and so it's a waste."*

*"One of the books not on copyright, in second term took away photocopy and had to spend £50 in Waterstones - not good."*

*"They are too expensive and there are not enough copies in the library."*

*"Books are expensive. It would be good to know how long we are going to need them for. Just for the module or for the rest of career."*

*"Have had to spend more than £100 on plays as they are unavailable any other way."*

*"I had to take the money out of savings."*

*"I could only afford about 10% of my reading list."*

*"Books have been £100+, however free copies have also been found online."*

*"£16+ to cover two books a week for two of my modules is very expensive."*

*"I can indeed access the books, however for my reading lists I have had to ask for extra money from my parents considering that my loan just about covers my living costs and I am already borrowing money to be able to do food shopping and laundry."*

**2.3.1** In a separate **Quality Conversation on additional course costs**<sup>6</sup>, several student comments featured comments on reading lists and course texts. SU Staff surveyed students 304 students at random between Monday 14th November and Friday 25th November 2016.

Students were asked:

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I was informed of and prepared for how much everything would cost as a student at UEA"

<b>Definitely agree</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Mostly agree</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Mostly disagree</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Definitely disagree</b>	<b>5%</b>

What course related costs were you not anticipating?

*"Text book costs are horrendous and I had to pay full price for them because we were told we needed the book for the next lecture, if I had time I could have found a second hand one."*

*"The cost of textbooks was higher than expected."*

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<sup>6</sup> 14/11/17 to 25/11/17

"Books, not enough in the library, told to buy books written by the lecturer."  
 "Initially shocked by the cost of course books and felt pressured to buy them at the beginning."  
 "Lecturer insisted on the course buying his textbook, very expensive, haven't looked at it since."  
 "Books costing so much and not needing them for much."  
 "In first year, I had to buy lots of book and it would have been helpful to have the reading list earlier so I had the opportunity to find second hand books - it was just sprung upon us."

### 2.3.2 Student Costs Report

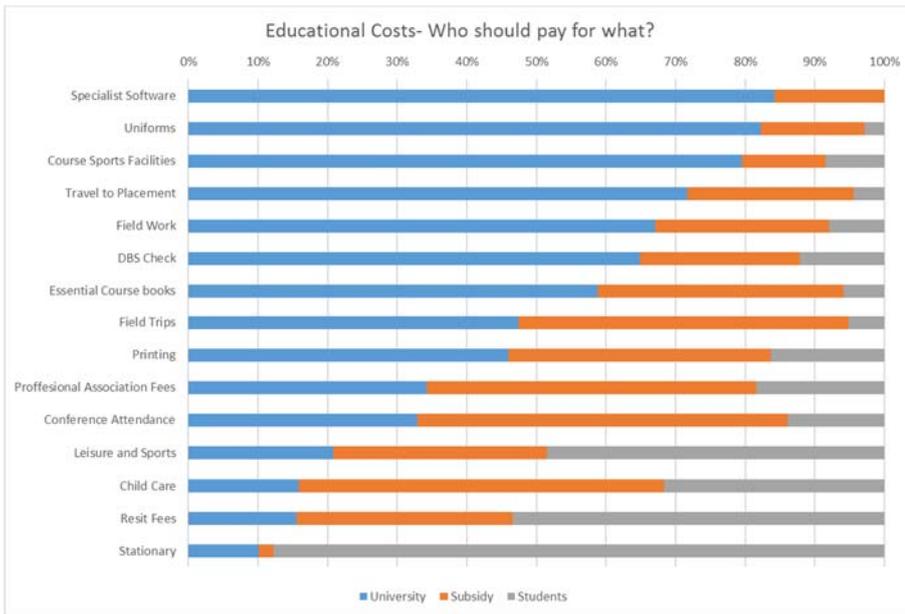


In the Student Costs Report, there is clear evidence that students believe that core texts should be offered as part of their tuition fees.

During an activity that asked students who should cover the costs of different aspects of their programme 58% of students believed that essential course books should be covered by UEA. 35% believed that they should be subsidised and only 5.9% believed that essential course texts should be the entire responsibility of the university.

Cost	Total Votes	UEA (%)	Subsidy (%)	Students (%)
Specialist Software	101	84%	16%	0%
Uniforms	107	82%	15%	3%
Course Sports Facilities	83	80%	12%	8%
Travel to Placement	113	72%	24%	4%
Field Work	88	67%	25%	8%
DBS Check	91	65%	23%	12%
<b>Essential Course books</b>	<b>136</b>	59%	35%	6%
Field Trips	118	48%	48%	5%
Printing	135	46%	38%	16%
Professional Association Fees	76	34%	47%	18%
Conference Attendance	79	33%	53%	14%

Leisure and Sports	101	21%	31%	49%
Child Care	101	16%	53%	32%
Resit Fees	116	16%	31%	53%
Stationary	148	10%	2%	88%



### 2.3.3 NSS Comments

Comments in the 2016 NSS also reveal issues around the cost of texts.

*“Textbooks needed for the course were expensive (one was £80).” – BIO*

*“Often instructed to buy unnecessary books. Make it clear if it is essential or not.” – LAW*

*“Some modules also supply their own reading packs, which is helpful as it saves money and time.” – LDC*

*“The limited library resources have meant that I have ended up spending a lot of money on books. It would make sense to increase the number of copies of each book so that you don't have every person fighting for the same book on the same week.” – LDC*

### 2.3.4 TALIS and Costs

Having more dynamic reading lists in Blackboard with links directly to online essential course texts will have a positive impact to student’s additional course costs and avoid some of the more extreme experiences:

*“PSY student - has had to spend £300 on core books for her course. Having to wait for her loan to buy the final couple of books.”*

Continued use of the system will only see this improve, with the Library team able to continue to respond to student needs with their reading.

With online texts ability to find specific chapters this will affectively tackle the issue of students buying textbooks and anthologies with only a portion of the text being used for the course at great cost to the student.

The SU also recommends that an assessment of the total cost of participation in a module, with a particular focus on reading lists, be incorporated as key task of module design/review.

## **Appendix C: Potential benefits to academic teaching and Academic Case Studies**

Some of the potential benefits to academic teaching from TALIS Aspire include:

### **3.1 Time saving in the long term**

After the initial time investment, the rollover process should help reduce the amount of time needed by academics in terms of keeping their lists updated each year.

Efficiencies will improve over time as the TALIS system records all decisions and highlight changes to lists meaning subsequent reviews of the same lists take much less time.

### **3.2 Ensure all students have access to core reading**

At its heart, the University wide adoption of TALIS addresses an academic issue - ensuring that all students are sufficiently prepared for lectures and seminars by having read the required texts.

This was recently illustrated in a Times Higher Education Survey where 52% of academics surveyed were concerned that 'students turn up for class without having done the required reading'<sup>7</sup>. By using TALIS, academics can ensure that students get access to readings in the most efficient way possible.

Compared with a static Word or PDF document, TALIS can offer much more by presenting core reading to students directly (where ebooks or digital chapter scans can be provided) and show library shelf marks and live availability for print books. This places all students on a level playing field in terms of access to reading and by implication benefits under widening participation.

Easier access to readings may also encourage students to spend more time reading around their subject.

Reading lists also provide advantages for students with additional needs or studying 'at a distance' or on placement who may find conventional print-based materials more limiting.

### **3.3 Provide instructors and the University with direct feedback and learning analytics**

All TALIS lists have in-built reporting on high and low use digitised readings which will potentially provide useful data to academics for improving teaching quality.

They also enable students to feedback to module conveyors and their peers on the usefulness of reading.

TALIS also provides a platform for contributing to institutional learner analytics work which will be useful for the TEF. More consistent usage of the TALIS will provide more meaningful data to feed into that University-wide project.

### **3.4 Ensure stable access to learning resources over time**

Use of TALIS reduces risk in terms of ongoing access to teaching resources. TALIS works by direct linking to resources, allowing both the library and the resource provider to track their usage, as well as ensuring that UEA is compliant with any publisher license terms and

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<sup>7</sup> Grove, Jack. "THE Teaching Survey 2017: Results and Analysis". *Times Higher Education (THE)*. February 16th, 2017. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/the-teaching-survey-2017-results-and-analysis> Accessed: 22 Mar. 2017

conditions. TALIS is now the only mechanism for the University to offer digital chapter scans that are compliant with the CLA HE license. Any other type of scan is at risk of being taken down. This issue particularly important for modules that already have PDFs embedded in Blackboard. In these cases, the rationale to switch to TALIS is to ensure that such resources have appropriate copyright clearance, that dynamic links are maintained, and that there is minimal risk of them being taken down.

### 3.5 Academic Case Studies

**3.5.1. Dr Gill Seyfang (ENV)** was an early adopter of the Talis Online Reading list system and has been using it for the past two years. She currently has two reading lists: ENV-7025A Sustainable consumption (PgT module) and ENV-4012Y Human geographies of a changing world (U/g module).

Gill has used the Talis "Create a new section" feature to highlight Key study, presentation and life skills reading, key texts and then weekly compulsory and optional additional reading so that the students can easily find the material they need to read for their next lecture / seminar or workshop. There is a range of reading material listed: print/ ebooks, journal articles, webpages, reports, videos, (even a link to a collaborative facebook group!), with useful guidance notes added for the students, e.g. "must be completed before the seminar - bring your results".

Asked about her experiences of the Talis system, Dr Seyfang confessed that she had anticipated some teething problems, being a new system, and expected to receive some grumbling from students when she first adopted it, but they have all been very positive- "they love it and say it makes finding the material easier". The bulk of the material can be uploaded well in advance, giving students the advantage to prepare early if they want. For Dr Seyfang, it is the flexibility of the system that appeals: ENV-4012Y is co-taught by several different lecturers: "As a module organiser, Talis has made it easy for me to delegate the responsibility of reading list creation for each week to my co-lecturers on this module". She especially likes the flexibility to update the reading lists at short notice allowing last minute updating to reflect current topical news events.

**3.5.2 Dr Katy Appleton (ENV)** has been using TALIS' Reading online system for the past 2 years to host the supporting reading for her module: **ENV-4004Y Research and Field Skills** (ENV 1<sup>st</sup> year). She also teaches on **ENV-5028B GIS Skills for project work** and **ENV-4010Y Geographical Perspectives** and for these two modules she has created her own sections within the online reading lists for ENV-5028B and ENV-4010Y to support her lectures.

There is no compulsory reading for ENV-4004Y Research and Field Skills. The module aims to introduce a range of transferable skills, tools and data resources that are widely used in research in Environmental Sciences, and the reading list therefore is designed to provide additional information sources that the students can refer to, as and when needed throughout their studies. For this reason, Dr Appleton chose to organise the list into sections by Topic, rather than weekly readings, so students can find the material easily at a later date.

Dr Appleton likes the ability to add notes to items on the Reading list, both as a guide to the student and as an "aide memoire" for herself, e.g. "Includes a valuable section on what research is not, as well as the characteristics of genuine, formal research"; and to highlight potential problems that students may encounter, e.g. "\*\*\*Note that the figures in the chapter are in black and white - there is a separate ebook entry for the colour plates."

Talking generally about her experiences of using TALIS, Dr Appleton says that she finds the system easy to update both at work and at home and has not encountered any problems.

**3.5.3 Katie McGhee (HSC)**, Lecturer and Course Director in Child Health Nursing, School of Health Sciences, alongside the children's nursing academic team developed the Children and Young People's Nursing 2016/17 reading list. There are approximately 80 students on the pre-registration children's nursing programme however the reading list is focused on the general physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people and therefore relevant to adult, mental health and learning disabilities nursing fields alongside allied health professionals, paramedics, midwifery and post graduate healthcare professional students working with infants, children, young people and their families. Her reading list contains about 50 items, a mix of e-journal articles, webpage hosted reports, ebooks and books. These are organised by the course's main themes, helping students identify material supporting specific areas and focusing their reading, rather than as weekly readings. She updates the list as new resources come to her attention, which she wants her students to engage with.

Some of the additional functions have enabled Katie to assist partners in the NHS who have responsibility for mentoring students on their placements. Exporting PDFs have helped nursing mentors understand the kind of material that the students were being expected to study. She had also used this to inform colleagues on the Children and Young People's Nursing Academics [CYPNAUK] group, a national forum for ChYP nursing academics to inform children's healthcare nursing policy.

There are some features, which Katie can see the benefit of, but hasn't yet had the chance to fully explore. She could see the potential of the "Dashboard" function and is going to explore its learning analytics options with colleagues, to see if this could be useful for managing students' engagement with their learning. She could also see the benefits of the "Read Status" function. She will be reviewing some of her teaching practices to see how she can encourage students to engage with this, when she has a new cohort. The additional learner analytics and information for students will be beneficial.

Whilst Katie acknowledges there are some challenges, in linking the list to all the nursing and healthcare modules, there would be great benefits of linking such a generic healthcare list wider than children's nursing and/or nursing in general. There are opportunities to engage with colleagues delivering other courses within the school or cross schools to use material from such a list in their own teaching, sharing knowledge and informing all relevant teaching. Within HSC they are a useful tool to support the move from profession- discrete training of illness-treatment to thinking about educational courses as supporting the health promotion to all patients from childhood onwards. The reading list software can help to promote resources from all modules to be used by others where required.

Katie feels that all CDs and module leads should be engaged with this software and familiar with how to use it. "It is an excellent resource" - giving a framework of underpinning knowledge and evidence for students to explore further - "If I don't know what the literature says how can I expect the students to?"