## Targeted reading lists and guidance on which chapters or sections to prioritise

## What is it?

Targeted reading lists distinguish between core reading for a course, and additional or further reading. There are various additional ways reading lists can be targeted or organised, or annotated to make clear the prioritisation of texts. This information helps students to engage with the most essential reading in a timely and efficient manner, as a basis for additional and self-guided reading.

## Why is it important?

For some disabled students, accessing print materials is a lengthy and difficult process. Very long reading lists for courses, which put the onus on the student to analyse and explore the relevance of the content, creates a need to obtain, skim-read or read in full a large number of texts quickly in order to make decisions about what is most relevant. For those with a print disability (a difficulty or inability to read printed material), the need to carry out these tasks as a first step, and the lack of structure for initial reading, creates a major barrier to study. This may be because:

* skim-reading physical books is not possible for some with a physical disability;
* of slow reading due to language processing difficulties;
* an alternative format is used to access reading, such as Braille, enlarged print or audio recordings, which can take up to 6 weeks to create;
* many students rely on digital solutions to access texts, such as text-to-speech software, screen magnifiers, and electronic Braille. Even when students are expert users of digital technology, these methods place greater demands of time and concentration than the same reading task for a non-disabled student.
* Some students with ADHD or autism can experience difficulties knowing what to focus on or from moving from task to task. More structured reading lists can provide a framework for students to organise their reading.

It is important for these reasons that students with a print disability are able to make most effective use of their time and energy by reading the most relevant texts first, and making self-guided reading more likely to be effective because of a good basis of core reading.

## Why do we have to do it?

Universities are under a legal obligation under the Equality Act (2010) to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students to ensure that they are not put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with students who are not disabled. The University has also committed to providing ‘exemplary inclusive practice’ in its Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students [link]. If a student is recommended provision of targeted reading lists within their Student Support Plan, then departments in partnership with academic staff should comply with this.

## What do I need to do?

For all students:

* Make course reading lists available to all students at least 6 weeks prior to the beginning of term.
* Make a clear distinction between core reading and additional reading; where there are particularly useful chapters or sections, make this clear on the reading list.
* Use Oxford Reading Lists Online if your department is signed up to the service. Those using text-to-speech software can have immediate access to their reading list because it is in digital form. ORLO also provides direct links from the citation to the full electronic text, if available, or to the library catalogue listing, making texts more accessible for everyone. Direct access to electronic versions from the reading list greatly enhances accessibility for disabled people. The system enables reading lists to be structured, annotated and formatted. For more information about the availability of ORLO please contact [ORLO@bodleian.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ORLO@bodleian.ox.ac.uk).

For students with ‘targeted reading lists’ recommended in their SSP:

* Tell the student you are available to talk about their reading and to make suggestions about what they should read based on their developing interests as the course progresses.
* Take time to read the student’s Student Support Plan if you have been given access to it, to learn about what barriers they experience in their reading.
* Adapt your course reading list bearing in mind these barriers. Short summaries of key reading could help the student make decisions about what to read and in what order.
* It is very important that targeted reading lists used by ARACU (Accessible Resources Acquisition and Creation Unit) are provided no less than 6 weeks prior to the start of term. It is particularly important to be clear when the items are needed and whether the whole or a part of a book should be read. Alternative formats include both Word and PDF Image, audio DAISY CD, Braille and tactile diagrams.

## Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to explore their own reading and the further reading recommended on the course in addition to core reading.

## Anticipating student needs

The University has an equality duty to not just respond to student need but to anticipate needs wherever possible. We must think ahead about the common barriers to study anyone within a cohort might experience and remove them, without reference to individual students. Tutors can contribute to meeting this anticipatory duty by following the ‘what do I need to do: for all students’ section of this guide.