

Survey of Digitisation of Core Readings in UK Higher Education

Final Report

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Introduction

A survey of the digitisation of core reading in UK higher education was undertaken by Jane Secker (LSE) and June Hedges (UCL) in March 2009. The survey was designed to collect information primarily about current practices relating to the digitisation of core reading to support taught courses across the sector, but also touched on wider issues.

This survey built on earlier work carried out by Jenny Delasalle¹. The survey was launched in March 2009 shortly after the introduction of the Copyright Licensing Agency's New Comprehensive Licence which allows higher education institutions to photocopy and scan from print and from digital sources and so poses questions that relate to this and the previous Trial Scanning Licence, issued in August 2005.

Survey topics and response rates

Alongside collecting data about the scanning of core readings under the CLA Licence, the survey took a wider look at operational issues and related decisions that were being made in university libraries to develop support for taught courses. The survey covered the following topics:

1. Background and institution details
2. Digital readings at the institution
3. Copyright Licensing and compliance, including the new CLA Licence
4. Procedural issues, including scanning operations and the delivery of readings
5. Management of readings
6. Wider issues (such as collection management and e-learning)

The survey was distributed as an online questionnaire using the Opinio software. The survey was available in March – April 2009 and was widely publicised on mailing lists aimed at practitioners involved in scanning and in copyright advice within universities; these included the JISCmail lists for copyright - LIS-Copyseek - and the Heron User Group list – LIS-HUG.

The following report will present both the quantitative and qualitative findings of the survey. With regard to the qualitative data: the report did provide ample opportunity for institutions to expand on their responses with comments and as a result a large volume of textual feedback was collected. The report will summarise these responses and include the full text of comments where appropriate. All comments have been anonymised.

A total of 44 responses were received, although not everyone responded to all questions. The decision was taken by the survey designers not to make it mandatory to respond to all questions as not all areas would be applicable to

¹ Delasalle, J. (2007) The CLA HE Trial Scanning Licence - how we're using it. Library and Information Research. 31 (98). Available online at: <http://www.lirg.org.uk/lir/ojs/index.php/lir/article/view/39/46>

all institutions, subsequently some responses were deemed as incomplete by the survey software.

1. Background and institution details

The size of institution (in terms of total number of students) ranged immensely from 3630 to 34,000, making the average institution size 18,201.

As expected the breakdown of student figures showed that the largest proportion of students were undergraduate with a mean average of 12,762. All but one institution (which did not complete this question) provides support for both distance learners and part time students. The term 'distance learner' is open to interpretation and could be taken to mean anything from students based overseas that never visit the university campus, to those that live at some distance but do make occasional visits to campus. Only 31 institutions confirmed that they supported Non-Credit Bearing students.

The survey also asked whether respondent institutions were members of HERON, the on-demand digitisation service. Responses were as follows:

No – (11 respondents or 29%)

Yes – Full members (24 respondents or 63%)

Yes – PackTracker users only (3 respondents or 7.89%)

The high positive response rate to this question is a reflection of the fact that the survey was publicised at a Heron User Group meeting and also on the Heron User Groups mailing list. It should be stressed though that the survey was carried out independently by two practitioners working in UK Higher Education Institutions.

2. Digital Readings at the Institution

The second part of the questionnaire asked participants practical questions regarding the volume of scanning undertaken and related issues such as staffing resources available, promotion and motivation for offering this service.

Number of digital readings made available

Respondents were asked to indicate how many digital readings had been made available to students at their institution in the academic session 2007-8 based on their CLA Data Return and also to anticipate how this figure might increase in the academic session 2008-9.

Total number of digital readings made available 2007-8:	
Minimum number:	20
Maximum number:	2844
Average:	563 (41 respondents)

Anticipated number of digital readings for 2008-9	
Minimum number:	0
Maximum number:	3300
Average:	794.7 (40 respondents)

The figures above demonstrate the range of scanning activity that has been taking place at institutions over the past years. The reasons for lower figures from some institutions become clear in the responses to later survey questions, in most cases lack of resources is cited as a reason for low scanning figures. However, the average figures clearly show that institutions anticipated a considerable increase in the number of digital readings that would be made available in 2008-9. Something which has been confirmed by data provided by the CLA which shows that the average number of scanning events per licensee² stood at 331 in 2007-08 and rose to 487 in 2008-09³.

Staffing the service

Questions 9-10 of the survey concentrated on the staffing resources available to support the creation of digital reasons. The 37 responses showed that there were huge variations in the number of staff working in this area: 4 institutions reported 0.5 or less full-time equivalent (FTE) staff being available, while 6 claimed to have 5 or more⁴ FTE staff. However, the average FTE number of staff working in this area was 2 (a total of 10 institutions reported exactly 2).

Slightly under half (20) of institutions had a dedicated team to manage the creation of digital readings. In the 24 where there was no dedicated team a wide range of approaches were being taken to staff the service. In a number the work was undertaken by subject/liaison librarians with some support from clerical staff (10 in total), elsewhere other teams within the Library were responsible for this area, these included the Acquisitions team, Reader Services, Document Supply/Inter-Lending. In a relatively small number of institutions (5 in total) the management of the digital readings had been devolved to the academic departments, with academics or administrators being designated to scan under the CLA Licence.

The final question regarding staffing asked whether there had been an increase in the resources available since the introduction of the CLA Trial Scanning Licence in 2005. Forty-two institutions responded, with 10 confirming that there had been some increase in staff levels (this ranged from 0.5 FTE to 1.5 FTE). Thirty-two institutions reported no increase in staff levels, of these a couple indicated that they have been continuously lobbying for additional staff support.

² The total number of Licensees for 2007-08 was 150, with 158 in 2008-09

³ The 2008-09 data includes copying from digital originals under the Comprehensive Licence

⁴ 2 institutions submitted quite high staff figures; however their responses to later questions suggest that they counted the total number of people that might be involved in creating digital readings rather than providing an FTE figure.

Motivation for scanning and service promotion

Respondents were asked to rank the top 3 motivations for scanning core readings at their institution:

Reason for scanning (in ranked order)	Ranking score (overall)	Breakdown of scores (ranked 1-3)
Improve access to course readings	41	Rank 1) 39
		Rank 2) 2
		Rank 3) 0
Support for e-learning	35	Rank 1) 1
		Rank 2) 19
		Rank 3) 15
Meeting student expectations	28	Rank 1) 0
		Rank 2) 12
		Rank 3) 16
Reduce need for multiple copies (save space)	11	Rank 1) 1
		Rank 2) 4
		Rank 3) 6
Reduce need for multiple copies (save money)	6	Rank 1) 0
		Rank 2) 4
		Rank 3) 2
Raising the profile of your library	4	Rank 1) 0
		Rank 2) 1
		Rank 3) 3

The overwhelming motivation for scanning is to increase access to course readings, followed by “Support for e-learning” and “Meeting student expectations”. Providing sufficient access to core texts is a long-standing concern – both in terms of space and funds to make multiple copies available - for HE libraries and is closely tied to satisfaction ratings in student surveys across the sector, which might explain why “meeting student expectations” features in the top 3 motivations. Interesting is that so few institutions rank “raising the profile of your library” as a motivation, given that in many HEIs the management of digital readings is delivered largely as a ‘value-added’ service on top of existing services.

Given that “raising the profile of your library” is ranked so low and that many institutions have restricted staffing resources available to support the service, it is perhaps surprising that 35 out of 44 respondents do actively promote their scanning service. The comments related to this question show that the most frequently cited means of promotion was “web pages”, with promotion via subject/faculty/liason librarians being the second most popular. Other methods of promotion included: email, training sessions and newsletters. Of the institutions that did not actively promote their service, 3 indicated that this was because they could not cope with any increase in workload that might be generated by the publicity.

3. Copyright Licensing and Compliance

In Section 3 of the questionnaire respondents were asked about matters relating to the CLA Licence, the impact of the New CLA Licence⁵, and wider copyright issues within the institution.

Thirty-eight institutions responded that they had signed the New CLA HE Licence (issued August 2008); of these only 1 had not held the previous CLA Trial Scanning Licence. At the time of the survey only 2 of the 38 respondents had signed up to the full Comprehensive Licence (which includes copying form digital originals). According to CLA data, the total number of HEIs holding a CLA Licence for the session 2007-08 was 150, with 158⁶ licensed in 2008-09 (during which session this survey took place).

The majority (19 in total) of the 37 institutions that responded were managing the data reporting requirement of the CLA Licence by maintaining a central record sheet (within the Library); 3 had devolved this to departments. Thirteen were using the HERON software, PackTracker, to maintain records and generate the data report. The 2 institutions that had signed the Comprehensive Licence both indicated that they reported digital to digital copies made under the licence in exactly the same way as paper to digital copies.

For material that falls outside the scope of the CLA Licence a total of 11 institutions recorded that they do not arrange transactional permissions. Those that did (27 in total) used a variety of approaches:

Directly with publisher:	16
Via the Copyright Clearance Centre:	9
Via Heron:	16

Where transactional permissions were arranged, 10 respondents indicated that the academic departments paid any fees, and 20 said that fees were paid by the library⁷.

The New Copyright Licensing Agency Licence

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the New CLA Licence (see footnote 4) had any impact on scanning services and in what way. This question provided the opportunity for free text responses, from these two common themes emerged. The first being a general consensus that the inclusion of the US Participating Publishers in the New Licence was an extremely welcome development (this was specifically mentioned by 16 respondents):

⁵ The term "New CLA Licence" refers to both the Comprehensive and the Basic CLA Licences as they have now become known since they were issued in August 2008.

⁶ CLA data indicates that of the 158 institutions 38 hold the Comprehensive Licence

⁷ There were 28 responses in total, but respondents were able to select more than one response to this question

“The inclusion of US publishers increased the number of requests we can satisfy.” Or, “The ability to scan from books published in the US has enabled us to do more scanning within the same budget as previous years.”

However, in some cases it was noted that the inclusion of these publishers had led to a greater workload and had not necessarily led to savings: *“It has saved us money as now a lot of our readings that are US publishers can be requested via the licence rather than via copyright clearance. Having said that the increased cost of the licence probably outweighs this so in real terms we may not have saved much. It does open up more material for scanning though as we had called a halt to getting copyright permissions for any newly requested material due to cost we can now offer a better service.”*

The second theme was that since the introduction of the Trial Licence in 2005 a number of institutions had either established an entirely new scanning service or had developed existing services:

“We didn't have a scanning service before the CLA introduced the trial scanning licence and it has had quite a major impact in some subject areas but not others.” Or, “We are now trialling a centralised library scanning service as a result of signing up to the new CLA licence”, “We have streamlined the way we do scanning and changed some of the procedures”

Common themes also emerged when asked what impact the CLA Licence had on paper services⁸. A number of institutions had not previously offered any type of paper services. Of those that did, 12 indicated that there had been some reduction in their paper services, either because lecturers were opting to use scanned course readings: *“More departments are choosing to digitise readings instead of using course packs”*, or because the Library had taken a decision to reduce their offprint collections: *“We have reduced the number of photocopies going into our short loan collection”*. Some had actively begun to transfer their entire paper offprint/short loan collections to digital format, although this had not been without problems: *“We are actively trying to reduce the volume of the old photocopy collection. Where possible we are or intend to digitise readings. This has not been straightforward and has taken us twice as long as we anticipated as so much of the old collection was lacking module numbers etc. This data is required for the CLA data reporting.”*

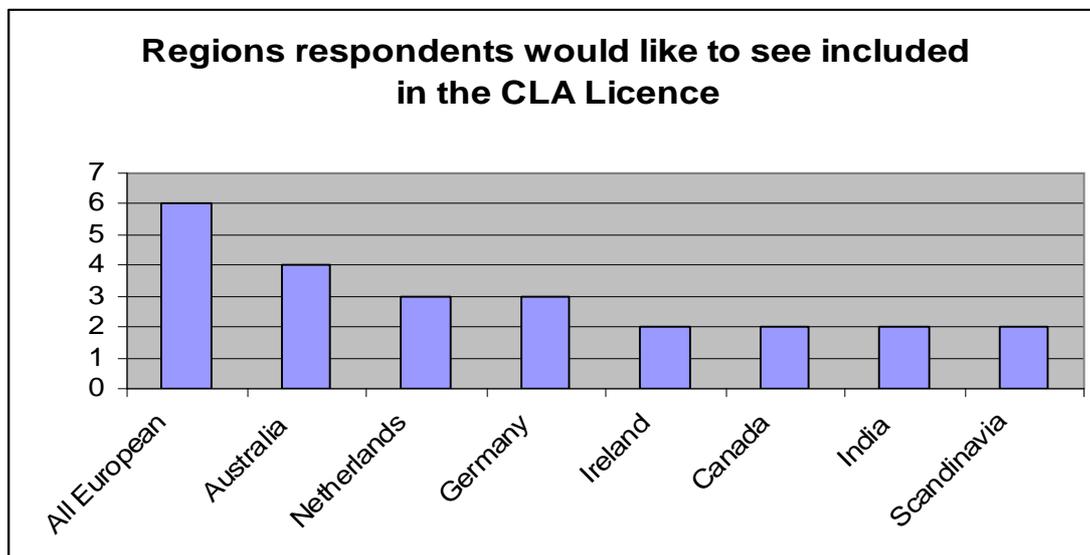
In general there was a feeling that the volume of paper readings being made available either via centralised services or directly by departments to students was reducing, although it was noted that this in line with some universities' policies to reduce paper consumption. Certainly there was a sense that this reduction would become more evident in the coming years even if no evidence was available currently.

Given the popularity of the addition of the US Participating Publishers to the CLA Licence in 2008, it followed that respondents were keen to see further territories added to the Licence. At the time of the survey 31 of 34

⁸ Paper services is used to describe either paper course pack production at the university and/or the provision of an offprint collection within the Library.

respondents stated that they would like to see the repertoire increased, 2 said they did not think this was necessary and 1 didn't know.

Some respondents mentioned specific countries, the chart below summarises these:



In addition to these there were individual mentions of: The Far East, Japan, France, Spain, South Africa, and one respondent asked for "All English Speaking Countries".⁹

The survey went on to ask respondents about their use to the CLA web pages. Of the 38 respondents, 30 said that they did refer to the site. Respondents were not asked to provide a reason if they did not so there is no way of knowing why 8 of the respondents did not visit the site. However, there were 32 responses to the following question which asked institutions to rate how useful they found the site:

Very useful	4
Quiet useful	21
Indifferent	7

Copyright Issues

This part of the survey aimed to find out more about how copyright issues and queries are dealt with within institutions. The section opened with a question to establish whether there was a named copyright officer within the institution. Twenty-three institutions did have someone in this role, while 14 did not. Fortunately, there were no respondents who did not know.

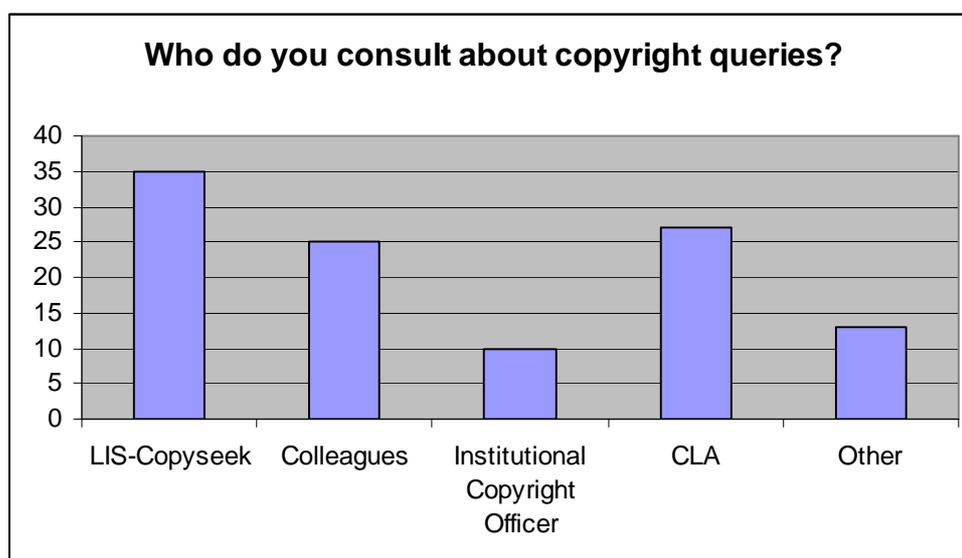
Of the 14 that did not currently have a copyright officer 1 institution was hoping to establish such a role, 3 said that they did not have a specific

⁹ It should be noted that the CLA has been able to add further territories to the Comprehensive Licence since its launch in 2008; these include many of those mentioned by respondents.

copyright officer, but that providing copyright advice fell within the remit of a colleague, e.g. *“Not called a Copyright Officer but we have a member of library staff who is our ‘expert’”*. Where a copyright officer existed 16 institutions stated that the role was based within the Library.

Thirty-three institutions responded to the question regarding copyright training or advice. The types of training and advice provided varied amongst institutions. Many responded to copyright queries on request, and provided information on web pages. 17 respondents indicated that they provided special training sessions for academics and/or students at their institution. However, it was mentioned several times that attendance at this training was voluntary.

Finally in this section, respondents were asked to indicate who they consulted about copyright queries. Participants were asked to select all sources that applied. In total, 38 individuals responded selecting 110 options between them. The chart below shows these responses:



Where ‘Other’ was selected, participants mentioned a range of sources including JISC Legal, individuals known as experts in the field and other universities copyright pages.

4. Procedural Issues

This section of the survey focussed on the practical issues relating to the scanning, delivery and management of digital readings. It was also the longest section of the survey in terms of number of questions.

Scanning

Of the 38 institutions that responded to the question regarding scanning in-house or out-sourcing, 18 scanned in-house and only 5 out-source this work. A further 14 use a combination of approaches. In the majority of those

institutions that scan some or all of their readings in-house this work was undertaken by staff within the Library, with only 3 respondents stating that the scanning was done by academic or departmental administrators. Those institutions that out-source all or some of their scanning cited a number of services that they used for this task¹⁰. These included the British Library's HE Scanning Service (12), Heron (11), and Other (3)¹¹.

The next two questions related to the provision of text files for users with a disability or visual impairments. The first asked whether institutions routinely OCR (use Optical Character Recognition software to create text files) digital readings for students. The majority (23) of the 39 respondents did not, 11 did and 4 stated that they did not know. Following from this, 19 institutions stated that they would provide text files for students with a disability or visual impairment, 10 would not and 8 did not know.

Continuing with the practical theme, participants were asked to state what source they used to create scanned readings, again it was possible to select more than one option:

Original source	29
Photocopies	21
Copyright fee paid copies	34
Other, please specify below	3

Of the 21 respondents that said they scanned from photocopies, the following were responsible for making these photocopies:

Library staff	18
Requesting academic	12
Department administrative staff	6
Other	2*

* Other was listed as being an out-sourced print service and 1 specific member of staff

Finally, participants were asked whether they placed any limit on the number of readings that would be made available per course. Thirty-two institutions had no restrictions in place. Of the 6 that did the number varied from 3 to 40 per academic (presumably this is per course rather than spread across all courses should an academic teach more than one). Elsewhere the limits were 10/12 items, 20 and 25, although the latter was stated as being "flexible".

Delivery of readings

The CLA Licence places restrictions on how scanned readings can be delivered. These call for readings to be delivered to students on a specific course and via an authentication system to ensure only to those registered

¹⁰ Participants were able to select more than one option.

¹¹ All 3 institutions noted that they used external companies that had existing contracts to provide services to their institution.

with the institution have access. As a result, the majority¹² delivered readings via their VLE (35) or reading list system (10). These options also have the benefit of tying the scanned readings in with other resources and more generally with e-learning developments at institutions. One respondent selected “via the library catalogue”, but clarified that this was part of an Electronic Library Service and was suitably authenticated. A small number also cited other delivery mechanisms that sat alongside either the VLE or reading list system, these included password protected areas or course web pages and a ‘teaching and learning repository’ called Intralibrary.

Leading on from this participants were asked to indicate where their readings were stored. Of the 37 respondents¹³, 21 indicated that files are stored within the VLE, 23 stored them on a secure server and 7 also have them stored elsewhere, although the majority of comments relating to these suggest that respondents are referring to back-up copies which are stored on local hard drives.

Ten participants had indicated that they delivered scanned readings via an online reading list system. However, there were 16 responses to the question asking which reading list management system institutions were using. Of these, 4 said that they used a system linked to their Library Management System; presumably these are used for administrative purposes (stock management) rather than to deliver links to resources for end users. The majority of other respondents were using TalisList (8), with 2 mentioning the reading list software developed by Loughborough University and one a system that had been built in-house.

Twenty-nine institutions responded to the question: “Who is responsible for updating reading lists in your system”, given that only 16 institutions recorded having a system available it suggests that some interpreted this to mean more general updating of reading lists. However, 24 participants responded that library staff are responsible for updating reading lists, 12 indicated that this falls to academic staff and 2 mentioned departmental administrative staff.

Management of readings

The management of scanned readings can represent a considerable administrative burden whether an institution supports a large service or relatively small one. Increasingly institutions are adopting software solutions to support the management of digitised readings. A total of 22 respondents indicated that they are using some kind of software to manage their readings, by far most popular being Pack Tracker with a total of 13 current users, plus one that had just bought the software. Fifteen institutions did not use any software solution.

When asked who initiated the digitisation of readings, the most popular response (35) was that requests made by lecturers/academic staff started this

¹² Respondents were asked to select all applicable options. A total of 38 individuals responded selecting 56 options between them.

¹³ Again, multiple responses were possible

process, although one institution went on the say: *“In practice academics submit their reading lists. Subject librarians identify material which can be scanned and pass to us.”* Subject librarians are responsible for initiating requests at 15 institutions, with 4 receiving recommendations from other staff. One of these 4 uses a combined process: *“We also check reading lists that have specified particular chapters and ask academics if they would like items digitised.”*

The question: ‘Do you digitise all readings that you are asked to, or do you recommend alternative materials, or reject items on the grounds of copyright?’ aimed to find out about institutional approaches to dealing with material that falls outside the scope of the CLA Licence. The question generated responses from 36 institutions. A large number (19) report that they reject requests for all readings that fall outside the terms of the CLA Licence, of these a handful will suggest alternatives to academics such as adding a photocopy to a short loan collection (for non UK/US material which is covered by the CLA Licence for photocopying), or investigating whether an e-book version of the source is available for purchase. Many (13) will try to gain transactional permissions for material that is not covered by the Licence, but the majority try to avoid this due to the reasons cited below:

“When selecting readings staff are asked to consider e-books ejournals and full text databases. If the readings are print based we will digitise but we ask (strongly) that they stay within the boundaries of the CLA Licence thereby keeping costs associated with clearance to a minimum (fees, staff time, delays in obtaining permissions).”

A number highlighted that requests are routinely rejected as they are from sources to which the institution already has electronic access:

“Most requests are digitised but we do reject some on the grounds of copyright - too long or not covered by the licence. If not covered by the licence we will sometimes try to get copyright clearance if the lecturer requests that we do. We also reject some requests as we already have electronic access via databases etc - quite worrying that some academics have no idea just what we do have available.”

Another requirement of the CLA Licence is that all readings are reported within the annual data report for each year that they are used. In practice this means that institutions have to ‘renew’ (confirm that they are still required) the readings every year. Again, 36 institutions responded when asked to describe their renewal process. Most of those institutions using Pack Tracker take advantage of its automated renewal process – it summarises all readings available for a specific course and then sends an email to the named course contact requesting confirmation that readings are still required. The majority of other sites also send emails to academics asking them to confirm which readings they will continue to use. In some cases renewal notices are sent first to the subject librarians who then liaise with academic staff. Although in one case emails have been abandoned due to the low response rate:

“We send out a detailed letter relating to every scan to each lecturer and ask them to renew by replying by a fixed date. We make it clear that non-response will result in the item being removed from the VLE in September of that year. We tried using emails but we found that we had very few replies. This method although laborious provides the best response rate although I am sure that were we to have hundreds more scans this would not be a viable. We keep a database which indicates renewals status of scan etc.”

A handful of institutions (8) state that they actively remove or repress access to readings if no response is received by a certain date. Many mention the need to send reminders to academics as they are slow to respond to renewal requests.

Given the resources involved in creating digitised readings it is interesting that only 12 out of 36 institutions actively collect usage statistics about digital readings, of these only a few use this data to inform any renewal decisions. It should be said that in these cases the usage statistics influence the decision to continue paying (or not) for transactional clearances where items are not being used, and not to remove any material made available under the CLA Licence: *“If we have paid copyright clearance for articles that are not being used we would encourage the teacher to choose another reading.”*

Similarly, of 37 respondents only 4 actively gather feedback from students as part of their library survey regarding the value of digital readings. This is a little surprising given that ‘meeting student expectations’ was one of the top 3 motivations for scanning cited in Section 2 of this survey. It may also be a reflection of the fact that many services are still in the early stages of establishment.

5. Wider issues

The final section of the survey looked at issues that go beyond the creation and management of digital readings to try to get a picture of what impact their availability has on collection management within institutions and also how they interact with e-learning support.

Collection management

The provision of e-book collections within UK universities to support taught course students has been slow to develop for many reasons including subject coverage and the some times high costs or restrictive licensing models. However, in delivering digital course reading services librarians are able to engage intensively with lecturers regarding what materials are needed for teaching and get a better idea of what format this should be provided in, thus creating more impetus to develop e-book collections. Not surprising then that 28 out of 38 institutions take the availability of e-books into account in their collection development policies, with some institutions actively buying titles as e-books if they are required for taught courses: *“If they're available we order an e-book for all reading list material”* and others reducing their print holdings where e-books can be purchased *“We reduce the number of print copies purchased if an e-book is available for any course material request.”*

Similarly, the majority of respondents (27 out of 37) check to see whether e-book versions of all core course readings are available and many *"would buy an e-book if available in order to maximise access to any core reading"*. This is certainly reinforced by the 22 respondents who would buy an e-book (if it is available) if a request is received to scan material from that title. The only inhibiting factor to this policy being cost or access issues: *"Unless it is very expensive or incompatible with our e-book systems"*.

Most respondents (32) would not scan readings requested from e-journals provided that their institutions had a subscription to that title. Almost all of the participants that commented on this question stated that they would link to journal articles in these cases: *"We already pay for the e-journal access so do not feel it would be cost-effective to scan a paper copy as well. I ask for a link from the VLE to be included or a PDF if the journal licence allows."*

Respondents were also asked whether electronic availability of material had an impact on stock levels maintained in their library collections. At the majority (27 out of 36) of institutions electronic availability does influence print collections. Interestingly, many of the comments made suggest that this does not just concern the retention of paper journals where electronic subscriptions are held, in many cases buying an e-version of a book would be coupled with a reduction in print copies: *"Yes if there is an e-book we would buy less paper copies. And if students only need one chapter from a textbook then providing a scanned copy means that we only have to purchase one paper copy yet they can all access the chapter."* However, even where there is a policy to reduce print holdings where electronic versions are available, the lack of core titles as e-books is cited as an issue: *"I don't think there is a huge impact though due to the low number of textbooks available as e-books"*.

E-Learning

As most UK institutions now support a Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) and these are the main vehicle for delivering digital course readings (see Section 4), the final questions of the survey related to the management of the VLE and resources within it. Thirty-eight respondents confirmed that their institution does have a VLE; there were no negative responses to this question. Who provided support for the VLE within an institution varied considerably, although a high number of institutions do mention a dedicated 'e-learning team'. Also frequently mentioned was support provided by libraries for the VLE even where the service and infrastructure fell under the remit of other departments.

Twenty-eight respondents also reported that library staff do have access to the VLE, although all institutions that commented on this said that this was only on an ad hoc basis and relied on course owners granting access to library colleagues: *"Library staff access is ad hoc not universal. Access to the VLE is subject to the department registering the librarian to access specific modules"*, in some cases there was evidently some reluctance to grant any access: *"... this has been a thorny issue for sometime, e.g. e-learning team and academics reluctant to permit access."*

A high proportion of respondents were unsure about what other types of material might be made available via the VLE. Those that did provide details of the types of material mentioned “home-grown” and tutor-created materials, such as PowerPoint presentations; podcasts and streamed video were also mentioned a few times as well as other types of audio-visual materials (images and audio recordings) and links to resources that are publicly available through sites like YouTube. The issue of rights in the use of these materials was mentioned only by 2 respondents; one stressed that their institution ensured the legality of all materials delivered via the VLE: “*Yes but all is made or owned by us, cleared copyright or creative commons*”, while another highlighted the difficulty in ensuring that copyright legislation is adhered to all the time: “*I’d imagine some of it of dubious legality!*”. Only 4 institutions manage the provision of these non-textual digital resources for the VLE.

Finally

At the close of the survey respondents were given the opportunity to make any additional comments or raise any further issues regarding digital readings at their institutions. The comments made covered a range of issues from lack of attention to copyright restrictions during the preparation of classroom materials, and the difficulty of providing copyright guidance and ensuring copyright compliance within an institution, particularly in the context of e-learning: “It is a can of worms and some people don't understand it.”, to more practical issues regarding the scalability of scanning services and the administrative burden of providing a centralised service, in particular when no dedicated team existed to support the service. A few sample comments:

“The number of scans created is beginning to get unmanageable in terms of processing renewals. I need to find an automated way of generating renewal e-mails and keeping track of requests in general.”

“Copyright training for academic and library staff is a major issue. Workshops are well received but not well attended. The need for ongoing funding and additional staff to undertake scanning in a significant way are also challenges we face. At the moment we're relying on existing staffing and structures.”

“Some staff would really like to incorporate materials into complex learning objects and I currently have to advise them to link to digital readings rather than incorporate them. Images are a problem generally and we have a very large Art and Design School who get up to heaven only knows! I am concerned that if the use of our scanning service continues to grow we will not have the staff to support it - and I am very reluctant to make academic staff designated persons as I know we will not be able to administer the licence efficiently if we do.”

Images and the issues related to using these in digital format to support teaching were mentioned by 2 other respondents.

Conclusion

The main intention of this report is to present the data collected during the survey rather than to attempt to draw conclusions about current and future developments, and as such the data presented should speak for itself. Clearly the CLA's Trial Scanning Licence and the more recent Comprehensive and Basic Licences have had and continue to have a significant impact on higher education libraries. There seems a fairly even spread in terms of investment in services to deliver digital readings with an equal number of institutions benefiting from dedicated teams that process large volumes of scanning versus those institutions that support small-scale or evolving services. It is true that most responding institutions expect the number of digital readings made available to increase and that there is an intention to expand services as resources permit.

Many respondents seem to be grappling with wider copyright issues, such as providing guidance for lecturers and providing resources for those that are creating courses within their institutional VLE. Clearly, providing digital readings provides a means for many libraries to become involved in supporting the VLE, but concern regarding how to ensure copyright regulations are complied with, and more generally how to roll out guidance and support regarding copyright - an area that is not popular or straight-forward - across an entire institution remains widespread.

It is surprising that little attention is currently focussed on user feedback and usage statistics, potentially this is something that will change as services become more embedded in institutions. With financial restraints forecast across the higher education sector for the coming years it will also be interesting to see whether scanning services become more significant as a means of providing students with access to core materials and therefore more resources are invested in supporting these in terms of dedicated staff, or whether these services are pared back.