

Reaching with Uniqueness

Electronic Reserves:

E-Reserves include study materials prescribed or recommended by lecturers for structured courses and listed in Tutorial Letter 101. The purpose of e-reserves is to provide access to content that supplements assigned textbooks; most e-reserve items are articles, single book chapters and law cases.

1. Prescribed and recommended resources

The E-Reserves Service was created to manage prescribed and recommended journal articles, chapters/pages from books, law reports, government publications and material available from the Internet in a secure environment. The material is available through an easy retrieval system and is supplied within the legal framework (copyright, creative commons) to registered Unisa students.

E-Reserve articles are searchable in the Library Catalogue and the material can be downloaded or printed. Copyright permission is cleared by the Library and wherever possible, links to e-resources are made available. The service is used by structured courses, ranging from first year to Master's courses.

2. Growth in Collection

The E-Reserve Collection is available in different formats. The E-Reserves currently link 7,184 resources (book chapters, articles, law reports and Internet publications) for the 2015 academic year.

3. Usage profile

The use of periodical articles (62%) is the most popular type of material placed on E-Reserves. Law Reports (20%) are used by the Law College, while 14% of the material is taken from chapters in printed books. The service has identified and linked 89 open access items, making access to these materials more easily available to students. Four (4) persistent links to the Unisa Institutional Repository were made, making this service available to users of the Electronic Reserves as well.

The Unisa Institutional Repository (UnisaIR)

The Unisa Institutional Repository (UnisaIR) is removing transactional distance by archiving and providing open access to scholarly information resources and research output of the University of South Africa. At present it is hosting 16,000 items and receives an average of 700,000 full-text views per month. It includes, but is not limited to, articles, working papers, research reports, speeches, conference papers and other artefacts created by the Unisa Community.

The UnisaIR is harvested by several other databases, resulting in increased global visibility and impact of Unisa and African scholars and researchers. The UnisaIR can be accessed at <http://uir.unisa.ac.za>.

Digitising the Unisa Archival material

The archives preserve over 4,000 linear metres of records of historical, legal, fiscal and/or administrative value to present and future researchers. Archival materials are consulted in the Archives Reading Room. The Institutional Memory material of the University, as well as donated collections, are preserved.

The Unisa Library has started to digitise selected collections in order to make them more widely available.

Advantages of digitisation:

- Knowledge sharing, access to community information anywhere, anytime
- Increased possibilities of performing innovative research
- Safeguarding fragile and brittle material by reducing constant handling
- Making faint material more readable by enhancing and/or manipulation of images

Digitised material is accessible in the Unisa IR at: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/4176>



University of South Africa (Unisa) Library

Collection Development in a demanding Open Distance Learning milieu addressing the challenges of transactional distance, access and time barriers



<http://hdl.handle.net/10500/18888>

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Abstract

This flyer accompanies the poster presented at the IFLA 2015 Conference. Its purpose is reflected in the following abstract: The Unisa Library's aim is to ensure that transformation of resource **selection practices** are directed to support enhanced throughput of our learners by providing study, teaching and research materials to them regardless of **transactional distance** or **time barriers**.

The poster's intent is to illustrate the Collection Development Division's objective to portray the **developmental activities** performed within the team of selectors and to highlight areas of service excellence identified in our particular environment, i.e. Unisa's unique character for serving all of its remote clients. Highlighted in the presentation will be a brief description of the use of different **input data and information** used to inform decision-making for the selection of resources.

The poster illustrates the different areas that the Library needs to plan for, to ensure that the information reach of our services is aligned with the **vision and mission** of the University. Attention is given to the particular strategies that are followed to move towards developing resources in line with the demands of emerging technologies that inform libraries' operational activities, but not neglecting the immediate needs of our clients who have no or limited access to these technologies.

Challenges for Open Distance Learning Institutions

- Student profile very diverse: two worlds to serve (hybrid)
- Transactional distance – student to university to teacher to information resources
- Postal services: unreliable
- Students having limited access to electronic devices to read electronic information resources
- No short loan shelves: e-reserves to serve
- E-Reserves to be linked to course content a year in advance
- Challenge of sourcing locally-produced content
- Current social and political instability in some African countries
- The weakening rand, changes in VAT regulations (14% VAT on e-Resources)

From Strategy to Collection Development Operations

- Strategic Plan informs, prioritises and identifies goals, strategies and strategic risks.
- On University operational level, the Institutional Operational Plan (IOP) informs the research, teaching and learning direction for the University.
- The Library plans its operational output from the basis of the IOP, developing the Library Operational Plan (LOP).
- The final step for planning is the identification of the library staff members' Performance Indicators and expected outputs.
- The LOP items are modified into milestones that are monitored on a monthly basis to determine and assure progress.

Collection Development Selection Practices

- Academic profiles
- Research flagship projects
- M & D research focus
- Input from College Tuition Committees
- Input from Library College Teams
- RSS feeds
- Gap analysis
- Feasibility studies
- SANLIC offers (consortium)
- Publisher's & websites
- Requests from clients
- Interlibrary lending requests by clients
- Evaluation of lost & missing items

Unisa in a Nutshell

- Founded in 1873 as University of the Cape of Good Hope
- Became the first public open distance university in the world in 1946
- Largest open distance university in Africa
- Extensive geographic footprint with 389,486 students in 2014
- Offers 839 formal qualifications
- 90% of students work full-time
- 63% of students are female
- 72% of students are in the 25-49 age group
- 3,000 are students with a disability
- 63% of students are undergraduate

Unisa Vision

Towards *the* African university shaping futures in the service of humanity

Unisa Mission

Unisa is a Comprehensive, Open Distance e-Learning Institution that produces excellent scholarship and research, provides quality tuition and fosters active community engagement

Guided by principles of lifelong learning, student-centredness, innovation and creativity

