## Imperial College London

Alma, Primo, and Leganto: Supporting the Library Mission with Ex Libris Higher-Ed Cloud Solutions

Imperial College London has adopted Ex Libris products for its core functions to better serve the institution, academic staff, and students. Working in step with Ex Libris, the library is on a journey to continuously deepen the value it offers.



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### **About Imperial College London**

The only university in the UK to focus exclusively on science, engineering, medicine and business, Imperial College London is renowned for applying the skills of each focus area to industry and enterprise. The school is consistently rated among the top five UK universities and the top ten worldwide, and its distinguished members have included 14 Nobel laureates. The Library serves Imperial's learners and researchers from its Central Library in South Kensington as well as branches at six other campuses.

### Supporting the Library's Mission

"Our aim and our mission is to support the education and research taking place at Imperial College London," states Katherine Rose, Head of Content and Discovery at Imperial College London Library Services. "We do this by connecting users to knowledge, resources, and expertise." In order to further that mission, the libraries have adopted the Ex Libris higher-ed cloud platform, including the Alma library services platform, Primo discovery service, Leganto course resource list management system, and most recently, the Rialto selection and acquisitions platform. "The most front-facing element for us is Primo, which we call Library Search," Rose explains. "We couldn't fulfill our mission without a good, easy and intuitive way for users to discover our resources. It has to be effective, flexible and improvable, and generally this is what we have found Primo to be. We're starting to make better use of Primo's APIs and design customized forms. We have a library systems developer in house, so we have the resources to build on and improve the interfaces as the needs of our users and our organization evolve."

### Deeper Engagement with Students and Faculty

Katharine Thompson is Liaison Librarian for Natural Sciences at the university and is also the Leganto expert for the library liaison teams. In choosing Leganto, she relates, "Because we already had Alma and Primo, we liked how well Leganto is integrated with other Ex Libris systems. It fits our goal of making our collection more accessible and discoverable." Thompson has found that Leganto leads to more interaction between the library staff and academics. As she tells it, "It's a nice way of making contact with them. We're offering them help, giving them something that's valuable to their students. We tell them, 'You can engage students a lot more through the material that you're asking them to read, and we have this lovely system which allows you to do that.' That often sparks additional conversations about our other learning technologies, such as our Blackboard VLE. We make sure that the reading lists are properly set up, which increases student engagement. So we're engaging more with both sides. We're making sure that the technology works, that the students are able to access it, and engaging more with academic staff about how they can make their lists more interesting to students. We're seeing student participation and activity go up significantly."

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### Positive Experiences for Academic Staff and Students

Thompson continues, "The academic staff like the mix of different materials they can include in the Leganto reading lists — journal articles, links to videos and websites, their own documents. They can show and hide different materials at various times during the term and move material within the list to make some items more prominent. Some have introduced a flipped-classroom model with more pre-reading, and they've seen a massive jump in the number of students interacting with the material. Academics can see how much students are looking at the readings through Leganto by seeing how many times students clicked on them."

Making course materials more affordable for students is another big benefit of Leganto. "We've really pushed the digitization service," reports Thompson. "Academic staff are enthusiastic that we can give all of their students access to a chapter of a textbook and get them to read what they want them to read, without having to spend all the money to buy an entire textbook. Also, students can't say that they couldn't get hold of the book — the chapter is in Leganto."

### **Expanding Services Through Analytics**

James Garry serves as library systems manager, with responsibility for managing Alma, Primo and Leganto. "One of the mainstays of my job is analytics. My team and I use them quite a lot," he states. What information do they get? "Anything and everything," he replies. "That includes stock counts, as well as various usage statistics on borrowing, downloading and citation clicks to guide collection development and weeding." In short, "Pretty much any form of analytics the library could conceivably want or need. We also provide statistics to external departments within the university. They all have their own idiosyncratic stat requests. Having Alma and analytics really helps satisfy those." One prominent example is laptop loans. Many academic departments have their own laptops to loan, and "we help each department by running their loans through Alma, which is great," declares Garry. "The library's Alma system tracks borrowing and returns and furnishes statistics about the usage of their laptops. It's very convenient to write those reports and distribute them using Alma."

### A Collaborative Journey

As Rose explains, Imperial is part of the Leganto analytics working group and is a development partner for Rialto. "The problems ProQuest and Ex Libris are addressing by creating Rialto are very real to us at Imperial, and I'd imagine to every library," Rose notes. "We want a seamless, end-to-end selection and acquisitions process where as much as possible takes place within one system, without multiple systems open at once on multiple screens. We need one user-friendly system which makes it easy for our liaison librarians to find the best content for their subjects and offers an intuitive and efficient workflow for our Acquisitions team, making full use of data and analytics to help us supply and use material. We hope Rialto will deliver this and more, helping us realize potential benefits we haven't thought about yet." The Ex Libris team has assisted in that effort. "I have found the people involved, including the Alma customer success team, to be incredibly helpful," reports Rose.

Concludes Rose, "Our focus is on making the most of all of the systems that we use, and on working as collaboratively as possible with the user community and with Ex Libris to make them work for us. It's a journey, and we're moving in the right direction. Ex Libris is helping us with that."

#### **About Ex Libris**

Ex Libris, a ProQuest company, is a leading global provider of cloud-based SaaS solutions that enable institutions and their users to create, manage, and share knowledge. In close collaboration with its customers and the broader community, Ex Libris develops solutions that increase library productivity, maximize the impact of research activities, enhance teaching and learning, and drive student mobile engagement. Ex Libris serves over 7,500 customers in 90 countries. For more information, see our <u>website</u> and join us on <u>LinkedIn</u>, <u>YouTube</u>, <u>Facebook</u>, and <u>Twitter</u>.

