Using External Library Services and SCONUL

This page provides access to online library catalogues to help you locate hardcopy books and other resources from libraries in your locality.

I would like a SCONUL card to allow me to use another academic library

SCONUL is an agreement which allows UK based university students to obtain a ‘SCONUL access card’ from the University Library where you are studying which can be presented at external University libraries for reference or borrowing purposes.

To request a SCONUL card you can apply at the information desk at one of the University of Liverpool Libraries in Liverpool, if you are an online student or studying remotely you can also consult your Librarian (see list of Liaison Librarians and Librarian for Online Programmes).

Requirements to use SCONUL

To be issued a ‘SCONUL access card’ you must satisfy these requirements:

- You must have registered for a full UoL Library borrowing account (to loan physical library items at the University of Liverpool). Note - borrowing membership of the Library is separate to your network account used to access the online library.
- You must have current UK residency.
- Not all UK Universities are part of the SCONUL scheme, you should check the local University Library is part of the scheme (http://www.sconul.ac.uk/sconul-access).

SCONUL for Academic University Staff

Academic staff are able to apply for a SCONUL card, however the above requirements must be met to issue the card.

SCONUL borrowing access for Research Students

Only students studying via research can apply for full borrowing access (e.g. PhD, MPhil or professional doctorates). If you meet these criteria (and the above general
(criteria) you will be able to loan items at the university where you are seeking access.

**SCONUL borrowing access for Masters, Undergraduate and Short Courses**

If you are an undergraduate (e.g. BSc, BA) or taught Masters student (e.g. MSc, MBA, MPH) or studying a professional qualification (such as CIPD) then SCONUL allows for reference only (i.e. items cannot be loaned from the library where you are seeking access).

Since only students by research (PhD or MPhil) can apply for borrowing under SCONUL, you may find it is easier to simply approach your local academic Library and request public visitor access for reference purposes; most University Libraries offer this service at no cost (see ‘Further Options’ section below).

**SCONUL for Online Students**

Students on online programmes do not typically have a Library borrowing account by default. If you wish to use SCONUL you should contact your Librarian to check if you have a UoL Library borrowing account.

Online students who have current UK residency and are studying a programme managed directly by the University can apply for a borrowing account (see note on Laureate based students below). For information on registering for a Library borrowing account see our guideline on [Using the Physical Libraries and Services for Alumni](#).

Note - students studying with Laureate Education cannot use the SCONUL Access scheme. This is because these students are not able to obtain a Library borrowing account for use with current SCONUL arrangements. See below for further options for accessing local university libraries. You can also [contact the E-Learning Librarian](#) for assistance with unavailable e-resources or help searching the Library for Online Programmes.

**Additional SCONUL Information**

Further details about SCONUL are provided on our [SCONUL page](#).

**Further options for accessing a local University Library**

If you do not qualify for borrowing with SCONUL and wish to loan items from another University Library you are recommended to view that Library’s policies for public visitor access and borrowing. Most University libraries will allow you to register to use their libraries for reference purposes without cost (i.e. public visitor access), you
should contact them before you visit to find out what their arrangements are. Some universities do not allow non-university users to access the Library during term time.

Possible further options include:

- Joining the academic library as a visitor for reference-only access.
- Joining as an external member (usually involving a yearly subscription fee) for borrowing rights.
- Some UK University libraries have schemes to allow Public Library users to borrow from their collections.

**Accessing Public Libraries**

Public Libraries can often be used to borrow scholarly materials or can provide inter-library schemes to obtain unavailable items. You can see online Library Catalogue tools a little way down this document.

**I would like to borrow from the British Library**

If you live near London, you may also find it helpful to know that the British Library in London will provide reference (reading) facilities to visiting students with a student ID who have a valid reason for using the collection.

The address of the British Library in London is:

The British Library  
St Pancras,  
96 Euston Road,  
London,  
NW1 2DB  
Telephone: 020 7412 7332

**ArticleReach**

Our ArticleReach service is an electronic delivery service which is visible when viewing an ‘Is it @ Liverpool’ link (only shown when an article is unavailable). You can also access this option from a search result in DISCOVER when an item is not shown as directly available (showing ‘Request It’ or similar link) You can see further details about ArticleReach at [http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/using/articlereach.html](http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/using/articlereach.html)

Online students do not typically have access to services based on-campus such as ArticleReach, this is due to the fact that these services require Library borrowing membership at the University Libraries. To use ArticleReach you will need to register for a borrowing account (note – eligibility for Library borrowing and related document supply services such as ArticleReach requires current UK residency during your studies). **Also note – students with our partner Laureate Education can apply for external membership** for borrowing but this does not allow for
use of document supply services such as ArticleReach – other categories of membership such as Alumi are also available.

Important - All University students however have the same access to all our online subscriptions/ collections. For information on registering for a Library borrowing account see our guideline on Using the Physical Libraries and Services for Alumni.

British Library Document Delivery Service

If you are a UK resident, you can also use the British Library document delivery service providing access to 100 million items (including articles, patents, reports, conference proceedings etc.), a fee is charged to the user. See the document delivery service Frequently Asked Questions for further details.

Copyright Clearance Centre (full text article delivery service)

Students can also use The Copyright Clearance Centre, a pay-as-you-go method of retrieving full text journal articles. You should check your required resource is definitely not available via the Library before using a commercial option.

NCBI document supply services

NCBI is a medical and health related database which can suggest commercial supply services, you should ensure you have consulted UoL Library databases (and should explore UoL Library supply services such as ArticleReach if you are able to use these facilities - see advice above) before using commercial supply services.

Other Library Catalogues

You might consider using a local or regional library as an additional source for printed books and other resources, the following online catalogues may be useful for browsing the collections of National, Public and Higher Education libraries:

- **WorldCat** - A single database bringing together the holdings of thousands of libraries worldwide. Find items of interest to you and then enter your postcode to find libraries near you that stock them.
- **British Library Catalogues** - Access to the major reference collections of the British Library at St Pancras in London and document supply materials at Boston Spa. You can also access the British Library web site.
- **COPAC** - COPAC provides access to the merged online catalogues of the largest University Research Libraries in the UK and Ireland. COPAC also includes the British Library catalogue with over 10 million British Library records from reference materials held in the London Reading Rooms and document supply materials held at the Document Supply Centre, Boston Spa. Users can search individual Library catalogues or cross-search the British Library and member catalogues.
- **SUNCAT** - The Serials Union Catalogue for the UK research community is a free tool to help researchers and librarians locate serials held in the UK.
- **M25 Consortium** - Links to over 100 higher education libraries in the London area and to their catalogues
- **National Library of Scotland** - On-line catalogues of the National Library of Scotland
- **National Library of Wales** - On-line catalogues of the National Library of Wales in Welsh and English

**Other Options for Document Supply/ Unavailable items**

If you are studying overseas or with our partner Laureate Education you may not be able to access UoL Library document supply services such as ArticleReach, this is due to licensing and copyright restrictions imposed by external publishers and copyright agencies.

You should ensure you consult our electronic resources and databases to check if electronic access is available for your required reading or independently sourced readings derived from your literature review.

You should consult –

- DISCOVER – our multi-source platform, you can perform a ‘Search by title’ using the DISCOVER search box shown on the homepage of the Library for Online Programmes [http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes](http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes)
- Library Catalogue – you can attempt to locate required E-Books using the link to the Library Catalogue shown on the homepage of the Library for Online Programmes or Catalogue search box shown on the E-Books page [http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes/ebooks](http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes/ebooks)
- ‘Go to an article’ search box (to look up an article by journal name, volume, issue, title) see this option on the E-Journals page [https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes/ejournals](https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes/ejournals)
- Other major journal databases – you can attempt to search for required E-Journal articles using other major journal platforms such as SCOPUS, Web of Science, MEDLINE/OVID (for medical sources) or other specialist databases for your subject – see links to ‘Major databases’ shown on the homepage of the Library for Online Programmes or your subject page/tab.
- Google Scholar/ Google document/ WWW sources – these search options can be consulted for further access to Library subscribed resources and open access sources, see links/Scholar search box on the Library for Online Programmes homepage or WWW page [https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes/www](https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/onlineprogrammes/www)

If your required E-Journal article, E-Book or other specialist resources is not available via UoL Library subscriptions and you have consulted our guidelines (and optionally your librarian) to ensure you do not have access to UoL Library borrowing/supply services, you should inform your tutor.
For information on registering for a Library borrowing account see our guideline on Using the Physical Libraries and Services for Alumni.

Further help

If you have any questions please contact your Librarian (see list of Liaison Librarians and Librarian for Online Programmes).