

Service Description for Accessible Copies

What is the Accessible Copies Service?

The Accessible Copies Service exists to provide library content in alternative, accessible formats to meet any additional needs as specified and requested by students and researchers at Royal Holloway. The aim of the service is to eliminate as far as possible any inequity of experience that may arise in access to and use of library content due to a library user's disability or neurodiversity. The service aligns with the University values of equality, diversity and inclusion, but it is also a response to the University's legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to support library users with disabilities. It is also in line with the Library Services Information Resources Policy, which follows a digital first strategy and provides resources in online formats wherever possible and affordable.

Who can access the service?

Any student or staff member at Royal Holloway who has an additional need is entitled to use the service. Service users do not need to have registered their disability with the University or with the Disability and Neurodiversity team.

How can the service be accessed?

The service operates in response to specific requests from library users. These requests can be made directly, or requests can be made on behalf of a user by either the Disability and Neurodiversity team or by an academic member of staff. Requests must be placed by completing the online request form.

What standard services are available?

Users can request any of the following services:

1. **RNIB Bookshare registration:** Registering a user on RNIB Bookshare, which allows them to independently search and access content available on that platform.
2. **Reading list check:** Checking of a specific reading list to identify items listed as Essential that are not held in a format accessible to the user. Once any items have been identified the library will inform the user and seek to provide all Essential items in an accessible format. Should the user wish to read any Recommended items from a reading list, these requests should be submitted under the **Item request** service and subject to those service levels.
3. **Item request:** Provision in a format of the user's choice of any specific item already held in the library collection or of any item not currently held by the library, as long as it accords with the current purchasing policies of the Library.

The service will attempt to source an alternative format for any of the following resource types: book, book chapter, article or single journal issue.

The following alternative formats can be requested: screen readable pdf, Word document, e-book online, physical print item.

What are the standard service delivery times?

1. **RNIB Bookshare registration:** Up to 5 working days
2. **Reading list check:** Up to 10 working days
3. **Item request:** Up to 70 working days

Working days are counted from date of the receipt of the request, or from the date at which all the required information has been provided by the requestor (see below). These delivery times are guidelines and not service standards. Library Services will always aim to deliver content as quickly as possible, and it may be delivered sooner than these timescales. However, delivery times cannot be guaranteed due to our dependency on external parties and limited staffing capacity.

Users may find that they receive an **Item Request** more quickly depending on how it can be sourced:

Means of provision	Information required from user	Guideline to speed of delivery
RNIB Bookshare registration	Name, University email address	5 working days
Directly available in RNIB Bookshare	Name, University email address, Title, Author, ISSN/ISBN, Module Code, user preference of format	5 working days
E-book purchase		10 working days
Print book purchase		30 working days
Requested from publisher		20 working days
Scan in house if already owned		50 working days
Scan in house if purchase required		70 working days
Reading list check (not including subsequent provision of items)		Name, Module Code, user preference of format NB: an accurate reading list for the module must be published on Talis Aspire reading list system by the teaching Academic(s)

Items that take longer to source are partly due to the delivery timescales of publishers and external suppliers.

What are Non-standard requests?

Some requests may not be able to be fulfilled as standard either because:

- they cannot be provided through established procedures
- the Library does not have the expertise or technology to meet the request in-house
- the staff resource or funds required to meet the request are not available

Examples of non-standard requests include:

- Resource types: e.g., scores, audio or visual materials
- Format types: e.g., Braille

- Books or journals that can only be provided by scanning and which contain a high proportion of illustrations or pages with non-standard text that need to be manually described (more than one illustration per 20 pages).
- Books that can only be provided by scanning and which are particularly long (over 500 pages).

In such cases the service will investigate the most appropriate way to meet the request.

- In some cases, the Library will be able to meet the request, but due to current capacity will not be able to do so within its standard delivery times.
- In some cases, it may be appropriate for another department or service within the University to meet the request.
- In some cases, it may be appropriate to out-source provision of the request to a third party.
- In some cases, it may not be possible to meet the request.

Consideration of such requests will be made in light of the University's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

When can a user expect a non-standard request to be fulfilled?

First notification: Once a non-standard request has been identified, the Library will inform the requestor (note: for some requests this may only be identified after standard avenues for meeting the request have been exhausted).

The non-standard request will then be investigated as to potential means of provision. The Library will lead the investigation and may do so in conjunction with other University stakeholders and external parties.

Second notification: Within 30 working days from the date of the first notification, the requestor will be informed how the University proposes to address the request, with an expected timeframe for delivery. If the University is unable to meet the request, the requestor will be informed. If the requestor is dissatisfied with this outcome, they may contact libraryaccessibility@rhul.ac.uk to discuss the matter with the Head of Acquisitions and Content Delivery.

Updates: The Library or the department in the University that is meeting the request will provide updates on the progress of delivery at regular intervals as agreed with the requestor.

Related Documents

- [Library Services Content Strategy rev draft July 2023.docx](#)

Approved LMT 24 July 2023