

Student experiences of reading list engagement

Students use reading lists strategically

Students use reading lists to support immediate academic tasks

Why students use reading lists

66% Assignments and assessments
32% Finding sources for research
30% Preparing for classes
30% Following up lecture content

Key finding: Assessment relevance is the strongest driver of engagement.

Most students spend only 1-4 hours per week on reading

39% use reading lists every week

Students prioritise content they see as most useful and relevant.

Key finding: Most students do not complete all recommended reading.

Students are selective readers

Teaching staff make a big impact

Students engage more when reading lists are used in teaching

Students value:

Links to assessment
Explanations of relevance
Discussion and activities
References in class

Key finding: Teaching practice strongly influences engagement.

Students face significant barriers to engagement

Common challenges:

Too many readings
Limited study time
Competing demands
Unclear priorities

Key finding: Time, not access, is the main challenge.

Workload is the biggest barrier

Students want more than books

Students value a range of resource types

Preferred formats:

Videos
Journal articles
Book chapters
Interactive content
E-books

Key finding: Students benefit from varied formats and shorter resources.

Students want easy to navigate reading lists

Students value:

Essential readings highlighted
Clear sections and chapters
Explanatory notes
Consistent structure

Key finding: Clear organisation supports reading decisions.

Design matters

Students are most likely to engage when reading lists are:

- Relevant to assessment
- Clearly explained
- Focused and manageable
- Embedded in teaching
- Well organised
- Available in different formats

Overall finding: students engage when reading feels purposeful, achievable and relevant.