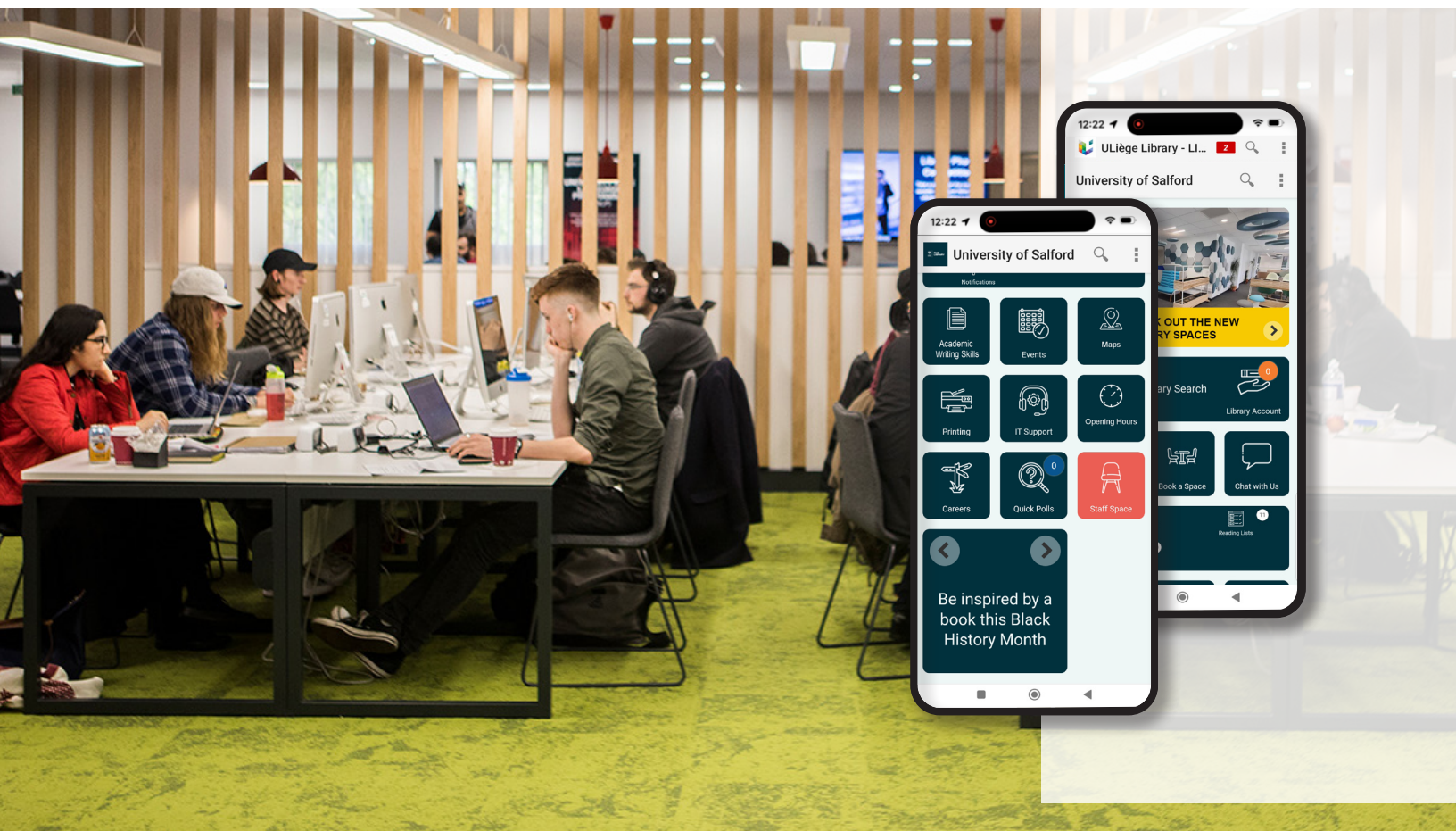




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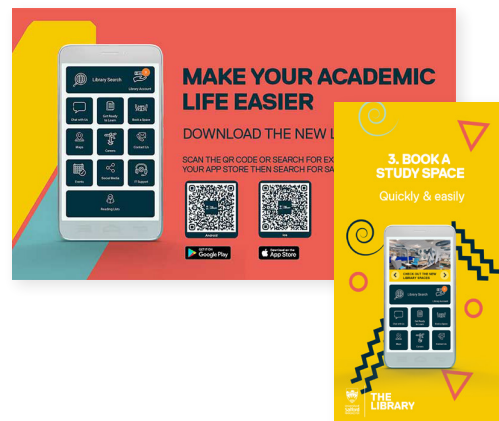
The University of Salford Library Empowers Patrons and Librarians with the Ex Libris Library Mobile App





Executive Summary

The University of Salford (UoS) Library wanted to deploy a Library app to give patrons more ownership over their library experiences and to meet growing patron digital expectations. In July 2021 the University selected the Ex Libris Library Mobile app, and in November 2021 they released the app to University users. A simple implementation process, coupled with built-in integrations with Ex Libris Alma, Primo and Leganto and inventive marketing campaigns, have made the app popular with both patrons and staff.



Key Takeaways

- Rich product integrations combined with Single sign-on (SSO) environment enables patrons to access library accounts, resources and reading lists seamlessly from within one interface
- At the end of the academic year the app had over 3,000 registered users, more than 10% of the student body, and 1,000 active users per month
- The app has helped facilitate 12,000 study space bookings since its launch in November 2021

About the University of Salford

The University of Salford is located in the heart of Greater Manchester. We have almost 30,000 students, 2,000 staff and a global community of over 170,000 alumni.

We pioneer exceptional industry partnerships leading the way in real world experiences by preparing students for life.

We work with industry to co-create the curriculum producing job-ready graduates primarily in health & well-being, engineering, digital and the creative sectors.

The results of REF 2021 confirmed that 78% of the research carried out at Salford is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions.

We are continuing to invest in our campus and facilities with a £300 million masterplan that will make us fit for the future.

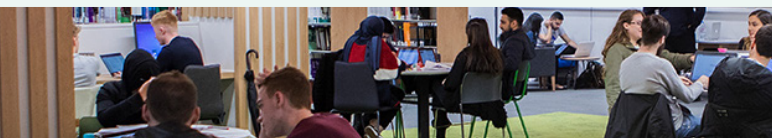
Giving students more agency over their library experiences

Towards the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, UoS librarians introduced new digital tools at speed to better accommodate patrons. New measures included online seat booking to enable socially distanced study spaces and adding new laptops for loan so that lower-income patrons could have better access to remote classes, resources and services.

In November 2021, UoS went live with a digital platform that they hoped would transform the digital library experience: the Library Mobile app, powered by Ex Libris. After over a year of remote and hybrid learning, UoS librarians had become convinced that a Library app was a must.

“Our patrons come in with really high expectations,” explains Angela Walker, Digital Library and Systems Manager at UoS. ***“They expect that there will be an app, as they use apps in every aspect of their lives.”***

Since its launch, Library Mobile has empowered patrons to make the most of library services, both on site and on the go. University demographics are diverse, with many students commuting to campus. Keeping up with recurring responsibilities like part-time jobs or parenting requires patrons to have access to resources at times convenient to them. Library Mobile makes it





easy for them to do so. ***“We’ve had people saying that they’ve booked a study space on their commute,”*** says Angela. ***“The feedback has been really positive.”*** At the same time, the library is already completely self-service through RFID, and it was important to librarians that the app further enable patrons to be autonomous within the library. Here too, the app has proved useful. ***“We’re seeing students using the app to navigate the shelves. We have a Stackmap within Primo, so you see them wandering around with the app and finding the books on the shelves.”***

Making life easier for librarians and academics

From the outset it was clear that onboarding librarians and other patron-facing staff members was critical. The UoS Library is joined with Career Services, so they were among the first services the Library app implementation team involved in app planning. Additionally, academic support librarians went out to speak with academics about the app and answer questions. One academic was so enthusiastic about Library Mobile that they ran a focus group on it with their students, with positive results.

UoS librarians are also benefitting from the app in unexpected ways. Like many libraries, the staff have not fully returned to the office, with librarians working

in a hybrid fashion. Agile working has allowed the Library to give more librarian office spaces over to students. However, having significantly reduced their office space, library staff wanted to ensure that they had a desk to work at when they visited the office. Library Mobile helped to solve this issue: ***“We created a role on the app for Library staff. When they log in to the app they’ve got their own dedicated tile so that they can book their own agile staff space.”***

How to implement Library Mobile

- **Implementation is not as complex as you might think.** The UoS Library team is small and does not have access to in-house developers, so being able to manage most of the project themselves was essential. Ex Libris’ support personnel configured the app’s integrations with Alma and Primo, and the University’s IT services assisted with setting up the user authentication process. Aside from that, ***“I could do most of the implementation myself, there’s nothing very technical there,”*** says Angela.
- **Stay agile.** Salford relies on metadata to promote features that are most relevant to patrons and to tweak the app to better serve its diverse patron population. Before the app launch, Salford library staff did a deep dive into the Library website

analytics to help decide which tiles they were going to build and what content to provide within the app. Today, the Library app team continues to move tiles around and provide new content based on the usage analytics they are seeing within the app.

- **Marketing the app is key.** Salford worked closely with Ex Libris' marketing team to create campaigns to increase awareness of the app and encourage users to download and interact with it. The activities librarians undertook to market the app included:
 - **Gamifying the app** with word searches and restaurant voucher prizes
 - **Money-off vouchers for the library café –**

when patrons showed the app at the café, they got money off hot drinks

- **Review the app, win a chance to win a Kindle.** Salford libraries had patrons submitting positive videos, blogs and even a poem to share their experiences with the app and enter a raffle to win a Kindle.
- **Posting consistently and frequently** about the app on the University's social channels as well as putting up posters and QR codes to make it easy for patrons to download the app



About Ex Libris Library Mobile

About Ex Libris, Part of Clarivate, is a leading global provider of cloud-based SaaS solutions that enable institutions and their individual users to create, manage and share knowledge. Working closely with its customers and the academic community, Ex Libris develops creative solutions that increase library productivity, maximise the impact of research, enhance the teaching and learning experience, and promote mobile student participation. Ex Libris serves over more than 7,500 customers in 90 countries. For more information, visit our [website](#). Please visit us on [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).