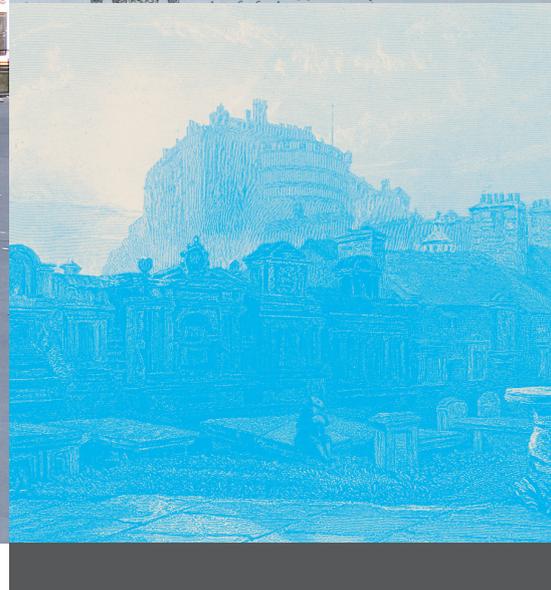
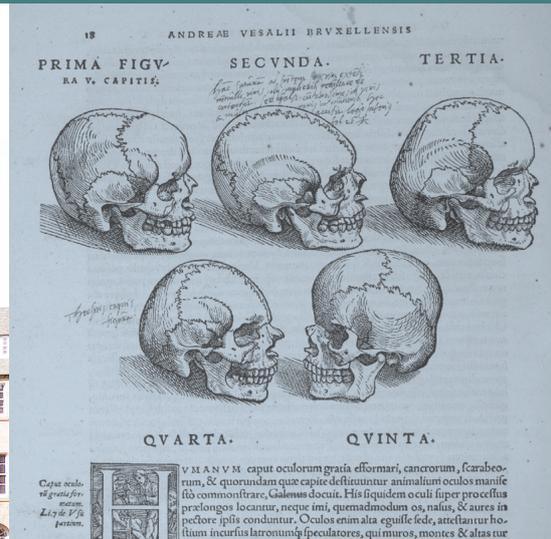




THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



A Digitisation Strategy for the University of Edinburgh



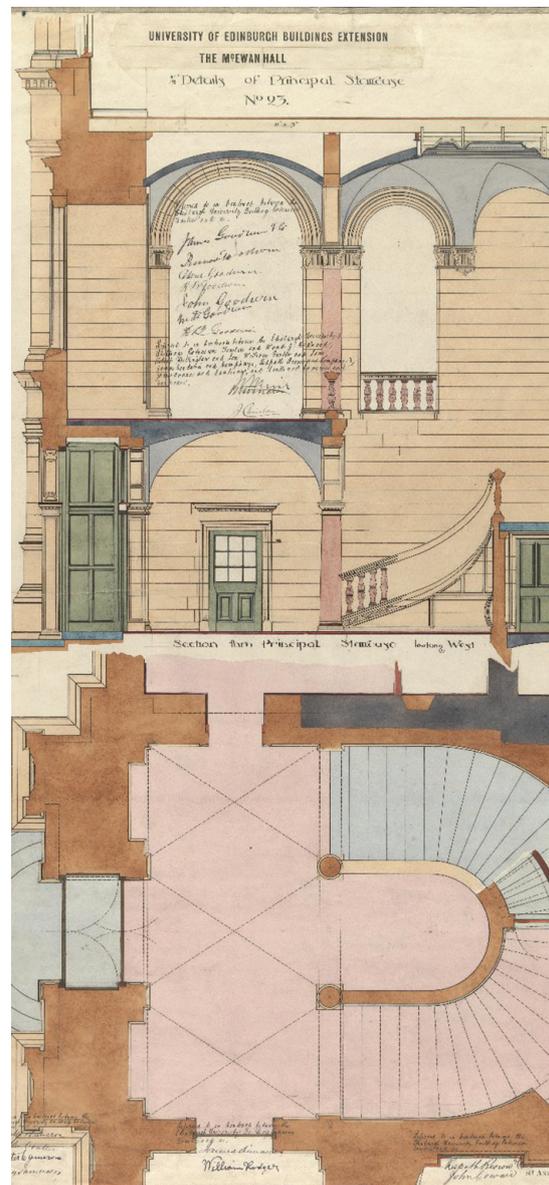
Vision

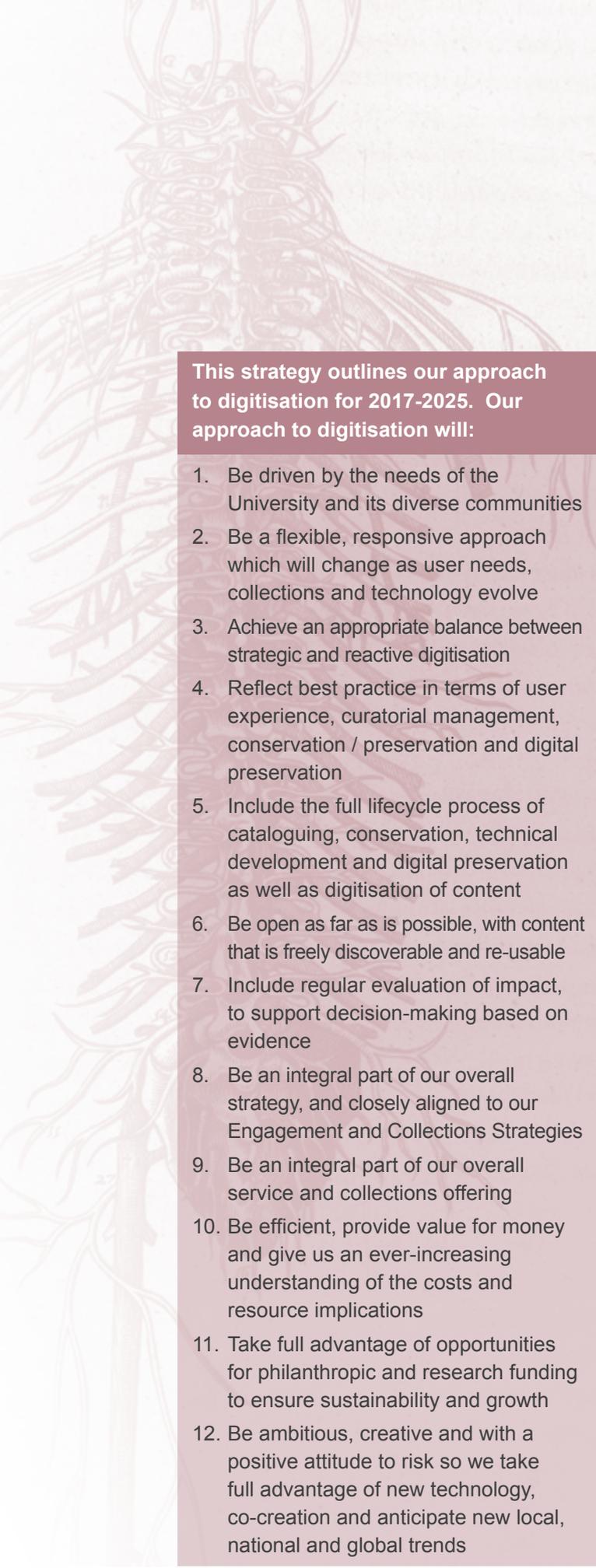


The University of Edinburgh has one of the world's leading collections of cultural heritage assets in the form of books, archives, artworks and museum objects, many found nowhere else. These historic collections are part of our identity and help to make the Edinburgh student experience special. We make these collections available for research, teaching and enjoyment through physical spaces such as our libraries and museums. Modern technology means we can now also open up this content online for a world-wide audience to use in new and exciting ways. As part of the University's commitment to open access, we are investing in a new programme of digitisation.

We believe that digitisation:

- Makes a significant difference to the experience of learners and scholars at the UoE
- Realises the value of historic collections which we steward on behalf of the nation
- Widens access and international participation in our cultural heritage
- Democratises knowledge and enriches local communities
- Preserves, develops and re-interprets collections for the future
- Makes online courses such as MOOCs possible
- Builds partnerships to allow sharing and re-use of content from different sources





This strategy outlines our approach to digitisation for 2017-2025. Our approach to digitisation will:

1. Be driven by the needs of the University and its diverse communities
2. Be a flexible, responsive approach which will change as user needs, collections and technology evolve
3. Achieve an appropriate balance between strategic and reactive digitisation
4. Reflect best practice in terms of user experience, curatorial management, conservation / preservation and digital preservation
5. Include the full lifecycle process of cataloguing, conservation, technical development and digital preservation as well as digitisation of content
6. Be open as far as is possible, with content that is freely discoverable and re-usable
7. Include regular evaluation of impact, to support decision-making based on evidence
8. Be an integral part of our overall strategy, and closely aligned to our Engagement and Collections Strategies
9. Be an integral part of our overall service and collections offering
10. Be efficient, provide value for money and give us an ever-increasing understanding of the costs and resource implications
11. Take full advantage of opportunities for philanthropic and research funding to ensure sustainability and growth
12. Be ambitious, creative and with a positive attitude to risk so we take full advantage of new technology, co-creation and anticipate new local, national and global trends

The annual plan of digitisation work and projects will now be set in this strategic direction. Initially we will prioritise within the following areas:

- I. Digitisation which directly supports the University's strategic vision for teaching and research, particularly Online Learning, Digital Education and Digital Scholarship
- II. Unique collections not available elsewhere
- III. Printed Books and Journals required for research, teaching and learning, which have not been digitised already (including and additional to the existing E-reserve service)
- IV. Archives and Manuscripts, especially those which lend themselves to transcription and the creation of searchable text or data
- V. Art and Museum collections
- VI. Collections which are identified through a new standard process for selection in response to user requests
- VII. Digitisation where there is internal need (e.g. conservation, new accessions) or demonstrable external demand (e.g. high-use items, research projects, exhibitions), and where we expect measurable impact
- VIII. Digitisation which creates access to collections which would otherwise be hidden or inaccessible due to preservation issues or lack of traditional metadata, to support wider community engagement

Context



The University of Edinburgh has a strategic vision which prioritises digital transformation. Specifically, the strategy states that we will “invest in digital services that are key to discovery, development and sharing” and that we will “engage the public in research: encourage the widest possible range of audiences to understand our research through public engagement programmes and our digital resources.” Information Services Group (ISG) implements this strategy by supporting digitisation as a key theme within the Library. During 2016-2019 we have committed to develop “A world leading digitisation strategy, culture and programme that aims to enhance student experience, research opportunities and leverage the university collections.”



This strategy outlines our vision and approach to digitisation, and is informed by a consultation exercise we ran from April-July 2017 (see Appendix). It builds on the last 15 years of digital content creation and looks to leverage our collection strengths to support the University and its communities. The strategy looks to the period 2017-2025, but it will be reviewed formally each year and tested through focus groups and monitoring of key targets. The strategy is not itself a policy document or plan of work but will be used to inform other documents (e.g. Digital Asset Management strategy) as an integral part of our overall strategic planning. The strategy is owned by the Digitisation Programme Board which represents stakeholders from across the University as well as all the staff working on the digitisation programme. Digitisation itself is based within the Library & University Collections (L&UC) directorate within ISG.



Our digitisation strategy is aligned with key initiatives including the recent appointment of a new Professor of Digital Cultural Heritage, the building of a Digital Scholarship Centre in the Main Library, and the focus on Edinburgh as a world centre for data through the Edinburgh Futures Institute, Bayes Centre and the projects associated with the City Deal.

¹ <http://www.ed.ac.uk/governance-strategic-planning/strategic-planning/strategic-plan>

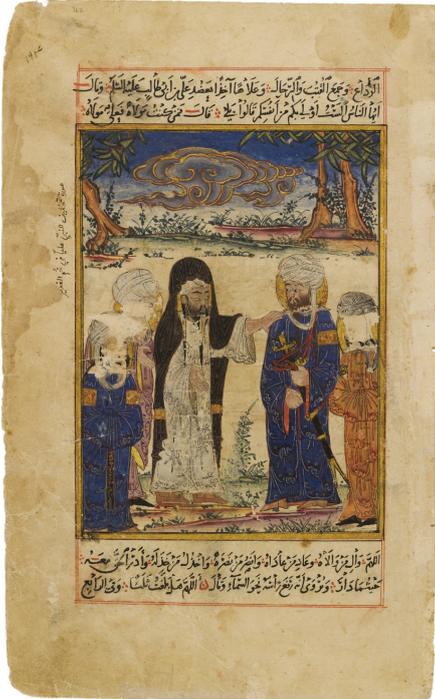
Digitisation



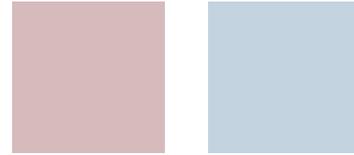
Digitisation is the process of representing books, documents, recordings or objects as digital information. It can make analogue sources accessible to anyone with an internet connection, across the world. Digitisation is used to preserve and share information and to widen access to rare and fragile heritage material. The digitisation process is carried out by specialist staff including photographers, audio-visual technicians, digital curators and developers. It can be carried out in different ways depending on the nature of the material and the needs of the user. At times the scale or type of content may mean we use external contractors. The resulting content is normally put online. At the University of Edinburgh we have an open by default approach, so, if we can, we will make everything freely available to anyone who wants to use it using a Creative Commons CC BY licence (although we have to comply with current Data Protection and Copyright legislation). See <http://open.ed.ac.uk/>

We digitise items from the University of Edinburgh's own collections, as in the case of the recent project to digitise the entire collection of University Theses. We also digitise material owned by other institutions as part of partnership projects, as in the case of the current project to digitise the Scottish Session Papers in collaboration with the Faculty of Advocates and Signet Library. Digitisation of content is part of our overall digital offering which includes the wide range of e-resources produced elsewhere, both licensed and open access, that we also provide. See <http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/finding-resources>

An overview of all the University collections is at <http://collections.ed.ac.uk/> and a gateway to those collections which have already been digitised at <http://images.is.ed.ac.uk/>



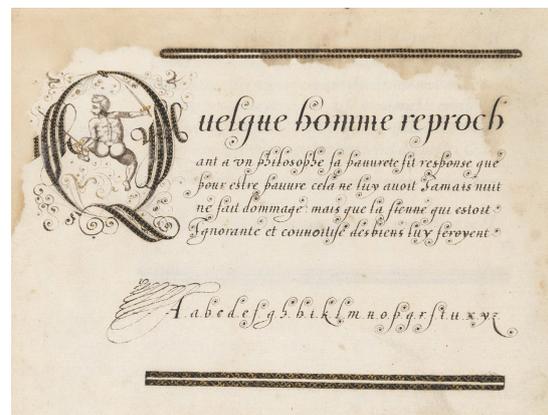
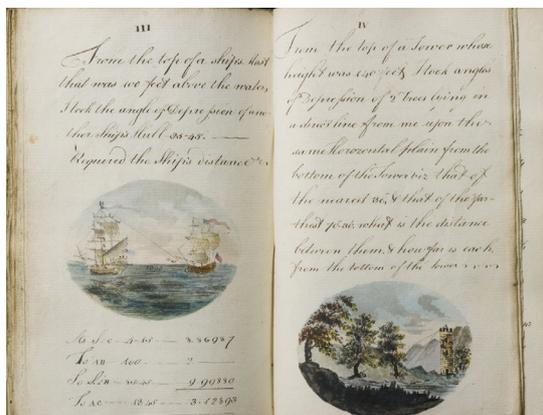
Key targets and KPIs



These targets and KPIs relate to current objectives of our digitisation investment in 2016-2019, and to the overall, long-term Digitisation Programme and Digitisation Strategy. All deliverables are resource dependent and many are projects in their own right.

A. Key targets for 2016-2019, to be delivered through the strategic project investment in Digitisation – Content.

No	Target	Date
1	Relaunch of collections.ed website, including online Directory of Collections and top-level descriptions for Archives collections, to support Open by Default policy	December 2017
2	Completion of Scottish Session Papers project phase 2 (300 volumes) completion to support research and public engagement	December 2018
3	Digitisation of all iconic items and content available online, to support public engagement by releasing our 50 best-known international highlights	July 2019
4	Pilot project to add digitised content into resource lists / VLEs, to support teaching and learning	July 2019
5	Put online one collection of 3D images from Museum collections to support research, teaching and and public engagement	July 2019
6	Establish programme for enriching Wikipedia / Wikimedia with collection images, to support teaching and public engagement	July 2019



Long-term strategic targets 2019-2025



B. Long-term strategic targets, 2019-2025

No	Target
1	Overall increase in proportion of collections available in digital format from 2% to 5%
2	Digitisation of all iconic items and content available online
3	Process in place for selection and prioritisation of new content to support teaching, research, learning, engagement and culture
4	Process and systems in place for tracking and measuring the benefit and impact of digitisation including use of content in VLEs, publications and events
5	Process in place for ongoing review of workflows and continuous improvement
6	Upgrade of interfaces and search systems including our collections gateway http://collections.ed.ac.uk/
7	To embed digitisation in teaching resources and practice; digitise core readings for the online reading lists of 75% of UG courses
8	Receipt of at least one major research grant AND one philanthropic grant with a digitisation or digital scholarship component
9	At least one collaborative project with another institution using the IIF model http://iif.io/
10	Delivery of a new portal to Scottish and Gaelic collections including audio-visual content
11	Links in place between catalogues for books / archives and images website to allow easy navigation between description and picture
12	Programme in place for retrospectively adding metadata to images to aid discovery
13	Technical development to allow automated indexing and geo-referencing of large volumes of OCRd material including Scottish Session Papers and Theses
14	Technical development to create visual recognition tools to allow automated identification and indexing, to be applied to e.g. decorated bookbindings, film content
15	Online presentation of at least one collection of 3-D scanned images from the museum collections



16	All copyright-cleared images to be available online to be downloaded free of charge in high resolution under CC licence in line with Open by Default policy
17	At least one new collection online including transcribed and translated manuscript content, e.g. western medieval manuscripts
18	All existing digital content resources moving to a sustainable footing following digital preservation policy to allow long-term access
19	At least one external partnership (commercial or non-profit sectors) to support development of cutting-edge technology e.g. in the field of automated handwriting recognition
20	Investment in promotion of digitised content through social media and Wikipedia
21	Digitise all analogue film content
22	Identify journal runs which can be digitised as an alternative to taking out commercial subscriptions, and release through OJS service
23	Digitisation of all maps (850 items)
24	Develop 23 Digital Library Things MOOC to increase awareness of digital resources and collections within UoE and develop skills of students using digitised content



Appendix:

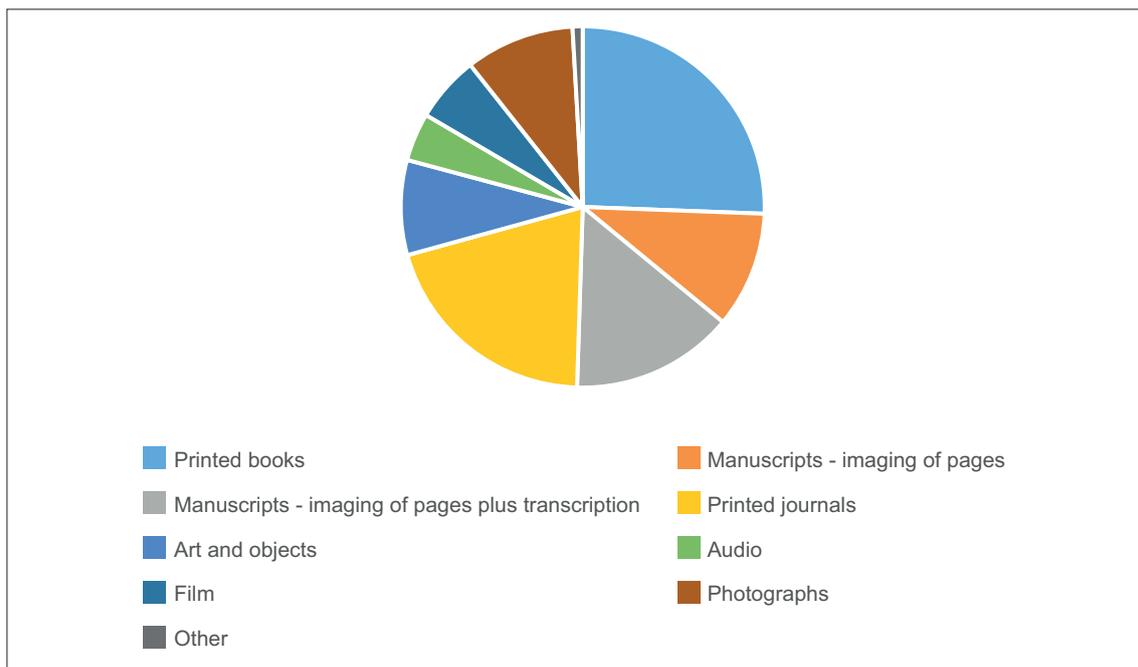
Digitisation Strategy consultation exercise

From 6 April – 31 July 2017 we ran a survey to ask stakeholders what digitised content they currently used and how they would like us to prioritise digitisation in the future. The survey was accompanied by webpages explaining the digitisation process and the collections available: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/about/organisation/library-and-collections/strategy-planning/digitisation-strategy-consultation>

The survey was promoted through a wide range of networks and attracted 254 responses. Of these 43% were from UoE academic staff, 24% from students and 21% from UoE non-academic staff. The detailed responses are given below. A few highlights:

- 46% of respondents already use digitised content from UoE collections at least once a week
- The most popular type of digitised content currently used was “digitised books, chapters or journal articles” (35%), followed by “searchable text / data” (15%) and “digitised manuscripts” (15%)
- The most popular use of digitised content was for research (31%), teaching (18%) and learning (12%)
- 81% of respondents would like us to prioritise “Unique collections not available elsewhere”
- The most popular specific collection identified as a priority was the David Laing collection (5 respondents)

The key question was 4: “What would you like us to prioritise for new digitisation from the University of Edinburgh’s collections?” to which responses were as follows:





The free-text responses were extensive and in many cases detailed. Responses suggested that some people do not differentiate between types of online resource (search engines, catalogues, digital collections). There was also awareness that people had incomplete knowledge of what was available (“I didn’t even know these resources existed, I’ve only ever used the main library”).

There were 113 responses to “What would you do with this new digital content and who would benefit?” These responses included:

- Use it as basis for new research / PhD programmes
- This content would be used for creating striking and memorable cases for support on behalf of the University
- Have more flexibility with studying. This would benefit me and other people who find silent library atmospheres impossible to work in
- Online distance learners would benefit greatly from further digitisation
- I use digital images in many different ways. For me, availability for download and open licenses are the most important things. The interface is secondary
- Have it available on the internet so that researchers around the world would benefit. The item would also benefit from being handled less in future
- I’m from the generation of academics that hates paper. It gets in the way. Digitized books would just make it easier to read efficiently
- My students are scattered through Scotland, so more digital resources helps them learn
- I have no idea - I wasn’t aware this existed, and will have to go snooping now!

62 respondents provided their email address so we can contact them about any immediate specific needs for digitisation and / or to ask them to help us further through a focus group.

Overall, the responses indicate a need to balance the demand for unique content (which people may not know about fully) against the demand for more digitised books and journals (which people are already familiar with using). The number of responses was very good for a survey of this kind and the level of engagement strongly supports ISG investing in digitisation as a key strategic priority to support the University of Edinburgh.

Joseph Marshall

Head of Special Collections and the Centre for Research Collections

v. 6

November 2017

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