

Member case study

Queen Mary innovates to help students access discount course material.

Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) has taken advantage of collaborative buying power to help students to purchase course material at discounted prices through a deal struck with bookseller John Smiths.

The university can expect to make a saving of around 5% over the next year, after using a national framework agreement for books to purchase course materials (print and electronic) for students at schools right across the university. By aggregating demand, better and more consistent discounts are available, while improved contract terms mean surety of supply, ensuring that students get the core texts they need, when they need them.

London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) worked with academic and library staff from QMUL to invite tender proposals from framework suppliers for the provision of these materials. This involved defining strategy and requirements, and evaluating tender responses.

The exercise, under the Joint Consortia Agreement for Books, Standing Orders, E-books and Related Material, will initially benefit QMUL's Schools of Biological and Chemical Science, Economics and Finance, Engineering and Material Science, Mathematical Sciences, and the Centre for Academic and Professional Development.

Purchase of course materials under arrangements led by these schools accounted for around £120k spend

in the last academic year, but these were fragmented and did not make best use of the university's collective buying power. The new approach has led to discounts of up to 75% in some cases and increased centralised co-ordination means the university can track the usage of course materials and meet student needs better in the future.

The initial contract will run for one year, with an option to extend for up to a further three years. With interest from a number of other universities, this is seen as the first phase in a process that will grow to include other institutions within the Consortium's membership in future years. This will help to drive further collaboration, maximising benefits across the sector.

Queen Mary University of London's Director of Student Services Emma Bull said: "Our students benefit from easy access to course materials online, via the Mile End campus bookstore or through pop-up distribution points at the first lecture, for free or at heavily discounted prices."

LUPC Director Andy Davies said: "We look forward to extending this innovation to include all London universities and colleges. This is a great way to support students in acquiring the texts they need and help ease the cost of studying in the capital."

For more information on the Joint Consortia Agreement for Books visit the [LUPC website](http://www.lupc.ac.uk).

For more information about LUPC agreements, Member benefits and how to join us, visit www.lupc.ac.uk or contact us on 020 7307 2760.

