

Lexis ebooks

Submission to LexisNexis Australia proposing the ProQuest ebook platform for the academic sector

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About Us

The Australian Law Librarians' Association is a national association with over 430 members in all Australian states and territories. ALLA represents librarians and information professionals working in courts, universities, government departments, law firms and professional associations. The Association supports the interests of law libraries, collections and legal information services to both legal and public communities.

The Association aims to promote a network for Australian law librarians, providing forums for continuing education, including legal literacy, and advocating on behalf of the interests of law libraries and our patrons. We also aim to promote access to legal information within the wider community.

Background and Introduction

Ebooks are becoming more prevalent in the legal environment. This is more pronounced in the academic sector, where university students largely prefer ebooks to print.

LexisNexis titles were previously made available on the Wheelers platform (2016-2018).

In 2019 LexisNexis changed this arrangement, preferring to host its publications on its proprietary Lexis Red platform.

This decision has, in effect, meant universities have lost access to LexisNexis ebooks. The Lexis Red login requirements are unsuited to universities' online access environments.

Consequently, there is now a strong groundswell from university librarians in Australia (and New Zealand) to have LexisNexis titles hosted on the ProQuest EBL platform.

This submission outlines the key reasons behind this proposal.

Ease of use and accessibility

Ease of use and accessibility are the main criteria for universities wanting Lexis content on the ProQuest ebook platform. ProQuest offers the following advantages:

- Most (if not all) Australian universities already have the ProQuest EBL platform.
- ProQuest EBL collection is multi-disciplinary, covering humanities, sciences, architecture as well as law. This means that many students are already familiar with the platform, and know how to find, borrow and access the ebooks
- Authentication has already been set up by universities for ProQuest platform allowing seamless access to titles.

- ProQuest offers flexible ebook user models, including unlimited users / multi-users, which means content is universally accessible*
[*Reference was made to an issue which arose in 2018, when there was a delay in LexisNexis delivering key print textbooks at the start of semester meaning some students were unable to participate in the curriculum]

Premium content on the pre-eminent ebook provider

LexisNexis is a publisher of premium legal content. ProQuest is recognised as the industry leader in Australia, delivering excellence in functionality and delivery. Some of the key areas identified are:

- The ProQuest platform offers ebooks from over 750 publishers including law publishers such as Oxford and Thomson Reuters <https://www.proquest.com/products-services/ebooks-main.html>
- Thomson Reuters recently added their content to ProQuest to the mutual benefit of both the publisher and the university sector
- ProQuest provides excellent customer service and understands the needs of university users
- ProQuest provides Counter5 statistics which is the current preferred standard of reporting
- High quality metadata and analytics and integration with the Alma community zone
- Copyright protection is implemented on the EBL platform
- ProQuest offers the ability to purchase individual titles or collections helping to streamline collection management workflows, as well as providing greater access to content / titles
- Ability to link to content via reading lists (eReserve)

Conclusion and Outcomes

ALLA acknowledge the needs of publishers like LexisNexis to provide innovative solutions within a commercial framework. However, the solutions for subscribers and users must be practical and flexible enough to meet the needs of different legal markets and industry sectors.

It is vital to know your audience.

Today's university students are digital natives and prefer to research online, and ebooks are now a complementary part of the online legal research environment.

Students and academics will continue to use the recognised research platforms, such as Lexis Advance. Students will also continue to purchase hardcopy editions of prescribed texts for open book exams. However, university libraries need a workable solution to access LexisNexis ebooks.

We recommend ProQuest as a practical means of delivering this ebook content.

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