

FAQ re: Cancellation of Direct Borrowing Agreement with U of T

1. What is the University of Toronto Direct Borrowing Agreement?

This agreement, which began in 2010-11, allowed Ryerson faculty, graduate students and staff to borrow from U of T libraries. Unless a direct borrowing agreement is in place, users from other universities are not able to borrow from U of T. The Library and the Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic have been paying for the costs associated with this agreement.

2. How much does this agreement cost?

For 2013-14, a flat rate of \$90,000 was paid to U of T for 220 borrowers to get a card, which works out to about \$400 per card. This is higher than the \$310 charge an individual would pay for an external research card. The costs have gone up annually since the agreement began in 2010-11, while usage has declined each year. For more information, please view the report [here](#).

3. Who was able to borrow from U of T Libraries under the Direct Borrowing Agreement?

The agreement allowed Ryerson faculty, staff and graduate students to get a direct borrowing card. The agreement did not extend to undergraduate or Chang School students.

4. Was access to U of T's electronic resources included in the agreement?

No. The direct borrowing agreement only allowed Ryerson faculty, graduate students and staff to borrow books. Visitors can access U of T's catalogue and e-resources through selected [LIRA workstations](#) at several U of T Libraries, which are available to the public.

5. What does the usage report capture?

The usage report captures borrowing transactions as opposed to browsing the collection. Within the parameters of this report, it was not possible to measure how much browsing takes place.

6. What other options exist for accessing U of T Libraries' collections?

[InterLibrary Loan Service](#) allows the Ryerson community to borrow items from other university library collections, including U of T. Electronic delivery of journal articles is now available through ILL.

To browse the collection at Robarts Library, faculty members, staff, or graduate students in other universities may purchase either the short-term visitor stack pass, at the Information Desk on the first floor of Robarts Library, or the annual Stack Access Card at the Reader Registration Desk, also on the first floor of Robarts Library. More information is available on the U of T library [website](#). Note that many of the college libraries at U of T allow public access to their collections for browsing at no cost.

To borrow from U of T libraries, please register as an [external researcher](#) - the annual fee is \$310/year.

7. Why is the Library no longer paying for access to U of T?

The Library has done a critical analysis of this program, and have found that:

- Slightly less than half of material borrowed is already in our collection
- Much of the material not available at Ryerson, based upon the reports received from U of T, is easily obtained, and at a lower cost than the fees associated with the agreement.
- The costs of the agreement keep going up, while usage has gone down. We feel it is important to invest funds in building Ryerson's collection.
- Feedback from graduate students has indicated that access to study space at Robarts is more valued than access to collections - with the Student Learning Centre opening in 2015, more study space will be available to Ryerson students.

8. How has the Library committed to improving collections at Ryerson?

The Library continues to make large investments in building a collection that meets the needs of our users. We encourage faculty and graduate students to contact their [subject librarian](#) regularly to suggest items that merit inclusion in the collection - this is the best way to improve the collection, and ensure that it reflects the research needs of the university. Requests for continuing resources (such as journals and databases which were not covered by this agreement) go through a selection committee. Electronic delivery of articles via InterLibrary Loan is now available, and we've recently implemented a large scale [demand-driven acquisition](#) program which allows us to be more responsive to our user's requests for resources. Library staff are also reviewing requests made through InterLibrary Loan, and purchasing these items where possible.

9. What level of consultation took place prior to the cancellation of the agreement?

In 2012/13, the Library determined it would renew the agreement for one more year, but that usage would be monitored closely. As such, during the past year the agreement has been discussed extensively with the Academic Planning Group (APG), where there was support for not renewing. Deans and Associate Deans were also involved in discussions, and gathered additional feedback from graduate students. The decision to not renew was communicated to Chairs, Deans and Directors, who were asked to share this with their faculty.