

**University of Bristol
Information Services**

Library Collection Management Policy

February 2009

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1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of Library collections is fundamental to the University's success in learning, teaching and research. Therefore, the Library, in close cooperation with academic staff, must select, manage and exploit its collections of print and electronic resources, and facilitate cooperation with and access to other collections, in a manner which will help the University achieve its aims.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide academic and Library staff with guidelines for making decisions about the development, management and exploitation of Library collections. The Policy will:

- describe the purpose and scope of the collection;
- clarify responsibilities for collection development and management;
- set out the Library's policy and provide guiding principles to inform and underpin subject-specific collection policies and day-to-day decisions with regard to: selection, acquisition, access, preservation, relegation and withdrawal of library materials.

It is intended that this Policy is accompanied by subject-specific collection management policies, which are developed and updated by Faculty and Subject Librarians in liaison with academic staff.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE LIBRARY'S COLLECTIONS

In this Policy, the term 'collections' refers to all materials held within Library-managed accommodation, and to the electronic resources to which the Library provides access.

The purpose of the Library's collections is to support the University's learning, teaching and research. The Library also has a responsibility to maintain appropriate collections of local, national and international significance, even if these collections are not currently used by University students and staff.

The Library manages its collections in the light of complementary resources available elsewhere, having regard to the needs and the convenience of the University and its members and also of the wider community. It is the Library's intention to maintain and, where appropriate, to acquire material of regional, national and international significance which is not housed elsewhere.

In addition, the collection includes:

- general reference material which does not directly support university programmes but which is of value to scholars and students
- appropriate finding aids such as indexes, abstracts and subscription databases
- online subscriptions to all House of Commons and House of Lords papers and Command Papers
- an archival collection of University of Bristol research degree dissertations and theses

- recent examples of taught course dissertations and student projects
- works which support the professional development of library staff
- archives and Special Collections, including the University's institutional archive (see Appendix A for further details).

The Library also hosts one of the UK's European Document Centres, housed in the Wills Memorial Library.

The collection does not include:

- archives of taught masters theses or student projects
- material for recreational reading
- advertising or promotional materials
- devotional works which are not used for University of Bristol teaching or research.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The successful implementation of this policy is dependent upon the collaboration of library and academic staff. The roles and responsibilities of these staff are set out below.

The Director of Library Services is responsible for the allocation and management of the Library Resources budget. Details of the budget allocation process are set out in Appendix B.

The Assistant Director of Information Services (Client Services) is responsible for the overall management of Library collections, and for the implementation, review and regular update of this Policy.

Subject Librarians are responsible for managing budgets and collections in individual subject areas, in accordance with this Policy and with University, Faculty and Library strategies. Their specific responsibilities with regard to Library collections are:

- managing subject budgets, including endowment budgets where appropriate (see Appendix E);
- liaison with academic staff about purchases and withdrawals, advising on issues such as numbers of copies, loan periods, format, and the balance to be maintained between purchase and inter-library loans;
- in liaison with academic staff, developing and regularly updating subject-specific collection management policies which set out the collection aims, scope and balance (eg, between research and teaching, books and journals) to be sought in each subject area;
- evaluating collections by monitoring usage and demand, through discussions with academic staff and students, and by comparing Library collections with other research university libraries and with specialist subject bibliographies;

- ensuring whenever possible that the Library has the most up-to-date editions available and that out-of-date material is removed or relegated to store as appropriate;
- regularly editing subject collections, taking into account the learning and research needs of academic staff and students;
- promoting the Library's collections, access tools and inter-library cooperative schemes;
- teaching students and other users to find, evaluate and use information available within and beyond the Library's collections.

Faculty Librarians are responsible for coordinating collection management policies and activities across faculties, working with Subject Librarians, the Assistant Director of Information Services (Client Services) and the faculty's academic representatives to ensure overall collection quality and balance, effective use of resources, and the consistent implementation of this Policy.

Academic Library Representatives are the principal channels of communication between academic departments, schools or faculties and the Library. They will represent the teaching, learning and research support needs of the department to the Library, and will communicate Library matters to their academic colleagues. Guidelines for Academic Library Representatives can be found at:
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/is/policies/librep.html>

4. SELECTION OF MATERIALS

Teaching and Research

It is the Library's aim to provide sufficient copies of, or electronic access to, all items included in student reading lists.

The Library expects teaching staff to provide a list of items required for teaching well in advance of the commencement of the unit. When new academic programmes or units are initiated or significantly changed, it is important that Subject Librarians are involved at the planning stages to ensure that planning for learning resources is taken into account.

Beyond these considerations, decisions about the balance of the collection for teaching support and research support will vary across the University's subject disciplines, and will be clarified in subject-specific policies. These policies will be regularly updated by the relevant Subject Librarian, in liaison with academic staff.

We will also collect, publish and preserve the University's research outputs by maintaining an institutional open-access repository and we aim to begin storing primary data in a form suitable for re-analysis.

Formats

For the foreseeable future, Library collections will be in both physical and electronic formats. The proportion of the collections will be increasingly electronic, as in some subject areas (particularly sciences) collections will be mostly electronic, whilst in other areas (such as arts and humanities), they will remain predominantly physical.

It is the Library's policy is to provide electronic rather than print journals when suppliers or intermediaries can guarantee secure and permanent access to these journals.

Journals and books

By far the largest part of the Library's budget for the acquisition of information resources is spent on journals, both print and electronic. For several decades, journal prices have risen faster than book prices and faster than the annual increase in the Library's overall budget.

Therefore, the Library, in liaison with academic staff, carries out regular reviews of journal subscriptions to ensure that journal prices do not grow to absorb the whole Library budget and leave no money for other types of resources.

It is also necessary to be cautious in taking on new subscriptions. When considering a new journal subscription, therefore, it is necessary to consider whether it is essential, and whether it is possible to cancel an existing subscription to help pay for it. Nevertheless, we can and do start new subscriptions every year on the advice of academic colleagues, with and without prior cancellations, and we welcome further suggestions. (See also Appendix C.)

General and Interdisciplinary Materials

General reference works and finding aids, journal back files, packages and expensive items used by more than one or two academic departments, are paid for from a small central budget. This budget is managed by the Library Purchasing Advisory Group (LPAG), comprising Faculty Librarians and colleagues responsible for managing the acquisitions process.

Gifts

The Library is pleased to accept gifts of items which fall within the general selection criteria outlined above – ie, items which support University learning, teaching and research, which develop existing collection strengths or fill identified gaps, or which are materials of regional, national or international significance not elsewhere available in the region. However, it must be recognised that gifts are not 'free', as they require staff time and accommodation. Therefore, the Library is unable to accept gifts of items which fall outside these criteria.

5. ACQUISITION, CATALOGUING, ACCESS & PRESERVATION

Acquisition and Cataloguing

The Library aims to buy resources from the best source, which may not always be the least expensive if speed is a factor. Subject to this, we buy through purchasing consortia where this results in a better price or other significant benefits (such as the use of favourable licence terms). Each prospective purchase is judged on its merits when selecting a supplier.

The Library also pursues strategies which reduce the impact of monopoly pricing on library resource provision.

The Library maintains and monitors internal processes such as acquisitions and cataloguing, to ensure that these processes are fast, efficient and cost-effective.

Access

Materials are housed at the appropriate branch library, and as a rule not duplicated at more than one branch.

The Library's aim is for our collections to be as comprehensive as possible, and we discourage the use of separate departmental libraries which are not part of the University Library system.

The Library encourages the use of reciprocal access schemes, which allow members of the University to use other university and national libraries whose collections complement our own.

Preservation

The Library binds journals and strengthens paperback books when appropriate.

The Library exploits suitable opportunities to digitise materials from our collections in the interests of both conservation and effective use.

Access to online journals is leased rather than purchased. Therefore, a number of measures are in place to protect our interests in this situation. The Library subscribes to Portico, which holds independent copies of electronic content supplied by participating publishers and guarantees to preserve that content in a useable form in perpetuity. In addition, we use LOCKSS open source software which allows us to preserve and provide access to our own local copy of the e-journal content to which we have subscribed. We download into our own LOCKSS systems electronic content from publishers who are not members of Portico. Further information about LOCKSS and Portico is provided in Appendix D.

6. RELEGATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Regular, appropriate editing is imperative, in order to maximise the usefulness of the collections, make best use of limited Library and University space, and eliminate unnecessary administrative costs. Therefore, the Library will remove materials not currently used to non-open access areas, and will withdraw unused duplicate copies.

The responsibility for identification of stock for relegation or withdrawal lies with the Subject Librarian, taking into account the needs of academic staff and students.

Books

Collection editing should be carried out on an ongoing basis, with all areas of stock being edited at least once every five years.

Items which are infrequently used may be relegated to the Library Store, from which they are normally available on request within two working days.

Editing criteria will vary from subject to subject, but will include one or more of the following factors as appropriate:

- the item is no longer of relevance to current teaching or research;
- the item is infrequently used;
- duplicate copies are available;
- the item is in poor physical condition;
- there are better or more recent editions of the title available;
- the item is now held electronically;
- there are copies available in other branches, local libraries or via inter-library loan.

It is no longer the Library's policy to keep in perpetuity one copy of every item acquired.

Journals

Print copies of journals will normally be discarded when secure and permanent online access becomes available, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ACQUISITION POLICY

Background

The principal aim of the University Library is to support the teaching and research programmes of the University of Bristol. Our normal collection development policies, of necessity, reflect current interests and activities.

Over the years, a number of “special collections” have been built up, consisting of books, manuscripts and other archival materials. The collections are listed and briefly described on the Special Collections web pages:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/is/library/collections/specialcollections/>

Some of these collections are relevant to current interests, but some are not. All of them, however, have an intrinsic value by virtue of their age, rarity, association with the University and its history, scholarly quality or financial worth. As their custodian, the Library has a duty of care which transcends current interests. Nevertheless, this duty does not extend in every case to further acquisition.

This document seeks to set out the considerations which govern our acquisitions policy for Special Collections.

Definition

All printed books and journals with a publication date before 1851 should be removed from the open shelves and transferred to Special Collections. Special Collections will also acquire later material that has association value or other claims to rarity or high intrinsic value, so the date cut-off is only a guide for interpretation by the Special Collections Librarian in each case.

All archival material, including all manuscript material, all photographs and other illustrations, and all artefacts, should be transferred to Special Collections.

Location

In the past, rare books and archives have sometimes been located in branch libraries other than the Arts & Social Sciences Library. In the future all such material will gradually be brought together in the Special Collections suite under the management of the Special Collections Librarian and the Archivist. For reasons of space, some Special Collections material may be held in the closed-access Store at the discretion of Special Collections staff.

Methods of acquisition

Material may be acquired by:

- Purchase
- Gift

- Deposit without the transfer of ownership.

It must be recognised that gifts are not “free”, since they involve expenditure on staff time, processing and conservation materials, and accommodation. Deposits also incur such costs, with the further burden of obligation to the owner for the well-being of the materials concerned. In present circumstances, space for accommodation is in particularly short supply.

Sources of funding for purchase

There are three funding sources:

- “Core” funding, by which is meant the Library’s annual purchase grant from the University, derived from the current resource allocation mechanism.
- Income from endowments, as listed in Appendix E.
- Special grants or other financial gifts received from time to time.

Acquisitions policy

Occasionally an item or a collection will become available which is so important that acquisition must be considered, and possibly attempted, even where it does not complement or enhance one of our existing collections, as summarised on the Special Collections web page. Otherwise, future acquisitions for Special Collections will normally be considered only in the following circumstances:

- Core funding will only be used to purchase those suitable items¹ which are identified as appropriate for the support of current teaching and research, and for which we have the agreement of the relevant academic department to charge its library book budget. Such acquisitions need not necessarily complement an existing collection.
- Income from subject-specific endowments will only be used to purchase suitable items which fall within the approved categories identified by the benefactor.
- Income from general-purpose endowments and from special grants may be used to purchase suitable items for any existing collection.
- Gifts and deposits will be accepted where they support and enhance existing collections.

Revision

This policy is subject to revision in detail as the University’s teaching and research programme changes.

¹ Where “suitable” means that the item qualifies by virtue of age, value or rarity to be kept in Special Collections rather than elsewhere in the library.

APPENDIX B: THE ANNUAL BUDGET ALLOCATION PROCESS

The University budgetary mechanism

The following information is extracted from *The Budgetary Process and Financial Information 2008/09* (<http://www.bris.ac.uk/finance/systems/fis/guides/bpd0809.pdf>).

“The University Planning and Resources Committee (UPARC), advised by the Budget Committee ..., is responsible for recommending budgets to the Vice-Chancellor for Council’s approval. The aim is to estimate income and authorise expenditure in a way that is fair and supportive of the academic goals of the University. ... The six academic Faculties (headed by the Deans as budget holders) and the Support Services (headed by the Registrar as budget holder) make up seven Budget Centres. ... The Deans and the Registrar allocate salary and non-salary expenditure budgets to their budget units.”

The outcome of this process is that a single gross sum is allocated to the Library for the purchase of information resources. This does not include staff or other costs, which are assigned separately.

Distributing the Library’s core budget

Starting from the gross information resources budget, sums are set aside at the beginning of the financial year in the following order:

Journals

1. To pay for our journal, database and other regular subscriptions, we take out a sum equivalent to the previous year’s actual expenditure, plus the cost of any known changes (new subscriptions or cancellations), plus an estimate of inflation. Subscriptions have to be the first call on our budget because they represent an advance commitment and we must be able to meet their cost.

Binding

2. Then we take out a sum for journal binding. The figure is determined with reference to the previous year’s expenditure, allowing for price rises but also taking account of the steady decline in binding as more journals become online-only. (The cost of strengthening paperbacks is met from within the book budget: see below.)

Inter-library loans

3. Then we take out the value of the annual voucher distribution, at the current rate per voucher. (The value of vouchers distributed remains the same from year to year unless individual departments request a change in their allocation.)

General books

4. Then we take out a sum for the purchase of “general” books, usually general reference works. The figure is determined with reference to the previous year’s expenditure but taking account of any known changes.

Books by subject area

After steps 1-4 we are left with a final sum which is available for the purchase of books and other non-subscription items. The balance is allocated according to weighted student numbers, at department or school or faculty level as requested by individual

faculties. (Unweighted student numbers, reckoned as FTEs and making no distinction between undergraduates and postgraduates, are supplied by the Student Systems & Information Office in the Academic Registry. The current weighting is: every Arts student counts as 3, every Social Sciences & Law student as 2, and everybody else as 1.)

Timing

The Finance Office guidance note mentioned above explains that the annual budgetary process involves five stages:

- a) August to December: review and data gathering
- b) January: determination of draft budget. (The chair of Budget Committee, working with the Assistant Finance Director, presents a draft budget for the committee to consider. The draft budget is discussed and finalised at a UPARC budgetary meeting.)
- c) February: Distribution. (The Deans and the Registrar allocate expenditure budgets to their budget units.)
- d) March-May: review and approval
- e) June-July: financial planning for succeeding years.

Although the Library's core budget for information resources provision is known after stage (d) in May, the breakdown between its component parts cannot be calculated until August because a key variable is the actual expenditure on subscriptions in the previous year and this is not known until after 31st July.

However, during stage (c) in February the Finance Office needs to know how to apportion the Library's information resources budget to academic budget centres through the Financial Information System (or FIS). This is done in the same way as for eventual distribution.

Building the budget

For each academic budget centre, we calculate:

1. The cost of its directly attributed subscription titles, plus a share of the cost of the "general" subscriptions in proportion to its directly attributed cost, plus an estimate of inflation. (At this stage in the year the final cost of subscriptions for the year is not known, so the figure from the previous year is used and then uplifted for annual inflation twice over. For example, in calculating the FIS figures for budgetary year 2008/09, which occurs in February 2008, we take the known expenditure from 2006/07, apply an annual inflation factor to get a predicted figure for 2007/08, and then apply the inflation factor for a second time to get the appropriate figure for 2008/09.)
2. A share of the binding budget in proportion to (1).
3. The value of the department's inter-library loan voucher allocation.
4. A share of the budget for "general" books allocated in proportion to the department's total library contribution.
5. The remaining balance allocated for books according to weighted student numbers (FTEs).

Because the budget is built before the outcome for the current year is known, it is inevitable that the final distribution in August differs slightly from the estimate produced in February. In general, however, the principle is that academic budget centres should get what they pay for.

APPENDIX C: ACQUIRING NEW JOURNALS FOR THE LIBRARY

By far the largest part of the Library's budget for the acquisition of information resources is spent on journals (both printed and online). At the beginning of the academic year we estimate how much it will cost to pay for all the journal subscriptions in place at that time, and set this sum aside. The remainder is then allocated to subjects for the purchase of books and inter-library loans.

For several decades, journal prices have risen faster than book prices and faster than the annual increase in our overall budget. For this reason we have to be cautious about taking on new subscriptions. Even if we simply maintain the subscriptions that we already have, journal prices will eventually grow to absorb our whole budget and leave no money for anything else.

When considering a new journal subscription, therefore, we must always consider:

1. Whether it is deemed essential by academic staff for teaching or research
2. Whether we can cancel an existing subscription to help pay for it
3. Evidence of usage.

Nevertheless, we can and do start new subscriptions every year on the advice of academic colleagues, with and without prior cancellations, and we welcome further suggestions.

In the first year of a new subscription its cost will be charged to the book budget of the subject area from which the request comes. This is because, since it is new, we shall not have taken account of the charge when calculating how much money to set aside for journals at the beginning of the year. The book budget must have enough uncommitted funds to cope, and the Library might also have a view about whether the longer-term cost is sustainable.

In subsequent years, the cost of the subscription will be included in the sum set aside for journals at the beginning of the year. The end result is the same, however: the money can only be spent once, and the more that is spent on journals the less is left to spend on books and inter-library loans.

If you wish to suggest a new journal, please consider the three questions mentioned above, and then talk to your subject librarian.

Dr Peter King
Director of Library Services
December 2008

APPENDIX D: PRESERVING E-JOURNAL CONTENT USING PORTICO AND LOCKSS

Printed journals become our property on purchase and are held on our own premises. This does not guarantee access to the content in perpetuity, because pages can (and do) become unreadable through wear or theft, but at least the matter is in our own hands. Access to online journals, however, is typically leased rather than purchased and the source content remains on the premises of the supplier. A number of measures are now in place to protect our interests in this situation, including membership of Portico and LOCKSS.

Portico is an American not-for-profit corporation which holds independent copies of electronic content supplied by participating publishers and guarantees to preserve that content in a useable form in perpetuity.

An alternative preservation strategy is LOCKSS ("Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe"). This is open source software which allows us to store, preserve, and provide access to our own local copy of the e-journal content to which we have subscribed, thereby recreating the 'ownership' model familiar from print days. We run a LOCKSS system of our own, into which we download copies of electronic content from those participating publishers which are not members of Portico. Each LOCKSS system continually compares the content it has collected with the same content collected by other LOCKSS systems, and repairs any differences, thereby giving the assurance of preservation thanks to "lots of copies".

Portico and LOCKSS together will give us secure access to a wide and growing range of paid-for e-journal content in the event of a failure of supply from the original source.

APPENDIX E: ENDOWMENTS

Endowments comprise capital sums given to the Library by benefactors and invested to produce annual income. Some endowments are devoted to specific subjects at the request of the benefactor, whilst others are for general purposes. In most cases only the income may be spent but sometimes the capital may also be spent: this is specified by the terms of the gift in each case as held and interpreted by the University Finance Office. Endowments have an Aleph budget record like core funds and are available to the appropriate subject librarian in the usual way.

<i>Brief title of endowment</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Britton	Christian art & architecture	Usually devoted to new books
Clark	Neurology	Usually devoted to new books
Dental	Dental	Usually devoted to new books
Eyles	Geology	Usually devoted to Special Collections
Fry	Unspecified	
Griffiths	Unspecified	
Mercer	Physics	Usually devoted to new books
Price	Child health	Usually devoted to new books
Ruding Bryan	Architecture	Usually devoted to new books
Smith	Unspecified (traditionally used for Medical Library)	Usually devoted to new books
Wiglesworth	Ornithology	Now wholly consumed by current journal subscriptions
Worsley	Chemistry	Usually devoted to new books