

University of Aberdeen Library Collections Policy

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University of Aberdeen Library Collections Policy

Executive Summary

The Library's primary task is to collect, maintain, promote and provide access to relevant and representative information resources which serve the Library users and support their research, learning and teaching.

This collections policy is a statement of a framework and set of parameters within which library staff and users work. The primary function of the collection management policy is to provide guidance to all staff when selecting and deselecting resources for the collection. The document serves as a guideline for each stage of materials handling and also provides a sound foundation for further collection development.

The Library will:

- Seek funding to support the acquisition of materials to support research, learning and teaching
- Prefer the most appropriate format, making use of electronic provision where archiving and access policies are proved to be stable
- Purchase multiple copies to support Course Reading, subject to agreed criteria
- Purchase paperbacks in general preference to hardbacks
- Purchase without bias or discrimination, within the limits of legal compliance
- Accept donations only in specific circumstances
- Decide on appropriate locations for collections
- Relegate materials to store, following consultation
- Dispose of superseded works or outdated editions of works without scholarly or intrinsic value
- Ensure the security of the physical items
- Examine the collections on a regular basis
- Preserve materials for the future, conserving and repairing as appropriate

Mission Statement

Our mission is to *Inspire to enquire*

Vision

To support the University's ambitions by being a leading library, special collections and museums service within higher education. We will build upon our unique heritage, distinguished collections and iconic spaces, and inspire creativity and curiosity. We will engage and empower communities both within and beyond the University in support of teaching, learning, research and enjoyment. We will work together innovatively, informed by best practice, and continuously improve what we do.

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Library Collections Policy 1 - Introduction

1.1 Purposes of the Collections Policy

The growth and preservation of the University's library collections is a principal and strategic function of library management. Collection development concerns the process of building and maintaining these collections in both print and non-print formats. The collections development process includes the assessment of need and the formulation of policies and procedures to support university business, together with budget allocation, materials selection, collection maintenance and evaluation, and resource sharing.

1.1.1 *Collection Development and Management*

The primary goal of the Library's collection development programme is to build collections that both support the specific needs of current research, learning and teaching programmes, and underwrite the long-term investment in scholarship that is critical to the University's success as an institution of higher learning.

The collections policy described here reinforces the missions of both the University of Aberdeen and its Library Services: to serve the advancement of research, learning and teaching within the University by providing solutions to the information needs of clients through efficient, effective and innovative services. Exercising its responsibility to the research and teaching needs of Colleges, the Library recognises the need to manage appropriate collections and to provide access to services that include electronic resources and document delivery.

The **Collections Policy** enables the Library to:

- Work actively with Colleges, Schools and research centres to ensure that current and future needs and priorities are recognised
- Provide consistency across the Colleges, Schools and research centres in policy governing the building of collections
- Assign funding to priority areas where there is demonstrated demand
- Manage effectively the considerations and constraints of available space
- Identify needs for access to resources through methods of provision other than print
- Manage the collections with effective evaluation, maintenance and disposal policies

The Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it takes account of the changing circumstances, needs and priorities of University business.

1.2 Library services covered by this document

Although operating as one integrated service, the University library is functionally divided into two main units. This document, unless otherwise stated, refers to the general library, operating from The Sir Duncan Rice Library, Taylor Library and the Medical Library. The Special Collections Centre (SCC), which has responsibility for the University's rare books and extensive archive collections, is covered by Special Collections policies – Archives collection policy, Rare books collection policy and Preservation Policy, available at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/about/policies-112.php#policies>.

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Library Collections Policy 2 – Collection development

2.1 Acquisition of Materials

The Library is a member of collaborative procurement Framework Agreements for the supply and delivery of print and electronic books, serials and databases to the higher education (HE) Institutions in Scotland, under the auspices of The Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL). Where possible we will buy from suppliers listed in the Agreement when procuring resources for the Library.

Materials purchased with the Library Collection Development Budget must be located physically within one of the University's site libraries or, for electronic material, be available via the network or on a multi-user basis. Electronic material for single, exclusive use will not be purchased using the Library Collection Development Budget.

2.2 Library Collection Development Budget Allocation

The Library Collection Development Budget is the budget from which books, periodicals and electronic information resources (online databases, CDs, etc.) are purchased. The Resource Allocation Model (RAM) used currently has been agreed by University senior management. The RAM has been developed to provide flexibility in linking resource allocation directly to the changing demands of research, learning and teaching. Its principal components are:

- A central fund for the purchase of subscriptions to multidisciplinary electronic resources. See [Appendix 2](#)
- A small Subject Development Fund to support development in research excellence and/or the introduction of new teaching programmes
- A formula-driven allocation to academic units (Schools, Institutes, etc.), based on teaching needs/student numbers and research profiles, using the ratio applied for the SHEFC teaching and research grants (80:20), and adjusted by a series of weightings. See [Appendix 2](#)
- Using the RAM, allocations to Colleges are made from the Library's Collection Development Budget towards the end of the preceding academic year. Subsequent discussions with the individual College Heads will produce a more detailed set of allocations at School or sectional level. These allocations are communicated to Schools as soon as this information is available.

Throughout the academic session, nominated [Library Representatives \(LRs\)](#) within Colleges/Schools are responsible for ensuring that spending from allocated funds is planned and regulated, ensuring the effective use of this resource in meeting both research and teaching needs. LRs receive regular feedback from the appropriate [Information Consultant \(IC\)](#) on the status of their particular funds throughout the session. See Section 3 Role of Library Representatives

2.3 Responsibility for Collection Development within the Library

The University Librarian

- In consultation with the academic community, defines and implements policies and strategies for the development and management of the Library's information resources, including their selection, acquisition and retention or disposal, cataloguing, preservation and conservation, storage and security, exploitation and promotion. This is done in liaison with the Library, Special Collections & Museums Senior Management team
- Directs and co-ordinates the work of those persons responsible for collection management operations by setting objectives, allocating tasks and agreeing priorities
- Formulates and implements policies and strategies for the management and utilisation of Library space, including determining allocations for storage and display of Library materials
- Builds effective relationships with prospective donors, sponsors, grant-awarding bodies and other external contacts, and represents the Library's interests in the wider academic and professional community

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Technical Services Manager

- Analyses collection building activities in the general library to ensure the development of a balanced collection
- Liaises with Information Consultants regarding the development of general library collections to ensure adequate support for the University's research, curriculum and new programmes
- Formulates policy documentation in collaboration with the Librarian and other appropriate colleagues as necessary
- Develops RAM in consultation with institutional colleagues, monitoring mechanisms in use in other institutions
- Produces monthly reports of expenditure and commitments
- Analyses spending patterns

Library Collections Co-ordinator

- Manages all aspects pertaining to major collections relocation projects in the general library:
 - Plans and manages projects
 - Oversees the actual physical moves of material within and between sites
 - Ensures that all related re-processing is successfully completed within appropriate timeframes to keep disruption to services to a minimum

Information Consultant

- Advises academics and the Librarian, and recommends appropriate materials and resources in all formats
- Liaises with academics regarding development of collections appropriate to their research and teaching
- Liaises between Library representatives in the purchase of cross-School, Centre or College resources

2.4 Access to Information Resources

In consultation with the academic community, the Library will determine the optimum method of access to information resources, including: -

- Purchase of or subscription to physical materials, in a variety of formats, will be maintained within the Library's collections
- Purchase of or subscription to remote electronic information resources
- Collaborative purchase of or subscription to remote electronic information resources
- Gift or deposit of material in any format
- Document delivery or inter-library loan

2.5 Collaborative Purchase and Access

The Library may enter into collaborative agreements with other institutions to acquire material. Reasons include: -

- Items with a cost that is too great for a single institution to justify
- Where a joint application for funding is made to acquire the material
- Where the resource is provided electronically and accessible remotely

In all cases, appropriate and guaranteed levels of access and service will constitute an integral part of any purchase agreement.

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The Library currently participates in several collaborative access schemes which facilitate physical access to collections of other libraries and, occasionally, borrowing privileges. See the Library's web pages. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/using-libraries/accessing-our-libraries-145.php#panel377>

2.6 Considerations not related to content

2.6.1 Formats

Material will be acquired in a range of formats, including printed and electronic monographs and journals, sound and visual recordings, and multimedia, according to the following criteria:

- Known or predicted user demand
- Appropriateness to user requirements for access to information
- Availability or cost of alternative formats
- Availability or cost of essential enabling equipment/facilities
- Accessibility
- Licensing arrangements
- Capability of technology to support the format
- The Library's ability to support the format
- Ability of the e-resource to provide statistics of use for evaluation purposes
- Life cycle, costs and value
- Overall cost-effectiveness

2.6.2 Print 'v' Electronic

- The Library makes resources available in electronic format wherever it is advantageous to do so
- New CD-ROMs will only be acquired where no suitable (in terms of cost or content) online version is available
- Online versions of existing CD-ROMs will be preferred, where possible
- Full-text online delivery of electronic journals and other materials will be selected whenever possible. Where licensing arrangements are deemed acceptable, online-only access will be selected for full-text resources

Monographs

There will be a preference to purchase an electronic version where this improves access for teaching, learning and research but the Library does not have an e-only policy. Many books will continue to be acquired in printed format. Alternative media accompanying books (e.g. a CD-ROM) will only be made available and supported where this is technically and legally feasible.

Journals and databases

Factors governing the selection of format will depend on the nature of user demand, requirements for use, archival facilities or methodology, licensing arrangements, and technology compatibility. Online format for journals and databases will be preferred wherever possible, except where this format is found to be inappropriate by the recommending College or School.

Reference works

Will be acquired in electronic format, depending on availability, cost, and appropriateness of format to the anticipated type of use.

Exam papers

An online database of exam papers provides access to a 5-year rolling collection of papers. Coverage is not comprehensive, since only those exams papers provided by Schools are made accessible by the Library.

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Exam papers can be archived and removed from public view at the request of Schools or Departments.

2.6.3 *General Criteria for Selection of Materials*

Some of the following criteria will usually be applied by Library Representatives when considering material for inclusion in the Library collection.

- Price/relative cost of material in relation to the budget and other available material
- Relevance to the curriculum or research activity and appropriateness to the user
- Timeliness and lasting value of content
- Reputation of the author, issuing body, and/or publisher
- Presentation (style and clarity)
- Literary, artistic, or social value
- Special features of unique value
- Local interest e.g. pictorial representations; bibliography
- Physical and technical quality
- Suitability of content to form
- Strength of existing coverage in the same or similar subject
- Improve coverage in subjects where titles are deemed inadequate
- Demand, frequency of inter-library loan requests for material on the same or similar subject

2.6.4 *Course Reading List Materials*

Monographs

- Schools are responsible for ensuring reading lists are accurate and up-to-date and for advising the Library of their content and any changes
- Following receipt of up-to-date reading lists from Schools specified items will be made available in the Heavy Demand collection
- Space constraints may make it difficult or impossible to accommodate all requests for multiple copies in Heavy Demand. Under such circumstances the HD Supervisor will liaise with School contacts
- The Library will move items in and out of Heavy Demand, informed by the usage statistics and requests from academic staff

Articles or chapters

- Where appropriate copies may be held in electronic format in compliance with the terms of the Copyright Licensing Agency licence
- All copying is made in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, and takes into account any special agreements made with appropriate bodies (e.g. the Copyright Licensing Agency)
- In cases where the offprint content is not available from the Library's collections, copyright-fee cleared copies are requested through the Inter-Library Loans service. Schools are expected to pay all related costs

2.6.5 *Purchase of additional print copies of course reading list materials*

In general, where an electronic version is not available or where the cost of an e-book is uneconomical, the Library may buy

- 1 copy per 20 students, up to a maximum of 25 copies
- Where the School indicates that students are required to purchase personal copies of the text, 1 copy per 30 students

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Multiple copies will usually be placed on 4-week Loan unless other loan categories are specified. Library staff undertake to relocate material according to demand on copies.

Subject to the maxima above these levels of provision are guidelines and dependent on a number of factors, such as the level of demand, cost or alternative forms of access. They may also vary among subject areas/Schools.

2.6.6 Purchase of materials in support of new courses or staff

To enable an element of flexibility, each academic session a percentage of the Library's Collection Development budget (usually 5% of the uncommitted amount) is allocated to Subject Development initiatives i.e. in support of new academic staff, new courses, etc. A maximum upper value of the amount available is indicated to Schools at the start of the bidding round.

- A bidding process is undertaken within Schools and submissions for funding are prioritised by the Colleges, with advice from the appropriate Information Consultant
- Prioritised submissions are then considered by the Head of Library Services and monies allocated
- Submissions can be made for one-off purchases of electronic resources

2.6.7 Criteria for purchase of hardback/paperback

Printed books are usually purchased in paperback format, except where the paperback versions are known to be of inferior quality with limited life. Paperbacks are laminated (usually done by the suppliers before delivery) to make them more sturdy and durable.

Hardback format is usually preferred in cases where:

- This format has been specified by the requester for valid reasons
- The hardback is not significantly more expensive than the paperback
- The resource being purchased is a reference item
- The item merits retention in perpetuity

Book jackets are usually discarded for new material going into current collections.

2.6.8 Out-of-Print Materials

Out-of print material will be purchased, where available, but may take longer to source and acquire. Monograph budgets should primarily be spent on purchasing current publications of long-term worth.

2.6.9 Foreign Language Material

Foreign language material is bought only to support specific research and teaching interests, on the recommendation of the Library Representative.

2.6.10 Date

Works will be acquired irrespective of date if they are relevant to teaching/research interests, and where they accord with the other specified selection criteria.

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2.6.11 *Bias/Discrimination*

Works will be acquired irrespective of source and/or content if they are relevant to teaching/research programmes, and where they accord with the other specified selection criteria, within the limits of legal compliance.

2.6.12 *Temporary deposits of material on loan*

Requests to deposit “for borrowing” personal materials within the library will generally be refused, although the merits of each request will be evaluated before a final decision is taken.

2.6.13 *Unsolicited items*

Unsolicited items sent to the Library, intended for purchase, will be kept for 30 working days while the sender is contacted and asked if they wish the items returned. After which the items will be treated as a donation.

2.7 Donations

2.7.1 *Criteria for the acceptance into the general library of material acquired by gift (or exchange)*

- Items or collections will only be accepted on the clear understanding that the Library may subsequently select individual items for retention or disposal as it deems appropriate
- Items not required may be sold and the proceeds applied to the acquisition of other materials for the Library. Material should be of recognised scholarly significance
- On the basis of current teaching/research priorities, the material should have actual or potential use
- Material may be accepted because of its specialist nature
- Material may be accepted where authorial bias provides unique contextual value (e.g. in explaining national/religious thinking)
- The item offered is in better condition than an existing Library copy, and the content is still topical
- On the basis of known or anticipated demand, additional copies of the title would be useful
- Items that fill gaps in the Library’s holdings
- Material that is significant to the heritage of Northeast Scotland
- Free CD-ROMs, or other media, will only be accepted if they meet the above criteria and can be supported technically and legally
- Donations must be in good physical condition, e.g. the binding should be sound, there should be no annotations
- Donors should be aware that where a donation is accepted by the Library, it will not be possible to retain it as a discrete collection. Material will be dispersed within the existing Library collections, according to subject
- Donations accepted become the exclusive and absolute property of the Library and maybe disposed of if they cease to be of value to the Library’s collections
- In the case of large donations, the donor is responsible for preparing a list of documents for donation
- Donations will not be treated as a priority unless urgency to support a course is indicated at the time of donation

[Library Services Donation Agreement Form](#)

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2.7.2 *University of Aberdeen Theses*

All research postgraduate theses produced by students of the University of Aberdeen will be retained in the Library currently one electronic copy, one print copy for reference. Theses generated on taught Masters programmes will generally not be retained.

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2.8 Cataloguing and Classification

Information resources acquired by the Library will be recorded in the Library Catalogue. All resources in the catalogue are described to internationally agreed standards for bibliographic description, currently RDA (*Resource Description and Access*) and AACR2 (*Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Second Edition*), and are held in MARC21 (*MAchine Readable Cataloging for the 21st century*) format to facilitate the exchange of data with other libraries and agencies. Subject Headings using the Library of Congress Subject Headings standard are added for all materials. Authority control is maintained for author and subject names following the Library of Congress Name Authority File headings. Physical materials held in the Library are normally assigned a shelf mark based on the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme. Electronic materials are not all individually catalogued, but where this is the case the same standards apply. These materials are not normally classified.

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Library Collections Policy 3 - Role of Library Representatives

3.1 General Responsibilities

The main purpose of a Library Representative (LR) is to serve as the liaison point between the College, School or Section and the appropriate [Information Consultant \(IC\)](#). Wherever possible, the aim is to ensure that:

- There is smooth and efficient exchange of information between the Library and the School
- The Library has sufficient, timely, information to support the School's research and teaching activities
- Information is communicated to users in the Schools and comments and suggestions from students or academic colleagues are fed back to the IC
- Initiatives by the Library are supported and encouraged within the School

An illustrative summary of the LR's main tasks is given below. As internal procedures vary widely across Schools, practice will differ considerably.

Responsibilities include:

- Co-ordinating and prioritising orders for new purchases, both books and journals, in print or in other formats
- Balancing Library collection development budget allocations between teaching and research and monitoring to ensure efficient use of the allocation
- Co-ordinating School recommendations on withdrawal of stock
- Advising the Library on purchase of multiple copies of student texts, particularly those on reading lists
- Submitting School requests for purchases from the Subject Development Budget
- Reviewing journal expenditure annually, co-ordinating cancellations and new subscriptions
- Attending meetings of Library-related groups
- Ensuring ICs are aware of, and invited to, appropriate staff / student meetings
- Ensuring that ICs receive notifications of new or revised courses
- Communicating School's opinion (staff and student) to the Library and the College Library Committees
- Notifying ICs of new staff members within the School and new research interests or teaching methods

3.2 Spending the Collection Development Budget allocation

The LR is delegated responsibility for the Library Collection Development Budget allocation for their particular School or Section.

- The School can recommend materials in all formats in accordance with this policy's guidelines
- Materials purchased through this budget must be located physically within one of the University's site libraries or for electronic material be available via the network or on a multi-user basis
- Electronic material for single, exclusive use will not be purchased using the Library Collection Development Budget
- Colleagues must order materials through the LR. Library staff will only process those orders which are authorised by the LR
- Each LR is required to deposit with Library staff a specimen signature (to fulfil the requirements of the Library's auditors), plus a password so that orders can be made through the appropriate web-mounted forms
- The LR is supplied with a monthly statement of expenditure to date, plus a list of what is currently on order and a list of completed orders

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- A Library Guide [Spending your Library Collection Development Budget Allocation](#) is available

3.3 Procedure for ordering material

Information about how to order material, including electronic order forms, can be found on the [Ordering Library Material](#) web pages.

Books, journal back runs and electronic databases can be ordered in a variety of ways:

- By using the [electronic book order form](#)
- Submission of an annotated publisher's catalogue with the LR's signature attached
- A list with full bibliographic details

Use of the [web form for new journal subscriptions](#) is mandatory.

Recommendations for electronic resources which are available on a subscription basis must be made via the web form for ordering [electronic resources](#). Sharing the cost of resources between School allocations may be considered. Orders for material costing less than £50 will not be considered for sharing. Shares should be investigated and arranged through the appropriate IC(s).

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Library Collections Policy 4 - Collection Management

The Library caters for variation in demand and type of use of library materials by a number of methods:

- Initial mode of acquisition or subscription and type of access (e.g. printed or electronic, licensed with online access, Inter Library Loan)
- Library locations at sites appropriate to users' needs: The Sir Duncan Rice Library and Taylor Library in Old Aberdeen, Medical Library at Foresterhill, Reid Library at the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health
- Alternative locations for material: Heavy Demand, closed access and remote stores, Special Collections Centre
- A range of loan periods: Long Loan, 4-week loan, 3-day loan, Heavy Demand (overnight until 10.30 a.m.), 24-hour loan, Reference

The Library will allocate material to and move it between these locations and categories according to demand and access needs; sensitivity of content; intrinsic value, and security and conservation requirements.

4.1 Locations and Availability of Material

The majority of the library's collections are located on open access in The Sir Duncan Rice Library and Taylor Library in Old Aberdeen, at the Medical Library at Foresterhill and at the Reid Library, Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health.

4.1.1 Heavy Demand

- Heavy Demand is a short loan service, created to ensure swift and fair access where resources are limited
- Academic staff must specify which titles they wish to make available through HeavyDemand
- Library staff will locate material into Heavy Demand where there is demonstrated demand

Multiple copy orders will normally be allocated to 3-Day Loan, with one copy on 4-week Loan, unless other loan categories are indicated on the book order information or specific School-wide instructions are received.

4.1.2 Remote Closed Access Stores

These facilities accommodate material with low use levels in one or more of the following categories:

- material matching a particular cut-off date
- material that currently has low potential for teaching or research
- has restricted use conditions
- does not need preservation in a special environment

4.1.3 Inter Library Loan

Material that is not currently held in Library Collections and which may not be suitable or available for purchase may be available for borrowing from another library. Recently published book material that is in print should be considered for purchase.

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4.2 Movement of material between locations and categories

Library Services will assign material to, and move it between, appropriate locations and categories of availability. It will also work according to agreed mechanisms whereby lesser-used works – e.g. those with little scholarly or intrinsic value – can be withdrawn, and works no longer relevant to this University but of use to others can be suitably relocated through transfer or sale.

Library material will be accommodated and moved between locations and categories according to the criteria specified below. Subject or School-specific collecting policies will override these guidelines where agreed with the Head of Library Services. Material moved to closed-access areas will be fully catalogued to ensure it is properly accessible in the Library Catalogue.

MATERIAL TYPE	ACTION
Currently purchased print only subscription serials or series published since 1970	OPEN SHELF
Works not borrowed for a period of time but which are in areas of teaching or research interest	STORE
Duplicate copies of works that are no longer recommended course reading	DISPOSAL
Superseded works or outdated editions of works of scholarly or intrinsic value	STORE (1 copy)
Superseded works or outdated editions of works without scholarly or intrinsic value	DISPOSAL
Damaged works of scholarly interest or value that cannot be replaced or repaired	SCC or STORE
Low use or damaged works of no scholarly interest or intrinsic value	DISPOSAL
Works damaged beyond repair	DISPOSAL (Replacement may be considered if recent record of use and copy available for purchase)
Low-use works in repairable condition but not of sufficient value to repair	STORE
Works permanently replaced by alternative media	DISPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED
Out-of-date material of an ephemeral nature	SCC OR DISPOSAL
Periodicals without current subscriptions, not consulted for a period of time, and no longer of teaching or research interest. Applies particularly to incomplete or short runs titles	DISPOSAL OR STORE
Duplicate periodical issues	DISPOSAL

4.3 Guidelines for transfer of material from modern Library Collections to the Special Collections Centre

Books and journals will be referred to the Special Collections Centre for assessment and possible transfer if they meet the following criteria:

- Published prior to the existing “cut-off date”, currently pre-1841 for arts and humanities titles; pre-1861 for titles in the sciences, medicine or topography
- Limited editions, with the number in the print run given on the preliminary pages, the reverse of the title page or endpapers, e.g. “number 7 of 250 copies”
- Related enclosures are present such as letters or newspaper cuttings

Books and journals may also, by discretion, be referred to the Special Collections Centre for advice if there is:

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- Evidence of provenance, e.g. non-Aberdeen University Library, i.e. private or institutional library, bookplates; prize bookplates (including those from the University of Aberdeen); *non-Aberdeen University Library* book stamps; signatures and / or annotations are present.
- Significant illustrative matter is present, e.g. numerous colour (not black and white) plates; aquatints, engravings

In all instances where transfer to the Special Collections Centre is considered, dust jackets (where present) will be retained and no further processing will be done.

4.4 Security control

General library materials are marked with appropriate security devices and buildings are provided with appropriate equipment to ensure the safe retention of the physical item. Library buildings are maintained by the University's Estates department so that the internal environment does not conflict with the preservation of library materials. See [Appendix 3](#)

4.5 Library material checks

Library collections are checked on a regular basis to ensure their security and condition of repair. Damaged materials will be repaired or replaced if the conditions at [paragraph 4.3](#) are met.

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Library Collections Policy 5 - Collection Maintenance and Evaluation

5.1 De-selection of materials

De-selection involves removal of materials from current collections to closed access storage or for disposal and from storage to disposal (e.g. sale, transfer). Large-scale de-selection exercises will only be undertaken following consultation with the academic community, having regard to patterns of teaching and research interest. Where levels of use indicate high demand items can be relocated from storage to the current collections.

5.1.1 General criteria

- Material of current research and teaching interest will be retained
- Material no longer of current research and teaching interest, but with the potential to be of future research and teaching interest, will be moved to storage
- Material with no past, current or potential research and teaching interest will be disposed of
- Library Services will regularly monitor the collections. Members of senior library staff have responsibility for conducting de-selection in their subject areas of collection responsibility, in close liaison with academic colleagues
- All material for disposal will be checked against a list of criteria prepared in consultation with Special Collections Centre staff

5.1.2 Criteria for retention

The consideration of materials for retention will usually encompass one or more of the following:

- Current and future research and teaching needs
- Levels of use
- Known to be needed for reference and consultation
- Inclusion in current research and teaching assessments and subject surveys
- Material retained under co-operative collection agreements or contractual obligations e.g. European Union documentation
- Material written or edited by current members of University staff
- Currency
- Reputation of work
- Relevance
- Inter-disciplinary interest
- Subject area
- Format
- Rarity
- First editions
- Private Press materials
- Provenance
- Value or rarity of item as physical artefact
- Local (North-East of Scotland) interest, including items with a strong University or University Library association or provenance

The final 7 of these criteria indicate potential eligibility for retention in the Special Collections Centre.

5.1.3 Criteria for relegation to store

Consideration of materials for relegation to store will usually encompass one or more of the following:

- Levels of use - items that have not been borrowed for a subject-specific period or time may be relegated, unless they meet other criteria for retention, e.g. classic texts.

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- Date
- Language
- State of repair (items will be replaced or repaired if other criteria are met)
- Availability in alternative formats
- Currency
- Reputation of work
- Relevance

5.1.4 *Criteria for disposal*

Monographs

- Duplicates will be disposed of, except in cases of continued high demand, known usage or where the Library holds rare copies.
- Superseded editions without research interest, but
 - in all subject areas, at least the earliest and the latest editions will be retained and one copy of other editions may be retained, in particular, where the contents are relevant to the development of ideas.
- Materials available in electronic or other alternative formats and in perpetuity.
- Materials available within a co-operative store
- State of repair - materials which cannot be replaced, repaired or rebound and for which the cost of preservation exceeds the usefulness of the information contained
- Currency
- Reputation of work
- Relevance

Serials

- Incomplete and short runs of a title will be withdrawn to storage or for disposal on the recommendation of appropriate Library staff, and with the agreement of the Serials & E-resources Manager
- Titles which contain information that is not useful in the long-term (e.g. newsletters) may have automatic discard patterns established (such as, "current year only to be retained")
- Annuals, biennials, and regularly updated editions of directories, almanacs etc. will be de-selected, depending on the value of the information contained in earlier editions and the existing library holdings. One or two older editions may be retained in circulating collections.
- Duplicate issues of periodicals and journals are usually discarded when a volume has been bound, unless heavy usage indicates a need for duplicates.

The *Collaborative Print Retention: a policy for Scotland* (Appendix 4) ([link](#)) will be consulted prior to disposing of print serial runs. If the serial run is established to be duplicated elsewhere within Scotland the run will be disposed of (i.e. "last copies" will be retained).

5.1.5 *Disposal of de-selected materials*

Practices to dispose of materials withdrawn from the collection are prioritised:

- Exchange with or donate the materials to other libraries or institutions
- Sell through library book-sale
- Sell to legitimate book-dealers if the stock is of an appropriate nature
- Donate to book related charities
- Discard by recycling

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5.2 Replacement of Missing Materials

Where items have been lost or irreparably damaged while on loan, a charge for replacement will be made and the item replaced where possible. If the item is out-of-print, a more recent edition or a text of similar content may be acquired. Where items are reported as missing from the shelves, staff will make repeated searches in all possible locations. If the item remains missing, it will be recorded as such in the catalogue. Items which have been missing for over two years are considered for replacement by the relevant Information Consultant: earlier replacement may be made on request. These replacement items are funded from the Library's Replacement budget. If no replacement is possible or desirable, the catalogue record will be deleted.

5.3 Conservation, Preservation and Restoration

The Library's policy for the conservation, preservation and restoration of material can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

5.3.1 Binding and Repair

Library Services will refer damaged library material for repair, where the value of the item warrants such intervention (e.g. where the Library owns multiple copies of a paperback book, it is unlikely that a damaged copy would be repaired, or where the cost of repair is greater than the cost of a new copy).

To ensure long term preservation print journals, that are not replicated electronically, may be bound.

5.4 Digitisation Policy

The Library will, where appropriate, provide surrogates of vulnerable or frequently used material, through digitisation or other formats. – see [Appendix 3](#).

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Library Collections Policy - Appendix 1: Collection Policies for Schools and Subjects

This information relates only to materials in the general library collections, and not to items held in the Special Collections Centre. Please refer to the policy on archival material at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/documents/Archives%20Collection%20Policy.pdf> and for rare books at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/documents/Rare%20Books%20Collection%20Policy.pdf>

Broadly, material will be collected in any format that supports teaching, learning and research at the University, usually on the recommendation of academic staff. Individual Departments and Subjects may request a departmental-specific variance to these policies where these do not conflict with the overall aims of building a collection that will support both present and future generations of Library users.

For example, the **School of Education** currently applies the following policy to their **Teaching Resource Centre collection**, very much a current, contemporary resource with no archival role:

1. All resources in the Teaching Resource Centre are of the type found in schools, used by students whilst preparing material for school experience, or materials for the application of theories or concepts. For example

- *Children's books*
- *Posters and artefacts*
- *Photocopiable resources*

2. The Teaching Resource Centre should not be considered as a 'store' for out of date material. The Centre will be dynamic - reflecting the needs of Education students, and not a 'historic' resource.

3. A Library Representative will be responsible for the Teaching Resource Centre budget. S/he will authorise all requests and manage the budget. The Library Rep will also be responsible for contacting groups of staff based on the curricular areas for requests. All students will also be advised (through a fact sheet about the resource) that the TRC Committee welcomes suggestions for orders from them. The committee was formed to oversee the modernisation and maintenance of the resource. The committee will advise library staff on the suitability and relevance of recommendations and library staff in turn will advise on resource management.

Relegation Policies for Schools and Subjects

In addition to the [Acquisition](#) and [Collection Maintenance](#) details outlined in the main document, relegation rules may differ between Colleges/Schools and are currently represented thus:

College of Life Sciences and Medicine

- **All Science Subjects** – pre-1860 material is held in the Special Collections Centre
- **Schools of Medicine & Medical Sciences** – older, lesser-used book material in Medical Library Lower Ground Floor stack; all other materials on open access
- **School of Biological Sciences and School of Psychology** – for all subjects, lesser used books, pre-1970 print periodicals and print periodicals for all years with an electronic version not held “in perpetuity” in Closed Access Store; all other materials on open access

College of Physical Sciences

- **All Schools** -; lesser used books, pre-1970 print periodicals and print periodicals for all years with an electronic version not held “in perpetuity” in Closed Access Store; all other materials on open access

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College of Arts and Social Sciences

- **School of Law** – Most pre-1840 material in Special Collections Centre, some pre-1840 Acts are held in Taylor Library; some Official Publications with electronic availability are in Closed Access Store; print Official Publications collections are on open access in Taylor Library; all other materials on open access
- **All areas** - pre-1840 material in Special Collections; lesser used books, pre-1970 print periodicals and print periodicals for all years with an electronic version not held “in perpetuity” in Closed Access Store; all other materials on open access

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Library Collections Policy - Appendix 2: Resource Allocation Model for Library Collection Budgets

The senior management team of the University and the Heads of College set the overall budget for Library, Special Collections and Museums. Contained within this is the Library Collection Development Budget. After the Collection Development Budget has been agreed, a top-sliced sum to cover e-resource expenditure is set ([see below](#)) and a Subject Development Budget amounting to 5% of the Library Collection Development Budget is also removed, (Schools may make bids for part of this sum to support new courses and for course development). Following this, broad resources allocations to the individual Colleges are set and discussions are held with the relevant Head of College regarding the final allocations to Schools and Sections. It is recommended that Colleges review expenditure as the year progresses and transfer funds as appropriate to ensure full strategic use of the budget.

Funds are divided amongst academic Schools and sections according to a formula that recognises teaching need (T) and research value (R).

The sum available for distribution is split into two parts whose proportions represent the distribution of Scottish Funding Council funding (currently 80:20, teaching grant: research grant). Allocation of the (T) portion is determined by calculating the number of academic staff and students (full time equivalents) within each School or Section using current student and staff numbers from Student Load and Human Resources data.. Research postgraduates are weighted 1.5.

Allocation of the research value (R) is based on Research Excellence Framework (REF) scores and the number of active researchers in each School or section. The individual section or school scores as a ratio of the total for T and R divided into the sums available to provide the basic allocations for the School or Section.

A weighting is then applied to reflect literature cost differentiation for both monographs and periodicals, and volume of literature published.

The fiscal year runs from 1 August to 31 July. Under present arrangements, at roll-over between fiscal years, the previous year's encumbered funding (i.e. funding committed to orders placed for monographs and standing orders/continuations not yet received by the Library) is carried forward and becomes a commitment on the new allocation for the coming year. While every effort is made to ensure that orders are received in year any uncommitted funding remaining within the allocation at the end of the financial year is not transferred into the new financial year and may be used for in year general collection development purchases, e.g. the purchase of electronic journal backfiles.

Library Topslice

Within the Library Collection Development Budget, and before it is disbursed to Colleges, a proportion is top-sliced for cross-College recurrent e-resource purchases; these are in the main electronic journal 'deals' from particular vendors or bibliographic databases. In general, the proportionate amount of the Collection Development Budget in the top-slice is 72%, with a further 19% committed to the recurrent purchase of School selected journals, leaving 9% for monographic or other new purchases. In order to leave the Colleges with some flexibility in purchasing, the budget for non-top-sliced journals remains devolved and not centralised in the top-slice.

The top-slice is managed centrally; changes to the content may be undertaken following structured consultation. The consultation level is currently £4,000: i.e. any product costing less than £4K being proposed for inclusion in the topslice and matching the criteria below, or any change in price to an existing product within the topslice of 10% or less will be approved by Library staff, without reference to Heads of College. Where any item currently in the topslice is cancelled, the funds thus 'saved' are used to offset the inflationary price increases in the remaining topslice materials – and NOT refunded to particular departments, this on the premise that materials in the topslice are cross-disciplinary, of interest to more than one discipline.

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Criteria for material to be included in the topslice – all to apply simultaneously:

- Database or other e-resource that is of interest to more than one academic unit
- Resource that has been funded by one or more academic units, or from non-Library Collection Development Budget monies, for a period of time no less than one year
- The principle of collegiality, or the greater good, will apply over narrow Section interest

Criteria for material to be removed from topslice – any to apply:

- Usage of the resource falls to an unacceptable level: e.g. where usage is less than half of that recorded in previous years
- Costs rise out of proportion to the academic value of the resource: e.g. where only a very small number of users utilise a resource whose costs rise by more than 20%
- Replacement of any one item by an alternative, improved product

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Library Collections Policy - Appendix 3: Preservation Issues

This appendix refers to modern collections. For Special Collections material see <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/documents/Preservation%20and%20Conservation%20Policy.pdf> and <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/about/glucksman-conservation-centre-109.php> information.

A3.1 Definition

Conservation is taken to mean those steps and policies taken to maintain and / or repair (an) individual item(s); whereas preservation refers to those managerial, and technical steps involved in retaining the information content of library materials in all formats, so as to maximise the useful life of that information.

A3.2 Preservation options

In the sense above, preservation encompasses conservation, but also extends much further, and **includes** such issues as:

A3.2.1 Printed books and journals

- The discarding of material after intensive use; to be replaced by another physical copy;
- The preservation of the information within a book or document, by surrogacy; and the retention or disposal of the original;
- The conservation of the (physical original) book or document (e.g. by de-acidification) because of the importance (however defined) of that original copy;
- The discarding of material, and its substitution in electronic format

Surrogacy here can include: electronic format, microfilming, photographic prints, photocopying and digitisation.

A3.2.2 Audio and Visual media

If the format for recording and playing becomes obsolete and there is evidence of use a replacement copy in an alternative format would be purchased, if required and available.

A3.2.3 Digital resources

Digital resources bring different problems with them, depending on how / when / by whom they were created.

Library Services and the Special Collections Centre holds material that was commercially produced and that was created in a digital format (e.g. floppy discs, CDs in textbooks) over which there may be [copyright and IPR issues](#) but which information the library may wish to hold in perpetuity.

Digital preservation (time-limited or in perpetuity) strategies include:

- Total deletion when no longer of any use (e.g. obsolete, superseded information)
- Emulation (techniques for overcoming obsolete hardware and software by imitating obsolete systems)
- Migration (the movement between media, e.g. disc to CD; CD to copying / absorption in the Storage Area Network (SAN))
- Reformatting (from one file format to another)

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The responsibility for preservation of the content of commercial online products that are hosted remotely e.g. electronic journals, books and database lies with the service supplier.

Locally created digital resources such as theses and exam papers are stored in DigiTool, LSC&M's Digital Asset Management System, networked and hosted locally. Research outputs are stored in AURA the networked and remotely hosted Institutional Repository.

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Library Collections Policy - Appendix 4: Collaborative Print Retention: a policy for Scotland

Memorandum of Understanding

The [Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries \(SCURL\)](#), the [National Library of Scotland \(NLS\)](#) and the [Scottish Library and Information Council \(SLIC\)](#) have come together to develop this policy for all Scottish libraries.

The **aim** of the policy, at this stage, is to ensure that researchers, in the broadest sense, continue to have access to low-use print research materials.

It offers libraries, of all kinds, the opportunity to manage the risks associated with inadvertently disposing of important material and providing a safe process for collections management of print research materials in Scotland. This collegiate approach will underwrite local collection policies which have been and are dependent on the mission, teaching and research of the parent institutions over centuries. Attention should now be given to an extension to non-print materials.

Scope

Although it is likely to be of most relevance to HE libraries initially, it is recognised that significant research materials are also held in the wider library community.

The NLS regards Scottish material (published in Scotland, or by Scots, or about Scots) as central to its collecting and preservation strategy. It will also continue to collect as much as possible of the UK published output, and to provide access to international publications as required by the users of Scotland's largest research library.

Recommendation

That a copy should be retained within Scotland of: -

1. Scottish material (published in Scotland, or by Scots, or about Scots, or relating to Scotland, to any aspect of Scottish life and culture, or to individual Scots). Such material, representing the intellectual capital of Scotland and held within Scottish libraries, is at the core of this collaborative print retention strategy.

2. Unique items (within Scotland) which enhance the world class research collections held in Scotland and therefore should be retained for communal access and benefit.

These criteria would be applied when an institution's own collections management procedures resulted in a risk that an item meeting the above criteria may no longer be retained within Scotland.

Rationale

Political devolution has made library and information services more aware of issues around the retention of a "**Scottish copy**" for the future. There has always been a distinct cultural identity, manifest in the separate education and legal systems. A strong sectoral and geographic collaborative network has been a feature of the Scottish information landscape for many years. This policy, together with sectoral guidance notes, will enhance this collaboration while supporting the shared service agenda.

It is recommended that this policy is reviewed after 3 years.

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The Scottish Collection

The items in the Scottish collection will be distributed across many libraries, with a preponderance of print journals available in the NLS and the larger research libraries.

Since many libraries may hold such materials, retention would be arranged on a collaborative, distributed model. Any disposing library should check the holdings of the NLS first and offer to the NLS if not held there. Should the NLS not be able to add the item then, if the holding library is still minded to discard, other sectoral partner holdings should be checked. If the item is identified as a 'last copy' and the holding library is still minded to discard, then a library should be sought to hold the item on behalf of the community.

Updating catalogue records and services to ensure easy discovery and access is critical, together with the ability of researchers to find items through aggregated resource discovery tools.

This Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and agreed by the:

- Chair of SCURL

Director of SLIC

Librarian of the NLS

The University Librarian & Director, Library, Special Collections and Museums, University of Aberdeen, signed this Memorandum of Understanding and thereby agrees to ensure, as far as possible, that this policy will be incorporated into the internal collection management procedures within the University of Aberdeen.

(SCURLScottishcopy9Jan2010)