



University of  
St Andrews

# University of St Andrews libraries' core collections policy

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# 1. University of St Andrews Libraries' Core Collections Policy

## Introduction

The role and purpose of the University Libraries is to support research, scholarship and learning in the context of the University's strategic aims. We do this by providing high quality, professional services and information to the University and wider community. This is supported by the active management, preservation and promotion of our exceptional collections.

The Libraries' Vision and Strategy for 2019-23 emphasises that whether in digital or physical format, collecting will have a sharpened focus on the courses being taught and on areas of current and imminent active research in University Schools, Centres and Institutes. As far as possible our Libraries will give precedence to digital content, providing e-books, e-journals, online search tools and digitised readings as a priority and providing digital proxies of items from the unique and rare collections. A point of optimal balance will be sought for all disciplines between digital and analogue content and collections, with content in its physical form continued to be provided where there is no alternative, its condition allows, or where materiality is important to the user experience.

The Libraries' strategy is underpinned by the following four core principles:

- Embracing Digital
- Focused Collecting
- Empowered Research
- High Quality Study Space

By 2023, the place of digital in our services will be understood, physical collections will represent an important, well-curated and highly valued asset, research support services will expand, and the design of Libraries' spaces will be enhanced to meet and balance the differing needs of users.

## Scope

- The scope of the University Libraries' Core Collections Policy includes:
- The acquisition of or provision of access to, content in all formats through outright purchase, donation, rental or inter-library loan, or suitably licensed open access publications.
- The allocation of resources to support the acquisition of content, and the factors which drive the decisions made about the material collected.
- How the Libraries store and manage material, both print and digital, once it has been acquired.
- The services provided to allow users to access content.
- Digital research outputs produced by St Andrews researchers, including 'born digital' material (full text, research data, etc.) and material from existing collections which has been digitised.

The Libraries' Core Collections Policy provides a public statement to ensure that all University stakeholders are aware of the service they should expect from the Libraries, the principles on which the collections are acquired and managed, and also to set realistic expectations of what the Libraries are able to deliver.

In addition, it is a live document enabling Libraries staff to undertake their work within clear parameters efficiently and effectively.

As the Core Collections Policy functions both as a public and working document, various stakeholders need to be involved with its creation and review. The following groups are expected to be involved with this process.

## University Library

Libraries & Museums Senior Management Team	Oversight of the Collections Policy
Collections Working Group:	Annual policy review
Senior Manager (Core Collections & Digitisation)	Operational implementation of the Core Collections Policy

## University Community

Libraries & Archives Strategic Advisory Board	Strategic oversight of policy
Library User Group and Student Library User Group	Comment on and input to proposed amendments

## Purpose

Collections are central to the purpose of the Libraries and to the student and staff experience. The collections acquired and managed are vital to student learning, and to the research endeavours of both students and academic staff. As a research-focused university library, we acquire and hold material primarily in support of the current and imminent teaching and research interests of the University. Where funds allow we will develop collections to support wider scholarship, and the national heritage of Scotland and the UK.

## Constraints

Limitations on physical space and budget considerations require the Libraries to actively manage the development and configuration of collections in all formats (analogue and digital). In assessing potential additions to the collections, the Libraries must take account of a range of considerations, including overall cost of stewardship, licence and access arrangements, conservation, storage space, cataloguing resource, digitisation costs, shelving, promotion and other lifecycle costs.

## Acquisition

### Censorship/Intellectual Freedom

University Libraries support the principle of intellectual freedom and aim to steward collections that represent a wide range of diverse viewpoints, supporting research and scholarly debate. Material is not censored. Provision of material in the collections does not imply the endorsement of the content by the University Libraries.

## Budgets

The Libraries purchase content from a proportion of their annual operations budget. Purchase funds are allocated to separate funds to support different areas of collection activity. These funds are:

- **Subscriptions** - for the purchase of material acquired via annual subscription including databases, individual journals, journal bundles and standing orders. Purchasing from the fund is primarily controlled through the analysis of usage figures and the corresponding cost per use, although a range of other criteria are considered including open access availability and publishing costs, importance to a subject discipline, licence and access arrangements,

cost, format, and number of St Andrews authors published. The subscriptions are reviewed annually in advance of their renewal date. Schools are consulted on subscriptions “at risk” as a result of e.g. low use or unacceptable price rises before any decisions on cancellations are made. New subscriptions will usually require the cancellation of an alternative title of equivalent value.

- **Books** – for the purchase of books, either in print or electronically, required for reading lists, teaching and research. Purchasing decisions are primarily made on the basis of recommendations received from academics. Academic Liaison and other Libraries staff also select books for purchase. The allocation of funds is kept under close review to ensure an equitable distribution across all subject areas.
- **Central funds** - for interdisciplinary purchases, replacement of lost and damaged items, demand-driven purchasing including demand from students. Purchasing decisions for these funds are controlled by the Senior Librarians (Academic Liaison) and the Senior Manager (Core Collections & Digitisation).
- **Special Collections funds** - for the purchase of printed, digital, manuscript and photographic items. Purchasing decisions are made by the Special Collections staff in consultation with the academic community.
- **School funds** – for the occasional purchase of material, using funds from the Schools’ own budgets to buy material either for the university Libraries or for the Schools’ own libraries.
- **Inter-Library Loan funds** – for purchasing access to any research material held by other Libraries. Increasingly, University Libraries are exploiting collaborative lending initiatives with other research libraries to reduce costs for document supply.
- **Open access funds** – for the support of new publishing models primarily for content produced by St Andrews researchers, allowing materials to be incorporated into the collection. This fund is managed by Research & Innovation Services and material is selected in consultation with the academic community.

### **Acquisition Policy - Formats**

The University Libraries acquire content in a wide variety of formats. When deciding the most appropriate format for content, the Libraries will consider the needs of each subject discipline supported by the University.

The preferred format for journal acquisition is e-only unless:

the archiving arrangements for the journal are not secure;

the subject discipline has an identifiable need for the continued provision of print;

the material is only available in print;

the total cost of ownership is prohibitive in comparison with print (taking account of storage/lifecycle as well as subscription costs).

Books may be acquired in either print or electronic formats. Decisions will be made based on format availability, mode of delivery (e.g. dual or blended learning), digital licensing terms, the preference of the recommender and cost. Unless there is a clear rationale to the contrary, multiple copy provision will be met with e-access whenever possible.

### **Inter-Library Loan (ILL)/Document Supply**

The Inter-Library Loans service allows users of the Libraries to request material not held within the University’s collections. Staff and students of the University have a generous quota of inter-library loans which are provided free of charge in each academic year. Charges apply to requests made

beyond these quotas and for renewals, lost and overdue items. In addition, the Libraries offer 'Article Reach', a free service enabling current students and staff to obtain journal articles from an international consortium of academic libraries. Articles supplied using 'Article Reach' are free of charge and unlimited and do not count towards the quotas outlined above. This route is encouraged when there is no urgency associated with an inter-library loan request. Further details are available on the [online guide for inter-library loans](#). –

## **Audio-Visual Material**

This material is purchased to support the teaching and research needs of the Department of Film Studies but also of other Schools and Departments who use documentaries and film in their work. The collection is particularly strong in the area of world cinema.

The Libraries will purchase films and documentaries in DVD format or as digital files unless Blu-Ray is specified in the order record. All regions, zones and languages will be considered for inclusion in the collection. Increasingly, streamed media is also purchased where appropriate. The BUFVC TRILT service can be used to request copies of off-air TV and radio recordings on DVD or CD and these too can be added to the collections.

Where there is a demand and it is possible, existing material in legacy format is migrated to or replaced by new media.

A number of items are available as reference-only and can be consulted in the Main Library or borrowed by academic staff for screenings in class. Items marked as reference are:

High-value, rare or sensitive (located in closed access locations but recallable).

Do not have a BFI certificate (located on the open shelves).

## **Theses**

All doctoral theses awarded by the University of St Andrews for research degrees since 2007 are available online unless embargoed and can be accessed through the [St Andrews Research Repository](#) and [EThOS](#) (The British Library's electronic theses service). Most pre-2007 theses are also available online through these platforms and retrospective digitisation is ongoing to complete this work. All pre 2019 theses are held in print and can be used in the University Libraries on a reference basis.

## **Online Databases**

The University Libraries will purchase both full-text and bibliographic databases to help users access the Libraries' collections and enable discovery of research material.

Preference is given to electronic databases over print where affordable and available. Web-based or networked resources that can be installed on the University's standard desktop are also preferable to standalone or small network installations.

The Libraries reviews usage and content of these databases on an annual basis and will consider cancellation or provision of alternative resources as appropriate in consultation with academic staff.

## **Newspapers**

Although the Libraries privilege newspaper archives in electronic format, we continue to subscribe to a small collection of current subscriptions in print (including foreign newspapers) when they are directly related to teaching and research needs. The Libraries will retain only a limited run of some recent back issues where space allows.

## **Music Scores**

Printed sheet music is purchased on the recommendation of the Music Department to support both teaching and research in the University.

## **Microforms**

The Libraries will continue to purchase material on microfiche or microfilm, where this is the only available format. As information migrates to digital formats this will become increasingly rare.

## **Acquisitions Policy - Teaching Materials**

Where possible, the Libraries will favour the electronic format of any material needed to support the teaching of modules.

Where a book is only available in print, multiple copies may be purchased based on student numbers. Academic Liaison will make relevant decisions in discussion with academics.

Books expected to be in heavy demand will be supported by the purchase of e-books where available.

Any individual articles or book chapters recommended on module reading lists will be delivered where possible online through the Libraries' Reading List facility either through existing licensed online content or by digitised material acquired via the CLA digitisation licence.

## **Acquisitions Policy – Research materials**

The University Libraries will acquire material for research purposes as requested by School Library representatives and by the Academic Liaison Team within the limits of appropriate budgets and in line with agreed governance and financial delegation arrangements. Material will be supplied in formats as requested, but factors such as space and accessibility will be taken into account and may result in a preference for electronic content.†

Staff and students can request digitised copies of content held in all University Libraries for delivery direct to their University email, subject to standard copyright regulations.

## **Acquisitions Policy – Selection**

Selection of stock for the Libraries is primarily the responsibility of the Academic Liaison team, working in close partnership with Schools to recommend material appropriate to current and imminent teaching and research priorities, and including material required for reading lists.

Academic Liaison will allocate funds in response to requests via [morebooks@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:morebooks@st-andrews.ac.uk), and ensure that items submitted to the online reading lists service are available, either in print or electronically.

## Cataloguing and discovery

### Cataloguing

All material acquired by the University Libraries is catalogued to the following internationally agreed standards:

RDA (*Resource Description and Access*) and AACR2 (*Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Second Edition*), and are held in the MARC21 (*MAchine Readable Cataloging for the 21st century*) format for bibliographic data. The Libraries use the Library of Congress classification system and subject headings. Where appropriate, material is catalogued using both transliteration and non-roman script, making records more discoverable.

In certain cases, an enhanced standard is implemented e.g. genre headings for AV material.

### Discovery

Catalogue records for print and subscribed electronic content can be searched using [Library Search](#). They are also fed into national and international aggregations of bibliographic data e.g. the National Bibliographic Database (NBK) and Worldcat, making the collections visible internationally., making our collections visible on an international basis.

Library Search harvests data from a range of University collections, providing a single point of access to Libraries, Museums and photographic collections in addition to the University's digital research outputs from research information systems such as Pure.

### Collection Management

#### Donations

The University Libraries are very grateful to the many donors who have gifted materials, from individual volumes to established collections, to the University and welcomes this important contribution to teaching and research. Space constraints and the amount of staffing resource required to record and process donations mean that the Libraries must be selective in what can be accepted. In addition to estimating the total cost of stewardship, consideration will be given to:

- relevance to developing collections;
- value for teaching or research;
- physical condition e.g. replacing damaged/heavily used copies in the collection;
- and format.

Once a collection of donated material has been received into the Libraries, the University Libraries reserves the right to deal with it as they see appropriate, e.g. transfer, relegation or disposal. Financial contributions towards the cost of e.g. cataloguing, conservation and storage are welcomed and will be discussed with the donor.

Further information on this can be found on the donations section of the Libraries' [regulations](#).

#### Collection Strengths

The Libraries regularly analyse the collections to evaluate their relevance to current teaching and research. This data forms the basis of supplementary purchases and donation criteria to strengthen the collections where necessary.

## **Stock management**

The Libraries have an active programme of stock assessment covering open and closed access locations within Core and Special Collections. As a research library, legacy holdings may reflect areas which do not directly relate to current teaching and research priorities and this must be balanced against the issues of limited space and the financial implications of storage.

The Libraries have a distributed estate, therefore stock locations are selected as far as possible to maximise access and convenience to users.

## **Weeding**

### **Journals:**

Print journal holdings are reviewed on a regular basis, and as far as possible, titles are located at point of need. If titles are available electronically they may be withdrawn from stock and disposed of, subject to the following criteria:

There is an agreement from relevant Schools.

There is no identifiable need for the continued provision of print.

The electronic archiving arrangements for the journal are secure.

All embargoes on the electronic copy of the title have expired (these are usually 6, 12 or 18 months).

The platform which hosts the electronic journal is secure.

Where electronic backfiles of journals are available and affordable, the Libraries will consider such purchases as a means to further reduce print journal holdings, freeing up more space.

### **Books:**

The Libraries regularly analyse usage statistics of the monographic collection, and where relevant will seek to weed any low-use duplicates and titles in poor condition. Significant weeding projects will always happen in consultation with Schools.

## **Involvement in collaborative collection management initiatives**

As part of the commitment to make resources available, the University Libraries continue to participate in current and prospective national programmes supporting cooperative collection management. Examples of this include:

Adhering to The Scottish Collections Policy and contributing to the preservation of the nation's cultural heritage.

Being an active participant in United Kingdom Research Reserve (UKRR), a collaborative national research collection of periodicals which ensures access to material while allowing space to be freed up for other Library purposes. More details can be found on the [UKRR webpage](#).



## Collection care

The collection is subject to continuous assessment and where appropriate and affordable the University Libraries will seek to repair damaged books and replace those which have been lost.

## Binding

The Libraries will make decisions as required and when resources permit, on whether to bind stock (both books and journals) according to criteria, such as usage, subject needs and preservation priorities.

## Special Collections

Special Collections preserves and offers access to the oldest and most valuable materials in the University Libraries, in manuscript, printed and photographic form, as well as maps, music and 'born digital' material. Special Collections are known and respected locally, nationally and internationally, and therefore continually enhance the University's reputation and academic standing.

View the [Special Collections policy](#) for further information.

Policy details will be added regularly, and on occasion changed, to reflect the developments in our information provision. Please feel free to send comments to [library@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:library@st-andrews.ac.uk)

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1.0	New document	Draft	Jennifer Louden, Deputy Director	21/9/21