

The Queen's College Library

Collection Development Policy

June 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

The Library of the The Queen's College (hereafter *the Library*) collects materials which will aid it in achieving its goals as defined in its mission statement:

The mission of the Queen's College Library is to support teaching, learning and research within the College, University and wider community by providing and promoting access to high quality information resources including printed, electronic and historical material in a flexible environment which meets the needs of all our users.

To do this we work closely with teaching and research staff and students to find out what users want, and plan and provide for specific requirements, working towards continuous evaluation and improvement.

1.1 General Policy

This Collection Development Policy is to serve as a framework for the maintenance and development of the Library's collections, providing guidance to those engaged in stock acquisition, revision and disposal.

This document will act as a statement of policy; provide information for all staff and students, and guidance on working practice.

Certain principles underpin the overall policy:

- Materials are provided as a collective resource for the whole College community;
- Information resources in all formats are covered;
- The Library is committed to providing equitable access to all users, including those with special needs;
- The policy is designed to be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of users;
- Collection development involves the Library working closely with the College's teaching staff;
- The fulfilment of the policy will depend on adequate resources being available.

1.2 Aims

The Collection Development Policy aims to ensure that the Library:

- Supports the College's teaching, learning, and research activities;
- Operates its policies transparently;
- Establishes priorities in the selection, revision and disposal of resources;
- Reviews regularly its policy in the light of changes in:
 - the College;
 - the University;
 - the wider higher education community;
 - the information sector;
- Provides access to information reflecting a diverse range of political, social and intellectual views;
- Upholds the principle of intellectual freedom and provides access to uncensored information.

2. THE LIBRARY'S COLLECTIONS

2.1 Introduction

The Library's collections can be described as being made up of the following four categories:

- a) *The circulating collection*: a corpus of material, both printed and electronic, to support undergraduates studying for degrees at the University of Oxford which are currently taught within the College. In collection management terms this includes the reference section and the Peet Library.
- b) *The reserve circulating collection*: older material that is retained for research purposes or other academic value. This includes material that is held elsewhere in College, e.g. in some Fellows' rooms.
- c) *The rare book collection*: the Library's historic printed collections published before 1850, preserved for the benefit of College members and the wider research community.
- d) *The manuscript collection*: the non-printed material that the Library has acquired since the College's foundation. (This excludes the College Archives.)

2.2 Collection (a): circulating collection

The Library's principal purpose in acquiring materials is the provision of books, periodicals, and electronic resources for use by current undergraduate students of the College preparing for first and second public examinations.

The Library provides materials for undergraduates reading for degrees in the following subjects, and in the joint-honours schools with which they are associated: Ancient and Modern History, Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Classics, Economics (including Economics and Management), English, Law, Materials Science, Mathematics, Medicine and Physiological Sciences, Modern History,

Modern History and Politics, Modern Languages*, Music, Oriental Studies (including Egyptology), Philosophy, Physics, Politics, Psychology.

* Although the College welcomes applications for all languages taught at Oxford, the Library collections only cover French, German, and Spanish at a reasonable level. Smaller collections exist for Italian, Portuguese, and Russian.

The circulating collection exists to provide a core academic library to support undergraduate studies. These resources, in conjunction with the historic collections, may be valuable for those engaged in doctoral or other research. The College cannot, however, cater for the unique needs of individual research students, or for taught masters courses which are allocated resources at University and Faculty level, although we will consider one-off requests.

In addition, the Library continues to maintain but not actively expand collections in areas traditionally well supported by the College, including Theology, American History, Bibliography, and Topography. The Library aims to be flexible in its response to emerging new subjects in the College and University. It seeks to provide for the needs of current and future Members by expanding collections in areas previously less well supported, taking into account the changing university curriculum, student numbers and patterns of demand within other libraries of the University.

2.3 Collection (b): reserve circulating collection

Historically this collection is formed from material relegated from the circulating collection which was deemed to be of lesser academic value when there was no procedure for disposal of stock. However, recent assessment of this collection has resulted in rationalisation and significant weeding has occurred.

It is a disparate collection: the majority of stock is housed in the Basement between the photocopying room and the Law Library. Smaller collections can be found in Fellows' rooms (Mr Buckley, Mr Taylor, and Mr Crowther) and further runs of monographs and serials are located in the Tunnel.

The collection provides a second level of older primary material and is a reflection of the development of ideas over the last 150 years. Material is retained in or moved to this collection when it does not meet the criteria for acquisition to the main circulating collection but is nonetheless considered to be of academic or historic value. This may for instance include works by former Fellows which are no longer of current academic use, or seminal first editions no longer on reading lists.

2.4 Collection (c): rare-book collection

The older collection offers an invaluable resource for research and is one of the largest and most diverse in an Oxford College. The collection is particularly strong in classics, philosophy, theology and church history, tracts and proclamations, ecclesiastical law, early medicine and British regional history.

By definition, material published before 1850 falls into this category. It is important to preserve and make available to members of the College and the wider research community these collections which are located in three parts of the Library: the Upper Library, the Tunnel and the Select Store.

We only add to these collections by donation and we do not weed from them.

2.5 Collection (d): the manuscript collection

The Library is rich in medieval and post-medieval manuscripts. The collection is particularly strong in theology, heraldry, medieval bindings, post-medieval antiquarian collections, and the history of the College and University.

The collection is housed in the Manuscripts Cupboards in the Upper Library.

We only add to this collection by donation and we do not weed from it.

3. ACQUISITIONS

3.1 Procedure

Recommendations for acquisition are collated by the Reader Services Librarian from:

- ✓ reading lists provided by faculties and tutors;
- ✓ consultations with subject specialists familiar with the University's curricula;
- ✓ Undergraduates' Suggestions Forms
- ✓ the online Suggest-a-Book form on the College's internal website;
- ✓ the professional judgement of the Library staff of the Library's requirements;
- ✓ requests from Fellows

Proposed purchases are considered by the Reader Services Librarian, who uses the following non-exhaustive checklists to decide on acquisitions.

3.2 Criteria favouring acquisition: collection (a): circulating collection

- ✓ found on a University reading list;
- ✓ found on a College tutor's reading list;
- ✓ a key work;
- ✓ in demand in Oxford;
- ✓ completes or adds to a series which the Library intends to collect in full;
- ✓ supports the understanding of existing collections (e.g. books about early printing);
- ✓ listed in standard subject indexes, guides and bibliographies;
- ✓ within budget.
- ✓ to replace a missing or damaged copy
- ✓ unavailable elsewhere in Oxford

Except for the replacement of missing or damaged copies or updating of editions, all purchases must be approved by a College Tutor.

3.3 Criteria favouring acquisition: (b): reserve circulating collection

- ✓ strengthens or aids the understanding of the reserve circulating collection;
- ✓ completes or adds to a series which the Library intends to collect in full;
- ✓ funds are available.

3.4 Criteria favouring acquisition: collection (c): rare-book collection

- ✓ strengthens or aids the understanding of the existing collection;
- ✓ has a strong connection with the College;
- ✓ funds are available.

However, in reality this collection is only added to by donation.

3.5 Criteria favouring acquisition: collection (d): manuscripts collection

- ✓ strengthens the existing collection;
- ✓ completes or complements other material in the collection;
- ✓ has a strong connection with the College;
- ✓ funds are available.

However, in reality this collection is only added to by donation.

3.6 Freedom of expression

Within the terms of the more detailed statements of collection development policy expressed in this document, the Library will not exclude from purchase material on the grounds of an author's race, nationality, sex or opinions, nor because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. The acquisition of a particular publication does not imply any endorsement of the views or opinions stated therein. Books expressing opinions or containing illustrations that might be regarded as blasphemous, offensive or distasteful, and which form part of the existing collections, will not be discarded solely on those grounds.

3.7 Budget Allocations

The Librarian will have a responsibility for allocating the available acquisitions budget to ensure appropriate spending among the different subject areas on the circulating collection. Purchases for the other collections are unusual and infrequent so these are appraised on a case by case basis.

3.8 Donations

Donations are, in principle, welcomed and accepted where they will enhance the Library's established collections. Accepted donations are acknowledged in writing by the Librarian.

Decisions on whether to accept proposed donations will be judged on the same criteria as for other acquisitions. Not all donations are appropriate additions to the Library, and selectivity must be practised. The Library actively encourages current and old members of the College to donate a copy of their own publication(s) to the Library in order to maintain a long tradition of "Queen's Authors" and provide biographical representations of its members. In all other cases it is Library policy that:

- a) if possible, the books should be assessed for usefulness prior to their arrival at the Library;
- b) if this is not possible, it is appropriate to agree with the donor or his/her representative only to accept part of a proposed donation;
- c) books offered in poor physical condition will not normally be accepted unless there is some compelling reason for their being so.

Donations are normally accepted only if they are made without conditions as to their binding, cataloguing, shelving or future disposal, but in exceptional cases The Library has discretion to accept gifts with conditions attached.

It is not Library policy to accept collections or individual items on temporary deposit or loan.

4. RETENTION AND DISPOSAL

4.1 Procedure

Material entering the library normally goes in the circulating collection. Periodically a weeding exercise will be instigated on certain collections for the following potential reasons:

- there is a pressure on space;
- a change in the curricula;
- change in the College's admissions policy;
- physical deterioration of stock;
- before a reclassification or recataloguing project;
- as a result of a request by Fellows.

To assist with the process, statistics of circulation usage will be provided by the Technical Services Librarian and the following criteria for retention and disposal applied to the items under consideration.

4.2 Retention

If items still meet the acquisition criteria set out in sections 3.2 and 3.3 above, they will be retained. If they do not, they will be:

- a) retained in the reserve circulating collection;
- b) disposed of outright.

The criteria for retaining material in or transferring material to the reserve circulating collection are:

- ✓ it is regarded as a classic work still of current use to scholars;
- ✓ unique in Oxford libraries;
- ✓ it forms an integral part of a smaller collection on a specialised subject within the collection;
- ✓ of interest for the history of the Oxfordshire region or of Oxford University or of the College;
- ✓ it is a donated by a Fellow;
- ✓ it is a first or notable edition of a multi-edition work;
- ✓ the item has significant monetary value.

In addition, a whole series may be moved to reserve circulating collection even though it is still currently collected for reasons of space.

4.3 Weeding the Collections

The Library regards the weeding of its working collections as a necessary part of efficient library management. The involvement of College Fellows and Lecturers in the weeding process is key and will be actively solicited and encouraged.

Under normal circumstances, there will be no weeding of the rare-book or manuscript collections.

Any material for disposal will be offered to College Members, other University libraries, for sale (with monies going into the book fund), for conservation training, to other UK or overseas libraries, or to charity shops. As a last resort, books are recycled.

4.4 Criteria favouring disposal: (a) circulating collection

In making decisions on which works in the circulating collection are suitable for disposal, the Library takes into account the following criteria, among others, and aims to discard:

- ✗ material that is deemed by academic staff to be no longer of academic use particularly where the information contained therein is found to be misleading or wrong;
- ✗ materials for subjects that are no longer taught in the College;
- ✗ superseded editions, with the exception of first or notable editions (see section 4.2 above);

- ✗ works that are available electronically (although this decision is made on a case by case basis);
- ✗ duplicate titles unless a proven demand exists for multiple copies – for this purpose, a duplicate title is defined as a work or works having the same or substantially the same intellectual content as another work;
- ✗ items in poor condition that are beyond reasonable preservation efforts providing a replacement copy can be purchased for a sensible cost.

4.5 Criteria favouring disposal: (b) reserve circulating collection

An item may be disposed of if it is:

- ✗ a duplicate copy – for this purpose, a duplicate title is defined as a work or works having the same or substantially the same intellectual content as another work;
- ✗ materials which do not support the teaching or the research interests of current Fellows;
- ✗ part of an incomplete series;
- ✗ items in poor condition that are beyond reasonable preservation efforts (such items shall only be disposed of if they are of no value for research purposes).

5. REVIEW

This Collection Development Policy will be reviewed at least every five years by the Librarian (next review due: Michaelmas 2015), who will take advice as appropriate and where necessary from members of the College and from others most closely involved with teaching and information provision in Oxford. Any modifications or changes will be presented to the Library Committee for approval. Copies of the current Policy will be made available on the Library's web pages to members of the College and other interested parties, thus creating awareness of the Library's objectives, and of its role in the provision of information and library services in Oxford.

Last revised: June 2012.