

Queen's University Belfast

Library Services

Resource Development & Management Policy

1. Overview

The Library at Queen's University Belfast aims to provide access to high quality Library resources in support of the teaching and research activities of the University.

This Policy outlines the principles of resource development and management as well as the general criteria used by the Library to assess the collection. It also explains the budget allocation and acknowledges that the Library faces the challenge of managing the ongoing and increasing pressure on study space whilst continuing to support teaching and research.

2. Principles

- The Library will purchase materials to meet the teaching and research priorities of the University.
- The Library will balance the size of its physical collections with the increasing need to provide sufficient study space.
- Library Services will take advantage of Jisc nationally negotiated deals wherever possible and the provision of all resources is constrained by budgets.
- Library Services will monitor the use of resources and employ usage data when available to evaluate continuing provision.
- Resources are provided for the whole user community. Very specialised resources, which are likely to be relevant to only a small number of users will not generally be purchased without financial support from the relevant School or Faculty.
- The Library will explore innovative ways of acquiring materials, for example through Demand Driven and Evidence Based Acquisition of books.
- Library Services is committed to providing equitable access to users with disabilities, by offering a range of accessible equipment, assistive technology and electronic copies of reading list items where possible.
- Resource development and management involves Library staff working with the academic community.
- The Library does not act as a legal deposit library (apart from in the area of Northern Ireland Official Publications) therefore it does not aim to cover all areas of knowledge.

3. Budget Allocation

Journals subscriptions are paid from an institutional budget. The annual journals budget is approximately £4 million and costs increase by between 4% and 6% each year. In order to retain the

existing resource base and avoid an annual cancellations exercise, the University must invest significantly each year. It therefore follows, that any changes to the subscription base must be funded by cancellations to an equivalent value.

If a new resource is considered a priority across a School or Faculty, then a reprioritisation of resources across the whole area can be considered in order to free up the requisite funds. Subject Librarians can assist with this process by providing lists of resources, prices and usage statistics.

The budget for the purchase of books is allocated for School support on the basis of a range of factors and, where possible, adjustments are made to take account of changing requirements or new areas of research. For individual PhD students focusing on new research areas, the interlibrary loan service will be used to supplement local resources.

In addition, the University has external contractual arrangements with the Department of Health and AFBI for the provision of certain subject-specific Library services.

4. Resource Development

This section summarises approaches to development of Library resources.

4.1 Books and E-books

Books and e-books are purchased to support the teaching and research needs of the University.

The choice of format is decided by the Subject Librarian on the basis of availability, access and value for money. Print is sometimes the only (or preferred) option, but e-books may be purchased where they give better value and access, for example for textbooks in high demand. Subject Librarians will consider projected levels of use and durability required, as well as relative cost, before deciding between paperback and hardback editions. E-books are sometimes purchased through evidence-based or 'patron driven' initiatives in which titles are added to the catalogue and purchased according to subsequent use.

Queen's University Belfast is now operating under the terms of the Inter-regional Agreement for Books, E-books, Standing Orders and Related Materials (1 August 2017 – 31st July 2021). As a result, the majority of our English language book orders must be placed with a single supplier identified by the consortium.

4.2 Journals and Databases

Journals and databases represent an expensive and ongoing commitment. The majority of journals are now available in electronic format as part of publisher deals, or as individual titles.

The journals budget is reviewed on an annual basis and Schools are consulted, as appropriate, in relation to any decisions taken. New subscriptions are rarely placed unless savings to an equivalent level are identified. This is challenging because many journal titles are part of publisher "big deals" and cannot be individually cancelled.

In the event of a budget reduction, Schools will be informed and consulted regarding cancellation decisions.

4.3 Reading list material

The Library aims to provide access to material on current reading lists to support undergraduates and postgraduates on taught courses. Subject Librarians rely on close liaison with academic staff in their Schools to acquire reading lists.

The number of copies purchased will be decided according to anticipated use (core reading or further reading), the cost of the title in relation to the budget allocation and whether students are expected to purchase the book or not.

Where multiple copies are purchased, consideration will also be given to appropriate loan categories and location.

Subject Librarians aim to make journal articles available that fall outside of the Library's subscribed journals by requesting 'copyright cleared' copies from the British Library through the interlibrary-loans service.

4.4 Special Collections

The Henry (or Hibernica) Collection is the core element of the Library's Special Collections. Its scope embraces academic texts on Irish-related subjects, as well as non-academic material relating to Northern Ireland and Ulster in particular, with otherwise a bias to the northern part of the island.

An attempt is also made to acquire published material relating to major manuscript and printed book collections or to Queen's University Belfast.

In terms of journal subscriptions, nominations from members of the University are welcomed and suitable items are purchased in perpetuity within the constraints of the budget.

Special Collections & Archives collects records in all paper, analogue and digital media. Special Collections & Archives does not collect costume or fabric collections.

Special Collections & Archives does not have facilities to preserve or conserve textiles in general.

4.5 Official Publications

Official publications include those of government and inter-governmental bodies (e.g. the EU, UN). Library Services aims to preserve its print collections of British and Irish Parliamentary Publications and provide online access where possible.

The Library at Queen's has historically played an important role in collecting Northern Ireland Official Publications and making them available to the research community and the wider public.

Print publications have been collected for many years under National Archives and earlier HMSO guidance stating that the Library should be treated as an official deposit library for Northern Ireland official publications. For the period of September 2015 onwards, the Library has focused on the creation of a digital archive of Northern Ireland official publications.

Documents are gathered from departmental, agency, Assembly and other official websites and added to the archive for long term preservation.

4.6 Theses

According to Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes (section 7.9.1), one bound copy of every thesis successfully submitted for a Higher Degree must be deposited in the University Library. This collection of Queen's theses is held in the McClay Library closed access store. Theses are recorded in the Library catalogue, and may be consulted in the Library or photocopied in whole or in part if the author has given permission.

According to Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes (section 7.9.2) students commencing a research degree programme from September 2016 onwards must also make the final, post-correction version of their thesis (as approved by the internal examiner) available in electronic

format. The student must agree that the thesis be stored and made available publicly in electronic format unless an embargo period has been approved.

Library Services does not collect or store undergraduate or taught postgraduate dissertations unless they are exceptional in nature or incorporate content of significant local interest.

4.7 Donations

A Donations Policy is available on the [Library website](#).

5. Resource Management

This section summarises the approach to management of the Library collections.

5.1 Stock checks

An ongoing programme of stock checks is carried out whereby material on the shelves is checked against what is recorded in the Library catalogue. Missing books may be replaced if relevant to current teaching and research priorities of the University but otherwise records for missing items are withdrawn from the catalogue.

5.2 Criteria for Withdrawal and Retention

The ongoing pressure on space and the need to support current teaching and research means that material is periodically withdrawn from the Library collection.

The Library uses the following criteria as a guideline to assess the Collection:

- Relevance to current and potential teaching and research priorities within the University
- Level of usage
- Duplication within the Library
- Currency of the edition
- Availability of electronic equivalents, for example, print journals where access to electronic archives is secure
- Physical condition
- Relevance to Special Collections

Stock for disposal will be identified by Subject Librarians according to these criteria during regular stock assessment.

Withdrawal of material *outside of these stated criteria* will involve consultation between the Subject Librarian and academic staff in the School or Faculty.

6. Policy Review

Changes to this policy will be made in the light of new developments, emerging disciplines and evolving trends. It will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it continues to reflect the priorities of the University.