

Stock retention and withdrawal policy

To ensure that the collections in the Library provide the best possible support for current research and programmes of study, we are undertaking a rolling programme of stock revision.

A systematic programme of revision represents good housekeeping practice and is undertaken at intervals by all non-copyright libraries. We add approximately 14,000 items to stock each year and since there is a finite amount of space for materials, study places and facilities in the building we are literally running out of space.

As a parallel development which will tie into to our revision, we are planning a major refurbishment of the Library. This will inevitably involve the moving, and the reprocessing of Library stock as we introduce different ways of working. It is therefore timely that we concentrate on a comprehensive review of our collections prior to any changes to the layout of the building that will emerge as part of the refurbishment. This evaluation of the Library print stock takes place in a national context in which all HE libraries are reviewing and revising their support to teaching and research. It is also accompanied by a number of national initiatives.

In developing this policy we have taken into account the following needs:-

- to provide and sustain collections that best support the current research and teaching and learning priorities of Sussex
- to achieve a good balance between study space for readers (individually and in groups), space for our collections and space for IT
- to accommodate new teaching, learning or research needs, e.g. e-learning, and any potential requirement to re-purpose the use of existing space that this may entail.

1. Criteria for withdrawal and retention: books

Criteria for withdrawal and retention of books fall into two categories: intellectual and practical. The intellectual criteria include:

- currency: most relevant in some sciences, including medical science and in some social sciences, e.g. Law
- content: the subject is no longer taught or researched at degree level at Sussex and is unlikely to be in the foreseeable future
- academic quality: it is acknowledged that classic primary texts may often need to be retained regardless of actual usage as they show the intellectual development of the subject and map the changing nature of the research area.
- material of scholarly local interest

The practical criteria are:

- physical condition (and the cost of restoring a book in poor physical condition for continued use)
- borrowing statistics (we acknowledge that use without borrowing occurs but we would argue that borrowing statistics, on the whole, are indicative of use)
- space considerations

The Library has the discretion to carry out routine stock reviews as part of the day-to-day collection management process without consulting with faculty. However, when larger scale withdrawal projects are proposed consultation must take place. In such cases, the Library will liaise with Schools to establish agreed principles, taking into account the different teaching and research profiles of each Department.

The following are indicative (but not exhaustive) examples of criteria used for withdrawal:

- out-of-date items, superseded editions and damaged stock
- secondary material which has not been borrowed for 10 years
- secondary material which may be seen as being of low academic quality

It is acknowledged that these indicative criteria are not appropriate for all subject collections and so different criteria may need to be applied and there may be variations between Schools and Departments. Differing needs in terms of breadth, depth and currency in various parts of the Library's collections will be reflected in consultation with faculty.

Items that are judged to be of sufficient historical value will be considered for addition to our Special Collections. We will also check whether holdings are unique. If they are, items will either be retained or offered to the British Library or other appropriate collections as part of any future National Research Reserve initiative.

2. Disposal arrangements for books

The Library's disposal policy for books is that, wherever practical and appropriate, we will endeavour to pass on, either through sale or donation, any quality material no longer required at Sussex that may nonetheless have a value elsewhere. The following options will be explored depending on the type of material concerned:

- selling onto commercial booksellers where appropriate, with funds being reinvested in the Library
- following their withdrawal, items will be made available (for a limited time) to not-for-profit organisations provided that the process of donation is made at no additional cost to the Library
- at our discretion and mainly in the case of duplicate copies of books, selling at Library book-sales
- disposal funded by proceeds from book-sales

3. Criteria for withdrawal and retention of print journals

The Library is working in collaboration with other UK Higher Education institutions in providing a coordinated and sustainable approach to securing the long-term retention and storage of print journal titles. The UK Research Reserve (UKRR) is an agreement between higher education and the British Library whereby the British Library will store low use journals on behalf of HE libraries, retain them permanently and make them accessible to researchers and others who wish to consult them.

Faculty will be informed of any proposed withdrawals of journal runs. The following criteria will be applied when reviewing print journals for relegation:

- titles identified as part of the 'Moving to electronic-only' policy, unless there is clear evidence of regular usage (see Appendix A)
- closed runs in the Main Library
- journals in subjects no longer taught or researched as mainstream courses at Sussex

Journals in the Main Library considered for withdrawal may be moved to the Holding Store in the first instance to allow a minimum of one year of usage monitoring prior to any consultation about permanent relegation. Conversely, any titles relegated to the Holding Store which subsequently show sufficient demand may be returned to the Main Library.

4. Disposal arrangements for journals

The following options will be explored depending on the type of material concerned:

- a) assess whether any items are of sufficient historical value to be added to our Special Collections
- b) offer sets and runs to other national and research libraries as part of the UKRR initiative. Depending on the collections these may also be offered to other interested research libraries
- c) following their withdrawal, items will be made available (for a limited time) to not-for-profit organisations provided that the process of donation is made at no additional cost to the Library
- d) departments, Schools and individual academic staff may request sets of discarded material
- e) disposal via recycling

Appendix A

Moving to e-only policy – background information

The Library's strategy for moving to electronic-only for part of its Journals Collection was ratified at the Information Services Committee meeting on 1 November 2006 and we have been implementing the policy ever since. The policy applies only to services where a robust archival model exists. A procedure for review and withdrawal of existing print journal runs that are available electronically was also agreed by the Information Services Committee.

Whilst migration to online-only may not have any immediate effect in terms of reducing library acquisitions budgets (the VAT that has to be paid for online-only often cancels out any publisher discounts), there are savings in terms of space and administrative overheads (e.g. check-in and binding). Any future resolution of the VAT issue could lead to some significant cost savings for bundled deals and individual titles.

We recognise that there are risks in moving to electronic-only as the material may be licensed rather than owned outright. For example, there are concerns about long-term archiving, so we are ensuring that the Library only moves to e-only provision where third party arrangements are in place for long-term archiving. There is also a small risk in terms of unknown future costs of retaining access to the electronic-only versions.

There are also concerns that the needs of users who prefer the print versions of journals are being bypassed. It is recognised that some people prefer to read journal articles in print rather than on the screen and that there is a potential ongoing cost to individual and departments in printing these out. However these disadvantages should be weighed against the advantages of the electronic versions:

- access on and off campus
- simultaneous multiple-user access
- often access to a much greater archived content for the journal concerned
- flexible and enhanced search facilities
- links from abstracting and indexing databases directly to the relevant articles
- ability to provide links to articles in reading lists, web pages and Moodle sites

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