Print 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. 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.

We add over 5,000 print 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 running out of space.

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 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 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 Legacy or Special collections. We will also check whether holdings are unique and distinctive. 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. Arrangements for book removal

The Library’s policy for book removal is that, wherever practical and appropriate, we will endeavour to pass on any quality material no longer required at Sussex that may nonetheless have a value elsewhere.

Following their withdrawal, items will be removed by a nominated book removal service which raises funds for both the Library itself and educational charities by selling the items on our behalf.

3. Criteria for withdrawal and retention of print journals

Printed journals will be examined in consultation with relevant departmental representatives. as part of the rolling reviews programme as described in the Collection development and management policy available at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/about/policy:

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 Legacy collection

b) we participate in the UK Research Reserve Project (UKRR) to help preserve the nation’s printed journal collections. Suitable material will be submitted to the UKRR process to ensure that two copies are always retained at the British Library and one other institution.
c) following their withdrawal, items may 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 requests sets of discarded material
e) removal via recycling

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