ULSTER UNIVERSITY
DIGITAL & INFORMATION SERVICES DIRECTORATE
LIBRARY SERVICE.

Policy Cover Sheet

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Custodian	University Librarian
Approving Committees	Digital Strategy Steering Committee
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Version	Date	Author	Description
1.0	27/7/18	C. Cregan	Revision of 15-18 policy to reduce in size and reflect changes in Library information provision
1a	9/8/18	L. Young & J. Kennedy	Further reduction to avoid repetition of key aims of policy
2.0	30/08/2018	C. Cregan	Minor formatting and grammar corrections
2.1	6/9/18	C. Cregan	Incorporating comments from Subs group
2.2	18.9.2018	J. Peden	Comment and review
3	28.09.2018	C. Cregan	Changes accepted and changes made in response to comments including removal of section on Collection Management (these guidelines will be contained in a separate operational document for Library)
4	08/10/2018	C. Cregan	Review comments from CLMs implemented
4.1	22/11/208	L. Young & J. Kennedy	Further revision of text to improve clarity of key aims of policy
4.2	3/12/2018	C. Cregan	Reviewed by Faculty ADEs and other appropriate persons within each Faculty including ADRs and Teaching and Learning Committees
4.3	13/12/2018	C. Cregan	Amended following discussion at LMT 5/12/18

Collections and Information Access Policy

Introduction

This document sets out the general framework within which the Library operates to select, manage and review content from the Library's collection of information resources.

The policy supports the Library's Mission Statement to 'develop, deliver and sustain Library services and resources to support the University in achieving its corporate aims' and is aligned to the current Library Services Strategy, "Learning for Success", Ulster's draft Learning and Teaching Strategy (2018-2023) and the overarching Institutional [Five and Fifty](#) Strategy.

The Policy will also support the University to achieve its strategic objectives in the context of delivery of the Greater Belfast Development project and its ambitions in relation to a Digital Strategy.

This policy is supported by a number of internal operational documents that can be supplied on request.

Context

This revision of the Policy will inform the Library's approach to collection management and development and continues to focus on the delivery of information resources in digital format.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy lies with the University Librarian and Deputy Chief Digital and Information Officer.

Key objectives of the Policy are:
- To pursue an "electronic first" approach to the provision of materials and services in line with the institution's digital strategy, where availability, cost and access models allow
- To enable the re-purposing of library space to accommodate changing pedagogies as "right-sizing" of the Library's physical collections is achieved through appropriate stock management and via the outworking of the e-first approach to information provision
- To meet most information needs of staff and students, whilst recognising that not every demand can be satisfied
- To provide equitable access to all users
- To be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of users.

Establishing Requirements

The Library will work in partnership with Faculties to keep under constant review the materials and information services needed to support the current teaching, learning and research priorities of the University.

Consultations between Sub Librarians and Deans or their representatives will inform the Library's purchasing plans, assisting with prioritisation and decision-making where necessary. Ultimately, the Library will seek to achieve an overall balance between competing needs to make the most effective use of the budget available. In that context, the prioritisation of provision of resources in electronic form will be the default starting point for the Library's budgetary decisions during the life of this Policy.

The Library will work closely with the University's academic community. However, to ensure consistency, the final responsibility for determining priorities rests with the Library.

Selection of Information Resources

Faculty Sub-Librarians will engage with teaching and research staff to identify appropriate subject specific content, using the following general guidelines:

- Material selected must support the current learning, teaching and research priorities of the University
- The number of copies or simultaneous accesses purchased will depend on anticipated and actual use, cost and availability
- Digital versions, where suitable and available, will be acquired in preference to the excessive duplication of print copies
- Academic quality of materials is important so all material acquired should be of an appropriate standard to support learning, teaching and research.

The format of content identified will be electronic where available unless the print format presents significant advantages (in terms of cost, usability or accessibility).

Print and other formats will continue to be purchased where it is appropriate to do so. Whilst there are often higher up-front costs associated with purchasing content in electronic format, it must be recognised that the acquisition and processing of print materials requires a considerable staff resource in the life-cycle management of the material and associated space it inhabits. This difference in costs impacts on provision overall.

Library staff will ensure the relevance and currency of stock and reserve the right to decline to purchase any item not consistent with the objectives of the Collections and Information Access Policy

The Library will make use of reading lists as the main means of ensuring students have access to required and recommended information resources. There is an expectation that a reading list will be provided for every module in a timely fashion to enable the Library to provide appropriate resources at point of need. The Library will be responsible for reviewing and making widely available the content of reading lists received, and for managing any attendant acquisitions processes, including the selection of formats, to ensure both appropriate accessibility for students and value for money for the University.

It is acknowledged that there are differences in the type of format preferred and associated costs between different subject areas. This may mean the selection and management of material will vary depending on the nature of the subject.

Information Resources

- **Books**

Books will be acquired in electronic form and with multi-user licences as far as possible. Meeting the simultaneous demands of users, specifically undergraduate students, remains a challenge but eBooks will be the preferred model for meeting this demand.

Where possible, the Library will provide electronic access (or as a secondary measure, print access) to all book titles listed as *Required* reading in student reading lists.

It may not be possible to provide access to all items requested due to material being either unavailable in eBook format, out-of-print and unavailable or too expensive to purchase for the expected usage. In these cases, the Library will seek to provide alternative access to key readings, from the British Library's Copyright Cleared Document Delivery Service. Where it is not possible to do so, academic staff will be informed so that a substitute title may be suggested.

Alternative purchase models such as demand driven or evidence-based selection of eBooks and purchase of eBook collections will be used where appropriate.

Where print copies are purchased, they may be distributed and moved across loan categories and campuses according to identified demand.

- **Journals**

The Library will apply an "electronic first" approach to providing users with current and archive content.

Faculties will be asked periodically to review current subscriptions to ensure continued relevance and value for money. Where additional spending on journal subscriptions is required to support new programmes, it may be necessary to prioritise their acquisition over the continuation of some existing titles. As many tittles now form part of nationally negotiated deals this may reduce the flexibility to cancel individual titles. Before subscriptions are cancelled, the views of all stakeholders including relevant Faculty staff will be taken into account.
In order to ensure continuing access to electronic materials, the Library will subscribe to appropriate digital archive and e-journal preservation services and will take advantage of potential future collaborative arrangements, both at national and institutional levels, e.g. collaborative storage initiatives and institutional repositories.

- **Databases**

The Library will make databases and information collections available in electronic format wherever possible to maximise access for users. Databases will be subscribed to after due consideration of factors such as scholarly evidence of need, cost effectiveness and ease of access. The Library's preferred option is to make

material available in web-based and full-text format provided there are clear pedagogical advantages such as ease of access to content

- **Non-Book Media**

The Library provides access to a range of audio-visual resources to support academic requirements. This material exists for legitimate academic use only, within the constraints of UK copyright law and the University's ERA (Educational Recording Agency) licence.

Audio-visual materials are also made available online where appropriate, e.g. a music streaming service is available. Materials in obsolete or superseded formats will not usually be retained in the Library's general collections.

- **Scanned documents and offprints**

Under the terms of the University's Copyright and Scanning Licence, documents such as book chapters and journal articles will be made available through the Library's centralised scanning service where the material is currently held in paper or digital form by the Library.

Criteria such as user demand, the level of current access and potential cost will be taken into account when considering the requests for digitisation. In compliance with Licence requirements, usage data will be monitored and reported to Faculty Sub Librarians and this will inform the renewal process.

For distance learning courses only, where material is required beyond the limits of the Copyright and Scanning Licence, the Library will make use of the Copyright Licensing Agency's (CLA) Second Extract Permissions Service, which permits the scanning of additional extracts from books and journals.

- **Theses and Dissertations**

In accordance with University regulations an electronic version of every research thesis will be deposited in the University's PURE repository, with access also provided via the Library catalogue. The Library also maintains a collection of research theses from past years in print format

The library will maintain a limited collection of Masters' degree dissertations with a mark of 70% or above (Distinction level) as exemplars or if they represent a unique or significant resource. Decisions on retention of these will be made in consultation with Faculties.

- **Examination Papers**

Past papers are available through the online exam paper database, which is accessible both on and off-campus to registered users from the Library web site. The Library will make available all papers provided by the Examinations Office in a timely fashion.

Institutional Repository and Open Access

The Library will work in partnership with the Research & Impact Department to support and promote the University's "green" open access policy and the University Institutional Repository.

Special Collections

Detailed information about the special collections curated by the Library and the latest strategy which informs decision-making in regard to the curation, preservation and promotion of these collections is available from the Special Collections and Rare Books webpages library.ulster.ac.uk/specialcollections

There are several collections of unique and distinctive material which are held in closed access areas, primarily in the Coleraine and Magee Libraries. These special collections support research and teaching at the University and their care is a vital curatorial role of the Library. By nature of the material, these collections are curated, managed and used separately from the main collections, usually under archival conditions due to their fragility, rarity, financial or other value.

Due to administration and accommodation costs, new special collections will only be initiated after careful consideration.

Donations (including bequests)

The Library will consider offers of gifts and donations in accordance with the same selection criteria applied to other purchased acquisitions. All donations (bequests), including those from academic staff, will be strictly assessed on an individual basis by the appropriate Sub Librarian in consultation with the Campus Library Manager.

Donations will only be accepted if:
- The material is relevant to the current teaching and research interests of the University
- Sufficient space is available
- There is limited cost in adding the material to stock
- There is full agreement that items may be disposed of in any manner deemed appropriate.

Library staff reserve the right to decline any donation which is not consistent with the aims of the Library or the University. The Library will retain the right to dispose of donated material should it no longer meet these aims. Archive materials specifically relating to the University are managed by Archives staff within the Library.

Library Provision in Partner Institutions

Faculty Sub Librarians will liaise with librarians in the University's partner institutions and with the appropriate Subject Partnership Manager to ensure that Ulster students in partner institutions have access to necessary Library resources.

Reviewing the Policy

Changes to the Collections and Information Access Policy will be made at any time in the light of new developments, emerging disciplines and evolving trends. It will be reviewed overall in consultation with academic staff every three years to ensure that it continues to reflect the strategic priorities of the University.