



Library Collection Development Policy

May 2024

Policy Statement

This policy is a statement of the library's priorities and criteria for the acquisition and maintenance of its collections. It is intended to ensure continuity by providing guidelines for library staff and advice to Directors of Studies. It replaces the previous policy from 2018.

Purpose of the collection

The primary purpose of the Bartlam Library is to support the information needs of the undergraduate members of Selwyn College for all subjects taught in the Tripos. This assumes that the faculty, departmental, and university libraries are the primary providers of more specialised material required particularly by Part II students and graduate students. However, the library will consider giving support for these students when other resources in Cambridge are not sufficient to meet their needs.

The library will preserve its rare books and special collections and make these available for study as appropriate.

Members of other colleges and external visitors may consult library material by arrangement with library staff, and will not usually be able to borrow.

Acquisitions Budget

The general library budget is agreed with the Finance Manager by the beginning of the financial year in July. It includes apportionments for book and journal purchasing. As a guideline, the library allocates a sum for each subject and divides the remainder between Tripos subjects on a per capita basis. Unspent funds from one subject may be transferred to another.

Print Books

3.1 Selection

Books that meet the primary purpose of the library are purchased by library staff in response to faculty, departmental, and college lists of recommended readings and requests from Fellows and students, with the guidance of the relevant Director of Studies as required.

If a subject allocation is unspent, library staff will examine the collection and recent publications and make purchase decisions, in liaison with Directors of Studies as appropriate, to ensure that the collection remains balanced and up-to-date.

Library staff also purchase cross-curricular material and books for a small professional collection, for the Academic Skills & Welfare collection, for the general reading collection, and occasionally to

support the archives, rare books, and special collections. Purchases for the Academic Skills & Welfare collection are made in liaison with the Study Skills Tutor and the College Nurse, as appropriate.

Fellows and students are encouraged to make book recommendations. Library staff will decide whether an immediate purchase should be made or whether a referral should be made to the relevant faculty or departmental library and the ebooks@Cambridge team, or to the relevant Director of Studies, usually in the case of expensive or specialised texts. The main factors taken into account when making a decision to purchase are: the availability of the text elsewhere in Cambridge, the cost, the ability to supply the book in good time, and the estimated use of the item in future. In practice, most recommendations are accepted by the library.

3.2 *Format*

Where there is a choice, the library will usually purchase books in paperback rather than hardback, owing to cost. Well-used copies are either replaced or rebound.

3.3 *New editions*

The library will buy new editions of recommended or well-used titles as required. The previous edition will usually be retained and older editions deleted unless shown to be on reading lists.

3.4 *Multiple copies*

In general, the library's policy is to acquire only one copy of a book, subject to demand, or on the recommendation of the Director of Studies. Law textbooks are purchased singly and placed on reference use, with additional copies purchased for print-only titles in high demand.

3.5 *Replacements*

Books are regularly checked for condition and worn items will be replaced if they show a history of frequent borrowing. Books identified as missing may also be replaced.

3.6 *Works in languages other than English*

Works of literature in original, non-English languages are only acquired where the language is part of the subject of study. English translations will be acquired where appropriate (for example, Ancient Greek plays studied in the English Tripos). Otherwise books not in the English language are not regularly acquired as these should be available in the more specialised faculty and departmental libraries.

3.7 *Reference books*

The library does not purchase general reference books, other than in response to specific requests.

3.8 *Rare books and special collections*

There is no specific allocation for the purchase of rare books or special collections items.

Electronic resources

Wherever possible, the library works collaboratively to provide electronic resources on a University-wide basis. The library contributes to the [Journals Co-ordination Scheme](#) (JCS) and the

ebooks@cambridge service from its general budget. Providing that the purchases made by these collaborative services continue to reflect the library's primary purpose, and that colleges are fully consulted regarding policies and practices, it will continue to do so.

Recommendations for the purchase of ebooks are passed to the ebooks@cambridge team and to the relevant faculty or departmental library, as appropriate.

DVDs

The library purchases DVDs to support Tripos studies using the book fund. The library also houses and lends the JCR's DVD collection.

Periodicals

Provision for periodicals is made through the [Journals Co-ordination Scheme](#) (JCS). The library does not subscribe to any print journals.

Other Materials

Models may be bought to support Tripos teaching, such as molecular models for Chemistry. The library does not usually purchase materials in other formats, at the discretion of the Librarian.

Evaluation and Weeding

Evaluation and weeding together constitute an integral part of collection management. As taught courses within the University change, and the intake of new students into the College in the different subject areas varies in emphasis, so must the library remain flexible and adaptive in its response to user needs.

Subject areas are regularly reviewed in conjunction with the Director of Studies. Each item in the collection is assessed for its ongoing usefulness, evidence for which will be drawn from reading lists and borrowing statistics. Items in poor physical condition will be removed and a decision made to replace or dispose. Older editions may be removed from the collection or relegated to the second floor of the Bartlam Library or to the Old Library.

Rare Books and Special Collections

The library's rare books and special collections date from the foundation of the College. Additional items are not usually acquired, although occasionally works complementing the collection may be purchased or acquired by donation.

Donations

Potential donors are advised to contact the College Librarian in the first instance. With limited space and staffing, offers of books not relevant to the primary purpose of the library are usually declined, although it may be possible to recommend a more appropriate recipient.

Large collections of books for donation will be judged on an individual basis. Any collection accepted, unless a specific historic collection, will be dispersed among the current book stock, and duplicates or items not meeting the collection criteria of relevance to the Tripos or significance to Selwyn history

will not usually be accepted. Subject-specific collections may be better directed to a more relevant library in Cambridge or elsewhere.

If the donation meets the necessary criteria, the library will usually request a list of the items on offer to check against holdings. Duplicates of existing stock will be accepted if they can be used to replace or add to those in the library's collection.

The library does not accept donations of journals (bound or unbound).

Off-prints or working papers of College members should be offered to the College Archives.

Whenever the library accepts a donation, it should be understood that this acceptance is subject to the terms of this policy. Therefore items may be disposed of as and when the library deems it necessary, by passing them to other libraries, offering them for sale, or donating them to a charity.

We hold and process data in relation to donations as set out in the College's Data Protection Policy (located on the [Finances and Governance](#) page). Donors should be aware that standard practice is to include a donor's bookplate inside donated items. Donors not wishing for their details to be shared in this way have the right to access, amend, or withdraw their details at any time, as set out in the College's Data Protection Policy.

This policy was approved in 2024 and is subject to review after 3 years.