

WOOLF INSTITUTE LIBRARY COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Overview

The policy is an inclusive statement of aims and sets out the Library's aspirations which are intended to be realistic while recognizing that their implementation is dependent on the availability of resources.

It is intended to provide information about the principles on which the Library's collections are acquired, to create an awareness of the Library's objectives and to form the basis for future developments and modifications as circumstances require.

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is:

- to provide a framework for the maintenance and development of the Library's collections;
- to define priorities;
- to establish selection criteria across the range of different Institute-related subjects, languages and media;
- to create a consistent and coherent basis for the future development of the collection while, at the same time, allowing for the library's position within the wider framework of the Cambridge Theological Federation and Cambridge University Library and outside Cambridge.

The Library and the Rationale of the Collection

The Library primarily serves members of the Woolf Institute and the Cambridge Theological Federation of which it is an Associate Member and is open to members of the University of Cambridge with borrowing rights for members of St Edmund's College (the Institute has an academic association with St Edmund's College and the extension of borrowing rights is a reflection of this association). It now also has a reciprocal agreement with the Cambridge Muslim College for use of one another's libraries (reading rights only). In addition, it serves the Woolf graduate student community, represented by PhD students and students reading for the MPhil in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (Pathway A: Muslim-Jewish Relations) at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

The primary function of the Library is to support the teaching, learning and research needs of the Institute, as well as attracting students and researchers from academic institutions both within and outside Cambridge. It aims to increasingly support the research of academic staff and postgraduate students. This responsibility includes providing material for current research and teaching, as well as anticipating future needs taking into account the development and introduction of new teaching programmes and new areas of research interest.

Whenever new courses are introduced, the Library seeks to support these by acquiring recommended titles in advance. It supports the research interests of individual staff, especially when these are reflected in taught courses and Woolf-based research projects or builds on existing areas of strength in the Library's collection.

As well as members of the Institute, the Library's readers include members of the wider academic community, from within the Cambridge Theological Federation and Cambridge University, as well as external students, researchers and interested members of the general public. The Library cannot, however, undertake to build up research collections in subject areas or in languages which are outside the scope of the Institute's research or teaching activities.

Recommendations and Selection

Selections for purchase are normally made by:

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- The Subject Librarian
- The Founder Director & Director of Studies
- Academic staff
- Research Staff/Students

Decision making is influenced by:

- Budgetary restrictions
 - Too specialist/esoteric (i.e. likely to be of limited interest to future readers)
 - Outside collection areas
 - Constraints of space
- The University Library/CTF libraries has/have multiple copies and/or a title is available as e-book . [It should be noted that students undertaking the Woolf's online courses who are not resident in Cambridge do not, in the main, have access to the University Library's collection of e-books.]

General Principles

- In the event of budget and space restrictions, titles relevant to research interests and courses taught within the Institute/Cambridge University or via distance learning will always take priority in the interests of supporting teaching and learning. The main areas covered by the Library are Jewish-Christian-Muslim studies (i.e., religious; philosophical; historical; socio-political; the Arts etc).
- It is hoped that, subject to available funding (e.g. through donors with a special interest in supporting the Library), a limited number of standing orders may be placed for key subject-related series when it is clear that every volume, or almost every volume, in the series will be appropriate to the Library's collections and would otherwise be ordered individually.

Foreign Language Titles

The major part of the Library's holdings is in the English language. Nevertheless, English-language material is not in itself always sufficient. Depending on the usual restrictions of funding, space and staff-time, books in languages other than English may be acquired if they fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

- When they relate directly to the teaching and research interests of the Institute
- When they are works by an acknowledged expert in the field^[1]_[SEP]
- When coverage in English, or in the language appropriate to the area, is generally perceived to be inadequate
- When the Library's coverage approaches comprehensiveness^[1]_[SEP]
- When it appears that the author is making an important and original contribution to the subject^[1]_[SEP]

Categories of material

- Translations into English from a text already represented in the Library in the original language
- New editions
- Reprints and Facsimiles. Reprints are not normally acquired if the original edition is held, but exceptions may be made for reprints of heavily used items. Modern facsimiles may be acquired if it is necessary to save wear and tear on the original edition.
- Pamphlets^[1]_[SEP] Pamphlet material may be purchased in the case of items of particular importance
- Theses. It is intended to house published and unpublished theses by members of Institute staff. It would also be desirable to house theses by individual members of the Institute's Trustees.

Reference Works

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- Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, bibliographies and other reference works are acquired for the reference collection. This aims to include not only scholarly works of reference but also books meeting general Institute research needs
- Many reference works are available in electronic form and are accessible to members of Cambridge University via the University Library website. The Library has no current plans to acquire electronic copies of reference works as these would prove too costly within the annual budget and would not serve the needs of our online student community.

Multiple Copies, Replacement Copies

- In general, the Library's policy is to acquire one copy of as many books as possible which meet the overall criteria. Priority is given to texts which form the core reading for the Institute's online courses. The reasons for this are twofold: physical copies of books used in online courses is a CLA requirement for the uploading of chapters/extracts etc onto Moodle (any material uploaded must meet prevailing copyright restrictions) and the Library's collections should reflect the courses it offers.
- Replacements for missing books which support the Institute's teaching and research may be ordered when the Subject Librarian becomes aware of the need (i.e., as a result of a stock check) or if requested by readers. It should be noted that books are often out of print when they are reported missing, and a replacement copy may not be available.

Special Collections in the Library

- The Library aims to build up special collections which contribute to the overall richness of its holdings. The most important of these is envisaged to be rare manuscripts and a limited amount of archival material, all of which must be relevant to the Institute's overall foci.

Relationship to the holdings of other libraries in Cambridge

- The Woolf Institute Library is a research and teaching collection. Its holdings are complemented by those in the University Library, the member houses of the CTF and individual Colleges.
- For academic use (core research areas and taught courses), it is often essential to acquire titles that are also held in other Cambridge Libraries. Borrowing restrictions, access restrictions and distance from the Institute are all considerations that limit the reliance of members of the Institute on alternative libraries in the University.

Periodicals

- The Library has a limited number of print journals (current and 'dead') and no immediate plans to increase its periodical holdings due to funding constraints. For journals recommended by members of academic staff and postgraduate researchers, factors such as academic importance, depth of coverage, language, cost and format are taken into account. For those who are members of the University, there are a growing number of relevant key periodicals available online via the UL's e-journals web-pages.
- If financial restrictions require a choice between continuing a long run and ordering a new title, preference is normally given to the former.
- The Library only terminates a long-established periodical run that has demonstrably not been consulted for a number of years. Expensive titles of marginal interest are most likely to be considered for cancellation.
- Periodicals are to be purchased in major languages to support research and teaching in the Faculty. Such purchases are normally restricted to academic and professional journals but may also include significant titles of general relevance.
- Purchases may be made to fill gaps in existing sets, and to provide sample issues to consider for subscription.

Topographical and Cartographical Collections

- Atlases may be purchased for the reference collection.

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Audio-visual materials

- The Library has a very good collection of subject-related DVDs.

Modern second-hand material, purchase of collections

- Catalogues of second-hand books are used to select material for purchase. Purchase decisions are made in accordance with the importance of the individual item, taking into account price and physical condition. Items purchased include material acquired by the Library but which has subsequently been stolen, damaged or subject to deterioration, and books for which there is a demand from readers or which fills gaps in existing holdings.

Collections and individual items offered for purchase or as donations

- When collections are offered to the Library for purchase or by donation they are considered on their merits. A list of the titles concerned must be submitted to the Subject Librarian who will then consult with an academic member of staff (i.e. the Director of Research or Director of Studies) in advance of any decision being taken. Collections are normally acquired on the understanding that unwanted material can be discarded. Often the items in the collection duplicate the Library's existing holdings to a considerable extent, thus limiting the value of the collection. Occasionally the specialist nature of a collection is such that its purchase enhances the Library's collections significantly, but collections are not purchased unless they contain a substantial proportion of material which is not held by the Library and which the Library would wish to acquire in accordance with its normal criteria. The physical condition of items in the collection is also a significant factor.

Rare Books

- It is intended that, in future years, a special collection of rare books and manuscripts should form a discrete part of the Library's holdings. This must be relevant to the Institute's focus on Jewish-Christian-Muslim material and it is envisaged that the collection will primarily be made up by donations from benefactors.
- The housing of rare books must be consistent with conditions which do not allow for the deterioration of leather bindings and fragile material. The Subject Librarian will use her experience and expertise in the cataloguing, care and conservation of special collections in the interests of any Woolf collection.

Retention and disposal

- Since the Library is a research library with a strong historical bias, its general philosophy is to retain material indefinitely. Items regarded as suitable for de-accession are usually confined to out-of-date reference works of limited interest/use for existing and future needs. Books in very poor condition may be de-accessed if they can be replaced by a newer copy. De-accessioned material should normally be carried out after consultation with the Director of Studies.

The Woolf Institute

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