

Library Services Information Resources Policy

Scope

1. This policy covers the management of the externally-created content to which the Library provides access, including open, purchased and licensed/subscribed content, and both online content and physical resources. This policy follows the principles outlined in the over-arching Library Content Strategy and should be read in conjunction with that strategy.
2. There are separate policies outlining the management of other content, including the Archives and Art collections, and College-created content that the Library supports - both research content (such as research data, publications, and theses) and education content (such as exam papers).

Budget

3. The information resources covered by this policy are supported by the Information Resources Fund, which the Library manages on behalf of the College. To ensure an affordable and sustainable approach to resource provision, in both the short and long term, the expectation is that resource needs are met from this budget, without additional supplements from Schools or Departmental budgets. The budget will be set through the College's annual planning processes, for consideration by the Executive and Council. Schools will articulate funding requests for any additional, strategically aligned information resources through that process.

Selection

4. The Library selects content in line with the principles outlined in the Content Strategy, and subject to affordability. Provision is necessarily selective and we therefore rely on collaborative provision with other libraries to meet users' needs, where this is appropriate and effectively delivers strategic objectives.
5. The Library takes a demand-led approach to selection of both education and research content in order to align collections to current needs. We actively collect evidence and data to better understand user needs, including seeking regular feedback from our users to ensure their voices are heard. We consult with Schools and their constituent Departments to determine priorities, taking into account a range of measures of demand, identified strategic needs, and available benchmarking indicators.
6. Content for teaching is selected to support current courses, and includes both reading list content and selective wider reading for student dissertations and independent essays. The provision of reading list content is based on the following approach, which seeks to ensure both that the Library can sustainably provide access to the required resources, and that students can achieve required reading within expected timeframes:
 - Lists should be no longer than 100 items long for a standard 15 credit module, with readings prioritized as either Essential or Recommended. List length should be pro-rata'd for shorter modules, and can be doubled to 200 items for 30 credit modules. Disciplines which have traditionally issued longer subject bibliographies may provide a 'Further reading' supplement to their reading list.
 - Lists must be provided using the College's reading list system (Talis Aspire).
 - Lists should be confirmed at least 12 weeks prior to the start of the course, or in line with advertised deadlines.

The Library will seek to provide access to all Essential and Recommended items, subject to affordability. In cases where the specified resources are unavailable or unaffordable, the Library will liaise with academic staff to identify potential alternative resources.

Further reading will not be checked by the Library, and the expectation is that supplemental reading lists should predominantly contain references to content already available through the Library, or available online through Senate House Library.

7. Content will be selected for research and knowledge exchange activity that supports College strategy, including, where sustainable, resources which will directly enable growth in external funding and improvement in knowledge exchange metrics.
8. Additional content may be acquired to support the College strategy. For example, resources will be considered where they:
 - provide additional support and advice to students and staff, such as resources to support wellbeing, skills development and living sustainably;
 - diversify our collections and help build a plurality of viewpoints;
 - build strength and currency in the 'Flagship' collections.
9. Donations may be accepted where they are relevant to the teaching and research needs of the College. When considering donations, we consider not only the relevance of the content, but also resource implications including the costs of access, metadata, storage, digitisation and preservation. We only accept donations of printed books and journals in limited cases, where they support our 'flagship' collections. Where the Library accepts an item or collection, it is a condition of acceptance that the donation will not necessarily be retained permanently.

Acquisition

10. The Library provides access to open access content, and to content acquired by purchase, license/subscription, exchange or donation. Where there is an option, the decision on whether to purchase for permanent access or license/subscribe for temporary access is based on affordability and achieving best value, taking into account the anticipated lifespan of the material's usage for either education or research.

In some cases, the Library may not acquire content, but rely instead on collaborative provision by obtaining material on temporary loan from other libraries (inter-library loan), or by referring users to visit other libraries directly.

11. The Library follows a digital first strategy and provides resources in online formats wherever possible. To support the College's blended learning approach, we aim to provide at least 50% of Essential and Recommended reading list items in online formats, subject to publisher availability.

Some textbooks and monographs are provided in print, either to complement online provision, or where particular resources are not available, or are not affordable to provide online. This is particularly the case for some textbooks, where online 'e-textbook' versions may only be made available under unsustainable pricing models. Where reading list items are only available as e-textbooks, provision will be limited to one e-textbook per module.

12. The Library acquires a broad range of resource types, primarily text-based and audio-visual resources. The Library may contribute to the provision of online learning packages, where these include a significant content element. In general, the Library does not acquire software for College users.
13. Trial access to paid-for online content may occasionally be arranged and will be managed by the Library. Trials will only be arranged to resources that are in line with the Content Strategy, and where purchase or subscription would be affordable. Trials will not be arranged purely for the purpose of providing temporary access to a resource, where there is no intention to seek longer-term access.
14. The Library seeks to achieve best value through procurement practices and supply chain management. Suppliers are selected in line with procurement frameworks to take advantage of discounts, shelf-ready supply and to ensure economies of scale to reduce staff overheads. Large resources are generally licensed through nationally-negotiated agreements for specific collections (for example, [Jisc Collections](#) or [Chest](#) agreements).

Access and discovery

15. Our strategy is to make content as widely available as possible. Access to the physical collections is available to any library user who is permitted to access the Library, under the terms of the Library Regulations. Access to online resources is subject to the licence terms for each resource, which determine who may use the resource, and for what purposes.
16. For online content, the Library will prefer content that is made available under Open Access licence terms, where possible.
17. Where online content is not Open Access and licence terms limit access to particular groups, the Library will seek licence terms that enable access for all Royal Holloway students, teachers and researchers. However, selected resources may be provided for use only by a specific group of users (for example students on a particular module), if that is the only way the content can be provided, or where it is a more cost-effective option.
18. Where the College has entered into partnership with another institution or commercial body to provide education or research, the Library may seek to negotiate extended licence terms to enable students and staff belonging to the partner organization to access selected online resources. Extended licence terms may not be available for some resources and are subject to affordability.
19. We will also seek to provide access to online content for Alumni, the wider scholarly community, and the general public where this is permitted within the terms of existing licence agreements - for example through 'walk-in user' provisions - and also technically possible.
20. The Library will ensure resources are provided in accessible formats wherever possible and support the provision of alternative formats and access equipment where necessary. Accessibility statements of online resources will be investigated to ensure accessible use for those with additional needs. Where there is a choice of platforms, existing suppliers may be preferred as these platforms can be more easily assessed for compliance with accessibility requirements.
21. The Library will endeavour to provide digital content in a way that is accessible to Royal Holloway members both on and off-campus in order to support users studying and working remotely. However, access to some resources may be restricted for users based in particular countries by factors beyond the Library's control.
22. We seek to make content easily available at point of need in users' workflows, for example by embedding access to content into platforms such as online learning environments. In particular, the Reading List system (currently Talis Aspire) is the College's channel for presenting reading lists to students, and for informing Library Services of resources required for education. Use of this system across all modules ensures a consistent student experience.
23. As well as embedding content, the Library will seek to make all content widely discoverable, both through library systems (such as Library Search) and also via external search engines, including national and international catalogues (such as [Library Hub Discover](#) or [WorldCat](#)).
24. The Library also facilitates access to resources held in other collections and libraries, or available digitally. In particular, the Library will promote the use of Senate House Library (the central library of the University of London).

Review and retention

25. All content, digital and print, is actively managed to ensure the collection remains aligned to academic needs and continues to offer value for money. It is also necessary to manage the finite space available to store print collections, recognising that there are other demands on space within Library buildings, as well as costs for any offsite storage requirements. The Library Content Strategy outlines our approach to dynamic collection management, and the collection categorization framework used to support this approach.

26. Subscription-based resources, including e-book and e-journal bundled deals, will be considered at least annually and/or at point of renewal as to their relevance and value for money, through assessing cost and usage data. Where the content is still relevant, alternative resources with similar content may be substituted if these offer improved value for money, or other benefits such as improved accessibility, or better licence terms.
27. Print content which is no longer in active use, or which no longer reflects education and research interests, may be withdrawn. Withdrawal decisions will take into account the categorization of collections:
 - Items in Flagship and Heritage collections will generally be retained, to maintain the coherence of that collection.
 - Items in Current or Finite collections will be withdrawn if they are no longer in active use, if they have been superseded by new editions, if they are available in digital format, or if they are damaged beyond repair and do not merit replacement.
28. The Library may take part in local, national and international initiatives to relegate, withdraw or exchange items and/or collections where the initiative is based upon ensuring access to the content via alternative means. Some Heritage collections may be transferred in their entirety to other libraries, where another library has existing collection strengths in that subject area.
29. Withdrawn print stock may be disposed of by offering it to reputable organisations and charities, from whom the College may receive a proportion of the sell-on profit. Withdrawn materials which we are unable to send elsewhere will be disposed of in an ethically and environmentally sustainable manner.

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