

University of Kent Collection Management Policy

Introduction

The University of Kent's Library Collections are central to supporting transformative teaching, learning and research activity. The Collections reflect the core purpose of the University whose work is '*driven by our deep and abiding values, our pride in our past and the people and communities we serve*'. Our vision is to enrich and enhance learning, teaching, research and wellbeing through the provision of rich, diverse and relevant resources.

The Collections reflect Kent's distinctive identity, the teaching and research interests and activities of the University community through time. Research works are discoverable through the Kent Academic Repository, which provides reliable, long-term, and open access to University of Kent research. Teaching and research collections reflect disciplinary needs and current course provision, supporting an excellent student experience and aligned to our Priority Research Areas. These include flagship collections of national significance managed through our Special Collections and Archives, such as the British Cartoon Archive and the growing UK Philanthropy Archive.

Purpose

This policy provides a framework within which we can undertake our commitment to develop, provide space for, make accessible, manage, preserve and promote the Library's collections.

Scope

This policy refers to the collections managed by the University of Kent Library Services and:

- applies to materials in all formats.
- excludes Special Collections and Archives, Kent Academic Repository and the Kent Data Repository which are managed through separate policies.
- covers Canterbury and Medway curated collections. It is complemented by the Drill Hall Library Collection Development Policy. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Library' encompasses both the Canterbury and Medway collections.

Audience

The Collections underpin the needs of the University of Kent students, staff, academics and researchers, whilst recognising and supporting the University's wider civic mission in outreach to the community.

Collections Management

Strategic Principles

- Support learning teaching and research by providing access to high quality, accessible and curated content as required by the University.
- Support digital first, open first and just-in-time approaches to content and collections access.
- Deliver digital first, considering availability, pedagogical requirements and user preferences.
- Maximise value for money, support affordable and sustainable models of access to content, and offer optimal long-term preservation and access aligned to the needs of the University.
- Provide inclusive, diverse and open access collections to support scholarship, lifelong learning, wellbeing and a sense of belonging.
- Engage with our user community to develop and enhance library collections.
- Review and edit collections regularly to ensure currency and value, balancing just-in time access to content with the requirement for just-in-case collections storage.

Selection and Acquisition

Collecting Principles

- Our primary collection focus reflects the teaching and research interests of the University, including our Kent and Medway Medical School (KMMS) and Universities at Medway partnerships.
- We collect, organise, make available and preserve the outputs of academic research, including research theses.
- We support the wellbeing of our users through the provision of extra-curricular resources including leisure, self-help and wider reading.
- We represent a diverse range of perspectives and voices to reflect the needs and interests of the University community.

- In line with the RLUK and IFLA's Statements on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom¹, we support the principles of intellectual freedom, facilitating access to different ideas, opinions and information without endorsement or censorship. We do not restrict access to materials based on the ideas or opinions expressed within the content. The materials we hold does not imply an endorsement of the views expressed within the content.

Language

The usual language of the collection is English. Library Services acquires materials in other languages, where required, to support teaching and research activity.

Formats

Content formats that are discoverable and accessible will be prioritised. Legacy formats are not collected for Main Collection unless there are specific academic or collection-related requirements. Formats are considered as legacy where equipment needed to access the content is unavailable from mainstream suppliers.

Requests for subscription or purchase of content in electronic forms will be considered where access to learning content is required for teaching. The resource will be evaluated using agreed criteria, including cost, licence terms, accessibility and authentication routes.

Where possible, ebooks must be available for library purchase or subscription as an institutional licence.

Multi-media and audio-visual formats (e.g. film, images, music) will be provided by licenced streaming services and online collections where available.

Taught-course provision

To ensure taught courses are adequately provisioned, we will:

- prioritise the fulfilment of resource requirements for teaching and learning through the online reading list service.
- aim to provide access to least one copy of every item submitted on a reading list whenever practical and when funds allow. We advise academic colleagues to make use of existing or open resources where available.

¹ Research Libraries UK *RLUK (2017) A Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom*. Available at: <https://www.rluk.ac.uk/a-statement-on-libraries-and-intellectual-freedom/>

- aim to provide access to an electronic version of all items marked as 'core' on reading lists. We will prioritise purchasing of multi-user access ebooks, access to either open or subscribed e-journal content, or digitisation of a book chapter or journal article through the University's CLA Scanning service.

To support access to the widest range of online content, we explore, invest in, and evaluate a range of content access models including Patron Driven Acquisition (PDA), Evidence Based Acquisition (EBA) and other flexible acquisition models. We will provide on-demand digital access where the content adds value to the collection and benefits user experience.

We encourage resource recommendations and book suggestions from staff, students and other users of the library.

Drill Hall Library

Items held at the Medway campus will primarily support the learning, teaching and research needs of courses delivered at the campus.

Items on reading lists for courses based at the Medway campus will normally be provided by the Drill Hall Library. Disposals from the Drill Hall collection will be managed collaboratively and in consultation with University of Kent Library Services.

Research provision

The Library provides research content on behalf of the University and makes Open Access content discoverable. Material to support research is selected for collections in consultation with academic staff, schools and centres. Suggestions from academic staff are welcomed and we actively purchase books and book chapters written by University of Kent academics.

To support research, we provide on-demand access to journal content through the Document Delivery (Scan and Deliver) Service.

Our holdings are available to view at a national level, through Jisc Library Hub Discover. We signpost to external content across the UK to facilitate access to specialist material.

Managing the collections

We manage and review our collections to ensure they are current, rich and relevant to education and research, including for emerging areas. The Library's Reserve Collection holds items of rarity, uniqueness or which there is a responsibility to retain in perpetuity.

We promote collections and content access through a digital-first, open-first and just-in-time approach. Digital access is sought for printed materials where appropriate, practical and affordable to do so. Electronic format is preferred for new materials unless there is a clear pedagogical and/or specific research requirement to provide access to the physical item. We regularly review availability of ebooks to manage the print collection.

The criteria for assessing subject collections will take account of disciplinary differences and available evidence. Items (including digital versions) will be reviewed for withdrawal where they are:

- Superseded editions.
- Low-use duplicate copies.
- Low levels of use. Items that have not been borrowed for a specified period of time (subject-dependent) may be withdrawn unless they meet other criteria for retention.
- Available in secure, electronic format.
- Damaged beyond repair or in poor condition and do not warrant replacement.
- Support subjects or disciplines no longer taught or researched at Kent (except for material that continues to have interdisciplinary relevance).
- Incomplete or short journal runs where secure, long-term electronic access is assured. An exception is where electronic formats do not provide adequate contextual content, such as tables, graphs, photos, illustrations, musical notation, scripts, etc.

Active collection management balances the need for access to physical collections with the requirement for study, IT-enabled and student-focused spaces. Justification for retaining material will be required from academic staff to support good decision-making. For physical collections, this enables the Library to provide sufficient space for acquiring new titles, to make collections accessible and to maintain a balance between study spaces and library materials.

For text-book-based material and donated items, the Library maintains the right to dispose of items without consultation.

The final decision to withdraw content rests with Library Services.

Items that are rare or valuable will be considered for moving to Special Collections in accordance with Special Collections & Archives Collections Management Policy.

Withdrawn print material will be disposed of in the most sustainable way. Journal runs will be offered to UK Research Reserve and books will be offered to third parties who rehome, recycle or donate books.

Related policies

University of Kent Special Collections & Archives Collections Management Policy

University of Kent Library Donations Policy

Drill Hall Library Collection Development Policy

KMMS Library Policy: Position Statement

University of Kent KAR Collection Development Policy

CLA Scanning Service Collection Development

Document history

Approved by Education and Student Experience Board on behalf of Senate 27/05/2025

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Authored by Academic Library Services Team, Library Services

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Next due for review: June 2028