

# **Collection Development Policy**

**Collecting to support research, learning and inspiration.**

**2017**

## Foreword

The first of our six strategic priorities in '[The Way Forward 2015-2020](#)' states simply: 'We will be the guardian of the published and recorded memory of Scotland for current and future generations.' That is the fundamental starting point for all that we do and collection development is at its very heart.

It is important to have clear policies that set out what we are going to collect and why we are doing so if we are to fulfil our function as Scotland's national library. Through our collections, we aim to educate, entertain and inspire everyone who uses them. It is also a core function of the Library to support Scottish and international researchers in a wide range of fields. To do that we need to continue building a national collection of physical and digital resources that records the story of Scotland while reflecting the ideas and cultures of the world, both now and into the future.

Collection development is a collaborative undertaking and we work with a number of partners including academic and legal deposit libraries in achieving our objectives.

The Collections Purchase Fund provided by the Scottish Government is essential for our collecting activity and is supplemented by other funding such as trust funds, external grants and financial donations.

In setting out our key collection development policy principles, we address the opportunities and challenges of the digital age while recognising and celebrating the solid foundation provided by our physical collections which have been built over three centuries.<sup>1</sup>

Dr John Scally  
National Librarian

---

<sup>1</sup> The National Library of Scotland was established in 1925 by Act of the UK Parliament. The Act transferred the Faculty of Advocates' non-legal collections and right of legal deposit to the National Library of Scotland. The Advocates Library has been in existence since 1682.

## **The Library's vision**

The National Library of Scotland aims to be recognised as one of the leading national libraries in Europe. The Library will build collections which can support its strategic vision to generate opportunities for learning and research while improving understanding and participation in Scotland's rich cultural life.

The Library aims to fulfil the functions of a national library as defined by the International Federation of Library Associations, which include: 'the collection via legal deposit of the national imprint (both print and electronic) .... ; the preservation and promotion of the national cultural heritage; acquisition of at least a representative collection of foreign publications'.<sup>2</sup>

## **General collecting principles**

- 1 The Library aims to provide a world class collection for the people of Scotland and for international researchers of Scottish subjects. Whilst Scottish material is our key priority, we also acquire a very important quantity of wider UK and international subjects and publications.
- 2 The Library works in collaboration with other institutions, recognising their strengths and expertise. We do not therefore collect every subject and format comprehensively.
- 3 The Library acquires material by print and non-print legal deposit, purchase, donation, and occasionally through exchange programmes. We purchase content that we cannot acquire via legal deposit by consortial framework agreements where possible, always seeking best value.
- 4 The Library prefers to own collections rather than have temporary access, loan or deposit arrangements. We consider resource implications when taking decisions about acquisitions, especially large collections. We are particularly pleased to receive collections that come with a financial donation to allow cataloguing, preservation, digitisation and promotion.
- 5 The Library acquires material legally, ethically and with due diligence. We will assist the authorities with restitution of cultural items according to UNESCO guidance. We reserve the right to decline material, or remove access to it on the grounds of illegal content, intellectual property infringements, or risk to the collections or staff.
- 6 Library policy is to retain the collections that we own in perpetuity although in certain circumstances we may dispose of duplicates, redundant, unusable formats or items which pose a hazard to the collections or staff.
- 7 We may acquire the same work in different editions or formats, especially Scottish material. We do not normally acquire duplicates but exceptionally may acquire duplicate copies for their material or historical significance.

---

<sup>2</sup> [www.ifla.org/national-libraries](http://www.ifla.org/national-libraries). Legal deposit is the statutory obligation to deposit publications in a national library. It helps to ensure that the nation's published output – and its intellectual record and published heritage – is collected systematically.

- 8 We will review our Collection Development Policy every five years. We consider emerging formats and new subject areas relevant to our broad readership on an on-going basis.

### **What we collect: Scottish published material in digital and physical formats**

- 9 As Scotland's national and legal deposit library we aim to collect the output of Scottish publishers comprehensively, including publications of the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies. We have a special responsibility for long-term preservation of such material.
- 10 We collect Scottish content extensively, including items published outside Scotland which are written by Scots, or which relate to Scotland, aspects of Scottish life and culture, or individual Scots. We also acquire translations of Scottish authors.
- 11 Our collecting of Scotland's digital heritage includes the on-going harvest of UK web content, augmented by focused web harvesting on specific topics. We identify Scottish web content to be added to these harvests that may otherwise be missed from the general UK web crawl.
- 12 We acquire materials selectively that have become Scottish by association, for example through long domicile in Scotland, or ownership by Scots. When considering the book as an artefact, we collect those notable for design, illustration, or binding produced by Scottish artists and craftspeople.
- 13 Gaelic and Scots language materials are a core aspect of our collecting, and are acquired in all formats.
- 14 We acknowledge that there are gaps in our Scottish collections. We try to fill gaps of published Scottish material, prioritising Scottish publishers, then Scottish content.

### **What we collect: Scottish archival material**

- 15 We collect Scottish archives, manuscripts, sound and moving image material on a selective basis with the aim of developing coherent collections of national significance. We build on the strengths of our unique collections, and work collaboratively with other Scottish archival collections.

### **What we collect: United Kingdom and Irish published material in digital and physical formats**

- 16 We acquire UK publications extensively, primarily through non-print or print legal deposit in collaboration with four other legal deposit libraries.<sup>3</sup> Irish publications are collected through a reciprocal arrangement with the legal deposit framework in Ireland.

---

<sup>3</sup> Bodleian Libraries of the University of Oxford, Cambridge University Library, the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, and the National Library of Wales.

- 17 Legal deposit collecting covers academic, commercial, non-commercial, independent, web, local and free publishing across a vast array of subjects, including international and global topics.
- 18 We do not collect some categories of print legal deposit material by cooperative agreement with other legal deposit libraries, for example, English and Welsh local publications.

### **What we collect: international published material in digital and physical formats**

- 19 We acquire international publications selectively focusing on current research and business needs and relating to existing collection strengths. Digital publications with remote access are an important element of this collection development. We may negotiate temporary access to digital resources without seeking to acquire them permanently to address our users' current needs.
- 20 Collecting focuses primarily on English, Scots and Gaelic language material, along with works of international significance in European languages where we have collection strengths.
- 21 Subjects relating to Commonwealth countries and the United States are our priorities for international purchases because of their strong link to current research activity.

### **Further information**

The Library publishes detailed policies for specific collecting areas on its website: [www.nls.uk/collections](http://www.nls.uk/collections).

The Library considers all requests from readers who suggest specific items for acquisition. To make a suggestion, email [enquiries@nls.uk](mailto:enquiries@nls.uk).

For further information about the context in which the Library builds its collections, please see:

- National Library of Scotland Act 2012: [www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/3/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/3/).
- Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/28/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/28/). This Act extended the right of legal deposit to cover non-print publications.
- The details of non-print legal deposit are laid out in the Legal Deposit Libraries (Non-Print Works) Regulations 2013: [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/777/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/777/).
- Irish legal deposit arrangements are laid out in the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000: [www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/28/](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/28/).
- UK Legal Deposit Libraries agreements and statements on collecting principles and policies: [www.legaldeposit.org.uk](http://www.legaldeposit.org.uk).
- Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries, Scottish Collections Policy: [scur.ac.uk/what-we-do/publications/scottish-collections-policy/](http://scur.ac.uk/what-we-do/publications/scottish-collections-policy/).