

Collection Development Policy

Last revised: September 2023

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## Introduction

This Collection Development Policy sets out how the National Library of Scotland selects material to be added to the collections. It describes our current practice as well as what we aspire to do as a forward-thinking Library. The Collection Development Policy is part of our Collections Management framework of policies. See the [National Library of Scotland Collections policies](https://www.nls.uk/about-us/corporate-documents/#collection).

Collection development is one of the core functions of a national library and includes "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" (International Federation of Library Associations).

Collection development is one of the National Library of Scotland’s statutory obligations under the [National Library of Scotland Act 2012](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/3/contents/enacted). See section 2.2.a. The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003, The Legal Deposit Libraries (Non-Print Works) Regulations 2013, and The Equality Act 2010, are the other key pieces of legislation defining our collection development work.

There are four core elements to our collecting.

* The Library aims to collect Scottish publications comprehensively.
* The Library collects Scottish archival material selectively, for example, manuscripts, moving image, photographs and sound.
* The Library works in partnership with the other UK legal deposit libraries to collect and preserve UK published material and content.
* The Library collects other publications, including international publications, selectively to meet the various needs of our audiences.

We are the guardian of the published and recorded memory of Scotland for current and future generations. The collections support learning, research and enjoyment. As we build collections that represent the lives and memories of Scotland’s people, and which add to world knowledge, we create opportunities for people to participate in Scotland’s rich cultural life. We welcome contributions to the development of the collections from those in Scotland and around the world. See section 3.4. The Library holds the largest collection of Scottish published material in the world, and one of the largest collections of Scottish archives.

This Collection Development Policy is where the Library formally articulates its commitment to building a collection that is diverse and representative. We know that more work is required to address the silences in the collections to ensure a richer and more representative variety of voices, views, and experiences of 21st Century Scotland are collected and curated. An [Equality Impact Assessment](https://www.nls.uk/media/gj5pfab4/eqia-policies.docx) has been undertaken for this policy. Print versions of the policy and the Equality Impact Assessment can be sent out on request.

### Definitions and terminology

The use of the word comprehensive in this policy is in line with the Conspectus definition, adapted to reflect our mission to collect the documentary heritage of Scotland as its national library. See definitions in [Library of Congress collecting levels](https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/cpc.html) which provides context to Conspectus. Comprehensive means "a collection which includes, as far as is reasonably possible, all significant works of recorded knowledge in all applicable languages for a defined and limited field; the aim, if not the achievement, is comprehensiveness."

The next highest level under the Conspectus model is Research. In this document, the National Library of Scotland uses the words significant or representative as one level lower than comprehensive.

### Historical context

The National Library of Scotland was founded in 1925 by an Act of the UK Parliament as Scotland’s legal deposit library for publications of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland, the latter by a special reciprocal agreement.

On its foundation the National Library of Scotland received from the Advocates Library all that library’s collections – except for law books, law manuscripts and papers – accumulated since the 1680s. The collection transferred from the Advocates was substantial. Through legal deposit from 1710 onwards, the Advocates Library was able to collect publications produced throughout the British Isles. This was in addition to strong collections of archives, manuscripts, and early printed books, including significant collections of material in a range of languages from other European countries.

From 1925, and particularly after the opening of the George IV Bridge building in Edinburgh in 1956, the National Library expanded and broadened its collecting interests. The increasing numbers of UK publications were supplemented by international publications, particularly North American, Commonwealth and European. The National Library of Scotland benefitted from substantial donations of the contents of important Scottish libraries, and of collections of Scottish books, maps, and music. The National Library has built on the archival collecting strengths of the Advocates, and developed new, additional interests, subject areas, and formats.

In 2007 the Scottish Moving Image Archive became part of the National Library, transferring collections built up since 1976 as part of the Scottish Film Council and then Scottish Screen. The National Library is now the specialist repository for the acquisition and preservation of moving image collections in Scotland. The collection contains and preserves unique moving image items reflecting Scotland and Scottish life since the mid-1890s. In 2009, the National Library was established as the leading body in a distributed national sound collection for Scotland.

In recent years, particularly since the introduction of non-print legal deposit in 2013, the Library has increasingly acquired published and archival collections in digital formats. This includes web sites through the UK Web Archive.

## Methods of acquisition

The Library acquires material by legal deposit, purchase, and donation.

The Library has a strong preference to own collections rather than have temporary access, loan, or deposit arrangements.

The Library has processes, guidance and agreed responsibilities for its acquisition activity. It acquires material with due diligence.

We consider resource and ethical implications when taking decisions about acquisitions, especially large collections. We take into account audience, access, metadata, storage, sustainability, environmental impact, digitisation, and preservation requirements for physical and digital formats.

We are particularly pleased to receive collections that come with a financial donation to allow cataloguing, preservation, digitisation, and promotion.

See section 3.8 for information on the acquisition of intellectual property in collections.

### Legal Deposit

UK legal deposit is a legislative tool enabling the National Library of Scotland and five other libraries across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to collect the national outputs of print and digital publications. Its purpose is to ensure that the nations’ publishing heritage and intellectual output - expressed through published works - is preserved and made available for consultation.

The legislation governing UK legal deposit is the [Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/28/contents). In Ireland there is reciprocal legislation. See Ireland's [Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000](https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/28/enacted/en/print.html) and [Copyright and Other Intellectual Property Law Provisions Act 2019](https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/act/19/enacted/en/print.html). Together the acts allow the legal deposit libraries to receive a copy of any work published in the UK or Ireland. The UK [Legal Deposit Libraries (Non-Print Works) Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/777/made) extended the legal deposit privilege to include electronic publications. Moving image and sound recordings are excluded from the legislation.

### Purchase and subscription

The Library purchases material that is not eligible for legal deposit. Scottish Government grant funding is supplemented by other sources.

For current publications the Library prefers to purchase e-books and e-journals rather the print version. It gives priority to e-publications which allow remote, offsite access in Scotland. We may purchase print formats and maintain some print subscriptions, particularly where this is the only format available, or the most cost-effective.

The Library prefers to purchase permanent access to e-content rather than subscribe to temporary access.

The Library seeks to obtain best value. It uses collaborative purchasing agreements where relevant, for example, through the Scottish Confederation of University Libraries (SCURL) and its Scottish Higher Education Digital Library (SHEDL) procurement frameworks.

Older publications are purchased from booksellers or at auction. We welcome quotations, lists and catalogues from the book trade. Many purchases are made as a direct result of booksellers being aware of our collecting policies and the gaps in our collections and sending us details of items. We also purchase older published items directly from individual or organisational owners.

The Library purchases archives and manuscripts at auction, from dealers, or through direct negotiation with owners.

We may choose to develop some aspects of our collections only through donation and not through purchase. We may restrict our collecting in areas where market prices are so high that to purchase actively would be to the detriment of other aspects of collection development.

### Donation

Our collections have greatly benefited from the generosity of donors. We will consider donations and bequests of all items which fall within our collection development policy.

The Library will consider individual items or collections and whether they fit its relevant collecting profiles. Every donation also presents the Library with costs for processing, preservation, and access, so we take a selective approach. Potential donors should approach the Library before sending or bringing material to the Library. We may return or dispose of unsolicited donations that do not fit our collection development policy.

### Deposit

The Library prefers purchase or donation of material over deposit, that is where the material remains the property of another organisation or a private individual. It does not seek new deposit agreements. Collections offered as new deposits are seldom accepted. We exceptionally continue to accept deposits of archival collections in continuation of earlier arrangements.

We work with owners of existing deposits to convert their deposits into donations where appropriate and possible. We always seek to make all deposited material accessible on the same terms as Library owned collections, for example, through reading room access.

Note that the term "deposit" is distinct from "legal deposit." See section 2.1 above.

### Heritage tax incentive schemes

Several tax incentive schemes help public bodies in the United Kingdom acquire cultural artefacts. These include Acceptance in Lieu, the Cultural Gifts Scheme, Private Treaty Sales, and Conditional Exemption. The Library works with those who are planning to transfer collection ownership under these schemes.

## Key principles and concepts

This section sets out the National Library of Scotland’s approach to collection development.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Library collects, preserves, and makes available diverse materials that represent the lives and memories of Scotland's people. The Library works to address the silences in the collections to ensure a richer and more representative variety of voices, views, and experiences of Scotland now and in the past are collected and curated.

Acquisition of published collections through legal deposit has built, and continues to build, collections that reflect the diversity of the world of publications themselves, not only commercially published works but a vast number of publications from organisations, charities, community groups and self-publishing individuals. Web archiving work since 2005 has also been important in terms of collecting in a way that reflects the diversity of 21st Century Scotland.

The Library has a responsibility to comprehensively collect and preserve the national published outputs, as well as nationally significant archives. That means that users may encounter text, images, film, or sound clips which include outdated, discriminatory, or harmful opinions or portrayals.

These may relate to:

* race and ethnicity;
* gender;
* sexual orientation;
* disability;
* religious belief;
* class;
* other areas of cultural sensitivity, such as contested geographical references.

The Library has a responsibility to describe, interpret, and present the collections in ways that make them useful to a wide variety of people. It is also important for us to be welcoming, inclusive and reflective of contemporary society. Language is central to this. The Library’s published [Harmful language statement](https://www.nls.uk/about-us/equalities/harmful-language-statement/) reflects that while we can change the way we interpret and present the collections, we also believe all items have research value. We are therefore careful not to censor or erase any part of the original material, no matter how problematic.

In terms of delivering equitable access to the collections, we acquire material in different formats as outlined in this policy, including formats that support different forms of accessibility and access. The Library will actively collect Braille material through legal deposit and through donation. We will purchase Braille material which has Scottish content, or that has been suggested for acquisition by members of the public and falls within our collecting policy. We consider requests to purchase items in specific formats such as large print to aid access. The Library provides a range of services to support accessibility of the collections. See [Accessibility and facilities information](https://www.nls.uk/using-the-library/accessibility/).

### Ownership, due diligence and restitution

The Library acquires material legally, ethically and with due diligence. We will always seek to confirm that the vendor or donor has proper title to the item offered to the Library.

The Library will cooperate with relevant bodies and organisations about any claims of restitution and consider the evidence according to the Library’s Cultural Restitution and Spoliation Policy which will be published on our website shortly.

We refer to and recognise relevant professional guidance on ethics in our collection development activities, for example, the [International Federation of Film Archives Code of Ethics](https://www.fiafnet.org/pages/Community/Code-Of-Ethics.html).

### Collaborative collecting

The Library works in collaboration with other institutions, recognising their strengths, interests, and expertise. Collaboration helps ensure coverage across subjects and best value. The Library participates in Scottish, UK and global collaborative collecting and collection management initiatives. Scotland contains a wide array of institutions which form part of a distributed national collection.

The Library may stand aside so that another public institution can pursue its collecting interest. Equally the Library may be the lead collecting institution itself and therefore not stand aside. The Library works closely with the UK’s national and regional archives and specialist repositories to harmonise territories, classes of collection, technical standards and to agree responsibility for acquisition and preservation, for example, with Film Archives UK.

For published collections the UK legal deposit libraries, including the National Library of Scotland, work collaboratively to collect the national published outputs comprehensively and for posterity. This collective endeavour is underpinned by a [Joint Collecting Framework for Legal Deposit](https://www.bl.uk/legal-deposit/britishlibrary/~/media/6fc028528be648aca68107cf4145642d.ashx). It sets out the collective priorities and goals of the six legal deposit libraries. This does not require any individual library to collect comprehensively. It enables each library to prioritise their efforts and resources in line with their respective collection polices within the common framework.

This shared endeavour is exemplified with regards to digital publishing, where a single copy is distributed across the six libraries irrespective of which library selects, harvests or collects. The framework places particular emphasis on improving the accessibility and sustainability of the collections, and on responding effectively to an increasingly complex and diverse publishing landscape.

The Library works within the [Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries Last Scottish copy policy](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dce8dc56042ec2efabc6c7b/t/5e71f6376f15503e9eb9a502/1584526904476/LastScottishCopy2019.pdf) for published material. The Library may choose not to acquire copies of items which are held in other public Scottish collections. We take into account the existence of copies in other UK public collections.

For archival collections the Library does not collect comprehensively. In considering acquisitions we are always mindful of the collecting interests of other institutions. Appropriate repositories for records may be within or outwith Scotland – the National Records of Scotland, for example, other national libraries or museums, university archive services, local authority record offices, local libraries with established archive collections, and specialist archives.

We will not as a matter of course take in wholesale material that other institutions deaccession from their collections. We do consider for selective acquisition material deaccessioned by other institutions where this meets our collecting polices and priorities. Clear, accurate information about such collections, including supporting metadata, will assist us in assessing their suitability for our collections.

### Participatory collection development

The Library is committed to offering a rich variety of ways for people to participate and engage with their heritage. This includes audience-led collection development.

Section 1 above sets out the four core elements of the National Library of Scotland’s collecting activities. Within these there are multiple ways for people outside the Library to contribute to collection development.

* You can suggest an item using the Library’s [Suggestion for acquisition form](https://natlibscot.libanswers.com/form?queue_id=2676).
* You can offer us an item or collection as a donation or for purchase, or send publications under Legal Deposit.
* You can provide feedback when the Library trials potential new eResources.
* You can participate in the [Legal Deposit Libraries' User Forum](https://libguides.tcd.ie/legal-deposit-user-forum/), or in periodic co-curation projects.
* The Library captures usage data on the existing collection so by using the collections you inform future acquisitions.
* You might wish to contact us about cultural restitution.
* You may make other contributions such as commenting on this policy or supporting us financially.

### Retention and disposal

Library policy is to retain the collections that we own in perpetuity. In certain circumstances we may dispose of duplicates, redundant, unusable formats or items which pose a hazard to the collections, buildings, or staff.

Once accessioned, purchased, donated and legal deposit items become a permanent part of the Library collection. We do not usually dispose of this material. We may dispose of exact duplicate publications. Appraisal and assessment usually occur before full integration into the Library’s collection to prevent duplication.

Where the Library creates or acquires surrogates, for example, digital moving images created from 16mm film, the Library may dispose of such surrogates once the content has been satisfactorily migrated to a replacement format, while ensuring that we maintain access to the content. Originals will normally be kept unless they are inherently unstable or unusable.

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, buildings, staff, or the public.

We may safely and responsibly destroy hazardous materials such as nitrate film or carriers of infected digital files. Prior to destruction, we will transfer the contents of such hazardous materials to a surrogate whenever possible.

Please see the [National Library of Scotland Collections Management Policy](https://www.nls.uk/media/zrrbbrmp/2021-03-collections-management-policy.pdf) and [Deaccessioning and disposals policy 2022](https://www.nls.uk/media/wlxb3mg0/deaccessioning-and-disposals-policy-2022.docx) for further detail about retention and disposals.

### Duplicates

We may acquire the same work in different editions or formats, especially Scottish material. We do not regard these as exact duplicates.

We do not normally acquire exact duplicates, for example, two copies of the same edition in the same format. We may acquire duplicate copies for their material or historical significance, for example, where they have annotations, indications of provenance, a bookplate or binding. We very rarely acquire a collection from an individual or another library without removing items which duplicate existing holdings in our collections.

We may acquire variant copies, particularly from the hand press printing period.

For digital materials, we may acquire copies of items where these copies come with different access permissions.

The Library may seek to replace damaged or imperfect copies of a publication.

### Condition and completeness

Wherever possible our preference is to receive material in new or as new condition. Where this is not the case, we will assess each item or collection taking into account the importance and scarcity of the items in question, and any conservation work required.

We prefer to acquire items which are complete, and complete or substantial runs of serials and newspapers.

Moving image items which demonstrate only small sections, elements or fragments of a moving image work, will only be acquired according to criteria.

* Rushes must be of a sufficient length to provide additional material for existing collections or be the only remaining evidence of a production or historic event.
* Trims and filmstrips should connect to existing collections, be of sufficient interest, provide additional information or offer an educational or demonstration use.
* Cutting copies or rough edits of films should represent the only viewable or assembled set of shots.
* Interviews without sound or where sound is not comprehensible should have the context that no other visual item exists for that person or in that period.
* Soundtracks where the matching picture is missing, must connect to an existing collection and / or provide additional information.

We recognise that some digital items are designed to continuously evolve in their content and form before and after we add them to our collections.

For digital materials such as interactive e-books, we may additionally collect relevant hardware, software, licences, or other dependencies that help maintain the functionality and understandability of the content.

### Copyright

The Library collects material protected by copyright and related rights, as well as material in which copyright protection has expired. When appropriate, and in particular in relation to archival material and material obtained through donation, the Library may seek to obtain copyright ownership. The Library is not, and does not expect to become, the owner of copyright in the majority of material in its collections. The Library manages its collections in accordance with applicable intellectual property laws.

### Access to collections

Wherever possible, and in line with its collecting priorities, the Library will seek to obtain material that it is able to make accessible in accordance with its normal practices and in pursuit of its particular functions. The Library may acquire material that it is not able to make currently accessible, or that it is only able to make accessible through limited means, due to geographic barriers, legal restrictions, limited support for specific access requirements, or fragile physical condition.

The National Library of Scotland is working towards better capturing and recording of the reasons behind any sensitivity-based access restrictions. A Sensitivity Appraisal framework is being trialled to improve consistency and transparency to the communication of the presence of sensitivities in collection materials to the public and to the application of access controls.

Please see section 3.1 above for information on collection development and provision of additional services to support accessibility of collections for people with disabilities.

### New subject areas of collecting and new formats

The Library considers new subject areas for its collecting and collecting in new and emerging formats. We welcome suggestions from communities, groups, and individual members of the public. See section 3.4 above.

Complex digital items can be difficult to preserve and make available. The Library will acquire such items for collections where appropriate, having considered resource or technical challenges.

Representative collections of digital literature, interactive children's books, and user-generated landscapes are collected by legal deposit libraries.

The Library may work with or refer to partner organisations to respond to the challenges of a new collection area. See section 3.3 above for information on collaborative collecting.

## Published collections

This section covers the entire historical period of publishing from the invention of movable type printing to the present-day range of print and digital media. It should be noted that there may be different intensities in collecting for the various historical periods and formats of publication.

### Scope of published collecting

We define a publication in the broadest terms, reflecting the radical changes in publishing enabled by the internet and digital technology. The legal deposit legislation and non-print legal deposit regulations provide definitions relating to publications.

The term publication could imply any of the following things, irrespective of whether commercially, non-commercially, or self-published, either in print, digitally, or on demand:

* books including children's books;
* journals, newspapers, magazines or comics;
* maps;
* musical scores;
* films;
* sound recordings;
* pamphlets;
* websites, blogs, e-articles or non-private social media;
* zines;
* ephemera, posters, flyers or leaflets;
* annual reports;
* government and official publications;
* academic texts and conference proceedings;
* manuals, directories or catalogues;
* CD-ROMs;
* artists’ books and private press outputs;
* interactive narratives;
* things with or without ISBN and ISSN numbers;
* fiction or non-fiction.

### Scottish publications, authors, and content

Our chief collecting priorities are Scottish publications, authors, and content, including content and authors published outside of Scotland. We aim to build as complete a collection as possible of the published recorded memory of Scotland.

We collect Scottish content whether published in Scotland or outside Scotland.

We collect the published works of Scottish authors. This includes works with significant or substantial Scottish authorial or editorial involvement, illustration, or design.

We collect material published in Scotland in any language.

We collect different editions and forms of works, particularly those which add new information to items already held in our collections about the circulation and reception of these works.

For Scottish printing we aim to collect comprehensively the commercially published pre-1901 textual output of Scotland. This includes all formats and methods of production and alphanumeric, musical, and cartographic texts. We aim to collect extensively other pre-1901 Scottish printing, including all significant texts printed for private circulation and an extensive and representative range of other private publications and ephemera. We actively collect the output of Scottish private presses. We do not, as a rule, collect separately published graphic arts such as prints or engravings.

We collect post-1900 Scottish printing extensively. We recognise that it is not possible to be as comprehensive in our collecting of modern Scottish printing, of Scottish content published overseas, of web content, and of ephemera. For ephemera, see 6.13.

We aim to collect comprehensively publications in Scottish Gaelic and Scots, from Scotland and around the world. We collect items in other Celtic languages from countries and regions such as Ireland, Wales, Isle of Man and Cornwall but are less comprehensive in these areas.

We acquire selected translations of Scottish authors, especially creative works and works which show the impact of Scottish contribution to knowledge. We may be less comprehensive in collecting translations of Scottish content which was originally published internationally.

We collect material that supports the study of gender, equalities, and diversity. We collect both primary sources and secondary literature which record the lives and experiences of people who have lived in Scotland who are underrepresented in our collections, and the impact of Scottish colonial activities on the world.

We collect to fill gaps in our existing holdings of Scottish material including Scottish serial titles.

We collect selectively significant and representative evidence of the history of the book as an object including examples of Scottish printing and binding, and evidence of distribution and reading.

We may acquire items for their provenance, including items whose owners were not significant figures in their own right, but are examples of readership in Scotland at different historical periods.

We do not, as a rule, aim to reconstitute dispersed Scottish private or institutional libraries. We do not try to acquire every library of a person or institution of note which becomes available.

Where the Library does not hold copies of the originals, it aims to acquire or provide access to Scottish publications and other key works through surrogates, particularly digital, for example published facsimile editions and eResources. We may acquire published or privately produced physical facsimiles, especially where we cannot source or provide access to a digital version. The availability of digital surrogates informs our decisions about potential physical surrogates.

We will selectively acquire a print copy of books by Scottish authors or publishers even if we have received the publication as a non-print legal deposit copy where we are offered such works by donation. We will selectively approach Scottish publishers and Scottish writers for donations at the time of publication where those publishers and writers are agreeable to such approaches. We will selectively purchase print copies where donations are not possible. It is recognised that we do not need to comprehensively collect both the print and electronic versions of the same works where the content of both version is identical.

We will seek to negotiate offsite access to born digital legal deposit Scottish publications.

To reflect cross-border exchange, historical shifts in the border, and in line with our Library readers’ interests, our collecting includes the counties of northern England that border with Scotland.

### Publications from other United Kingdom and international countries

Scotland has never been a country whose print culture has consisted solely of texts written by Scottish authors or works published in Scotland.

Collecting recent non-Scottish UK publications is part of the UK legal deposit libraries’ work. The Library acquires UK publications extensively through UK print and non-print legal deposit. These may be local, national, international, or global in nature. The intake represents all subjects in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences. However, it is not the case that material is received comprehensively, and we do not claim certain types of material.

Several international publishers have distribution offices in the UK. They deposit their publications with the UK legal deposit libraries, in line with the legal deposit legislation. This is the case with a number of North American academic publishers.

Collecting of other non-Scottish UK and international publications is done to meet the needs of our audiences. We focus on our collection strengths, collaboratively agreed collecting areas, and where there is evidence or expectation that collections will be used by readers.

Collection strengths include historical material written by non-Scots and published outside Scotland but which circulated in Scotland. For such material, our focus is on significant publications, with a representative collection of other material.

We may purchase or accept donations of UK publications where they have not been or cannot be received by UK legal deposit. In theory, legal deposit should have given our collections all relevant publications in the British Isles since 1710. However, at various times in the history of the Library, items were either never claimed or deliberately not acquired. We may now identify these as desiderata. We do not actively attempt to fill all gaps in our holdings of historical non-Scottish UK publications which should have been received through legal deposit.

Our purchasing and acceptance of donations of modern international publications focuses on the arts, humanities, politics, cartographic materials and fields of science where there is a special focus in Scotland. Our priorities are literature, history, philosophy, music, art, film studies, library studies and bibliography. We collect international material that supports the study of gender, equalities, and diversity. We acquire publications with subjects and authors of international significance. We do not usually collect self-published material from outside the UK unless it has significant Scottish content. To include as wide a readership as possible, we prefer to buy e-publications which allow remote, offsite access in Scotland.

We focus primarily on English, Scottish Gaelic and Scots language materials. Our acquisition of European language material published outside of Scotland is limited. We acquire such material particularly where there is significant Scottish content or to reflect language use in Scottish communities. Today this collecting activity is mainly in French and German, and to a lesser extent in Spanish, Italian and Latin. We have collected in various other European languages such as Polish, Dutch, Portuguese, Russian and Scandinavian languages at various times in the past.

Our collecting of international publications takes into account use, the Library’s resources including staff language skills, and the collecting interests of other institutions.

### Subjects and themes

#### Scottish publications and Scottish content

The following subjects and themes are key areas of collecting focus for Scottish published collections and published collections of Scottish content.

**Scottish literature, intellectual thought, and history of ideas**

We aim to collect comprehensively in these areas. The Library has an extensive collection of works by Scottish authors. We put emphasis on identifying who and where Scottish authors are, taking a broad definition of Scottish to include, for example, not only those born in Scotland, but also those who live or have lived in Scotland, and those who identify or are identified with Scotland. We acquire relevant biographies, literary criticism and studies as well as translations of Scottish writers. We aim to build as complete a collection of Scottish poetry pamphlets, playbills, theatre programmes and histories as possible.

**Scottish history**

The Library holds the world’s foremost collection of publications about Scotland’s history. We aim to collect comprehensively in this area. This includes social, economic, and military history as well Scottish contributions to science, medicine technology and engineering. Careful attention is given to identifying and acquiring locally published content at village, parish, and town level, as well as the histories of families, communities, and organisations.

**Scottish politics, political parties, trade unionism and labour history**

We aim to collect comprehensively across all political parties in Scotland, and to collect publications relating to important political and constitutional issues such as devolution and Scottish independence. For example, recent focussed collecting has taken place around the Referendum in 2014, and around the Brexit debate in Scotland. Online discourse and publications have become increasingly important to collect in the 21st century with regard to Scottish, UK, and European politics. Focussed web archiving on these topics is a key part of collection development.

Scotland figures prominently in the history of socialism and the British labour movement. It has produced some of its most famous leaders and writers, such as Keir Hardie, Ramsay Macdonald, Jennie Lee, John Maclean and James Maxton. By its very nature much of the printed material of these and other related radical movements was produced for a limited circulation, clandestinely or in ephemeral form. They are therefore not normally acquired by legal deposit.

We have historical collections of the Conservative and Unionist Party, the Scottish National Party, the Labour Party, the Green Party and the Liberal Party, as well as the publications of anarchist and other political movements. We proactively collect the publications of all political parties active in Scotland including election campaign literature.

**Scottish government, parliament, and official publications**

The Library has the foremost collection of official publications in Scotland from 1707 onwards. We have comprehensive collections of publications from the Scottish parliament and Scottish government, and about these institutions. We aim to collect the output of government departments, agencies, and non-departmental public bodies comprehensively. Since 2013 and moves away from print publishing by government bodies, almost all our official publications are now received electronically. We collect the websites of Scottish local authorities, agencies, charities, think tanks, and other third sector organisations.

We may acquire pre-1901 Scottish-related government publications not already present in either our own or the Advocates Library collections. We will consult with the Advocates Library as to which institution would be the better home for potential acquisitions. We defer to the Advocates as the home for printed Court of Session papers, and normally do not acquire copies for our collections.

**Law publications**

On the establishment of the National Library of Scotland in 1925, the Advocates Library retained its collection of law books, along with the legal deposit privilege for such publications. We do not normally acquire printed law items as they fall within the remit of the Advocates Library. However, we do provide access to Advocates Library published collections, including non-print legal deposit law publications.

**Scottish business, economy, and tourism**

We collect publications extensively in these areas including company annual reports and print ephemera, and increasingly through web archiving. In addition to our own permanent collections, we subscribe to a number of market intelligence and business information databases. These subscriptions are the best way to get current market intelligence at a point where the content has best value to the researcher. Much of this content is now only available digitally.

**Scottish cinema, film, television, and media**

We aim to collect publications about Scottish cinema, directors, actors, films, locations, and cinema buildings comprehensively. We acquire film posters featuring Scottish films and themes selectively. We collect film, television, and media studies. For information about our moving image archive collections, please see section 5.2 of this policy.

**Scottish art, photography, and architecture**

We collect publications about Scottish art, artists, photographers, architecture, and architects extensively. For our collection development of photographically illustrated books, albums and photographic materials, artists’ books and posters, see numbers 6.2, 6.8 and 6.9 in the Formats section.

**Scottish music**

We collect Scottish music publications extensively across musical genres and publication formats. Educational editions and musical ephemera such as event programmes are collected. We aim at collecting publications representative of Scotland’s diverse musical culture both contemporary and historic. Thus, we aim to collect from a wide range of musical genres including those described variously as traditional, folk or Celtic, classical traditions, and popular music of all kinds.

We add selectively to our collection of music sound recordings which are held on modern and historical formats such as vinyl records, shellac records, cassette tapes, reel-to-reel tapes, wax cylinders, CDs, computer disk. We also collect some music videos and DVDs. See section 6.3 for further information on sound recordings.

**Scottish sport**

As well as those sports particularly associated with Scotland, such as golf, shinty, curling, fishing, shooting, and mountaineering, we collect sports such as football, rugby, cricket, athletics, cycling, tennis, swimming, boxing, martial arts, and roller derby. We collect selectively and representatively with much material being acquired through legal deposit including web archiving. We have a vast and nationally significant collection of football programmes. We acknowledge the role that sport plays in many people’s lives. We are keen to develop our collections of any sport including junior and amateur versions of sports, minority sports, and other recreational games. For further information about our mountaineering collecting, see Polar and mountaineering in 4.4.2.

**Early European Books with Scottish authorship or Scottish content**

Building on the strong foundations of the original Advocates collections, we aim to build a comprehensive collection of items printed throughout Europe with Scottish authorship or Scottish content, including imaginative works set in Scotland. We have a particular interest in acquiring early printed books written by Scots for a European readership, such as texts in neo-Latin, translations of Scottish works of all dates and into all languages, and other works showing Scottish involvement in European printed culture. We also continue to acquire selectively items illustrating the impact of European ideas and culture on Scotland, such as works which influenced the Scottish Reformation or Scottish Enlightenment authors, and occasionally more general significant examples of European printing and the material culture of the book, in particular representative early printed material from Eastern European countries.

**North America publications with Scottish authorship or Scottish content**

Through early legal deposit, the Advocates’ collecting, and some named special collections, notably the Hugh Sharp collection, the Library holds an extensive collection of representative and significant North American publications, including maps. Today we acquire items printed in the United States of America and Canada primarily because they were by Scottish authors or contain Scottish content, including imaginative works set in Scotland, and extensively collect works relating to Scottish emigrants, emigrant communities, and the impact of Scottish culture on North America. We are particularly interested in acquiring examples of works by authors of Scottish birth previously not included in our collections, including early newspapers and serials edited by them or with substantial contributions by Scottish authors or about Scotland.

**South America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania publications with Scottish content**

The Library does not hold extensive collections of historical publications from these areas. We do hold map collections and travel literature in English and a small number of examples of representative early printed material from the regions of Asia. Today our focus is on collecting historical publications from these areas relating to Scotland, Scottish culture, Scots emigrants, and translations of Scottish works.

#### United Kingdom and international focus

The following subjects and themes are key areas of focus for material published outside of Scotland which is not primarily Scottish in content.

**United Kingdom and United Nations official publications**

The Library has the foremost collection of official publications in Scotland. We have comprehensive collections of publications from the Westminster parliament and UK government. Through collaboration with the UK legal deposit libraries, we collect the rich output of UK government departments, agencies, and non-departmental public bodies extensively.

We collect the output of UK authorities, agencies, charities, think tanks, and other third sector organisations whose work and publishing are of relevance to Scotland and the Library’s readers. The vast majority of this content is received through legal deposit collecting.

The Library has significant holdings of a range of intergovernmental organisations, including particular strengths in the United Nations and OECD collections.

With few exceptions, our official publications are now received in digital format.

**Contemporary sciences**

Scotland is recognised as a world leader in areas such as alternative energy, cloning and genetic engineering, informatics, mechanical engineering, and medicine. We develop collections that not only reflect this expertise, but also encourage and support new learning and advances. A large amount of content relating to these subjects is received though legal deposit. It is important that the latest international publications that relate to these subjects are acquired to support Scottish STEM research and industry. Our purchase of science, technology, engineering and medicine concentrates primarily on e-publications acquired through SCURL’s Scottish Higher Education Digital Library.

**Business information**

We collect to support Scottish businesses by providing information about global markets. We consider international export markets when deciding about the coverage of our business information subscription services.

**Arts and Humanities**

English-language collecting from North America, Australasia, the Caribbean, South Asia and Africa focuses on the arts and humanities and to a lesser extent on the social sciences. Subjects include history, politics, literature, philosophy, cinema, art, history of the book, libraries and librarianship, and the history of language along with more general reference material which reflects culture and publishing. Special attention is paid to those subjects in which the Library already has or is developing strong collections, for example, Black culture and history, the French Revolution and the Abolition of slavery in the Atlantic world, contemporary US politics, LGBTQ+, and women’s and gender studies.

**Maps, cartographic materials, cartographers, and cartography**

See section 6.1 below.

**Polar and mountaineering collections**

Our collecting focusses on travel, discovery, exploration, and attitudes to mountaineering. We collect UK and international polar exploration and mountaineering publications extensively, representing all mountain ranges of the world. We collect all formats of published material including ephemera. We build on the strengths of existing collections, specifically the Graham Brown, Lloyd and Wordie collections, and the materials received by UK legal deposit. We purchase relevant Scottish archival and manuscript material. See section 5.1. We have a dedicated trust fund to support this collection area.

**Non-Scottish music publications**

We aim to collect UK and Irish legal deposit music publications comprehensively and foreign music publications selectively. As music is an international language, an extensive collection of the music of major foreign composers has been built to provide access to the international music canon to the users of the National Library. See section 6.3 for collection development of sound recordings.

## Archival collections

This section considers manuscripts and archival collections. These comprise of records created or received by individuals, families, communities, or organisations during the normal course of their business and affairs. They are selected for permanent preservation because of their enduring value.

As contemporary records created by individuals and organisations as they go about their business, archival records can provide a direct window on past events. They come in a wide range of formats including written, photographic, moving image, sound, digital and analogue. If an archive is going to be authentic and reliable then we need to preserve its context to understand how, why and who created it, its content, and its format.

What we should remember is that at no point can we regard an archive as ‘the truth', only as a contemporaneous record from an individual or organisation with a particular level of involvement and point of view. As users of archives, we must be aware of this context when interpreting archives as well as how our own experiences and culture affect our reading of an archival resource.

### Archives and manuscripts collections

This section outlines the current collecting interests for archives and manuscript collections. We aim to collect material of national significance that develops our existing collection strengths while ensuring our collections are inclusive and diverse. We aim to develop our collections in a way that is reflective of and relevant to contemporary Scottish society.

We collect within a broader environment of public archival repositories both in Scotland and further afield. Unlike published material, archival material is unique and can only be held by one institution at any one time. As such, we work closely with colleagues at other archives and libraries to ensure that archives and manuscripts are collected responsibly, strategically and, wherever possible, collaboratively with other public institutions. We were an active contributor to the [Scottish Council on Archives' Collecting Policy Framework for Scotland's Archives](https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/SCA-Collecting-Policy-Sept-2019.pdf).

**Medieval manuscripts**

The Library has a significant collection of medieval manuscripts. We collect volumes of Scottish origin, ownership, or association only. These are not common and as such additions are rare. However, we will seek to acquire them when the opportunity arises.

**Early modern collections**

The Library acquires literary and personal manuscripts of national importance from the Renaissance to the late 17th century. Records relating to Scottish ecclesiastical history from this period are acquired selectively, respecting the collecting interests of other repositories. State, government, and legal papers from this period are acquired only in discussion with other repositories, in particular the National Records of Scotland.

**Scottish collections of the long 18th century, 1688-1832**

The Library has a significant collection of records relating to the early attempts of Scots to establish imperial outposts on the Darien isthmus in the 17th century and continues to acquire in this area.

We have extensive collections relating to Scottish Jacobitism, ranging from 1688 to 1746 and the post Culloden period. We continue to acquire Jacobite records of national importance but are sensitive to areas of local interest.

As our collection of family and estate papers has grown, we have developed a large collection of records relating to Scotland’s role in the transatlantic slave trade. This collection is global in scope, but its focus is on the Caribbean. We acquire records relating to slavery especially where they link with existing holdings. However, we are sensitive to the interests of other institutions, particularly those located in areas most affected by Scotland’s involvement in slavery and the slave trade.

The Advocates Library was central to the Scottish Enlightenment and we have extensive collections relating to the literary, scientific, religious, political and philosophical accomplishments of the period. We continue to acquire records in this area. We have a particular interest in individuals including David Hume, Lord Kames, Lord Monboddo and Adam Ferguson who all had a direct link with the Library.

The Library has important collections relating to Scottish literary figures during this period. These include the world’s largest collection of Walter Scott manuscripts. We have important collections relating to figures such as Robert Burns, John Galt and James Hogg. We acquire correspondence and literary manuscripts relating to the key writers of the period. This collecting area ends with the death of Sir Walter Scott in 1832.

**Modern Scottish literary papers, 1833 to present**

The Library has extensive collections relating to major 19th century writers including Margaret Oliphant and Robert Louis Stevenson, and 20th century writers such as Muriel Spark, Alasdair Gray, Kathleen Jamie, Ian Rankin, Naomi Mitchison, and Lewis Grassic Gibbon. We continue to acquire in this area. Our collecting is not restricted to major figures. All literary manuscripts, correspondence and papers of Scottish interest will be considered for acquisition, with respect to the known collecting interests of other repositories.

We have an unparalleled collection of records relating to the Scottish Literary Renaissance and we will continue to acquire in this area.

The Library works closely and actively with contemporary writers in Scotland. We seek to identify and engage with established and emerging writers to ensure that a diversity of contemporary writing is represented within the collection and continue to acquire in this area.

**Contemporary Scottish culture, 19th century to present**

We hold the corporate archives of arts and cultural bodies including the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, Edinburgh International Festival, and the Traverse Theatre. We will add to and supplement these when the opportunity arises. We collect theatre and related records selectively and in discussion with other repositories.

We do not usually collect the records of local cultural organisations of purely local interest, nor do we collect those of organisations wholly or largely funded by central government which are normally housed at the National Records of Scotland.

**Gaelic collections**

The Library has the world's largest collection of Scottish Gaelic manuscripts and we continue to acquire in this area. Our interest stretches over several centuries, beginning with the oldest Gaelic manuscripts which were acquired as part of the papers of the Highland Societies of Scotland and London.

We have long collected the papers of Gaelic scholars and collectors from the 18th century on. More recently we have focussed on Gaelic cultural institutions, and the records of Gaelic activists, scholars and writers. However, we will be sensitive to the collecting interests of repositories in Gaelic-speaking areas of Scotland.

**Scots language**

The historical papers in the collections contain examples of written Scots throughout. Our collections of modern archives continue to contain examples of written Scots, such as Hugh MacDiarmid, James Kelman, and the Dictionaries of the Scots Language.

**Publishing and allied trades, and other business records**

The Library has a significant collection of records relating to publishing in Scotland, and to allied trades such as printing, binding, and papermaking. The Library will continue to acquire the business papers of Scottish publishing houses of national significance.

Our collection of publishers’ archives has been built up over many decades. It includes the records of William Blackwood & Sons, Archibald Constable, Oliver & Boyd and W & R Chambers. Our strength in this area led to the acquisition of the John Murray Archive in 2006. The John Murray Archive incorporates the collections of Smith Elder which itself had Scottish roots and was already represented within the Library’s collections. We continue to acquire publishers’ archives in areas of established interest and particularly where they complement the John Murray Archive and promote research on Edinburgh-London publishing connections.

With the support of the John R. Murray Charitable Trust, we have acquired records relating to Murray authors including Patrick Leigh Fermor, Osbert Lancaster and Heinrich Schliemann and we continue to acquire in this area. The Murray family built up a rich collection of papers relating to Lord Byron and his circle which includes figures such as Mary Shelley and Caroline Lamb. We are the pre-eminent repository for the papers of Lord Byron and will continue to collect these, with a particular focus on records relating to Byron’s publishing activity.

**Politics, modern political parties, trade unionism, and labour history**

The acquisition of modern political papers has been a major collecting area of the National Library of Scotland since 1925. The Library actively acquires private and organisational archives from across the political spectrum. We take a holistic view of Scottish political life, aiming to capture political and constitutional change both in and outwith parliaments and political institutions. We welcome any opportunity to collect the nationally significant records of those who have historically been under-represented in Scottish electoral and trade union politics, and to ensure the ‘official’ record holds a plurality of different voices, opinions, and perspectives.

In addition to the central organisational archives of four of Scotland’s main modern political parties, the Library specialises in collecting the personal and family papers of individuals who played a prominent role in modern Scottish and British politics. Our holdings include the private archives of politicians including Lord Rosebery, Keir Hardie, Richard Haldane, Jo Grimond, Robert Boothby, J. P. Mackintosh, James Douglas-Hamilton, and Margo MacDonald, as well as several Secretaries of State for Scotland. We actively seek to acquire the personal papers of diplomats, civil servants, journalists, political commentators, intellectuals, and other figures of national and international significance to Scottish and British public life. As part of this area, we are committed to expanding our holdings of the papers of women who held significant positions in parliamentary politics, trade unions, and the professions in Scotland.

The Library holds one of the foremost collections of archival records relating to trade unionism and labour history in Scotland, including the personal papers of individuals active in these movements. In developing these collections since the 1960s we have often worked in partnership with organisations concerned with the study and advocacy of social history, including the Scottish Labour History Society and the Scottish Working People’s History Trust, and more recently the Workers’ Stories Project. We will continue to collect in this area, where possible taking an expansive definition of ‘labour’ to document a diverse range of working people’s experiences in an era of rapid change in employment patterns and working conditions.

We hold extensive archival collections relating to Scottish pressure groups and civic organisations, and actively acquire the papers of political and cultural campaigns surrounding civil liberties, feminism, human rights, equalities, the anti-nuclear and peace movements, and environmentalism in Scotland, as well as unionism, devolution, and independence. This area includes a major hybrid collection relating to the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum and the life stories of LGBTQ+ people in contemporary Scotland collected in partnership with the OurStory Scotland oral history project.

**Exploration, emigration, and travel**

The Library has extensive collections relating to Scottish activity overseas covering exploration, emigration, and tourism.

Holdings relating to British colonial activities in Africa during the 19th century are particularly strong. The Library is a major research centre for studies of David Livingstone and his associates. Selective additions to these collections will continue, concentrating on letters or other documents which contain substantial new information. We seek to collect material which documents the impact of colonialism while being sensitive to the interests of other institutions, particularly those located in areas most affected by Scotland’s involvement in colonialism.

We have a significant collection of records relating to emigration from Scotland and will continue to collect in this area.

John Murray was a leading publisher of travelogues and guidebooks. For this reason, travel writing is well-represented within our collections. Papers relating to travel writers include those of Maria Graham, Isabella Bird, Sir John Franklin, Mariana Starke and Patrick Leigh Fermor. We continue to acquire in this area, particularly travel writers with a Scottish connection.

**Overseas mission records**

The Library has since 1953 been the official repository of the archive of the Church of Scotland's World Mission Board. This includes the surviving records of most Scottish Presbyterian overseas mission activity from the late 18th century onwards and continues to accrue. This archive has been supplemented over the years by the acquisition of the personal papers of individual mission partners of Scottish Presbyterian churches and mission organisations, and this is an area in which we will continue to collect. We also occasionally collect papers of Scots engaged in overseas mission with other organisations, in discussion with other interested repositories.

**Military and naval papers**

The Library has significant collections relating to Scottish military and naval figures from the late 18th century on. These include the papers of Lord Lynedoch, Sir George Murray, and other Peninsular War collections. The Library has important collections relating to Scots’ involvement in the major conflicts of the twentieth century, especially the First and Second World Wars. Particularly significant are the papers of Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, which include his First World War diary. We acquire the papers of Scottish soldiers, sailors and airmen of any date and particularly where they offer new historical or personal perspectives. We also acquire records which document and shed light on the civilian attitude and response to war.

**Land and estate papers**

The Library has an extensive collection of estate papers especially covering east, south-east, and central Scotland. We acquire collections in this area selectively, usually in cooperation with the National Records of Scotland and with respect to the interests of local record offices.

We are interested in records that document the management of land and estates by communities, as well as individuals and families. We also have an interest in collections relating to the history of food and food production, along with nature and climate in relation to land use.

The Library has a significant collection of manuscript maps including estate plans, maps drawn by Scottish explorers and the maps of Timothy Pont. We collect selectively in this area. We acquire manuscript maps, annotated printed maps or estate plans separated from estate papers only where they are of significance to the national cartographic record.

**Medicine, Science and Engineering**

Historically, medical archives have been collected primarily by the ancient universities of Scotland, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons and, more recently, by Health Board Archives.

Science and engineering are represented by a small, but significant, number of collections which reflect Scots’ influence in these fields. The Library has a few outstanding collections rather than a wide range, including George Combe for phrenology and John Rennie and the Stevensons for engineering. We work with other repositories to acquire material in this area selectively where we have shared collecting interests and where records complement existing holdings. We seek to develop collections relating to scientific and technological activities in the fields of climate and environment, in consultation with other repositories with similar interests.

**Music**

The Library acquires manuscript music and the personal papers of Scottish musicians which relate directly to the history and development of music in Scotland. These include traditional music and piobaireachd, an area in which the Library holds the pre-eminent collection. Archival records relating to non-Scottish composers are acquired selectively and only where they have Scottish connections or provenance or relate to existing collections.

**Art and artists**

The Library has a long-established interest in archives relating to Scottish art and we will continue to acquire in this area. These collections will be developed in consultation with the National Galleries of Scotland and other specialist repositories for artists’ archives when collecting interests are shared, and for collections containing significant quantities of visual artworks or 3D objects.

Our collections range from single letters and sketchbooks to extensive private archives. We have acquired important archival collections relating to women artists in Scotland from the late 19th century onwards, and are committed to expanding our holdings in this area.

The Library also holds the papers of those who have been influential in the Scottish and British art worlds more widely. These include figures in the commercial art market, art critics and private collectors, and important figures in Scottish arts administration.

We prioritise for acquisition archives of significance to the history of art in Scotland, regardless of the medium of the artist, and have collected the personal papers of printmakers, illustrators, calligraphers, and ceramicists as well as fine artists and sculptors. We acquire the works of unknown and amateur artists where these hold wider research value, for instance to the study of travel or social history in Scotland.

**Sport**

The Library has extensive archival collections relating to the history, development, and organisation of sport in Scotland with a particular strength on golf and mountaineering. We are primarily interested in the archives of national sporting organisations and in records which shed light on the national or international history of sports. We do not collect records of only local importance except where they relate to existing collections.

**Film, filmmaking, and cinema history**

The Library supplements its collection of moving image and sound collections with documentation and supporting materials which contain contextual information about these collections. These include:

* cinema industry and memorabilia;
	+ business records from cinemas;
	+ film programmes;
	+ press cuttings;
	+ photographs;
	+ personal recollections of people in the moving image industry in Scotland;
* film production archives;
	+ surviving administration records for several small Scottish production companies;
* papers from individual filmmakers and cinema staff;
* records from institutions involved in film development in Scotland;
* records of amateur cinematographers and the film society movement.

### Moving image collections

The moving image collection is a selective archive of time-based media in various formats. The collection aims to reflect Scottish social, cultural, political and economic history and in particular the lives of people and communities in Scotland across the generations during the film era. It also encompasses the experiences of Scots who have emigrated to other countries and immigrants who have settled in Scotland. It has a related focus on the achievements of filmmakers in Scotland in the craft of film production.

When considering additions to the moving image collections, the Library seeks to be representative of life and communities in Scotland, and engagement with the wider world, and to reflect expression of the moving image medium in Scotland. We aim to represent the development of screen art, culture, and practice in Scotland. We collect selectively based on criteria.

The primary collecting materials comprise moving image formats, which are predominately but not exclusively represented as tangible time-based media. The criteria for selecting materials within this medium are determined predominantly by content.

The most at-risk formats and carriers of content will be prioritised for acquisition and preservation ahead of more stable and less at-risk formats.

Moving image material that is assessed to be adequately preserved in an archive elsewhere will not be accepted for preservation but may be acquired solely for the access collection.

The Library does not seek to comprehensively acquire all moving images made in or about Scotland. The aim is to collect works that have a cultural or historical resonance for Scotland and to support the Library’s strategic goal to be a memory organisation for Scotland. Collections acquired should be of historical value, significantly represent Scottish society past and present and be of value to a range of users and audiences.

The collection includes many types of moving images. The core of the collection consists of documentaries, educational and public information films, home movies, amateur films, short films, and features. We collect advertising and promotional films and cinema newsreels. We have television broadcast collections, particularly of Scottish regional television and Gaelic television.

Moving image collections are acquired on all formats. The original item or highest quality uncompressed digital file is preferred. Formats include film, videotape, DVD, Blu-Ray, and digital file.

There is no limit on the range of subjects included in the collection. These include social history in the form of home and work life, industry, transport, manufacturing and agriculture. We also capture community life in sport, entertainment, local traditions and community events. The ecology of Scotland is preserved in images of changing landscapes and new towns. Moving images capture major national events and movements such as experiences of wartime.

**Scottish national production**

Scottish based production, fiction and non-fiction, commercial and non-theatrical, national and regional television where this is not preserved elsewhere.

**Independent and amateur production**

Works created by people in Scotland outside the commercial or professional industry which reflect amateur film culture, contribute to the body of work of amateur and independent film makers or that reflect aspects of Scotland nationally or internationally.

**Educational production**

Works created for teaching purposes and / or as part of a programme of community or youth engagement initiatives.

**Historical record**

Moving images providing evidence of Scottish social, political, economic, and cultural history and the Scottish diaspora and immigration to Scotland.

**Languages**

Materials which record the languages spoken in Scotland and their associated cultures and traditions. In particular Gaelic and Scots, and all spoken languages both national and international and including British Sign Language.

**Scots abroad**

Evidence of engagement in the world outside Scotland and from which ‘New Scots’ have originated. These may comprise moving images reflecting tourism and the changing pattern of leisure and travel. More priority will be given to those with an ethnographic element including people and place, be reflective of community or hold significance for the country portrayed according to context, historic situation or the event that is captured. Moving images and supporting written materials that illustrate the representation of Scotland and the people of Scotland on screen will also be accepted, where these records may have a provenance outside Scotland.

**Oral histories and filmed interviews**

Audio recordings and filmed interviews of people connected to items in the collection, or which reflect or add to the history of film production, exhibition, and reception in Scotland.

## Formats and distinctive forms within published and archival collections

Note that printed and published works and ephemera are often found within archives and manuscript collections. These are preserved where they have been annotated or marked or are integral to the collection.

### Maps, atlases, globes, and roadbooks

Scottish, UK, and international cartographic materials have been collected by the Library since its beginning. A world class collection of maps covering the whole world has been established. It is accompanied by a reference collection of carto-bibliographies, gazetteers, and written works on the methods and history of cartography.

The aims in developing the map collections are:

* to acquire as complete a record as possible of maps of Scotland;
* to acquire through the effective functioning of the legal deposit privilege, new maps, atlases and geographic datasets which are published in the United Kingdom;
* to collect cartographic output from current Scottish map producers;
* to provide an extensive reference collection of foreign-published topographic and thematic maps, atlases, and reference works pertaining to cartography;
* to build up a representative collection of different forms of cartography, including examples of map ephemera, and of types of cartographic production and expression.

We add non-Scottish publications which illustrate Scots geographical understanding of the world.

**Older mapping**

We collect pre-1901 maps with a focus on acquiring as complete a record as possible of the published maps of Scotland and parts of Scotland regardless of who created these maps or where they were published.

We collect comprehensively the cartographic output from Scottish map producers and publishers whether published privately, by subscription, or for a general audience.

We add selectively to our extensive collection of older mapping of areas beyond Scotland, including filling the gaps in map series through the acquisition of physical originals or digital surrogates. We do not acquire every iteration of maps of Scotland published elsewhere, but rather a representative sample from different publishers and time periods, including all significant publications, prioritising items which add to bibliographic knowledge or provide evidence of how the geographical terrain was perceived or understood.

We collect other kinds of geographical publications relating to Scotland, such as gazetteers. We hold a selection of historical map ephemera relating to Scotland and may occasionally add to it.

**Modern mapping**

We collect cartographic materials through the UK legal deposit privilege, including digital mapping by UK map publishers.

We collect maps of Scotland published by foreign publishers. Due to the repetitive nature of these publications, the Library will not aim to buy every edition, but rather a representative sample from different publishers and time periods.

Most foreign mapping is received by donation from the Defence Geographic Centre of the Ministry of Defence. Where foreign mapping is purchased, it is either on a continuation basis, or as an active decision to purchase available sheets.

We aim to have recent coverage of:

* Europe at 1:50,000 scale, or nearest available scale;
* Rest of the world at 1:200,000-1:250,000 scale.

Former Commonwealth countries with significant Scottish diaspora connections may be collected at larger scales where available.

The Library collects representative examples of different cartographic styles and techniques. This includes printed "art" mapping. In mapping there is a crossover between scientific mensuration and the artistic presentation of the data. It is common for maps and cartograms to be issued as works of art rather than published. These works of art are not covered by the copyright legislation.

Our collections contain road books and itineraries of Great Britain and Ireland, but also many local guidebooks. We continue to collect these publications.

We hold a small representative collection of globes, to which we add on a very occasional basis. We defer to the National Maritime Museum Greenwich as the institution which holds the national collection of globes for the United Kingdom.

### Photographically illustrated books, albums and photographic material

The Library does not consider itself to hold the national collection of photography but to be part of a distributed national collection.

The Library has a large and very significant body of material. We hold over 376,000 individual photographic images in a variety of formats over 1,000 separate collections, spread over published and archival collections. A further c. 15,000 images have been added by the joint acquisition of the MacKinnon collection with the National Galleries of Scotland.

Photography in any format will be considered, provided that the Library has the capacity for storage, conservation and preservation of the originals.

Emphasis is placed on:

* acquiring photographically illustrated books, particularly from the period 1840-1900 (albums by Scottish photographers or of Scottish subjects are occasionally acquired);
* photographers or collections of national significance either for the history of photography or in a wider historical or social context;
* photographic material which relates to cinema exhibition and film production in Scotland;
* photographic material relating to mountaineering and polar exploration;
* material that is part of a wider archive.

We will consider stand-alone photographic material only where it closely links to the wider collecting interests of archival and manuscript collections. We do not as a rule acquire photographers’ working archives. We do not seek to collect the archives of modern Scottish photographers, or stand-alone photographic material of family or local interest.

We will work closely with other repositories where collecting interests overlap.

### Sound

Published sound recordings relating to Scotland are not collected comprehensively by the Library as legal deposit in the UK does not extend to sound recordings.

The Library collects published sound recordings on any analogue or digital format with a focus on published music recorded in Scotland, by Scots or predominantly influenced by Scottish musical styles. Limited collecting of recordings of classical music which do not have Scottish connections is undertaken to support use of the printed music collections.

Music recordings are held on modern and historical formats such as vinyl records, shellac records, cassette tapes, reel-to-reel tapes, wax cylinders, CDs, computer disk.

The Library collects spoken word recordings, such as radio, comedy, poetry, podcasts, audiobooks, and information tapes that sample Scottish creative, cultural and civic life.

Oral histories, interviews, radio broadcast recordings and other unpublished recordings, such as correspondence tapes and environmental sounds are represented in collections. These relate to contemporary Scottish theatre and culture, Gaelic, exploration, emigration, politics, music, and broadcasts.

Sound archives which do not specifically fall under any of the above categories will be considered by the Library under its role as sector lead for sound in Scotland. We are particularly open to collecting more sound recordings that record and are representative of voices of people from marginalised communities.

### Newspapers and periodicals

The Library holds a significant collection of Scottish national, regional and local newspapers. Completeness of holdings of titles improves over the course of the 20th century. We fill gaps in our Scottish collections, particularly where issues and titles are not held in other Scottish libraries.

We do not seek to fill gaps in our holdings of pre-1901 non-Scottish British and Irish newspapers and periodicals in print format. We do not acquire pre-1901 newspapers and periodicals printed in other countries unless there was significant Scottish involvement in their production.

We will selectively fill gaps in post-1901 non-Scottish newspaper and journal runs where there is evidence of reader demand and the issues are not held in other UK libraries.

We purchase or subscribe to e-resources that provide coverage of newspaper content. We have considerable collections of newspapers on microfilm.

Collection development activity relating to non-Scottish print and microfilm format newspapers is balanced against the likelihood that the content may be made available in digital format.

### Websites

The Legal Deposit Libraries collaboratively collect copies of UK websites and other web-based media in line with their remit. This involves an annual whole domain crawl which provides a comprehensive snapshot of the UK web domain. This is supplemented by more selective, focused crawls on specific themes or events. Targeted crawls can be carried out on a collaborative basis with the other libraries, or led solely by the National Library of Scotland where there is a specific Scottish interest or theme.

Due to the comprehensive nature of the whole domain crawl, web archiving assists with our EDI aims and collecting underrepresented communities and groups. This will be supplemented by more targeted collecting, and work to understand and make visible content not easily discoverable within the web archive.

In line with other non-print legal deposit Scottish publications, we seek public access for the websites we crawl. We make use of open licensing where this is present, such as Creative Commons and Open Government Licences.

### E-Resources

E-resources form a significant part of our collection development, particularly newspapers, bibliographies, business resources, digitised archives, and collections of e-books and e-journals. We prefer outright purchase rather than subscription. We always seek to provide remote, offsite access in Scotland so that registered National Library users can access resources from outside the Library. We will consider new access models as technology and platforms develop.

### Scottish illustration, comics, and graphic novels

Scotland has made a particularly significant contribution to comics and graphic novel illustration. The Library's holdings of major Scottish book illustrators are extensive. The Library is making a determined effort to fill gaps in its holdings in these areas.

### Postcards and posters

We have strong, representative collections of Scottish picture postcards. We occasionally add to them, in particular Scottish themed collections or collections produced by a Scottish publisher. We rarely acquire individual postcards. We have good collections of Scottish posters. We seek to build our collections of Scottish posters and 2D textual art.

### Artists’ books

The Library holds a significant collection of artists’ books and actively collects contemporary works in this field. We do not acquire Scottish artists’ books comprehensively. We primarily collect books that work with text in some way.

### Book bindings and book design

We acquire books because of their bindings, design, or copy-specific features such as annotations. We have the aim of building a collection of representative and significant examples of the development of Scottish bookbinding and the material culture of the book in Scotland.

### Miniature books

One of the most significant publishers in the history of miniature books was the Scottish publisher David Bryce (1845-1923). We continue to add to our extensive collection of his publications. We collect other Scottish miniature books comprehensively. We may add selectively to our collection of miniature books published elsewhere.

### Data

The Library collects data in some circumstances, for example, geographic datasets which are made available on our maps website. We expect this to be a developing area as some forms of print publications transform into data-driven resources, for example, databases, data-driven websites.

In addition, the Library creates and selectively acquires data derived from its collections and collection items, and contextual supporting data. This may be modified Library data, or data from external sources. It includes formats such as digital text; metadata; map and spatial data; moving image and sound data; web archive data; or other data relating to new and emerging collection formats. This is not accessioned in the same way as the collection items themselves. It is actively managed through its lifecycle in a similar way to the Library’s core collections.

We prioritise release of datasets from our own collections and internal data where these can be made available as open data, with no restriction on use and re-use.

### Ephemera

Ephemera are printed and digital items generally intended for limited use, with an expected limited lifespan. Ephemera normally include broadsides, calendars, flyers, manifestoes, menus, publicity material, timetables, trade cards, dynamic and transitory web pages, social media. Ephemeral content may provide evidence of activity and communities who are under-represented in mainstream publishing.

The Library has a good collection of modern ephemeral material. We will build on existing collections through selective and representative sampling of ephemera content produced by Scottish communities and related to Scottish events, such as elections and referendums. This will include developing a better understanding of what digital ephemera is collected through web archiving and integrating this with print ephemera collecting activity.

We hold strong collections of pre-1901 ephemera, particularly Scottish ephemera. As this material was often outwith the scope of legal deposit, there has always been a need to build the collections in this area retrospectively. We aim to collect as comprehensively as possible examples of the earliest Scottish printed ephemera up to 1700. For the rest of the hand-press era, we aim to collect extensively, prioritising the acquisition of significant and representative examples printed throughout Scotland. For the machine-press era, when the volume of ephemera exponentially increased, we collect very selectively.

### Publications available in multiple formats

We give full consideration to the format of publications where they are available in multiple formats and identical in content. We may seek to acquire publications in multiple formats. This can evidence changes to publishing, particularly as a consequence of the digital revolution.

### Objects and artefacts

We have small numbers of three-dimensional artefacts throughout the collections, such as medals, and textiles. We do not actively acquire objects unless they are an integral part of an archive or other collection.

We have a small permanent collection of moving image and sound equipment, such as tape and recorder players, film projectors, cameras and filmmaking apparatus. Items may be acquired if they:

* have a special relationship with an associated collection;
* are an example of moving image or sound history which can be used for educational work;
* can be used to demonstrate film and sound recording history and technique.

We sometimes acquire objects such as players for obsolete moving image, sound and digital publishing formats. This is to support the operational activities of the Library such as access to content otherwise not viewable. Although these are Library assets they are not regarded as part of the collections.

### Works of art

Our collections contain prints, drawings, and other works of art on paper, as well as a small number of three-dimensional works of art. We are not actively developing our physical art collections. We may acquire works of art on paper as part of a larger collection. We may acquire prints and illustrations as part of a larger collection or volume, because of their textual elements, or because of what they tell us about the history of printing or the reception of Scottish books or culture. Sections 6.7-6.11 above explain our collecting policy for book arts. Some forms of digital art may be acquired through our web archiving activity.

We do collect examples of artists’ moving image and sound art as part of our moving image and sound collections. In normal circumstances the content of the artwork will be preserved, while physical installations are not collected or preserved by the Library.

We defer to the National Galleries of Scotland as the national collecting body for works of art.

## Further information

The Library publishes some profiles for specific collection areas on its website. See [National Library of Scotland Collections](http://www.nls.uk/collections). Staff may also work to detailed profiles and documents which are available on request. The Library’s special and named collections are described in a guide on the Library’s website.

## Document information

* Document name: Collection Development Policy
* Document status: Approved
* Contact: Director Collections, Access and Research
* Approval:
	+ Date of Library Leadership Team Approval: 4 April, 26 June 2023
	+ Date of Whitley Approval: Not applicable
	+ Date of Audit Committee Approval: Not applicable
* Equality Impact Assessment Completed: 25 May 2023
* Date of next review: 2026
* Business classification: 01.01.02.00
* Retention: Review for historical and business value one year after superseded

## Document control

| Date | Action |
| --- | --- |
| September 2023 | Document updated and prepared for publication |