



Curtin University

CURTIN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

COLLECTION PRINCIPLES

Introduction

Curtin University has over 37,000 full time equivalent students and 3,000 staff.¹ Courses are delivered at locations in Australia and overseas, as well as through international partner institutions. The majority of Curtin's courses are available through online delivery.

The University Library is the primary provider of scholarly information resources for the Curtin community. The Library delivers electronic resources to all Curtin clients regardless of location, and manages physical collections at the T.L. Robertson Library, WA School of Mines Kalgoorlie Library, Curtin Graduate School of Business Library, and the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library.

Physical collections at Curtin's other campuses and at Curtin partner institutions are developed and maintained independently of the University Library.

This document provides an overview of the principles that are used in developing and maintaining the University Library collection.

The University Library:

- Supports learning and teaching through the provision of appropriate learning resources
- Supports the University's strategic directions in research by facilitating access to published and unpublished research outputs
- Reflects the requirements of Library clients through a process of formal and informal client consultation
- Ensures that resources are available in the most appropriate format for use by clients.

The Collection

As of December 2020 the Library provides access to approximately:

- 360,000 print books
- 580,000 electronic books
- 4,000 audio-visual items
- 40,000 streamed videos
- 170,000 journal titles
- 550 electronic databases
- 70,000 institutional repository records (including Curtin theses)
- 800 linear metres of archival material

¹ Source: Curtin University Statistics: <http://planning.curtin.edu.au/stats/>

The Library's collection responds dynamically to support the evolving needs of Curtin teaching, learning and research within the constraints of the acquisitions budget.

Information resources are made available in a variety of ways, including:

- Purchase of perpetual access to electronic book, journal and audiovisual content
- Purchase of physical books, DVDs etc.
- Subscription (with perpetual access) to electronic journal content
- Subscription (without perpetual access) to electronic book, journal, audiovisual and database content
- "Demand-driven" acquisition (e.g. selected electronic book content is made accessible to clients, but only purchased when used)
- Copying made under the Statutory Licence provisions of the Copyright Act

The content of subscription and demand-driven services is subject to variation depending on publisher agreements and Library priorities.

Special Collections

The Library holds discrete collections of archival and published resources relating to specific research projects or initiatives at Curtin University. In particular, the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library contains a significant collection of primary records, in various formats, that focus on the life and times of John Curtin. The Library adds value to these Special Collections by providing access to their resources through indexing, cataloguing, digitisation and by making content freely available online.

Publications by Curtin Authors

The Library maintains Curtin University's institutional repository, "espace", a primarily open access digital collection containing the research outputs of Curtin staff, including journal articles, conference papers, books, book chapters and other types of research output. espace also contains theses by Curtin research students (PhD and Masters by Research). The Library is automatically notified of any eligible staff publications when these are registered in the University's publications system (Elements).

Freely Available Online Resources

Library staff may select freely available, quality online resources for inclusion in the Library Catalogue. These are included on the basis of relevance to the University's learning, teaching and research programs and in accordance with the Library's criteria for selection.

Access to the Collection

The Library makes the Collection available to the University community by providing electronic access to resources and by placing most physical collections on open shelving.

Access to the Library's electronic resources is normally restricted to current Curtin students and staff. Some resources may also be available to Curtin alumni, pathway students and other client groups. Access for Curtin clients is available regardless of their location.

Anyone may access the Library's physical collections on site. Members of the public may also use selected electronic resources on site after registration with the Library. Eligible Library clients can borrow and/or request most physical items in the Collection at the T.L. Robertson Library and the WA School of Mines Kalgoorlie Library.

The Library uses a postal service to provide access to physical resources for eligible off-campus staff and postgraduate students, and clients with special needs.

Some items or collections are not placed on open shelving, owing to their fragile nature or vulnerability to theft or damage. These items are held at the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library and can be retrieved on request for on-site use.

Responsibility for Selection

Collection development is guided by the Library's Collection Development Group, a cross-Library team including all Faculty Librarians, which is advisory to the Manager, Collections.

All Library clients are able to recommend the purchase of relevant scholarly resources.

Academic staff are encouraged to be involved in the selection of library resources, and to recommend those resources needed to support their research, and study units for which they are responsible. Academic staff who are initiating new teaching developments or embarking on new areas of research are also strongly encouraged to meet with their Faculty Librarian to discuss the availability of relevant resources and ways in which the Library can provide support.

Criteria for Selection

The following criteria may be used by the Library to evaluate and prioritise recommendations:

- Relevance to the existing or anticipated needs of the University's learning, teaching and research
- Nature and extent of the existing collection within a subject area
- Currency
- Quality
- Price
- Format
- Language
- Actual or expected demand
- Ongoing financial commitment and maintenance
- Availability of access via alternative methods (e.g. inter-library loan and document delivery).
- Suitability of available technical mechanisms for access
- Licensing obligations and restrictions
- Options for perpetual access and/or archival rights
- Reliability of electronic platforms
- Requirement to pay platform fees

Library staff regularly consult with teaching and research staff across the University to ensure that the collection develops to meet the needs of the University community.

The Library maintains the principle that resources purchased by the Library should be available to all students and staff. It does not purchase resources on behalf of restricted client groups.

Focus on Electronic Resources

The Library prioritises a “digital by default” approach to our collections to maximise resource availability and best meet the diversity of our client groups wherever they are located.

New physical items will only be added to the Collection in a limited range of circumstances:

- Essential items to support learning, teaching and research which are not available electronically
- Items to be included in Special Collections
- Items where electronic equivalents do not reproduce critical features available in print (e.g. high resolution graphics)

Budget

The Library’s acquisitions budget is determined as part of the University’s annual budget process. For 2021 the University has provided \$11,297,080 for the provision of library resources.

In allocating the acquisitions budget the Library gives priority to:

- Ongoing commitments and subscriptions
- Support for learning and teaching, and the acquisition of textbooks and recommended readings for all units taught at the University
- Resources that support the current and emerging research priorities of the University.

The Library normally allocates no more than eighty-five per cent of the acquisitions budget to ongoing commitments and subscriptions. The remainder is allocated to one-off purchases.

As a large proportion of expenditure is in foreign currency the Library works with University Financial Services to ensure that appropriate hedging mechanisms are in place to manage the risk of currency fluctuation.

Subscriptions

The Library may subscribe to:

- Electronic journals
- Print journals
- Indexing and full-text databases
- Electronic book and video items or collections
- Electronic reference resources.

Subscriptions are reviewed annually by the Collection Development Group to ensure their continuing suitability for the Collection, taking into account:

- Increases in subscription costs
- Budget constraints
- Usage, cost per use and other metrics on value to researchers and teaching staff
- Changing needs of teaching and research staff in the University
- Changes in licensing agreements.

In considering cancellations, the Library will consult with stakeholders as appropriate.

Requests for new subscriptions are also considered on an annual cycle. These are examined carefully because of the ongoing financial commitment, and because increases in subscription costs often exceed the annual inflation rate.

Textbooks

Wherever possible, the Library will provide electronic access to prescribed textbooks. It should be noted, however, that textbooks are not always available in electronic format for Library use. Unit coordinators are strongly encouraged to consult the Library to confirm the electronic availability of textbooks in advance.

If textbooks (prescribed learning resources) are available in electronic versions, print copies will not normally be provided.

The formula the Library follows for purchasing print textbooks when electronic versions are not available is that for each unit taught, the Library will provide one copy of a textbook on the prescribed reading list for every thirty students, to a maximum of seven copies.

Where appropriate physical learning and teaching resources will be available at multiple locations (e.g. Curtin Perth and Curtin Kalgoorlie).

In many cases electronic books are provided with unlimited access. When electronic books are purchased on restricted access models the Library aims to provide for at least three simultaneous users for prescribed and recommended readings.

In addition, the Library will monitor usage, recalls and requests, and if required provide additional copies of high use items. When purchasing new editions we will take into account usage and number of copies of the earlier editions held.

Reading Lists & Copyright Material

As noted in the Course Quality Manual, all essential learning resources for students must be included in the Reading List system managed by the Library.² Notifying the Library of unit readings through the Reading List Service ensures that any new items required are treated with priority in the acquisition process.

Under the University Copyright Procedures, any copying and communication of copyright material under the Statutory Licensing scheme available to educational providers under the Copyright Act must also be handled through the Library Reading List Service.

The Copyright Agency Statutory Licence agreement covers text and graphic works (e.g. book chapters, journal articles, images, etc.). For this content, Library staff will check copyright requirements, attach warning notices, and source or digitise content as required.

The Library also facilitates access to broadcast TV and radio programs for Curtin staff and students under the Screenrights Statutory Licence by subscribing to online resource centres which provide online delivery platforms for this content.³

Donations

While the Library's collections are increasingly electronic, we recognise the benefit of donations of unique physical material to enrich our research and special collections. Such items will be evaluated in the light of the University's research profile and in accordance with the Library's Archival Collection Guidelines.

The Library is a participating institution of the Cultural Gifts Program sponsored by the Ministry for the Arts.

The Library reserves the right to decline or dispose of donations.

Resources Not Available in the Library Collection

The Library aims to hold a collection adequate to support undergraduate learning and teaching across the University. In order to support research, if resources cannot be purchased quickly for the Collection, the Library also meets the cost of supplying items through interlibrary loan and document delivery for staff and postgraduate students.

In addition, the Library has reciprocal borrowing arrangements for students and staff with other academic institutions in Australia and New Zealand.

² See: <https://staffportal.curtin.edu.au/learning-and-teaching/managing-a-course-or-unit/course-coordination/course-quality/>

³ For further information on the Copyright Statutory Licence agreements see: <https://copyright.curtin.edu.au/teaching/>

Open Access

The Library supports the principle of open access to knowledge and actively pursues innovative solutions to the challenges of providing open access content and containing the costs of scholarly information resources.

The Library is working with publishers and with the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) to move existing journal subscription agreements to a “read and publish” model which will allow open access publishing for Curtin researchers.⁴

The Library is not able to provide direct support to researchers to cover open access publishing charges.

Collection Maintenance

Collection Valuation

Regular valuations of the Library collections are conducted in compliance with the University’s risk management requirements.

Preservation

The Library will maintain the physical collection in good condition, with appropriate processes for replacement, binding and repair.

The Library will maintain reliable, ongoing access to electronic resources, by anticipating and planning for technological change.

Deselection

Library staff are responsible for decisions on deselection, and will consult with academic staff as appropriate.

The Library regularly withdraws physical items from the Collection if these are no longer required, for example:

- Duplicate copies of low use material
- Superseded textbooks and reference works
- Low use items which are also available in electronic format
- Non-scholarly material
- Items which no longer support current Curtin teaching or research areas

We anticipate that as physical items are removed and/or replaced by electronic equivalents over the next 2-5 years the size of the Library’s physical collection will reduce significantly.

⁴ For further information see: <https://www.caul.edu.au/services-programs/content-procurement-services/consortium-vendors/fast-track-open-access>

Document Review

The Collection Principles document is reviewed annually by the Manager, Collections.

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