



**Code:** QA 802

**Title:** Collections Strategy

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The Library seeks to proactively support and enhance the learning, teaching and research activities of the University by providing seamless access for all its users to excellent and relevant collections.

Our collections comprise many formats and media including print books, e-books, print and e-journals, databases, special collections, archives, AV material, microform, newspapers etc. In managing and delivering seamless access to these collections, the library faces many challenges. There are competing demands for the limited space available within the Library and on campus. The publishing world is in a period of transition between traditional print publishing and the maturing world of e-books and e-journals. Our users' preferences continue to vary greatly with some preferring e-books and others print books. Our users increasingly expect instant access to the information they need and there can be extremely high, but short term, demand for course textbooks and prescribed readings.

This strategy aims to set out some principles which will inform the future acquisition, storage, management and delivery of access to collections. It strives to address the challenges outlined above.

- We value and will continue to develop, preserve and promote our unique heritage print collection as an asset of the University.
- We will acquire and retain a single copy of all print books that are of on-going relevance to the needs of our University community.
- We will retain and preserve our print journal archive in specific areas as per the Long Term Print Journal Archive policy (see Appendix 1).
- We will continue to prefer e-only subscriptions to current journals, where that subscription provides perpetual access to the years subscribed.
- We will continue to maximise e-collections for ease of access from anywhere anytime.
- We will regularly undertake collection reviews with a view to applying these principles to our existing collections.
- We will ensure our collections (regardless of format) are accessible, easy to find and attractively presented to support browsing and discovery.

## Appendix 1 - Long Term Print Journal Archive Policy

The Library values and will continue to develop, preserve and promote our unique heritage print collection as an asset of the University. As e-journal publishing and preservation has matured in the last decade and is now a secure and reliable mode of delivery for journals, our subscriptions have increasingly been converted to online-only.

The print journal remains however a valuable resource in its own right, both as a physical artefact, often beautifully bound and illustrated, and as a piece of history, telling the story of how both research and scholarly communication has developed over the history of the University.

This policy specifies those journals that the Library undertakes to preserve and retain as a Long Term Print Journal Archive, regardless of future online availability.

- **Steinberger Journals:** Titles, still held by the library, which appear in the Journals Listing in the Steinberger catalogue (1913). These represent the foundations of the Old Library which was housed in the Quadrangle. They reflect the priorities and subject areas considered valuable in teaching and research in the second half of the 19th century, during the University's founding years. Many, in addition, are nicely bound and some titles are extremely fine examples of both binding and illustration with hand coloured plates.
- **Irish Studies:** full runs of titles published in Ireland and elsewhere in the following subject areas as they relate to Irish Studies:
  - Archaeology and Antiquities
  - Arts – Film, Dance, Theatre and Art
  - Celtic Studies
  - Education
  - Folklore
  - Gender
  - Geography
  - History including local studies
  - Irish Language
  - Irish Literature in English
  - Music
  - Political Studies
  - Religion
  - Sociology

These represent a body of scholarship which is crucial to one of the University's strategic research strands. They also tie in to the University's West of Ireland location, which is going to become more important in the future and which will be a distinguishing feature from other institutions.

- **Fold outs:** Titles in disciplines where the adequate replication of unusual formats such as fold-outs, maps etc is crucial e.g Archaeology, Classics. As yet the electronic versions, don't, in many instances, replicate the ease of access provided by the print copy when it comes to fold-out diagrams, charts, maps and other illustrative material. This may be something that will improve as time goes on. However, at the moment it is not appropriate to limit ourselves to electronic access only in these areas.

- **Titles in fine bindings /with hand-coloured plates/colour photographic reproductions:** Many, though not all of these, would fall within the category in point 1 relating to the Steinberger journals. However, there are some modern published titles which should also be retained not only for their content but due to their intrinsic value as artefacts for future generations of readers.
- **Donations:** Currently, when a collection is being evaluated for donation, it is usual to exclude journals as in many instances the journals offered are titles already held by the Library. However, where there is a substantial run of a title not previously held by the Library in any format it may be accepted as part of a donation if it augments our holdings and is representative of the scholarship of the original owner. In such instances print holdings will be retained by the Library.
- **CONUL Distributed Print Archive:** NUI, Galway has committed to permanently retain the CONUL Copy of Last Resort of a number of Abstracting and Indexing journals. These must be retained in perpetuity. This model may extend to non A/I journals in the future. The titles currently held under this scheme are: Biological Abstracts RRM, Current Mathematical Publications, Geo Abstracts A, B, C and D.

## Appendix 2 – Collections Strategy for teaching and learning

- We will strive to ensure that we are fully informed of the reading requirements of every taught academic programme.
- Where possible we will meet high demand for reading list titles and core texts through the purchase of e-book editions or chapter digitisation.
- We will retain on open access any material that is included on a reading list as prescribed or background reading.
- We will purchase multiple print copies of a title if that title is prescribed reading for one of our taught courses and where no e-book edition is available.

**Person Responsible:** Ms Monica Crump, Head of Collections, Library.