

## Managing Print Collections: JRUL Weeding Policy

### Why weed?

Stock and space are key issues for this Library as well as for many other research libraries as we find pressure on space is reaching critical levels. At the same time the changing nature of the academic Library has seen STM subjects relying more and more on electronic resources and we are increasingly seeing this trend develop in Humanities subjects, although at a slower rate. This change has enabled libraries to consolidate journal holdings through the highly successful UKRR scheme ([www.ukrr.ac.uk](http://www.ukrr.ac.uk)) and it is increasingly recognised that with excellent document supply services and improving electronic access to resources that not every Library needs to retain copies of material "just in case".

An analysis of JRUL stock illustrates some of the issues facing the Library:

- We acquire over 35,000 new books each year which take up approximately 1,000 metres of shelving as well as continuing to purchase some journal titles in print.
- In the Main Library over a million books are available on the open shelves but only 59% of these have been borrowed in the last ten years, 47% in the last five years.
- In some subject areas the proportion of stock borrowed over the last 5 years is as high as 87% but in others it drops to less than 30%, reflecting changing emphases in teaching and research.
- Of the material in our closed access Stores less than 20% of material has been borrowed in the last ten years.
- Using a formula developed by the British Library to establish lifecycle costings for Library books, it costs the JRUL an average of £7.90 to store a single book on the shelves for 10 years.

It is therefore essential that older, less well used material is moved to Stores to allow space for the newer material on the open shelves and that material no longer required is disposed of from our Stores. It is important that any material selected for disposal is carefully assessed and we are always mindful that it is the strength of our collections which lead to our recognition as a major UK research library and enhance the University of Manchester's reputation.

## **Stock management**

### ***Material on the open shelves:***

The Library invests in an annual weeding programme to ensure that there is sufficient space to house newly purchased material. A section of the Library is chosen where space issues are particularly problematic and material which has not been borrowed for five years is removed from the open shelves, duplicates are disposed of and material of potential academic or historic value is moved to Store. Those items remaining on the open shelves are also checked for condition and repaired as necessary.

### ***Material in Stores***

The Library Stores contain some impressive collections of material but amongst these treasures there is also a historic legacy of duplicate and unwanted items. Sorting these collections is a time consuming process but one which is necessary to enable space to be created for material to be relocated from the open shelves. Within Stores de-duplication of material is the first priority, followed by an assessment of the remaining stock based on usage and on duplication across the HE sector (using the weeding criteria below).

### ***Unaccessioned material***

The Library has a significant amount of uncatalogued collections, some of which are of major importance. These collections have been listed (see *uncatalogued collections list*) and ranked by academic and historic importance. Library staff are working through cataloguing these

collections and also seeking external funding for cataloguing projects where feasible.

The Library also has a legacy of uncatalogued textbooks acquired in the 1950s and 1960s the majority of which is now out-of-date and mostly irrelevant to modern teaching needs. This material is currently being assessed for importance and either awarded a cataloguing priority or disposed of using one of the methods outlined below.

### **Weeding criteria** (*this section from CMP*)

The Library uses the following criteria as a guideline to assess our holdings (the criteria will be adapted for each subject area in consultation with the Library's Faculty Teams and academic staff as appropriate):

- **Relevance** to current research and/or teaching and learning within the University
- **Potential relevance** to future research and/or teaching and learning within the University
- Level of **usage** (based on transactions on Talis)
- **Duplication** within the Library
- **Rarity**
- **Availability** of electronic equivalents where appropriate
- **Accessibility** of other copies (e.g. loans from other libraries)
- Intrinsic **significance** (historic and financial)
- Physical **condition**
- Items which need to be retained under the terms of the Copyright Licensing Agency (**CLA**) Higher Education Basic Scanning Licence

### **Methods of disposal** (*this section from CMP*)

Material selected for disposal will be dealt with in one of the following ways:

- Making use of charitable organisations to sell material on our behalf and divide income between the charity and the Library
- Selling to reputable booksellers
- Giving away to another library, a charity or similar organizations

· Disposing of using an environmentally responsible method

All proceeds from sales will be used to either catalogue existing material which would not otherwise be made available or to purchase new library materials.

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## **References**

*"What to withdraw? Print collections management in the wake of digitization"* Schonfeld, Roger C. and Housewright, Ross. Ithaka S+R, 2009. <http://www.ithaka.org/ithaka-s-r/research/what-to-withdraw/What%20to%20Withdraw%20-%20Print%20Collections%20Management%20in%20the%20Wake%20of%20Digitization.pdf>

*"Cloud-sourcing research collections: managing print in the mass-digitized library environment."* Malpas, Constance. OCLC, 2011. <http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2011/2011-01.pdf>