



**UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON**  
**SENATE HOUSE  
LIBRARY**

# Collection Development Strategy

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# Section One: Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

Senate House Library (SHL) is the central library for the University of London (UoL), its federal member institutions and the School of Advanced Study (SAS). SHL holds 2 million books, including over 50 named special collections and 1,800 archival collections, as well as artworks, and is a research hub of national and international significance. We provide access to over 80,000 journal and newspaper titles electronically and a quarter of a million e-books, while building digital collections to support research, notably of digitised primary sources and historical texts.

SHL has four strategic ambitions:

- Regain National Research Library status funded by UKRI as a nationally recognized library for arts and humanities scholarship
- Facilitate greater engagement with the collections
- Provide world class research facilities and a premier researcher experience
- Create an internal culture of excellence and support staff development

SHL's **collection development strategy** provides detailed information about the way the collections are acquired and developed across a broad spectrum, of the Arts, Humanities and certain Social Sciences, tied to eight key research strengths in support of ambitions one and two. Further information about the collections can be found in the **collection overview and key research strengths** document.

## 1.2 Governance

SHL primarily supports four core academic stakeholder groups:

- Central UoL (including UoL Worldwide, provider of distance learning services)
- UoL federal member institutions and their libraries
- All Institutes, staff and students of SAS
- The wider academic and research community

SHL's collection development strategy therefore reflects the requirements of these groups, whilst recognising SHL's key role in building its own unique collections in line with its first strategic ambition.

SHL also provides a range of collection management services (including limited collection development) for third party clients at Senate House, currently the New College of the Humanities, New York University, and the British Psychological Society; as well as storage facilities for third party clients at a depository at Egham, including Royal Opera House. For information on the way collections are managed, SHL has produced a separate **collection management policy**.

SHL has established an internal Collections Group (CG), which meets monthly to discuss collection management and development issues, consider and agree potential new acquisitions (large donations), and review and submit all relevant policies and strategies for final sign-off by SHL's senior team.

The collection management policy and collection development strategy are reviewed by CG for approval by SHL's senior management team at the start of every five-year strategy cycle.

Minutes of CG meetings and associated reports are sent to the Federal Collections Group (FCG), comprised of representatives from the federal member institutions. SHL is also committed to working in a consultative and collaborative manner with all key stakeholders, including constituent bodies of SAS. A formal SHL-SAS Libraries group meets to coordinate activities between SHL and non-integrated SAS Libraries (Institute of Historical Research, Institute of Classical Studies, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and the Warburg Institute).

The Federal Libraries Group receives the minutes from CG and FCG. The Board of SHL also receives an annual report at its summer term meeting that provides an overview of collection development activity in the preceding year.

### **1.3 Collection development principles**

The main goal for SHL's collection development strategy is to acquire material to support research-informed teaching (regardless of format) and research activity in the arts, humanities and specific areas of the social sciences. To underpin this goal, SHL has developed six collecting principles:

1. Purchase new content to support the fourteen existing modern research areas outlined in the **collection overview and key research strengths** document
2. Monitor emerging modern research areas for appropriate levels of new investment in relevant collections
3. Acquire heritage collections (primarily but not exclusively) to support the eight key research strengths outlined in the **collection overview and key research strengths** document
4. Actively develop the long-term transition from print to e-resource, including a strategic switch from print journals to e-resource; the provision and discovery of open access content; and the digitisation of existing print collections. SHL commits to spend 90% of its Collection budget on digital materials each year
5. Plan and build capacity for the future ingest and processing of born digital archives and associated content transferred by UoL or acquired via donation from other sources
6. To prioritise and enhance the collecting of those authorities, perspectives and voices, however defined, that have traditionally been overlooked and marginalized, both within SHL and the wider culture

It is recognised that in some cases these strategic principles may be in conflict; a key example here is some aspects of the drive to diversify the voices within the collection set out in the principle 6, which challenges our commitment to a shift to digital, with the global publishing and supply model meaning that material from outside a European or North American context is frequently extremely difficult to acquire in an accessible electronic format. In such cases, professional staff, with the guidance of CG, will judge which principle should have priority in each case.

SHL also recognises the need for co-operation and consultation between collecting institutions and will take into account the collecting policies of other libraries with similar interests in related areas and subject fields. SHL will consult with other organisations where conflict of interest may arise.

## Section Two: Collection Acquisition

Collection acquisition is the primary way in which SHL's collection development strategy delivers SHL's first strategic ambition, namely to re-establish SHL as a nationally recognized library for arts and humanities scholarship.

There are three main areas of acquisition:

- New modern collections, to support research-informed teaching
- New special collections material, to support research-informed teaching and research activity
- Acquired heritage collections, to support research activity

### 2.1 Purchase of new modern collections material

The purchase of new modern collections material is key to delivering collection development principles 1, 2, 4 and 6.

Under the guidance of the Head of Collections, each modern collection area is assigned to an Academic Librarian with delegated responsibility to implement the collection development strategy in that area.

Materials are collected on their subject merit to support SHL's eight key research strengths alongside any specific priorities of SHL's key stakeholders.

Acquisitions are grouped into two format areas – monographs; and e-resource / periodicals.

#### 2.1.1 Monographs and e-books

The modern collections team of librarians will purchase new material to support the latest scholarship in aligned to the eight key research strengths. They will also proactively seek opportunities to address historical gaps in collecting, and to purchase older materials that reflect the development of the disciplines covered in the key research strengths.

Each collection area is assigned an annual collection acquisition budget, with responsibility for purchasing material delegated to the respective Academic Librarian.

The individual collection budgets are primarily allocated according to demonstrable collection usage in all formats, derived from statistics for loanable or retrievable physical items, or online usage for e-books, that have been purchased recently (defined as between 1 and 3 years). For information on how this data is used to make decisions about relegation and stock control, see the associated **collection management policy**.

The expenditure against each budget area is reviewed monthly at CG. Each budget area has a key performance indicator of 66% spend or commitment to spend by month 6 (January), and 100% spend or commitment to spend by month 10 (May). Any budget underspend is diverted to e-resource provision.

Single item purchases from £300 to £1,000 will be referred to the Head of Collections for approval, and all items over this to CG. While it is a very rare occurrence, individual items costing over £15,000 require the approval of Senate House Library Board as well as CG. High-value items are automatically listed as reference only, as are materials over 100 years old on the grounds that they might be rare or valuable.

SHL will ensure that there is regular consultation with stakeholders over emerging collection areas via FCG and other relevant formal and informal channels.

SHL is committed to make material available in electronic format wherever possible. SHL will only purchase print volumes for Modern Collections where an e-book is wholly unavailable, or where the physicality of the book is important to its research value.

In addition, SHL will ensure that current monographic content is made available in the most efficient means possible for our readers, including subscribed digital access if that is judged to represent the best value. SHL will also ensure that a budget is allocated annually to support flexible PDA / EDA / DDA acquisition models.

### **2.1.2 E-resource and periodicals**

The E-resource librarian, in consultation with the modern collections team, will manage the delegated e-resource and periodical budgets. SHL has committed to ensuring that at least 50% of the annual Collections budget is assigned to e-resource purchase and subscription, outside of e-journal subscriptions and e-book purchases.

For annual subscriptions to periodicals and e-resource, the E-resource librarian and respective Academic Librarians will keep existing title usage and emerging research trends under constant review. Purchases are made to support the eight key research strengths, and with due regard to the teaching interests of the central University, and existing provision across Federal Member Institutions (FMIs); as remote access is the assumed mode of use, SHL will avoid purchasing resources which are held in several FMIs. SHL will strive to ensure that all new purchases and subscriptions for new e-resources are accessible remotely by staff and students of the entire federal University of London. Where this is not possible, purchases will be deferred to CG for ratification. Suggestions for all new purchases or subscriptions, or for cancellations, will automatically be presented to CG for approval where annual or outright cost exceeds £10,000; below this threshold changes will be reported on a monthly basis, but can proceed on the approval of the Head of Collections. In all cases, changes will be reported to FCG and other relevant consultative bodies for comment.

Any underspend from the collection development budget at the end of month 10 (May) will be assigned to e-resource provision.

Any requests for free trials of new e-resource subscriptions will be made to CG for approval, so that they can be monitored for use and a decision taken about whether they should be continued.

- The strategic aim is to move away from print provision of newly published periodicals and journals. SHL will only pursue the purchase of printed periodical content where it is unavailable in any other format and is judged essential to study in one of our key research strengths.

Nevertheless, as a research library, SHL collects many items that are provided by single-title suppliers that provide specialist print-only content. These suppliers currently account for 5% of the overall periodical or journal expenditure, although this equates to one third of the overall number of titles that are acquired annually. Although subject to the same usage reviews as the remainder of the collection, it is recognised that these are unlikely to be made available in e-format.

In addition to purchasing new e-resource content, SHL will work with stakeholders across SAS and the federal member institutions to ensure (where appropriate) that access to research outputs comply with open access guidelines. As such, SHL subscribes to the [Open Library of the Humanities](#) and provides access via its Discovery layer to SAS's open access publication portal, [SAS Space](#).

## **2.2 Purchase of new special collections material: single items**

Under the guidance of the Head of Collections, the Curator of Rare Books and University Artworks, and the Archivist are responsible for developing SHL special collections of archives, manuscripts and rare books in line with SHL's collection development strategy and eight key research strengths.

Various archives and special collections are supported by trusts that were set up to manage them on point of deposit by donors, for which the drawn down funds are used to further purchase material that develops the collection.

Revenue drawn down biannually from trust funds (linked to specific collections) will be managed by the Head of Collections, delegated to individual Academic Librarians or a suitable representative in Special Collections.

An additional discretionary special collections fund has been allocated to enable SHL to purchase material as teaching resource, or to acquire new material to support and complement the overall collection. All single title purchases over £1,000 will be subject to CG approval where feasible; if exceptional circumstances demand a very rapid decision, this can be authorised by any two of: Head of Collections, the relevant Associate Director, the Senate House Librarian.

## **2.3 Acquired heritage collections**

The following areas are key to delivering collection development principles 3 and 5.

### **2.3.1 Small gifts and donations**

SHL seeks to monitor the number and frequency of gifts and donations so that the impact on the overall collection breadth and storage capacity are effectively considered. SHL has developed a protocol to assess the use of small gifts and donations outside full CG scrutiny, framed in its **donation policy**. For Modern Collections, small donations are defined as 25 items or fewer, which can be approved by the Head of Collections; for Special Collections up to 3 rare books may be accepted where authorised by the Head of Collections. In both areas, the Head of Collections will refer to CG any small donations where it is felt that items have extraordinary value, or where a decision has larger implications for collection



policy. All offered donations over these thresholds, and all offered archival donations, are defined as large acquisitions.

### **2.3.2 Large acquisitions**

SHL seeks to proactively build its heritage collections and archives through major gifts, donations, bequests, deposits and other acquisitions of material with significant research potential. These will primarily be in the form of printed books, manuscripts or documents, although other materials can be accepted (increasingly multimedia and born digital content).

Any proposed donations or gifts need to support one of the key research strengths; support SHL's strategic research priorities; complement or extend existing special collection strengths; or represent an emerging research area that SHL wishes to develop.

To facilitate the decision making process over gifts and decisions, CG approves on a monthly basis which offers of gifts and donations are accepted in consultation with any relevant stakeholders (for example SAS Institutes).

CG operates strict acquisition protocols to provide a clear audit trail for any gifts, bequests, donations or other deposit of material within SHL deemed to be a large acquisition. These are set out below.

Stage 1: Request received from potential donor, assigned to appropriate staff for an assessment, and circulated to CG via email for a decision within 2 days to assess whether the material is worth appraising

- If no, the donor is notified, with a log of the approach made for future reference
- If yes, move to stage 2

Stage 2: CG authorises and arranges an initial viewing and appraisal of material by the most appropriate Collections staff, and directs consultation with relevant colleagues, including the Senior Conservator, the Space Manager, the Associate Director of Licensing and Digitization, and the Metadata and Discovery Manager.

Stage 3: The Collections staff member records all of their findings and outcomes of consultation in a Collection Acquisition Proposal form and submits this to CG

Stage 4: CG to accept, reject or request resubmission with recommendations for further development or clarification

- If no, the donor is notified, with a log of the rejection and associated reasons made for future reference
- If CG requires further information or clarification, it may ask for the proposal to be resubmitted, providing clear guidance over the issues to be addressed
- If appropriate, gifts or donations with a value exceeding £15,000 are escalated to the SHL Board and Vice Chancellor's Executive Group for approval
- If approved, move to stage 5

Stage 5: The relevant CG member (usually the Head of Collections) assumes responsibility for the completion and signature of the deposit agreement by donor, including the negotiation of the transfer

of ownership, copyright and other rights where appropriate. It should be noted that SHL's default position is to only accept acquisitions where all rights are transferred. Once signed by the Librarian, CG will maintain a digitised copy on file. At this point, the Space Manager will be asked to organise collection or physical transfer, and the Metadata and Discovery Manager to begin to assess any existing metadata, or to assess the level of priority for the creation of new metadata.

Stage 6: Collection acquired and transferred to agreed storage facility (stack or depository)

Stage 7: Relevant metadata ingested into catalogue

Stage 8: Collection development plan added to SHL annual catalogue plan, and / or to the digitisation pipeline

Where appropriate, additional funds are sought from the donor or depositor to support the management or development of the collection.

SHL will ensure that the information it holds relating to the collections is accurate, secure, reliable and accessible and can specify what format this data is held in.

As well as indications of research value, all submissions must include the fullest information possible on the material, including:

- Its physical condition. While poor condition will never be used as the sole reason to decline an offered donation, it can legitimately be taken into consideration amongst other factors
- Its physical size and location, to allow informed planning of transfer and storage
- Details of any metadata already present
- Reasonable indications of the material's rarity, age and format (though for larger donations it is clearly not necessary to be comprehensive)

Failure to provide such information, or to engage with reasonable requests to consult with colleagues, may ultimately prevent an application being approved.

## Section Three: Collection Development

Collection development is the primary way in which SHL's collection development strategy will deliver SHL's second strategic ambition, namely to facilitate greater engagement with the collections. This element of the strategy complements SHL's **engagement strategy** and **research strategy**.

There are three main areas of development:

- Catalogue enhancement
- Digitization
- Research support

### 3.1 Catalogue enhancement programme

#### 3.1.1 Catalogue pipeline

To ensure material is discoverable, SHL supports catalogue enhancement via a unified catalogue pipeline. The purpose of the catalogue pipeline is to ensure all items within SHL's collections are assigned suitable metadata, enabling them to be discovered via SHL's online catalogues; with the preferred 'gold standard' being via a keyword search and (for archival holdings only) a lower 'green standard' via browsable online handlists.

A hierarchical structure determines which material is prioritised at the top of the workflow, and resource assigned to it. New acquisitions are expected to fall within one of the 8 core research strengths currently published by SHL, and priority will be assigned to legacy projects that are associated with the 8 areas.

The Metadata and Discovery Manager will oversee the catalogue pipeline and administer an annual Cataloguing Plan for all collections with oversight on a monthly basis by CG. The annual plan will set targets for the completion of work, with variances highlighted and explained on a quarterly basis. Every quarter, CG will review the progress of acquisition or legacy projects and agree the priorities for the next quarter, ensuring suitable resource is assigned to each project.

#### 3.1.2 Prioritization of catalogue work

There is a hierarchical prioritization structure for all catalogue activities to ensure resource is allocated to the appropriate content.

(a) Print (non-archival)

Priority one: Material purchased by SHL

- Modern acquisitions
- Special collection: rare printed books and associated non-archival material

This material has been given the highest priority as it reflects significant levels of cash investment in the development of SHL's research collections, providing the latest research output for open access

consultation. In the case of special collections, the material purchased is often high value. Failure to catalogue new acquisitions would represent a waste of expenditure, adding to the backlog of uncatalogued legacy content.

All newly purchased print material is processed by the metadata team or the Curator of Rare Books and University Artworks respectively.

Processing protocols and service level agreements are in place to ensure any new modern material (not delivered shelf-ready) is processed speedily and can be tracked, with 5 identifiable stages to the workflow. The key performance indicator is to have all material on the shelf within 20 working days of arrival at SHL

Priority two: Material acquired by SHL (non-purchase)

- CG approved collections over 25 items (non-archival)
- Donations under 25 items in size

CG acts as an approvals body for donations or acquisitions of research value, linked to the 8 core research strengths, over 25 items in size. A log of material is kept, and a collection development plan drawn up for each acquisition. Resource is assigned to each collection as a separate project, either from spare capacity from the metadata team; volunteer recruitment; or a grant funding application to secure additional external resource.

SHL also accepts 'small' donations under 25 items. This material is of lower priority but is incorporated into the workflow of the metadata team, as much of the content supports the material purchased on behalf of the Academic Librarians.

Priority three: Legacy content

- Items retrieved via the online card catalogue
- Modern collections on open access identified by Library Modernisation Programme (LMP)
- Acquired heritage collections without metadata
- Acquired heritage collections with inadequate metadata

A key aim will be to reduce the number of 'hidden collections' held by SHL, as well as to prioritize those that are of commercial digitization interest.

The metadata team occasionally catalogues material that has been located via the online card catalogue and requested by readers. This is a small amount of work, and incorporated into the main workflow of the metadata team.

The LMP will focus on reducing the amount of open access stock via deduplication and weeding; at the same time, material will be removed from the research reserves in the Tower and depository stores. Uncatalogued material will be assessed for retention value and, if a decision is made to keep it, a judgement will be made about the need to catalogue the material. LMP is a key priority for the library and therefore resource will be sought to process legacy items from new posts under the LMP budget or plus existing capacity.

Equally, there are many known special collections without any metadata. Projects will be proposed and scrutinised on a quarterly basis via CG to ensure they are strategic and obtainable. Resource will be allocated from the Curator of Rare Books and University Artwork, and the Metadata team, alongside volunteer recruitment.

(b) Archival

Priority one: CG approved collections over 25 items (archival)

A collection development plan will reflect the amount of catalogue work required to produce the relevant level of metadata. The preferred option is 'Gold' standard entry into AdLib, though resource constraints means that the 'Green' standard of PDF handlist may, on occasion, be required. In these instances, the material then moves to the third tier (see below) for catalogue enhancement.

Priority two: Accruals to previously approved collections

Many collections remain 'live', with regular ingests of new material. These are reported to CG and added to the pipeline.

Priority three: Legacy content and catalogue enhancement via projects

There are some collections where there is insufficient metadata or descriptions, or the information remains in a paper handlist. A retrospective conversion process will convert this content into searchable online text.

Resource to support the archival strand of the catalogue pipeline will primarily be delivered by the archivist, who will manage resource obtained via SHL's volunteer programme. Project archivists will be used on specific collections, where funding is available to support this approach.

## **3.2 Digitization programme**

### **3.2.1 Background**

SHL raises the profile of its collections and generates income through a digitization pipeline, working with external commercial publishers to maximise benefit from SHL's unique and extensive collections. Where appropriate SHL acts as a broker on behalf of UoL stakeholders to ensure non-SHL collections are included in contractual negotiations.

Planning for the longer-term switch from print to e-resource is part of SHL's space management programme and feeds into SHL's proactive support for digital scholarship, with particular emphasis on the creation and curation of digital assets. Raised profile of SHL content is evidenced by citations, production statistics for related material, and, increasingly, by an increase in offers of donations and bequests of special collections and archives in themes and subjects where SHL content has a high online profile – such as economic history, left wing politics etc.

SHL is part of the wider research library exploration of approaches to the curation of digital content and open access research output across various standards and formats; we aim to ensure the continued provision of access and define the role of academic research libraries in the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century as a virtual

research centre. This will be covered by a separate **Digital Preservation Strategy**, currently under development by the UoL.

### 3.2.2 Digitization framework

The digitization framework and workflow is in place to manage the digitization process and assign resource accordingly. The business owner of the digitization programme is the Associate Director of Business Development.

#### Stage One: Scoping and appraisal

Identification of suitable material from SHL (chiefly special collections and archives), and potential collections from stakeholders in the central University of London (UoL), School of Advanced Study (SAS) and federal members, to produce lists of thematic content in response to commercial partners' commissioning priorities.

Requirements:

- Expert knowledge from special collections and modern teams to suggest relevant material, especially archival
- Production of reliable catalogue data via LMS and Discovery Layer
- Consideration of licensing potential as a key decider in making accession and acquisition decisions

Publishers are granted access to material in order to finalise their selections, survey conservation requirements and any outstanding metadata issues, with recommendations for any remedial work to be included in ensuing licence negotiations.

Requirements:

- Production of relevant material in assigned reading room space – ideally closest to where the material is currently held – SHL (for both SHL and Crown material), Egham
- Production of conservation reports, including light-touch remedial work required to prevent damage, assessment of fragility, issues around dis-binding
- Production of metadata report, including agreement on schema for pagination / foliation and other physical unique identifiers to be captured or created, as well as suitable descriptors
- Analysis of rights and permissions requirements – some publishers ask SHL staff to provide rights-holder information, others use their own resource to carry out this research and clear necessary rights. One result of this process has been the systematic review of deposit agreements, and a prioritised workstream renegotiating terms with depositors, aimed at securing gift rather than loan status, with rights assigned to the University

These stages determine the publishers' final content selections for licensing

- If no, in many cases, other publishers pick up content previously rejected for licensing and very little content assessment and reporting is wasted.

- If yes, the Associate Director, Business Development draft a contract, edits company templates or re-edits previous agreements to maximise the benefits to the library – in terms of royalty income, receipt of preservation images and free or discounted access to the finished online product; agree schema for metadata capture and image identifiers; agree conservation work required; and agree timetable for digitisation process.

#### Stage Two: Digitisation pipeline

Select and configure digitization workspace, either onsite or via offsite third party contractor.

Requirements for digitisation:

- Sufficient space to host digitization equipment – ceiling height to accommodate camera stands, black-out blinds on windows and adequate power sockets are all essential. Ability to isolate and turn off room lights desirable.
- Broadband and WiFi connections, with possible configuration of HDML lines for transfer of images to publishers' FTP sites from studio space, or review of collection processes for transfer of images on hard-drives
- Ability to transfer material to studio space from other locations and store securely, ideally for double-shift hours

Requirements for preparation and delivery of material for digitization:

- Production schedules are agreed, with sufficient notice for the required material to be produced. Capacity to deliver parallel projects depends on available space and man-power
- Material needs to be prepared for digitisation by the licensee – SHL will advise on recruitment and project-specific training of project conservators if recommended as a result of the conservation survey
- Pagination or foliation prior to digitisation is only agreed in exceptional circumstances, as it is expensive, time-consuming and prone to human error

Requirements for amendment to order status on LMS if out of circulation for extended period:

- For bulk-batches of printed books, note to be placed on catalogue that material will be un-orderable, with start and end dates clearly displayed
- Arrangements for the exceptional production of material to readers during digitisation
- For archives and manuscripts, slips are placed on the shelf reflecting that the item, file, collection, etc. is unavailable during the digitisation process
- Updates to location lists if large tranches of material or whole Special Collections are out of circulation for more than a month

#### Stage Three: Publication

Requirements for establishment of beta test phase to review editorial content, associated metadata and promotional marketing materials:

- Password access to publishers' secure beta sites is required, to undertake a review of images and associated content
- SHL subject expert(s) check editorial content for accuracy and links to SHL catalogue information

- Metadata spot-checks ensure the correct identification of images
- Reviews of publicity material check for correct credits, acknowledgements, representation and branding in advance of publication

Requirements for launch of content on third party platform:

- Provision of clear timetables to move from beta to full launch, once all tests completed
- SHL to set up free library access via IP address recognition (onsite) or authentication (remote) and promote resource on website
- SHL to receive deposit images for storage in SAS/SHL digital repository
- SHL tracks and monitors internal usage of online resources, and keeps track of sales and royalty reports to ensure the timely receipt of royalties.

### **3.3 Research support**

One of the key aims of the collection development strategy is to build collections that support research activity across the arts and humanities. As a result, SHL will tailor programmes of acquisition wherever possible to programmes of emerging research, especially within the School of Advanced Study where it is aligned to the eight core research strengths.