

Collections Review Report

Introduction

There are a number of contextual issues which affect library collection development and the library materials budget:

- Concern with the quality of the collections as reflected in recent student and postgraduate experience surveys.
- Concern with inflationary trends in the library materials budget which leads to annual issues through the planning round.
- The desire by the University to achieve the best usage, now and in the future, for the collections, in order to show value for money.
- The rapidly accelerating shift to the digital in library collections, now very rapid, impacting on books as well as journals.
- The diversity of need for library collections in the University community, across disciplines and for interdisciplinary areas, for undergraduates, taught and research postgraduates and staff, for on and off campus users, and for digital, print and other formats of materials
- New ways of acquiring collections, eg bundling or disbundling, patron-driven acquisition, pay-per-use, inter-library loan.

Remit of review

Following on from the recent review of library expenditure by the Knowledge Strategy Committee on behalf of Court, Senior Vice-Principal Nigel Brown led a review of library collection development and the library materials budget arrangements. The review examined the inter-related issues of how the University of Edinburgh funds the library materials budget, how it acquires library collections, how they are used, and whether the collection leads to satisfaction and value for money. The review bore in mind the diverse nature of the University with regard to need for and use of literature.

The remit of the review is to:

- Establish the appropriate level of funding for the library collections (materials) budget for a University such as Edinburgh, bearing in mind the position of comparator Universities
- Consider usage data and satisfaction levels
- Ensure that the library collections address the diverse nature of the need across the University
- Consider the sources of funding which could be available to support the library collections, including central, College, School and research funding
- Examine methods of distribution of the library collections budget to ensure that these satisfy needs across the University community
- Examine established and newer methods of acquisition to consider which methods will provide the best collection for the University in terms of both usage and satisfaction
- Consider the risks to the University in current or proposed arrangements
- Address arrangements for any exceptional requirements
- Position the library collections and funding arrangements for future changes
- Make recommendations to Information Services and Colleges on a strategy for library collections

The Review will report to the Knowledge Strategy Committee. The membership of the Review Group is included in Appendix A. The Review Group met on 3 occasions in December 2011 and January and February 2012. Minutes of the meetings are in Appendix B.

Evidence gathering

The Group gathered evidence in the following areas. The evidence is attached to this report as appendices.

<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>EVIDENCE</i>	<i>APPENDIX</i>
Allocations	Background Information, section A	Appendix C
	Input from Colleges	Appendix D
Purchases	Background information, section B	Appendix C
Comparative expenditure	Background information, section C	Appendix C
	Additional comparator statistics	Appendix E
Costs of acquiring library materials	IS Services costs	Appendix F
Current methods of procurement	Background information, sections D-E	Appendix C
	Bundles use by Schools	Appendix G
New methods of procurement	Background information, section F	Appendix C
	User-led acquisition of books at Newcastle University Library	Appendix L
Impact of collections	Background information, section G	Appendix C and Appendix K
Satisfaction with collection	Background information, section H	Appendix C
	Extract from LibQual report	Appendix H
Supporting new needs	Report from EUSA	Appendix I
Open Access	Gold Open Access fees at the University of Edinburgh: working out a yearly cost	Appendix J

Principles

The Review Group examined the evidence, and reached a shared understanding on a number of overarching principles on the library collections within which the recommendations of the Group should be viewed. These are:

- The University of Edinburgh is ambitious and aspirational.
- The availability of good library resources addresses the University's strategy of excellence in research, excellence in teaching and knowledge exchange.
- Library resources are a key element of the student and staff experience.
- There are a number of challenges for library resources to meet the University's ambitions and aspirations, particularly:
 - The appointment of the Chancellor's Fellowships;
 - The increasing importance of masters or taught postgraduate degrees;
 - Increasing numbers of students and researchers;
 - The broad disciplinary nature of the University;
 - New methods of course delivery.
- The use of e-resources is continuing to accelerate.

- Print materials remain very important in some subject areas.
- There is a background in which scholarly communications is changing rapidly.
- There is evidence in surveys that the quality of the collection is declining, which is leading to dissatisfaction and unfulfilled demand. Students and researchers are identifying gaps in the collections.
- New methods of procurement are available, which should be explored.
- The Review Group was mindful of funding issues and recognised that some of the recommendations would require additional funding.
- Devolved budgets are already tightly managed, leaving little room for additional purchasing through reappportioning existing resource.

Recommendations from the Collections Review Group to the University

1. The Group considers that the expenditure by the University of Edinburgh on library collections (“the library materials budget”) is not sufficient to meet the present ambition and aspirations of the University. This means that the quality of the collection is causing concern which is reflected in recent user surveys. The library collection needs to respond to the strategic direction of the University, for example to support the broad disciplinary nature of the University, the increased number of students and researchers, and new methods of course delivery.

The Group also considered that the present budget is insufficient in comparison to its peers. The evidence shows the following:

	Edinburgh	Average of Leeds, Manchester and UCL	Average of Russell Group libraries
Materials expenditure as percentage of institutional expenditure	0.78%	0.95%	0.94%
Additional requirement (at 2009-10 values) for Edinburgh to spend at same level as comparators		£1,043,520	£982,136

Notes: calculations based on 2009-10 figures; calculations are based on the full collections budget, from whatever source, i.e. include IS, College and School allocations. Any new funding will require some additional staff resource, as a first call on the funding.

The Group recommends that the University allocate additional funding of about £1 million for the library materials budget.

2. The Group noted that the current resource is allocated by the University to Information Services (IS). This is then allocated to Colleges, with the advice of Library Committee, and in consultation with Colleges. The College allocation is then distributed to Schools. The Group does not recommend changing the method of allocation to Colleges, which uses the

Income and Expenditure Attribution Model, for existing funds; but recommends using any additional funding in new ways. New funding is required for a variety of purposes: to supplement existing budgets which are under pressure, ensuring that these are addressed to support areas of need, to support new methods of procurement outlined in Recommendation 5 and 6, and for staffing to support new work.

The Group recommends no change to the current resource allocation methods for current funding using the Income and Expenditure Attribution Model for allocation to Colleges and that additional funding should be allocated by Information Services, with advice from Library Committee and in consultation with Colleges, to supplement existing budgets, to support new requirements in Recommendation 5 and 6 and for staffing to support the new work. Timely communication between Schools, Colleges and Information Services is important in determining the prioritisation of activities for funding.

3. The Group noted the need to support a wide range of needs in the University. These include both existing and new areas of research, as represented by the Chancellor's Fellowships, and new method of learning and teaching, as represented by online distance learning. The Group also noted the need to provide equity and to support diversity, and to protect the needs of specialised disciplines.

The Group recommends that it is essential that new demands in the University are supported and that subject areas with broad application, and small specialised subject areas must be supported equitably.

4. The Group agreed that the University needs to establish long-term mechanisms to address issues to do with the uplift required in library materials expenditure due to publisher inflation, currency fluctuations and changes in the VAT regime. The University should accommodate the known uplifts due to publisher inflation in the annual planning round to avoid these being additional calls on the IS or College budgets. Currency shifts are more difficult to predict and will need to be dealt with on an ad hoc basis in planning rounds and in consultation with the Finance Office. Currently, VAT only impacts e-resources.

The Group recommends that the annual planning and budgeting process in the University acknowledges the uplift required in library materials expenditure due to publisher inflation, currency fluctuations and the VAT regime in order to maintain steady state in purchasing power.

5. The Group noted with interest new methods of acquiring library materials which give users more direct control, and considered that a proportion of any new sources of library materials funding should be used in innovative ways, including:
 - a. User driven acquisition for e-books and monographs
 - b. Direct student requests for textbooks in high demand with a commitment to fast availability.
 - c. Elimination of the charges incurred by users for inter-library loans with appropriate safeguards against overuse.

These should be monitored and reported on with particular attention being paid to how these methods of acquisition impact on user satisfaction.

The Group recommends using a proportion of any new funding for pilots in new methods of procurement.

6. The Group noted the difficulties around supporting the library needs of new and changing programmes and new or declining areas of research, and noted the importance of clear lines of communication between the Schools to the Library.

The Group considered that the University, through a proportion of any new sources of library materials funding, should provide strategic one-off support for new initiatives in research and teaching. Boards of Studies must have and enforce a light touch approval process for new programmes at all levels, both on campus and online distance to ensure that the Library has the appropriate library resources or that mechanisms have been put in place to provide them in good time before the commencement of the programme. Importantly, the Library also needs to know about significant changes in numbers of students on existing programmes and courses, but noted that these should normally be covered in the normal annual review of courses.

The Group also noted the difficulties in supporting new areas of research, often in interdisciplinary areas, particularly with regard to requests for new journals. The Group recognised the needs of incoming staff, eg Chancellor's Fellows, who, if they are working in a subject area not previously supported, will have immediate demands for new collections

The Group recommends that the Library, through a proportion of any new funding, establishes a "strategic fund" to provide support for library resources for new programmes where library collections are weak prior to the commencement of the programme and to provide immediate support to incoming researchers working in new areas of research.. The "strategic fund" would be managed through a regular bidding process, managed by Library Committee.

7. The Group recognised the importance for clear signposting of the availability of all resources through a one-stop shop approach, and the importance of strong resource discovery mechanisms. The Group noted the Resource Discovery Board and considered that this should be re-established to continue its work to monitor and seek ways to enhance usage to ensure that the investment in library materials shows good value for money.

The Group recommends the re-establishment of the Resource Discovery Board to continue its work in improving the resource discovery layer.

8. The Group agreed that it is important that there should be regular and rigorous assessments to ensure that the library materials budget is continuing to provide value for money. This can be achieved through the creation and dissemination of regular reports on metrics on usage, with light touch reviews by Colleges.

The Group was concerned to hear of some inefficiencies in the financial management of the library collections budget, which had been identified in the recent lean review of the Acquisitions and Metadata processes. Changes in this area would reduce the overhead costs, while not changing the resource allocation model. However it is necessary to ensure that this is carefully reviewed, as part of the annual monitoring of cost per usage, to prevent stasis in the collection.

The Group recommends that an annual report on metrics of usage is produced, and appropriate changes are made in consultation with the academic community through College Library Committees.

The Group recommends that, from August 2012 that, after the initial resource allocation by the Income and Expenditure Attribution Model, that the funding for and the management of higher value bundles which are of interest in 2 or more Colleges or in 3 or more Schools are

moved to a central library account code. There should be a triennial academic review of these bundles.

9. The Group noted that there is strong professional collaboration, and links to other organisations in the procurement of library resources, which is to the benefit of both the University of Edinburgh and other universities. There are also reciprocal access arrangements which give users access to the resources of other libraries, including the National Library of Scotland.

The Group recommends that the Library continues and increases its leadership role in collaborative activity in procurement of library materials, where these are in the interests of the University of Edinburgh.

The Group recommends closer links be made to the National Library of Scotland, and that the University support reciprocal access arrangements with other libraries.

10. The Group acknowledges the importance of Open Access publishing, which may lead to a different method for scholarly communication over time. This is of particular interest to Research Councils and major charities. At the moment, it is difficult to know how much is spent on Open Access fees in the University, and the Group suggests that this is coordinated. This will lead to greater understanding of the expenditure on Open Access fees. With this understanding it will be possible to challenge publishers when they are charging for the same content through Open Access fees and subscription fees.

The Group recommends that the Finance Office establish an Open Access job code for the payment of all Open Access fees from August 2012.

The Group recommends that the Library works with publishers to understand the multiple routes by which publishers may be paid for the same item, and seeks to reduce this through renegotiation.

The Group recommends pursuing discussions with Research Councils and major charities on library materials and open access fees.