



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
Library

# Collections Strategy





# General Collections Vision

We will deliver quick and effective access to General Collections required for teaching, learning and research, maximising access to online and open content. We will work collaboratively with University colleagues, Library users and others within the sector to provide user-focussed and inclusive collections, services and spaces. We will respond to new resource formats, evolving publishing agreements and the impact of digital transformation to make the best use of available budget, technology, space and staff to provide access to General Collections for all University of Edinburgh Library users.

The General Collections vision and the Collections Strategy are underpinned by the values of the **University of Edinburgh Strategy 2030** which include:

- Our teaching and research is relevant to society and we are diverse, inclusive and accessible to all.
- We foster a welcoming community, where staff, students, alumni and friends feel proud to be part of our University.
- We are a place of transformation and of self-improvement, driven to achieve benefit for individuals, communities, societies and our world.

The Collections Strategy aligns with the **Library & University Collections (L&UC) Strategy 2020-2025**, with the vision that “we are a dynamic, collaborative and ambitious organisation, built around the strengths of our collections and the skills and creativity of our teams. We deliver opportunities and services in support of the University’s exceptional educational and research offering, and to the wider local, national and international community”.

The digital environment is a key component of our teaching, research and professional services. The General Collections vision and Collections Strategy are informed by the University’s emerging Digital Strategy which reflects the need to offer a consistent and joined-up digital experience in the simplest way possible, while being resilient, sustainable and reliable.

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# Context

In an evolving collections landscape there are a number of significant University of Edinburgh, national and international developments and opportunities which have an impact on the management of library collections.

These include:

1. The impact of Digital Transformation, including the availability and cost of new e-formats and publication models, emerging digitisation initiatives and the development of Collections as Data.
2. The transition to Open Research, including the development of Transitional and post-Transitional Journal Agreements, Open Access (OA) monograph publishing approaches and Open Educational Resources (OERs).
3. The need to support a diverse and evolving range of research requirements within the University of Edinburgh.
4. Student requirements for, and expectations of, seamless online discovery of, and access to, Library content.
5. The Curriculum Transformation programme at the University of Edinburgh.
6. University of Edinburgh's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
7. University of Edinburgh's engagement with external local and wider communities.
8. The need to prioritise and balance collections infrastructure (space, budget, staff resource) to best meet the needs of all library users.
9. The growth of collaborative national and international library networks, initiatives and services.
10. Climate change and the development of sustainable collections.

# Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles have been developed to inform the Library's decisions, policies and procedures in the management of General Collections. Guiding Principles are informed by developments and opportunities within the University and the wider sector, and reflect the values of the University of Edinburgh and the L&UC and General Collections vision statements.

## 1. User focussed collections and services

The Library provides and develops collections and services which support evolving teaching, learning and research requirements and meet the needs of all users. The Library provides opportunities for University staff and students to participate in the development of collections.

## 2. Online and print collections

To best meet the needs of all users wherever they are located, the Library prefers online content where this can be effectively provided through content acquisition, subscription, Open Access or digitisation. The Library recognises the ongoing importance of print collections where this supports the provision of diverse content, where required content is only available in print or where access to print resources aligns with disciplinary imperatives.

## 3. Open collections

The Library promotes and supports sustainable alternative publishing models aimed at reforming the current publishing system and making University of Edinburgh research publications freely available. The Library supports the provision of Open Access content, including through OERs and OA publishing initiatives.

## 4. Universal access to information

Aligned with IFLA's Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom the Library adheres to the principles of universal access to information and does not restrict access to materials unless the content is illegal. The presence of an item in the Library's collections is not in any way an endorsement of the views expressed within the work, or a mark of approval of the work.



# Strategic Priorities

In line with Guiding Principles the Library has identified ten General Collections strategic priorities for 2023-2028. These Strategic Priorities will be addressed through a **Collections Strategy Implementation Plan** in order to ensure Library General Collections and services respond to changes in the University and in the sector, and continue to meet evolving user requirements.

Within 2023-2028 the Library will:

1. Provide online Resource Lists and essential teaching resources for all appropriate University of Edinburgh taught courses.
2. Undertake a programme of projects (Collections 2025) to support the Library in making sure Library General Collections meet the needs of users in 2025 and beyond.
3. Increase the provision of online access to General Collections where possible through a review of current e-textbook provision and print collections.
4. Support University of Edinburgh research, teaching and learning through providing information and training on how to access Library resources. Library teams will develop, implement, integrate and promote access to content through on-demand services including Interlibrary Loans, Scan & Deliver and Request a Book.
5. Support the transition to Open Research through active engagement within the UK Library sector to develop and negotiate deals with publishers which meet sector requirements and available budgets on an ongoing basis.
6. Work with other UK libraries to maintain, establish and develop services to ensure access to shared collections in print and online.
7. Investigate the climate impact of General Collections at the University of Edinburgh and in the wider sector in order to identify possible ways to decrease the climate impact of General Collections.
8. Work with University of Edinburgh students to establish and promote collections to support student wellbeing and to increase content diversity within General Collections.
9. Develop a content statement to acknowledge outdated, inappropriate and offensive terminology within collections descriptive metadata, identifying a way for Library users to highlight specific examples to the Library.
10. Update policies and procedures relating to the acquisition and management of General Collections, ensuring all policies and procedures align with the content of the Collections Strategy.



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# Collection Management and Development

The Library makes best use of technology, staff, space and budget to provide access to well-managed, user-focussed, inclusive collections and services. The management of General Collections is led by policies and procedures which reflect the content of the Collections Strategy.

The main purchasing routes to develop General Collections are through the acquisition of teaching resources to reflect reading lists and the acquisition of resources in response to requests from students and University of Edinburgh academic staff working in collaboration with Library teams.

The Library acquires and retains multiple copies of titles only where this supports current or known future teaching or research needs in the University. The Library accepts donated material only where donated items meet the current or known future teaching or research needs in the University, and where Library space and staff resource is available to manage the donation.

Collection and service developments are informed by data analysis, assessment of user requirements, technological advancement and developments within the sector, with an ongoing programme of collection assessment, collaborative collections management, de-duplication and relegation.

Physical General Collections are located at the Main Library, site libraries and University Collections Facility (UCF) according to need, usage and space considerations. Where possible, lowest use General Collections are located in the UCF, with UCF content accessed through scanning and retrieval services.

# Collections Strategy Implementation and Review

The Collections Strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to respond to any significant changes which impact on the Strategy content. Minor updates to the Strategy will be made where appropriate; any major updates will be presented to Library Committee for approval.

The Collections Strategy will inform the development of a **Collections Strategy Implementation Plan** to address strategic priorities and ensure services, policies and procedures are reviewed, developed and updated in line with the content of the Collections Strategy.





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## Find out more

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