



(Draft) Collection Policy for English Language & Literature

For the purposes of this policy statement 'English language and literature' is defined as the study of the language and literature of the English-speaking world of all periods. The statement describes the purpose and scope of Oxford's English collections, the constituencies served and the subjects covered.

1. Overview

OULS's mission is to "maintain and develop access to Oxford's collections as a national and international research resource". The *Vision for 2011* provides the context for this, with details of a needs-based approach to library materials resource allocation, collaborative collection management agreements with other UK research libraries, the selective intake of legal deposit material, the increasing emphasis on electronic library resources including the digitisation of special collections, information skills training for users to enable them to make the best use of collections and the appropriate location of physical collections.

1.1 General coverage of English in OULS

Oxford's collections in English language and literature are exceptionally rich and diverse. The Bodleian's almost unparalleled research collections of printed works, manuscripts and archives are complemented and supplemented by the lending collection held at the English Faculty Library, by related collections in, for example, the Taylor Institution Library (linguistics, Germanic philology) and Area Studies libraries such as the Indian Institute Library and the Vere Harmsworth Library (American studies), and by unique and rare items in many college libraries. The research of scholars from all over the world is supported by this wealth of material, as is the teaching and research of Oxford's Faculty of English Language & Literature, the largest English faculty in the UK. The primary research resource for all readers is the Bodleian, but external readers are also welcome to use the EFL in the vacations and to access its special collections and any unique items at any time.

The Radcliffe Camera (reference) and the EFL (lending) hold general working collections focused primarily on supporting the teaching of English at Oxford; the EFL's primary constituency is the English Faculty, which it was founded to serve in 1914, although more than half of its borrowers are now from outside the Faculty. Material on English Faculty reading lists is purchased (often in duplicate copies) for the EFL and open-shelf access to this material is provided in the Bodleian as far as possible.

SOLO (Search Oxford Libraries Online) is the interface to OLIS (Oxford's online catalogue), OU E-Journals and OxLIP+ (databases). SOLO lists almost all printed monographs and journals held by OULS and college libraries, as well as related audio-visual material such as films, and provides links to most of OULS's electronic resources. Separate catalogues for manuscripts and some special collections can also be accessed via OxLIP+.

1.2 Legal deposit

Despite his low opinion of books in the vernacular and the 'friolite' of literature in particular, Sir Thomas Bodley's agreement in 1610 with the Stationers' Company means that the Bodleian Library's holdings of printed works of English language and literature have become one of its greatest strengths, the legal deposit collections having been reinforced from the 17th century onwards by substantial donations and purchases.

As a library of legal deposit, the Bodleian expects to provide virtually comprehensive coverage of British and Irish publications; this includes not only scholarly publications and the works of canonical authors but also, for example, books and other teaching materials for English at all levels of education and imaginative literature in English of all genres and for every kind of readership.

Much of this material is held on closed access, but can be called to the main reading rooms for English in the Bodleian (as well as other locations), which are:

- Upper Reading Room, Old Bodleian Library (primary texts, journals, bibliographies)
- Lower Camera (S.T. Lee) Reading Room, Radcliffe Camera (mainly critical works geared to the undergraduate syllabus)
- Duke Humfrey's Library (Dept of Special Collections), Old Bodleian Library
- Special Collections Reading Room (Dept of Special Collections), New Bodleian Library (works relating to 20th century literary collections, book history)

Decisions are made by the subject librarian for English on the location of items received by legal deposit; the EFL does not house any legal deposit material. The Copyright Receipt Office in the Bodleian is alerted to any gaps and delays in legal deposit supply.

1.3 Electronic resources

Increasingly, collaborative digitisation projects (e.g. the digitisation of OULS's 19th century print collections) and the purchase of electronic resources provide access via OxLIP+ to a wide range of online catalogues (e.g. ESTC), primary sources (e.g. EEBO, ECCO, Past Masters, Shakespeare Collection, TLS Centenary Archive), newspapers (e.g. Times Digital Archive), bibliographic databases (e.g. MLA Bibliography, Periodicals Index Online), electronic books and journals, reference works (e.g. OED), and web resources (e.g. Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical, Women Writers Online).

Important new resources for English are regularly added to the list of electronic desiderata for the Humanities to be discussed and prioritised by the Committee for Library Provision in English and the Humanities Subject Management Group.

Current policy is to maintain one print copy and one electronic copy of key journals, although certain subject areas may move more quickly than others to e-only. Legal deposit print titles are to be kept in perpetuity. In some cases where the Bodleian's legal deposit print copy does not support electronic access, alternative access will be sought.

Networked electronic resources are preferred to stand-alone CDROMs.

1.4 Formats

Collections for English are in a wide range of formats from printed books and journals to the Bodleian's extensive newspaper and microform collections and the English Faculty Library's audio-visual collections. Special collections relevant to English (see section 4 below) include, for example, manuscripts, drawings, children's books, ballads, ephemera, pamphlets, photographs and physical objects.

1.5 Languages

The Bodleian aims to collect a wide range of scholarly monographs, series and journals in English (published throughout the world), the principal Western European languages and to a lesser extent other European languages. Translations of English literary works into other languages are not normally collected unless accompanied by editorial or other matter which justifies their acquisition as a contribution to the study of the work and/or author; exceptions are made where the Bodleian holds manuscript or other special research material relating a particular author.

The EFL collects almost exclusively English language material, including Old and Middle English, Scots and Anglo-Norman. Secondary literature in other languages is purchased only for the Bodleian and works in English translation are generally not purchased, with the exception of: some critical theorists (e.g. Derrida, Adorno) for which there is heavy demand; writers who have been a major influence on authors writing in English (e.g. Chekhov/Mansfield) or on a particular genre (Petrarch/Renaissance poetry, Ibsen/theatre); and some postcolonial writers translated into English. The Library does, however, continue to acquire material in support of teaching and research in Old Norse-Icelandic to augment its existing collections in this area, and has substantial holdings of works in German (mainly from early bequests). Texts in Latin and Greek are purchased in support of the undergraduate Classics & English syllabus.

1.6 Collection management

Readers of this document are referred to the OULS Collection Management Policy at:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/lib/oxonly/2001/cul01-75.shtml>

which covers all subjects and collections and deals with the location, retention, disposal and transfer of library material. Individual collection policies are developed in accordance with the aims of the overall CM Policy, including reducing unplanned duplication and ensuring that individual items are correctly housed within OULS.

1.7 Funding

The main source of funding is from the PRAC grant to OULS, which is then allocated to subjects largely on the basis of the LMAM (Library Materials Allocation Model). PRAC funding also provides the separate budget for the purchase of rare books in the Bodleian, but Special Collections regularly seeks external funding for major purchases of printed material and MSS.

Both the Bodleian and the EFL are able to draw on trust funds and, in the case of the EFL, English Faculty funds.

2. Teaching collections

The main lending collection for the teaching of English at all levels is held at the English Faculty Library. Extensive use is also made of the Bodleian's reference collections for English, on open shelves in the Lower Camera and the Upper Reading Room, and in the Bodleian stacks. These collections are fully integrated with related research collections.

2.1 Text books

2.1.1 Given the broad sweep of the English undergraduate syllabus with its wide choice of options and the range of subjects studied in taught postgraduate courses, the English Faculty Library aims to collect both primary texts and secondary works as widely as funds allow, starting with titles on Faculty reading lists. Purchasing takes into account developments in the subject area and new teaching initiatives and courses.

Earlier editions of text books in certain subject areas (e.g. reference works, critical theory, linguistics) are withdrawn from stock in the EFL when the latest edition is acquired.

Background material in related cultural, historical and area studies is acquired sparingly, since readers are expected to find this in other relevant OULS libraries; subject librarians liaise with regard to its acquisition and location.

2.1.2 In the Bodleian Library, legal deposit and purchased titles in the subject areas outlined in section 5 are located in the appropriate reading rooms, with the main focus on providing access in the Lower Camera to (hardback copies, where possible, of) critical works geared to the undergraduate syllabus.

Audio-visual materials are not generally purchased for the Bodleian, and neither the Bodleian nor the English Faculty Library purchases material dealing with English language teaching (including ESOL).

Subject librarians liaise on the purchase and location of material for inter-disciplinary areas such as American studies, linguistics, postcolonial literature and courses such as the Masters courses in Women's Studies and Comparative Philology.

2.2 Journal articles

Almost all journal articles recommended on undergraduate and postgraduate English reading lists will be found either in print in an OULS library or electronically via OU E-Journals. Photocopies of individual articles not held in Oxford would normally be made available through the Bodleian's inter-library loan service or via WebLearn with the appropriate permissions.

2.3 Levels of provision

As far as possible, at least one copy of each title on an English Faculty reading list is made available in both the Bodleian (reference) and the EFL (lending). N.B. This does not apply to titles which may already or would more appropriately be housed in another OULS library.

In addition, given the high student numbers, one or more duplicate copies of titles expected, or known, to be in heavy demand are purchased for the EFL; second

copies are normally made reference-use only in order to help ensure their availability. Otherwise funding does not permit the acquisition of multiple copies; it is expected that college libraries will supply these and to facilitate this college librarians are kept informed about titles likely to be in demand through accessions lists and OLIS reports such as “hotlists” and numbers of reservations.

3. Research collections

The main research collections for English are held in the Bodleian Library, although the strength of the English Faculty Library’s holdings, built up over almost a century, satisfies some of the Faculty’s immediate needs.

3.1 Research books

The Curators of the University Libraries are charged with ensuring that ‘provision is made for the University’s library and information requirements for teaching and research’ and that ‘the University’s major research libraries [...] are maintained as a national and international scholarly resource’. In the furtherance of these aims, the Bodleian Library collects as broadly as possible in the field of English language and literature in support of both the local and the wider scholarly community. Scholarly editions of primary texts, bibliographies and important critical works, whether purchased or received by legal deposit, are located on open shelves in the Upper Reading Room as space permits.

Bodleian acquisitions are duplicated as appropriate in the EFL in order to provide a lending copy in OULS. Price may be a consideration here, but the EFL continues to be fortunate in having access to substantial Faculty trust funds, particularly in support of purchases related to the Faculty’s known research interests.
(<http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/faculty/list.htm>).

3.2 Monograph series and standing orders

The Bodleian Library has standing orders for a broad range of monograph series covering both primary and secondary material and published in both the UK and overseas, although there are considerably fewer standing orders for English than for some other Humanities subject areas such as History and Theology. Major series of printed primary sources are generally held on open shelves in the Upper Reading Room.

3.3 Journals

Current policy is to maintain one print copy and one electronic copy of key journals, although certain subject areas may move more quickly than others to e-only. Legal deposit print titles are to be kept in perpetuity. In some cases where the Bodleian’s legal deposit print copy does not support electronic access, alternative access will be sought.

In addition to its historic holdings and titles received via legal deposit, the Bodleian Library also subscribes to many other key titles for English. The EFL’s holdings of both current and older 18th and 19th century titles are almost all duplicates of Bodleian holdings, but there are a few unique titles (e.g. Staffrider). No retrospective acquisition to fill gaps in the EFL’s holdings is undertaken.

It is expected that further de-duplication exercises (for English this would normally involve the cancellation of print subscriptions in the EFL which are duplicates of Bodleian holdings and available electronically) will be undertaken in the future. Reshelving statistics collected in the EFL are used to identify the most heavily used titles. Decisions are taken in consultation with the English Faculty on the location of core titles. For example, Bodleian copies of journals cancelled in the EFL would normally be moved to open shelves in the Upper Reading Room if not already there.

New subscriptions (normally print+electronic) are acquired mainly by recommendation from academic staff in the English Faculty.

3.4 Other

Approval plans are currently not generally used, except for Hogarth Representations' approval plan for African literature (not North African countries or South Africa).

4. Special collections

OULS's special collections and rare printed books attract English scholars from all corners of the world and are a large part of the reason why students and academics are eager to study and work in Oxford. In the interests of more effective provision, OULS actively collaborates with other institutions on, for example, digitisation and retrospective cataloguing projects such as EEBO, the RSLP 19th Century Pamphlets project and EGIL, the Electronic Gateway for Icelandic Literature, and digital surrogates are promoted as part of information skills training.

4.1 Special collections in the Bodleian are too numerous to mention, but those relevant to English include manuscript collections ranging from Anglo-Saxon times to the Abinger Papers (Shelley MSS) and Tolkien's original MSS and drawings, Broadside Ballads, John Nichols' London newspapers (1672-1737), the Opie Collection of Children's Literature and the John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera. [\[Special Collections to expand\]](#)

4.2 The EFL's holdings are limited but largely unique:

the Wilfred Owen Collection (including Owen's personal library together with MSS, family photographs and objects such as a lock of Owen's baby hair and the toy boat made for him by his father);

collections of printed books relating to Old Norse/Icelandic (the York Powell Collection, the W.P Ker Collection and the Turville-Petre Collection). The York Powell and W.P. Ker collections are on permanent loan from Christ Church and All Souls respectively;

the Napier Pamphlets, which were acquired in 1916 on the death of Prof A.S. Napier and which include many scarce late nineteenth and early twentieth century academic dissertations on Old and Middle English philology;

archives, including the papers of A.S. Napier, E.H.W. Meyerstein, Herbert Davis and Percy Simpson.

4.3 The Bodleian in particular but also the EFL and many college libraries have substantial holdings of rare and antiquarian material, most of which is listed on OLIS, the English Short Title Catalogue and in printed catalogues.

The Bodleian Library actively acquires special collections and rare printed books, often applying for grants to purchase particularly important collections. The EFL, however, no longer adds to its rare book stock (approximately 9000 items) but does actively acquire current works on war poetry and Old Icelandic, for example, which are relevant to its special collections.

A separate collection management policy for special collections in OULS will be prepared to complement statements on provision for individual subjects. It is anticipated that, as soon as is practicable, most OULS special collections will be located in a redesigned New Bodleian Library. The approval of the English Faculty Board would be sought for the transfer of the EFL's collections.

5. Subject coverage of selected purchased material

In addition to the legal deposit intake and general works, OULS will purchase non-deposited material in the following specific subject areas:

reference works such as bibliographies, dictionaries and encyclopedias;

English language and linguistics, including the history of the language, lexicography, varieties of English, language and gender, sociolinguistics, stylistics, phonology, name studies (see also the Collection Policy for Linguistics);

editions of and works about all major English-language authors as well as less well-known and currently publishing authors of recognised literary quality;

general critical works on all literary genres and periods;

works on Scots language and literature of all periods;

editions of other literatures in English/postcolonial literature and criticism;

Old Norse-Icelandic language and literature (but not modern Icelandic or other Scandinavian languages and literature);

children's literature;

types of writing (e.g. life writing, letters, journalism, religious, scientific);

critical history and theory;

intellectual and cultural background to literature;

manuscript studies and palaeography;

bibliography and textual criticism;

book history, printing, and publishing, including the press and other media;

works on computing in the Humanities;

works on English as an academic subject;

audio-visual collections mainly in support of teaching on Shakespeare and poetry of all periods. (See also the Film Studies Collection Policy.)

6. Names of those responsible for the collections:

Sue Usher, OULS English Librarian	susan.usher@ouls.ox.ac.uk (01865) (2)71051
Rare Books Clive Hurst, Head of Rare Books Special Collections, Bodleian Library	clive.hurst@bodley.ox.ac.uk 01865 (2)77023
History of the Book Alan Coates, Rare Books Special Collections, Bodleian Library	aec@bodley.ox.ac.uk 01865 (2)77072
Manuscripts Martin Kauffmann (Medieval MSS) Special Collections, Bodleian Library Mike Webb (Early modern MSS) Special Collections, Bodleian Library Helen Langley (Modern MSS) Special Collections, Bodleian Library Judith Priestman (Modern Literary MSS) Special Collections, Bodleian Library	mrk@bodley.ox.ac.uk 01865 (2)77155 mnw@bodley.ox.ac.uk 01865 (2)77164 hml@bodley.ox.ac.uk 01865 (2)77048 jap@bodley.ox.ac.uk (01865) (2)77048
John Johnson Collection Julie Anne Lambert Special Collections, Bodleian Library	jal@bodley.ox.ac.uk 01865 (2)77047

7. Bibliography

Walker, Gregory, Mary Clapinson, and Lesley Forbes, eds. The Bodleian Library: a subject guide to the collections. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2004

Morgan, Paul. Oxford libraries outside the Bodleian: a guide. 2nd ed. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1980

Location register of twentieth-century English literary manuscripts and letters 2 vols. London: The British Library, 1988