

Provision of research materials for UG & PG Theses

Students in Oxford are fortunate to have access locally to a vast range of primary and secondary material for research-type work. Every year the History Librarian and other colleagues work together with the Faculty in informing both undergraduate and graduate students about the rich and varied archives held in Oxford. Many do indeed use this opportunity. However, many decide to work on very specific topics for which Oxford may not have the research collections needed. Therefore a policy is needed to regulate the purchases of research materials for individual UG and PG theses. On the one hand, library materials budgets are stretched and large purchase items need to be budgeted for; on the other hand, a student's experience is enriched by exploring sources and topics more widely or making use of particular knowledge and interests. To avoid any confusion and better manage expectations, it needs to be clearly stated what Bodleian Libraries can and cannot do to support the students' work.

Generally speaking, the History Librarian, in liaison with other Bodleian Libraries' colleagues, will aim to secure all library materials required for the research and writing of an undergraduate or graduate thesis. However, due to financial restraints, the following criteria will be applied to requests for purchases of British, Western European and US History materials (primary and secondary):

1. Requests to purchase materials up to the value of £100 will normally be granted. The material has to fall within the scope of the History Collection Development Policies. Requests from undergraduates have to be supported in writing by the tutor.
2. Requests to purchase materials up to the value of £500 will have to be supported in writing by the tutor, not be available at another library reasonably easily accessible and have to fall within the scope of the History Collection Development Policies.
3. Requests for purchases above £500 will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. Should it not be possible or reasonable to purchase materials, then the History Librarian will liaise with Bodleian Libraries' InterLibrary Loans to help the student secure access from another library. Currently the cost of each ILL request is heavily subsidised. It is expected that the student pays the ILL charge per request¹. It should be noted that the ILL service is under reviewed with the aim of improving it.
5. Should the geographical coverage of the material fall outside British, Western European and US history, the History Librarian will advise the student of the most appropriate librarian/archivist in Bodleian Libraries.

Students and tutors will be encouraged to identify library needs early on and contact the History Librarian for further discussion and advice.

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¹ £5 (2014-15) - <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/using/ill/prices>