



LEE LIBRARY  
WOLFSON COLLEGE

## Collection Development Policy

### *Context*

The aim of this Collection Development Policy is to explain the Library's role as an information resource in its own right and in relation to library provision elsewhere in the University, and to outline the means by which this role is fulfilled. The document serves as a framework for maintaining and developing the existing collections, and for determining future priorities. It is published on the Lee Library webpages so as to provide a clear point of reference for all existing and potential Wolfson members, and thus help manage expectations of the College's library resources.<sup>1</sup>

The Library's previous Collection Development Policy was drawn up in November 2001, and a number of developments in College since then have prompted the current major revision.<sup>2</sup> The Library Working Group and the Library Users' Committee have both previously acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining an equivalent level of provision in all subject areas, and particularly in those subjects for which students are admitted irregularly. The present Policy seeks to describe in general terms how subject coverage is managed. It is unusual for the Collection Development Policy of a college library to specify particular subject strengths, but, given the nature of Wolfson's student population, it will be helpful for staff, current students and potential applicants if the Lee Library collections are developed along clearly focused lines. However, it must be stressed that these are intended to be general guidelines, and that they must be interpreted flexibly as necessary. Recommendations from students will still be encouraged and demand for individual subjects regularly reviewed.

### **Brief statement of purpose**

The Lee Library collections are maintained to support Wolfson students reading for taught courses primarily at undergraduate level, and to a lesser extent at taught graduate level. The terms of use of the Library by the different categories of College member are defined separately in the Library Access Policy, but it should be noted here that, while all groups are welcome to use the Reading Room as a place to work, no one group should expect the Lee Library to satisfy all their information needs. Rather, the Library's role is to complement the coverage provided elsewhere in the University.

### **Subject coverage**

It is not practical for the Lee Library to cover the full range of subjects taught at Tripos level in the University, nor to cater for all subjects to the same degree. The Library budget is not subdivided by subject, and money is spent to help build up and develop particular areas as the need arises. The following criteria are used as a guide to determining priorities:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/library>

<sup>2</sup> The previous Collection Development Policy is available on request from the Librarian, but a more up-to-date statement of the Library's purchasing policies is available via the College website (<http://www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/library>); see especially the page labelled 'Collections'.

- Subjects in which Wolfson regularly admits mature and affiliated undergraduates
- Subjects in which Wolfson regularly admits students for taught graduate courses whose information needs overlap with those of undergraduates
- Subjects for which resources at departmental level are in high demand
- Subjects for which dedicated funding is available (by donation)

Coverage is best for those subjects in which the range of optional papers in Parts I and II of the Tripos is limited. Thus, most of the core texts required for the compulsory papers and a number of the most popular optional papers are available in the following subjects: Law, Economics, Medicine, Natural Sciences (Biological) and Veterinary Medicine. Students reading for the LL.M. and M.Phil. in Economics, Land Economy and Real Estate Finance will also find that their basic needs are catered for, but must expect to use departmental and faculty libraries and [eresources@cambridge](mailto:eresources@cambridge) for access to specialist monographs and journal literature.

Overall coverage in subjects where a higher proportion of optional papers are offered is less comprehensive, notably in some of the arts and humanities, but efforts are made to ensure that up-to-date copies of key texts for popular papers in Parts I and II are available in English, History, PPSIS, Philosophy and Land Economy. A selection of basic methodological texts for the social sciences is maintained that is useful at both undergraduate and taught graduate level.

The infrequency of admissions to Wolfson at undergraduate level means that the Lee Library cannot undertake to provide comprehensive coverage for either Part I or Part II in the following subjects: History of Art, Anglo Saxon Norse and Celtic, Archaeology & Anthropology, Classics, Education, Geography, MML, Music, Oriental Studies, Computer Science, and Theology & Religious Studies. The material held in these areas is best described as for general interest, and will not have been selected for its relevance to the current curriculum, though some may be pertinent.

### **General note about Undergraduate and Taught Graduate coverage**

Books required for a Part II course are generally not considered to be of lower priority than books for Part I, providing they are not very specialised, as it is possible that a title may be of wider benefit to taught graduates (especially related MPhils) and research students in College. The degree of specialism, and the case for acquiring a copy for the Lee Library will be determined by the Librarian, supported by advice from the relevant Director of Studies.

The Lee Library systematically acquires material for relatively few MPhil courses (though much of its subject coverage in some areas will be relevant, as suggested above), but the courses best served at present are those administered by the faculties and departments of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, including Law (LLM), Economics, Land Economy, International Relations and PPSIS.

### **Methods of selection**

Lists of recommended titles for the forthcoming academic year are distributed by a number of departmental and faculty libraries during the summer, and these are checked against the catalogue, and may be passed to the relevant Director of Studies for Wolfson who is asked to highlight the priorities for purchase. Most textbooks are updated as a matter of course when the Librarian becomes aware of a new edition, but advice may be sought from the relevant Director of Studies if the title appears not to be in regular use. Reading lists for subjects that are not distributed to libraries, and for certain popular MPhil courses are sought from departmental and faculty websites, and by liaison with other library staff, as appropriate.

Suggestions for purchase from students are encouraged, and accepted by email, the on-line form available on the College Website, or via a pre-printed form available in the Library.

### **Number of copies**

Multiple copies of the most popular textbooks in Law (typically 2), Economics (typically 2 or 3), Medicine (typically 3) are acquired as demand requires, and one copy always kept in the Library for reference use only. In general, however, multiple copies are restricted in favour of greater breadth of coverage overall.

### **Additional material – reference, study skills**

Non subject-specific reference works, including dictionaries and encyclopaedias are acquired when current holdings need updating and as the budget allows. Priority is nevertheless given to subject based resources, since the University Library's coverage of open-access reference material is very extensive, and is now complemented by an expanding collection of electronic resources, most of which are also available off-campus.

A small collection of study skills literature is maintained, of general and some discipline-specific interest. This is supplemented and updated as necessary.

### **Collection profile as a whole**

This policy describes *current* acquisitions practice. Different criteria applied in the past, so that the Library contains some material that does not readily fit into categories, and is retained because it may be useful for research purposes. The online catalogue can easily be searched to find out if a particular book is held.

### **Donations**

Donations of books are accepted if they meet the criteria applied to the purchase of new material, but the donor is advised that the Library does not guarantee to retain any material permanently, and that the Librarian reserves the right to dispose of it in the most appropriate manner. Wherever possible, a label is attached to books to acknowledge the donation, and a list of book donors is maintained for publication in the annual college magazine.

In general, prospective donors are encouraged to contact the Librarian in advance to signal their wish to donate material to the Library. Wherever possible, potential donors are asked to send a list of the titles on offer to enable staff to select those most appropriate for the collection.

Donation is the sole source of recreational material, including contemporary fiction and travel, which is accepted as space allows. This material is often donated anonymously, and thus is seldom acknowledged.

### **Electronic resources**

The Library does not undertake to purchase any networked information resources (including journals) independently, for reasons of cost and the burden of administration. All College members *in statu pupillari* may make use of the electronic resources provided by the University Library, many of which are available with a Raven password from anywhere in the world. Wolfson contributes financially to the ebooks@cambridge project and to the University's Journals Coordination Scheme, and is keen to support such collaborative initiatives wherever possible.

## Suppliers

Most new book purchases are made through the Heffers main bookshop in central Cambridge. These attract a good discount, plastic coating of paperbacks for a nominal charge, and free speedy delivery. Alternative specialist suppliers may occasionally be used with good reason. Out of print material is purchased online via *Amazon*, *Abebooks*, or similar sites, as necessary, using the Lee Library credit card.

## Disposals

The Librarian regularly reviews stock in popular sections and weeds out superseded editions as necessary. Superseded editions are **always** replaced in Law, and the withdrawn editions **cannot** be sold to students. The immediately previous edition is generally kept in Medicine and Economics, as space allows, but older editions are withdrawn. Notice of new editions in popular subjects (including Law, Medicine, Economics and Science) is received monthly by email from Heffers, reading lists are checked when issued, and older material is also discovered by browsing sections during the vacations.

Opportunities for consultation with Directors of Studies over stock refreshment are sought wherever possible (*e.g.* shelf lists are distributed by email, visits are encouraged), but a pro-active approach by Library staff is usually necessary to ensure that subject collections are kept up to date.

Booksales in aid of Library funds are occasionally held in College (typically twice a year), using unwanted donations and withdrawn stock. Superseded editions are generally not included to avoid confusion with current version. Prices are kept low in the interests of selling as much stock as possible.

Books not sold in a College booksale, or otherwise of greater value than could be realised this way, are offered to bookdealers, by invitation. Secondhand bookdealers are increasingly selective about the stock they will take, as the margins for online book selling are relatively small, but the aim is to establish good relationships with sympathetic dealers in the interests of securing the best price for the College.

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