

Collaborative print retention: information for Scotland

The Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL), the National Library of Scotland and the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) have collaborated to develop and now revise this policy which regards the print collections of libraries in Scotland.

Rationale

The aim of the print retention policy is to ensure that researchers, in the broadest sense, continue to have access to print materials in Scotland. Scottish libraries are working in collaboration to maintain access to print and digital material for the people of Scotland. Scottish libraries collaborate on maintaining access to print content through the access policies agreed by SCURL, SLIC and the National Library of Scotland, and also collaborate in UK print projects. Although the policy is likely to be of most relevance to Higher Education libraries, it is recognised that significant research materials are held in the wider Scottish library community.

Political devolution has made library and information services more aware of issues around the retention of a "Scottish copy" for the future. There has always been a distinct cultural identity, manifest in the separate education and legal systems.

The policy offers libraries a recognised mechanism to manage the disposal of significant material. This broader, more inclusive, approach will sit alongside local collection policies which have been and are dependent on the mission, teaching and research of the parent institutions.

The print retention policy is presented with the acknowledgement of on-going opportunities for digitisation where institutions hold rare items or significant collections. It is proposed that attention should be given to an extension of the policy to non-print materials.

Retaining and preserving the Scottish print collection

Given the above Scottish libraries agree to make the following Commitment:-

A copy should be retained within Scotland of:-

1. Scottish material (either material published in Scotland, or published outside Scotland by Scots, or about Scots, or relating to Scotland, to any aspect of Scottish life and culture, or to individual Scots). Such material represents the intellectual output and the collective national memory of Scotland.

2. Unique or rare items held in Scottish libraries should be retained for communal access and benefit. Rare to be defined

The print retention policy would be applied when an institution's own collections management procedures resulted in a risk that an item meeting the above criteria may no longer be retained within Scotland.

Guidelines for the workflow supporting this policy

1. Items identified for withdrawal from a holding library, where the items are the last copy in Scotland, should be offered to the Scottish community for relevance elsewhere.
2. If the items remain unclaimed, they should be offered to the National Library of Scotland.
3. Should the National Library of Scotland not be able, or wish, to add the items to its collection then the holding library should accept responsibility to retain the items on behalf of the wider Scottish community.

The SCURL Task and Finish Group have made the following recommendations, which should be pursued through a programme spanning three years:

1. Where ebooks are replacing the development and retention of print books, appropriate means of guaranteeing in perpetuity access should be established, by lobbying publishers with the support of other national bodies (e.g. CLPS, SCNU and RLUK.)
2. The prioritisation of digitisation of rare and unique collections should be co-ordinated across the Scottish group to improve access to such material for the national and international community.
3. Items retained under the Scottish Copy Policy should be identifiable in local and shared discovery systems, through use of the 583 field. A consistent wording should be established to allow the easy identification of this "Scottish collection" and digitisation status.
4. The Policy acknowledges on-going developments at a UK-wide level, regarding print monographs and journals. The Policy will be updated in line with such developments.
5. A working group is set up to co-ordinate local digitisation programmes and potential disposals.
6. A distribution tool should be created to ensure remaining copies cover best geographic subject spread.
7. When a copy is unique in Scotland consideration should be taken to agree that it is placed in closed access.

This Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and agreed by the :-

Chair of SCURL

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Chief Executive Officer of SLIC

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Librarian of the National Library of Scotland

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In my capacity as Chair/Chief Executive Officer/Librarian of

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I am signing this Memorandum of Understanding and thereby agreeing to ensure, as far as possible, that this policy will be incorporated into the internal collection management procedures within my organisation.

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