**Collection Management Policy for History**

**1. A detailed description of the collection**

**1.1 Purpose** **and description**

The purpose of the collection is to support teaching and research undertaken at UCL, primarily but not exclusively by the History Department.

**1.2 Readership & access**

**1.2.1.** The main readership of the History collection is UCL students (undergraduate and postgraduate) and UCL staff. There are also a significant number of affiliate students and intercollegiate students taking History courses taught at UCL.

**1.2.2.** Academic staff and researchers from other institutions are welcome to make use of the collection at any time.

**1.2.3.** Due to the high demands placed on the collection, access by students from other institutions is restricted. University of London students are given reference access (temporary variations to normal access policy apply April-June) but those from other universities are excluded except during UCL vacation periods.

**1.3 Description & holdings**

**1.3.1** The open access collection for History, excluding Ancient History, American History, Latin American and London History (see separate policies), contain some 27,000 volumes.

**1.3.2.1** The collection supports the undergraduate and postgraduate teaching carried out by the Department of History. It also supports the interests of academic staff and research postgraduates, as well as the research elements of the taught courses.

**1.3.2.2** The sequence consists of approximately 116 current print subscriptions. The Library also subscribes to a large number of electronic journal titles in History. In addition, about 50 current serials received by the Royal Historical Society are shelved in the History Series room.

**1.3.2.3** The Library provides access to the major indexing & abstracting databases in history, including the Bibliography of British and Irish History, Historical Abstracts and International Medieval Bibliography. A wide range of additional titles includes: Cambridge Histories Online, Cecil Papers, Early English Books Online, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, MIRABILE, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Slavery and Anti-Slavery: Part 3, State Papers Online and The Times Digital Archive.

**1.3.3** The History Library is to be found on the 2nd floor of the Main Library in the Wilkins building. It contains the collections on medieval and modern history

**1.3.4** There is also a substantial amount of less well-used material held in Store, including older journal volumes. Such material is usually available for next-day consultation on request.

**1.3.5** The History collection contains a substantial number of pre-1850 titles, held in Special Collections. Perhaps the most important of the printed primary sources is a set of British Parliamentary Papers of the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries, together with an almost complete set of the Parliamentary Debates and Journals of the House of Commons. (Journals of the House of Lords are held only to 1850). Other related special collections include the library of Rudolf Olden, relevant to interwar German history, and a currently uncatalogued collection particularly focused on Allied propaganda during the First World War. Bound pamphlet collections include the Halifax Tracts (covering 1559-1749) and Lansdowne Tracts (1679-1776). The collection of early nineteenth century tracts assembled by the radical politician Joseph Hume amounts to over 5,000 items.

**1.3.6 Relationships with other collections within UCL**

History clearly has a particularly close relationship with Special Collections, both because a significant part of the History collection is held there and because of historians’ interest in the manuscript material.

History of Science is a separate collection; the history of art forms a principal part of the Art collection. Most books on medical history are in the medical sciences libraries. while the history of economic theory is covered by Economics. Jewish history is largely contained in the Hebrew collections. The Scandinavian Studies library includes in its Nordic History section virtually all material in UCL Library on the history of that area. SSEES is now the principal UCL library for Russia and Eastern Europe, although there are significant holdings of material in English on this region in the History collection.

In a few instances there is an overlap with other collections. Guides to the location and use of primary source material are found in both Archives (and Palaeography) and History. Byzantine history is covered by both the general History collection and Ancient History. Similarly, material on Celtic history is found in both History and Celtic. Like the main History collection, SSEES has substantial holdings on German and central European history.

Much related material is held by Geography (for instance historical geography), Anthropology (which includes some social history), and Architecture and Town Planning (for instance on the history of housing). Some historical material is contained in the various language and literature collections, particularly Italian and Dutch. Material on politics and the history of political thought is partly in History and partly in Philosophy, with some in other collections such as Anthropology, Law, Public Policy and Town Planning. A separate collection of Politics Periodicals has been established by transferring titles from a number of different sections of the Library.

**1.3.7 Relationship with other collections outside UCL**

There are no formal agreements with other institutions. The acquisition of some material is in practice left to other nearby libraries to which our readers have access. Indeed, the Senate House Library is greatly valued by members of the History Department. The focus of the History collection there is similar to that at UCL, and it is extensively used to supplement our own holdings. Some special collections there are particularly important for historians, such as Palaeography or the Goldsmiths’ Library of early works relating to economic history. The Official Publications and Map libraries there are recognized as the nearest comprehensive collections for UCL users.

Provision of published primary source material is regarded as essentially the responsibility of the Institute of Historical Research, accessible to postgraduates and members of staff. Some undergraduate teaching takes place at other institutions, and in such cases UCL students are granted borrowing rights. With developing collections in African and Asian history SOAS Library is of great use, and similarly the Institute of Commonwealth Studies for material on Canada or Australasia. Readers will frequently be advised to use a wide range of other collections in London, ranging from the BL through the various libraries of the University to specialist libraries of government departments or other institutions.

**2. Acquisition**

**2.1 Responsibility for selection**

Selection of materials is undertaken by the subject librarian for History within the framework of the Collection Management Policy. There is also a close liaison with the Departmental Library Representative and other members of the academic department. Recommendations are always welcomed from staff and students. Final responsibility for collection management lies with the Director of Library Services.

* 1. **Subjects collected**

Books and periodicals are bought primarily to support the teaching programme of the History Department, including support for the requirements in this connection not only of students but also of academic staff. An attempt is made to maintain consistent coverage of all periods and fields of British and European history, although the emphasis will vary from time to time depending on the interests of members of staff and the special subjects offered. Eastern Europe is covered in less depth than other parts of the continent because of the availability of SSEES Library. Some material of general interest is bought relating to other parts of the world, increasingly relating to China, India and Africa.

**2.3 Priorities**

Priority is given to acquiring all materials necessary to support the undergraduate and postgraduate courses. If funds allow material is acquired to support the research interests of the Department and maintain the existing strengths in the collection.

* 1. **Level**

Material is collected at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level. Research level material is collected as funds allow and in collaboration with academic members of staff.

* 1. **Language**

Material is collected primarily in English, but important works in other West European languages may also be collected.

* 1. **Format & medium**

Material is still chiefly collected in print format but where appropriate - e.g. to support the requirements of a popular reading list - items in electronic format will be purchased if available. The preferred format for journals is now electronic where possible.

* 1. **Collaborative collecting agreements with other libraries**

There are no formal agreements with other institutions. The acquisition of some material is in practice left to other nearby libraries to which our readers have access, in particular the Senate House Library and the Institute of Historical Research, as described in section 1.5 above.

* 1. **Multiple copies**

Multiple copies of core texts and other books marked as essential on reading lists will be acquired using the dedicated book fund and according to the formula detailed in the generic Collection Management Policy. If possible, items in electronic format will be purchased to increase availability of material

* 1. **Donations**

Donations will be accepted for the History collections subject to the criteria outlined in the Library Services Donations Policy.

**2.10 Exchange & deposit arrangements**

None in place

**2.11 Material not collected**

Except in certain circumstances, material of a non-academic level is not purchased

**3 Retention and preservation policies**

* 1. **Periodic review of the printed collection**

The open access History collections will be reviewed annually for decisions on retention, relegation to store and disposal. These decisions are the responsibility of the Subject Librarian for History, although the advice of members of relevant UCL Departments may from time to time be sought.

* 1. **Open access material**

Newly acquired items and items of high or medium use will usually be given space on the open shelves. Priority is given to items needed for teaching purposes. In general, material is retained on the open shelves according to a number of criteria including usage, language, and date of publication. Important series will be maintained together on the open shelves.

* 1. **Relegation**

Any material may be relegated to store at the discretion of the subject librarian. Low use material will be relegated to store where necessary to accommodate more frequently used material on the open shelves.

* 1. **Retention and disposal**

Superseded editions of undergraduate textbooks are disposed of. (Earlier editions of current history textbooks may be retained on the open shelves while their content is still relevant and while there is demand for additional copies.) Other material will be retained unless it is judged to be of little value to future scholarship, in which case it will be disposed of. Research-level collections will be retained. Where material is relegated to Store only one copy will be retained; any additional copies will be disposed of.

* 1. **Preservation**

The Library’s collections are preserved according to the principles set down in the Preservation Policy, accessible on the web with all public policy statements from Library Services. The preservation of digital materials is dealt with by the Digital Curation Strategy.

**This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Subject Librarian, in consultation with the History Department Library Committee.**

Kieron Jones

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