**Collection Management Policy: Physics & Astronomy**

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

* 1. **Purpose and description**

The main purpose of the Physics & Astronomy collection is to support the teaching and research of UCL’s Departments of Physics and Astronomy, Space & Climate Physics, and Medical Physics and Bioengineering. The Physics collection also accommodates relevant materials in support of the teaching and research of other UCL Departments, notably the Departments of Mathematics, Earth Sciences, Chemistry, and Electronic and Electrical Engineering.

* + 1. **UCL departments covered by the collection**
* **Astrophysics** (i.e., massive stars, star formation, interstellar and circumsteller processes, astrochemistry, cosmology, galaxy formation and evolution, extra-solar planets, atmospheric physics and instrumentation).
* **Atomic, Molecular, Optical and positron Physics (AMOPP)** (i.e.,physics of molecules and quantum systems, quantum information, ultracold atoms and molecules, ultrafast laser spectroscopy and strong laser interactions, biological physics and. optical tweezers, positrons and positronium interactions with matter).
* **Biological Physics (BioP)** (i.e., physical methods to image, probe and manipulate biological materials from nanosecond to millisecond timescales and from molecules to cells, new magnetic materials with biomedical applications, understanding the mechanics of hearing and cell-signalling pathways initiated by receptor-ligand interactions as well as energy and charge transfer in photsynthetic membranes)
* **Condensed Matter and material Physics (CMMP)**(i.e.,quantum computing, organic electronics, superconductivity, the physics of the Earth's deep interior, biomagnetism, nanoscale imaging).
* **High Energy Physics (HEP)** (i.e., looks at at extremely small sizes, or equivalently at extremely high energies. Research focuses on theory/phenomenology, detector, software and accelerator R&D and analysis of data from the LHC, dark matter and neutrino experiments).
  1. **Readership and access** 
     1. **UCL**

The main readership of the Physics & Astronomy collection is UCL students (undergraduate and postgraduate) and UCL staff.

* + 1. **External readership**

Due to the demands placed on the collection, access by students from other institutions is restricted. University of London students are given reference access but those from other universities are excluded except during UCL vacation periods. Academic staff and researchers from other institutions are welcome to make use of the collection at any time. The collection is also used by members of three learned Societies affiliated to UCL Library Services: the Royal Statistical Society, the London Mathematical Society, and the Geologists' Association.

* 1. **Description and holdings**

The Physics and Astronomy collection covers all areas of Physics and Astronomy, and has strong historic coverage.

* + 1. **Monographs**

The open access book collection consists of approximately 6,500 print volumes. The books serve in the main to support teaching and research activity in the Department of Physics & Astronomy, Space & Climate Physics and Medical Physics and Bioengineering. The collection is shelved in the Science Library.

* + 1. **Periodicals**

The print journals collection consists of approximately 43 current print titles. Most recent volumes are housed in the Science Library as part of the Physical Sciences Periodicals collection, which integrates Library Services’ print holdings in chemistry, physics, astronomy, space science and science and technology studies. Older volumes of core titles are shelved on the ground floor of the Science Library. The library also provides access to approximately 1978 electronic journal titles in of Physics & Astronomy for the benefit of UCL staff and students.

* + 1. **Databases, indexes, etc.**

Library Services has on-line subscriptions to INSPEC, EI Compendex , SCOPUS and Web of Knowledge (i.e., Web of Science) . The Library maintains a print subscription to Astronomy and Astrophysics Abstracts.

* + 1. **Current location**

The Physics & Astronomy book collection and the most recent volumes of these Periodicals collection are housed in the Science Library.

* + 1. **Material held off site**

In addition to the open access collection, a considerable number of Physics & Astronomy books and journals are kept in off-site storage: these are available for consultation by readers on a next-day basis.

* + 1. **Special collections**

UCL Library holds a number of special collections relating to Physics & Astronomy . The Graves Library is of especial relevance: this extensive collection of early books, pamphlets and manuscripts contains many notable famous works, including first editions of the works of Newton, Kepler, Galileo and Copernicus, among others. It also includes important runs of early periodicals. A small amount of unpublished material is held, including a collection of letters to Sir Oliver Lodge and the correspondence and publications of Sir Harrie Massey

* + 1. **Relationship to other collections in UCL**

Useful material relating to Physics may also be found in the Mathematics, Computer Science and Chemistry collections. The Engineering collection holds many works relevant to applied physics, and works on bioengineering are shelved here. Secondary material on the history of physics and astronomy, and material on the philosophy of the physical sciences, is housed in the History of Science collection.

* + 1. **Relationship to collections outside UCL**

Collections at the British Library at St Pancras are available to members of the public with a valid research need. The collection is open to staff, research and taught course students. Taught course students may be asked to provide details of the materials they wish to consult.

**Section 2 Acquisition**

**2.1. Responsibility for selection**

The day-to-day selection of materials for the Physics & Astronomy collection is the responsibility of the Library’s Subject Librarian for Physics & Astronomy. Selection will be carried out in conjunction with the Departmental Library Representative for the Departments of Physics & Astronomy, Space & Climate Physics and Medical Physics and Bioengineering. Ultimate responsibility for collection management rests with the Director of Library Services.

* 1. **Subjects collected** 
     1. **Books**

Library Services collects books in all areas of physics, astronomy, space science and medical physics. Books are collected in support of both teaching and research.

* + 1. **Journals**

The Physics & Astronomy journal collection is primarily for research and education for undergraduate and postgraduate scientific research. Currently, there are approx. 1185 e-journals. These areas may broadly be characterised as follows:

* Astronomy and astrophysics
* Atmospheric physics
* Climate physics
* Detector physics
* Solar and stellar physics
* Planetary and plasma physics
* All areas of medical physics and bioengineering
* Condensed matter and material physics
* Atomic, molecular, optical and positron physics
* Biophysics
* Elementary particle physics
  1. **Acquisition priorities** 
     1. **Books**

The purchase of volumes required in support of teaching is given priority. Copies of all books which are recommended texts for courses given in the Physics & Astronomy Department are purchased by Library Services. Most course texts will be acquired in multiple copies.

The remainder of the Physics book budget is given over to research-level material. Such material is purchased selectively. Selection is the responsibility of the Subject Librarian for Physics, but the Subject Librarian will aim as far as possible to select research-level books in conjunction with the Departmental Library Representatives from the Departments of Physics and Astronomy, Space & Climate Physics and Medical Physics and Bioengineering. The Library will endeavour to purchase any research-level item recommended by members of staff and researchers in the Physics Departments, funds permitting. Any remaining funds are used to acquire research-level material, selected by the Subject Librarian.

* + 1. **Journals**

Priority will be given to the maintenance of existing subscriptions. The Department of Physics & Astronomy, Space & Climate Physics and Medical Physics and Bioengineering will periodically be asked to review the Library's Physics journal subscriptions to ensure that subscriptions remain relevant to current research interests.

Library Services will make every effort to fund new journals as new titles are published or as new research interests develop within the Department. Presently any new titles must be funded either by the cancellation of existing subscriptions to an equivalent value.

The high rate of inflation of STM journals prices may mean that occasional cancellations are required: in such cases the Library will endeavour to arrange full consultation with the of Physics & Astronomy Department. The journals holdings of other regional libraries will be taken into consideration when subscriptions are reviewed.

* 1. **Level**
     1. **Books**

Books are collected in support of both teaching and research.

* + 1. **Journals**

The Physics & Astronomy journals collection is primarily a research collection, but also serves for teaching.

* 1. **Language**

Material will normally be collected in English, but important works in any other language may also be collected.

* 1. **Format and medium**

Material in the following formats will be considered for collection:

* print
* electronic-only, including stand-alone CD-ROM and web-based resources
* print with supplementary CD-ROM or web resources
* video

CD-ROMs may be purchased for loan, but Library Services cannot guarantee to be able to make such CD-ROMs available over the UCL network.

* 1. **Collaborative collecting agreements**

No formal collecting arrangements with other libraries are in place.

* 1. **Multiple copies**

Most course texts will be acquired in multiple copies. The Library makes efforts to monitor usage of stock, and additional copies of texts may be purchased where demand is seen to outstrip provision. Feedback from students and lecturers in on the adequacy of Library provision in of Physics & Astronomy for taught courses is encouraged.

* 1. **Donations**

Donations will be accepted for the Physics & Astronomy collection subject to the criteria outlined in the Library's Donations policy.

**Section 3 Retention and preservation policies**

**3.1. Review of the collection**

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

* 1. **Use of open access space**
     1. **Books**

In general, the Library will aim to house the most highly-used books on the open shelves. The most recent edition of such books will be kept on open access; earlier editions may be removed.

* + 1. **Journals**

Recent volumes of journals to which a current subscription is held, and which are not available electronically, will be housed on the open shelves. Journal volumes will be removed from the shelves when they become available electronically or when the Library's subscription ceases. Back runs of journals may from time to time be removed from the shelves in order to accommodate more recent volumes.

* 1. **Relegation**

**3.3.1. Books**

Research material relegated from the open shelves will be retained in store rather than discarded (except where it has been superseded by later editions, in which case it may not be retained). Superseded textbooks and other out-of-date teaching materials will be discarded.

**3.3.2. Journals**Journal volumes will normally be removed from the shelves when they become available electronically or when the Library’s subscription ceases. Back runs of journals may from time to time be removed from the shelves in order to accommodate more recent volumes.

1. **Retention and disposal**

Material removed from the open shelves may be retained in store or discarded.

* Normally no more than one copy of any book or journal volume will be retained in store.
* Superseded text books will usually be discarded. Research level books may be retained in store.
* Journals for which we maintain a current print subscription will be retained in store, in the first instance, when removed from the open shelves.
* All material retained in store will subsequently be reviewed for decisions on disposal.
* Back runs of journals we have ceased collection will usually be discarded.
* Material which Library Services deems to be valuable, rare or unique will not be considered for disposal.

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.

**Policy review procedures and dates**

The policy will be reviewed and approved by the Departmental Library Committees for Physics & Astronomy, Space & Climate Physics and Medical Physics and Bioengineering.

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