University of Edinburgh Library Committee

Information Services

University of Edinburgh Library Committee

Wednesday 22nd October

Acquiring books written by University of Edinburgh staff

Brief description of the paper
Proposed new policy to improve the library’s coverage of monographs written by UoE staff.

Action requested
To consider and approve recommendations in principle.

Resource implications
Does the paper have resource implications? Yes

Risk Assessment
Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

Equality and Diversity
Has due consideration been given to the equality impact of this paper? Yes. The preferred format for the lending copy is e-format, so this should ensure that the majority of texts are made accessible to disabled users. As English is the main teaching language of the University, the material will be available in English only, unless by nature the material is a different language.

Any other relevant information
To be presented by Joseph Marshall, Head of Special Collections

Freedom of information
Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Originator of the paper
Joseph Marshall, Head of Special Collections
11 August 2014
Collecting books written by University of Edinburgh staff

University of Edinburgh staff write, edit or contribute to about 500 printed books annually. These include monographs, editions of other works and collections of essays or conference papers. All relevant titles are recorded in the PURE system. These are a major part of the University’s research output, but at present these are not acquired systematically, leading to queries from Science & Engineering in particular. The latest REF exercise has provided evidence that there is currently a gap in our collections because such publications are not acquired systematically.

The proposed policy is that the University of Edinburgh Library should acquire two copies of all these new publications. One copy will be held by the Main Library or the appropriate site library for current general lending, and one copy will be held by Special Collections to preserve the long-term record of the research and publication by University staff. If an e-book is available for outright purchase the Library will prefer that format for the lending copy.

Staff are encouraged to provide information about their publications at an early stage so that copies can be added to the library collections promptly. Staff are strongly encouraged to donate copies of their books at an early stage, otherwise the Library will purchase these books as soon as details are lodged with PURE.

This policy will help to streamline future REF exercises and will provide a strong incentive to researchers to add information to PURE, as well as providing ready access to important relevant collections resources. We will only acquire books once the information is in PURE.

The estimated cost for two copies of each publication is £50,000 pa.

At present there is no budget allocation for this activity, so in the first instance we propose to create a mechanism for staff to easily donate copies of their books to the University Library, with the intention of implementing this new policy in full if resource could be identified in the future.

It is proposed that Library Committee endorse this policy on a 2-year trial basis.

Note on retrospective collections, for information:

Non-current printed books by UoE staff not already in stock will be purchased on a demand-driven basis where possible, either for General Collections if they are relevant to current
teaching and research needs, or for Special Collections if they meet appropriate selection criteria in terms of date and content.

Non-current printed journals containing articles by UoE staff will be managed through normal collections policy. Given the volume of output and the difficulty in identifying, storing and providing access to individual articles, we will not normally acquire or retain print journals solely on the grounds that they contain articles by UoE staff.

We will seek to capture metadata for PURE for any articles or books written by living UoE authors.

Joseph Marshall
Head of Special Collections and the Centre for Research Collections, 8 October 2014