Information Services

University of Edinburgh Library Committee

Wednesday 21st May 2014

Library Collections Purchasing Budget

Discussion paper on the Library Collections Purchasing Budget allocation model

Brief description of the paper
This paper presents an opportunity for Library Committee to discuss the Library Collections allocation model, reflecting on the successes in innovative modes of acquisition through the CORe and other centralised allocations. The paper suggests some possible alternative future models for expenditure from the Library Collections Purchasing Budget, to offer best value from the available funds.

Action requested
Discussion, and proposals for process of consultation.

Resource implications
Does the paper have resource implications? No

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 paper provides an opportunity to discuss future approaches to the way in which the Library Collections Purchasing Budget is modelled and expended. Only when an agreed proposal is developed will the equality impact of such a model be screened.

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

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Discussion paper: Library Collections Purchasing Budget allocation model

This paper presents an opportunity for Library Committee to discuss the Library Collections Purchasing Budget allocation model, reflecting on the successes of innovative approaches to acquisition established through the Collections Review, and with the CORe allocation.

The paper also presents possible alternative future models for expenditure, to offer best value from the available funds.

The paper is expected to generate discussion and debate from Library Committee, in order to share new possibilities with the Colleges during the summer vacation.

1. Current position

In recent years, the Library has been able to trial centralisation of some budgets for efficiency and value for money. Included in this are the CORe¹ budget and the centralised allocations established for innovative approaches to acquisition through the Collections Review. These centralised allocations are in their second year of use, with full results of these approaches being presented in year three.

Current centralised allocations and corresponding spend connected to the Colleges in 13/14 are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquisition model/area</th>
<th>Value 13/14</th>
<th>CHSS expend.</th>
<th>MVM expend.</th>
<th>SCE expend.</th>
<th>Interdisc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Online Resources (CORe)</td>
<td>£3,099k</td>
<td>£814k</td>
<td>£822k</td>
<td>£1,295k</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Library Loans²</td>
<td>£20k</td>
<td>£29k</td>
<td>£4.5k</td>
<td>£4k</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Driven Acquisition (e-books)</td>
<td>£240k</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>£240k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student requests ('Request a Book' (RAB))</td>
<td>£60k</td>
<td>£54k</td>
<td>£1.8k</td>
<td>£4.2k</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal pilots</td>
<td>£130k</td>
<td>£14.3k</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£8.9k</td>
<td>£37k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Innovative Acquisition Models Totals        | £450k       | £68.3k       | £1.8k       | £13.1k      | £277k      |

It is worth indicating that using the centralised innovative models, the College with the largest allocation in 13/14 using the IEAM (HSS) gains the highest return.

¹ The CORe (Central Online Resources) allocation covers expenditure for electronic resources which would have been paid for from two or more Colleges, or three or more Schools.
² These figures are taken from the in-College budget spends, with an available shared top up fund to act as indicative figures should ILL be centralised. In 12/13, HSS were the only College to require use of this top-up fund to supplement the expenditure on inter-library loans for their community.
There have been substantial benefits proven through these innovative modes of acquisition:

i. New interdisciplinary package deals for e-books are presenting high value for money, where chapter download figures are up to 1,300 per item in some cases, and 1.8M pa across the e-book collection overall. Such packages cannot be practically separated into College or School level expenditure, so a top-sliced payment approach is preferable and achievable through centralised allocations.

ii. Patron driven acquisition and the Request a Book (RaB) scheme are showing an increase in user satisfaction with the library, with the provision of resources through the discovery layer, or as requested at time of need.

iii. Free Inter-Library Loan quotas\(^3\) are allowing access to a broad range of research resources appropriate to need, satisfying demand (particularly in HSS), with repeat usage of resources low.

iv. Prior to the introduction of CORe, during invoice payment each subscribed title required coding, often with multiple lines against multiple Schools, per invoice. In the new model, invoice payments are arranged quickly by paying against one combined code, saving substantial staff time and thus speeding up the acquisition to availability process for individual items.

Outside of these centralised budgets there continues to be issues around the sufficiency of resource to meet demands across the community. In large part, this is related to the total budget allocation and the cost of resources. However, there is also a challenge in meeting the demands of the community due to the way the remaining budget is modelled:

1) Due to the overall split between the Colleges (using IEAM or PRAM);

2) Within the HSS and SCE College allocations, due to the way funds are attributed to each School by each College.

With both, there are instances where allocations are insufficient to meet demands of ongoing commitments (journal and database subscriptions), as well as new resource purchases or subscriptions.

To contextualise:

\(^3\) Staff and PGR – 30 free loans pa; PGT – 20 free loans pa; UG – 5 free loans pa.
a) Without additional in-year College funding (or external funding such as from the NHS) in 13/14, some Schools in HSS (e.g. Divinity and Law), all Schools in SCE and also MVM would have been unable to purchase resources (electronic and print) outside of the annual recurring commitments;

b) Within the overall HSS budget, there is an ongoing arrangement whereby some electronic resources of interest to specific Schools (for example, Divinity) are paid for by the HSS General Fund, as allocations for Schools are insufficient using the allocation model. Should these resource commitments be allocated to the corresponding Schools, the maintenance of these resources will be impossible against School-level budgets.

c) On an annual basis within HSS, there are some Schools who require reminders to spend the remaining balances within their allocation before the end of the financial year, creating spikes in spend activity, as regular purchasing across the year does not materialise. Such end of year purchasing has been identified as producing lower return on investment in historic examples of purchasing, including multiple copies of books which go on to present very low or zero usage.

d) In 2013/14, overall, SCE were at risk of a substantial overspend and it was not possible to allocate a budget to School level, until in-year College funding became available. If the additional funding had not been released\(^4\), the only provision for book purchasing through the materials budget would have been the centralised RaB strand, and academics within the College would have had no ability to purchase content for research.

e) With MVM in 13/14, within the first few months of the year, the College was presented with the possibility of the budget being fully spent, and, it would not have been possible to allocate budgets to between the top level Medicine/Vet split of 80%/20%\(^5\).

f) On top of these high level issues with the budget, there is a concern within the Schools, evidenced by surveys, about ‘gaps’ within the collections, due to insufficient funding. In HSS, these ‘gaps’ are currently being identified.

g) There is also a broad perception, evidenced by surveys, that there are insufficient copies of books available for courses. The Library is in the early stages of a Review of

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\(^4\) Note, there may be a cause for concern with the 14/15 SCE budget, where funding is insufficient to acquire new resources and/or pay for recurrent commitments.

\(^5\) NHS funding received by MVM can only be applied to expenditure against resources for the Medicine subject area.
Library Collections Provision for Courses, with indications showing that we currently spend c.£300k per annum on the provision of books for courses across all three Colleges. This is not clearly defined within the current funding model.

h) With in-year funding, from whatever source, the time spent considering potential bids for new resources and then processing the agreed bids against the funding available is significant for both IS and the Colleges.

2. Options for discussion

In response to the successes of the centralised allocations (including CORe) and due to the issues that develop further year on year with the current Library Collections Purchasing Budget, Library Committee are invited to discuss possible alternative approaches.

One approach would be to alter the current allocation models in use across the three Colleges to a standard one to be applied to all three Colleges, based on resource type and need.

In the above approach, the steps for making the allocations would be:

1. The centralised allocations for innovative modes of acquisition, Interdisciplinary funds and Librarian’s Strategic Fund are established first, in order to allow substantive collections development opportunities during the year (i.e. new electronic subscriptions/acquisitions);
2. The remaining funds are then allocated as per a **University allocation model** to each College;

3. For each College, the expenditure for CORe resources is top-sliced, as in the previous years;

4. For each College, other **existing** recurrent journal, database and e-book expenditure commitments are identified, and with cancellations considered for those e-resources with "high cost per use”;

5. Finally, for each College, any remaining, unallocated funding is then set aside for book purchase (print and electronic) in support of both Course Materials (£300k across the three Colleges) and research materials.

With this approach, there would be no defined School level allocations, only resource type allocations. A process would be established to address requests for **new** recurrent purchases, such as journal subscriptions. Ring-fenced College/School or external funds such as from the NHS for Medicine would be required to be kept separate, or invested strategically in response to need identified by the College (e.g. Course Collections or research materials).

For MVM and SCE there may be an opportunity to move to such a new, further centralised model in the next financial year (14/15), as experience in the 13/14 financial year has demonstrated a need for spreading resources across Schools, and both Colleges are close to a centralised model in practice.

For HSS, the coming year would be an opportunity to further consider the allocations and expenditure against School level budgets and the innovative modes of acquisition with the aim of introducing a new centralised model at the start of the 15/16 financial year. Within the administration of the budget in 14/15, a shadow reporting mechanism could be maintained to identify expenditure against resource type (i.e. ILL, course books, research monographs) to review at the end of the financial year.

By allocating the budget in this way, there would be expected benefits:

- Each College would continue to derive benefit from the interdisciplinary nature of resources subscribed to and acquired through innovative acquisitions allocations, including the Request a Book scheme (which, dependent on expenditure through the year, could also be opened up for use by staff as well as students) and e-book packages;
• Ongoing efficiency in acquisition process in relation to the CORe allocation;

• The case for a larger Library Collections purchasing budget could be reiterated, by spending against resource type on a first-come, first-served basis and demonstrating resource usage;

• An opportunity for streamlining administration in line with a new Library Management Platform implementation in 2015/16, where a new Platform will more readily present information on usage of resources (not just reporting on expenditure against resources by College/School).

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