

Book Collection Development Policy and Procedures for 2020/21

This document sets out how title-by-title purchases of modern titles will be handled by the collaborative work of three groups: faculty and departmental librarians (FDLs), the ebooks@cambridge team, and the department of Collections and Academic Liaison (CAL). The role of college libraries remains of course as vital as ever, and readers are welcome to consult their college library staff about their book needs.

Principles

The support offered to Cambridge staff and students through individual ebook purchases during the total closure of physical collections in spring/summer 2020 cannot realistically continue at such an intensive level. Cambridge University Libraries (CUL) are in the process of buying access to large ebook collections which should provide access to most necessary books.

CUL will operate an e-first policy, preferring ebooks where possible and where the price difference between e and print is not prohibitive.

CUL budgets must focus on supporting current Cambridge staff and students. Requests from other readers will be supported where CUL staff are confident that University use of these books will be made.

Book requests

Individual book requests can be made through a [central form](#). The form requires readers to say whether the title is needed for teaching and learning or for research.

All requests for individual titles for teaching and learning will go directly to FDLs. This includes books requested by undergraduates to support their dissertations. FDLs will sign off each purchase (with titles costing \geq £200 to be signed off by the relevant school librarian or by other local agreement) or will point the reader to other resources.

Where the relevant FDL feels that a teaching/learning title (print or e) is very niche, they will consider the request to be for a research title and can pass the request to CAL.

All requests for research titles will go directly to CAL, bar STEMM requests which will continue to go to FDLs. Where only one chapter of a book is required, the reader will be pointed towards document delivery services. Where a research title is very expensive, the reader will be asked to use the inter-library loans service.

Budget structures and practical points

In 2020/21 the ebooks@cambridge budget (which focuses on teaching and learning) will be made up of college contributions, CAL and Connell Fund contributions, and CUP ebook credits. No FDL will be asked to make a contribution.

The ebooks@cambridge budget will be divided between subjects using proportions based on student numbers. A certain amount of the overall pot will also be reserved for ebooks titles which are particularly interdisciplinary. The ebooks team will send monthly reports to FDLs about the state of their centrally held pots.

Each FDL has its own budget for print and e purchases. Some FDLs order all teaching and learning ebooks directly. Others use the central ebooks@cambridge team to order ebooks. Others do a mixture of the two. Each FDL budget and its corresponding ebooks@cambridge pot are there to support the teaching and learning of the same body of students. Ultimately they can be seen jointly as a single overarching allocation of money to support a specific subject area. A separate workflow for internal use explains how ebook orders can be charged against a subject's ebooks@cambridge pot or against the local FDL budget.

For particularly expensive and/or particularly interdisciplinary reader requests for material available only in **print**, the FDL can pass the request to CAL for the latter to buy.

CAL budgets cover the acquisition of print and electronic books in English and European languages from around the world, primarily for research*. CAL specialists buy reader requests and also practise active collection development in order to maintain and build CUL's broad and representative collections. In 2020/21, CAL budgets will need to focus chiefly on reader requests and research-level ebook packages, with a smaller focus on librarian-led collection development than usual. Language budgets will need to be lower than in usual years in order to re-route funds as necessary for English research titles and for the support of teaching and learning purchases.

*Other languages are dealt with by staff in the [Chinese](#), [Japanese](#), [Near & Middle Eastern](#), and [South Asian, Tibetan and Southeast Asian](#) sections of the University Library.

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