



The
Geological
Society

servicing science & profession

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Purpose of the policy

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is to provide an agreed framework for the future development of the Library's collections which will inform decision-making on both acquisition and disposal.

The Collection Development Policy will be reviewed every five years from 2013.

Role and aims of the Geological Society and its Library

The Geological Society is a learned society and professional body. It was founded in 1807 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1825. It is a registered charity whose mission is to serve science and profession.

The Society's aims were articulated in its 2007 strategy:

- To be the respected public voice of geosciences in the UK
- To provide lifelong professional support to geoscientists
- To recognise and foster innovation in the geosciences
- To show leadership in the geosciences community nationally and internationally
- To promote geoscience education
- To communicate geoscience research and practice
- To assure high professional standards for the benefit of society

The Library's primary role is to support Fellows with their continuing professional development, research and practice needs by providing the most relevant and up-to-date print and electronic information resources.

The Collection Development Policy incorporates the recommendations from the 2010 Library Review and the Geological Society's strategic objectives.

The collections

The Geological Society Library collects current post-graduate material in all the main fields of Earth sciences. It holds in Burlington House approx 300,000 volumes going back to the 16th century and subscribes to around 600 printed and electronic journals titles.

Its map collection is of national importance and comprises over 40,000 items dating from the beginning of geological mapping through to the present.

The Library also maintains the Society's archives (from its foundation in 1807), modern records and a number of special collections including:

- William Smith Collection (maps, sections and reports)
- Greenough Collection (correspondence, maps and notes)
- Murchison Collection (correspondence, field notebooks, diaries and illustrations)
- Moore Collection (correspondence, lectures notes and reports)
- MacCulloch Collection (drawings, prints and paintings)
- Agassiz Collection (watercolours and drawings)

The users

The Library's collections are used by a number of groups:

- Fellows
- Candidate Fellows
- Corporate Affiliates
- Friends of the Geological Society
- Members of the Linnean Society, Royal Astronomical Society, Royal Society of Chemistry and Society of Antiquaries
- Members of AAPG, PESGB, Geological Society of America, Institution of Materials Mining and Metallurgy and Institute of Geologists of Ireland
- Corporate organisations
- Members of the public

Users can access Library resources in person in Burlington House and remotely (Fellows and Candidate Fellows only). 67% of the Library's hard copy stock is currently on open access.

The catalogue is freely available online via the Society's website and is the main source of information on the Library's collection.

The archive collection is currently being recorded on CALM and will gradually be made accessible to the public via AIM25 and Archives Hub.

Complementary collections

The Geological Society Library is a world-class library whose collections complement those of the British Library (for which it is a back-up library), the Natural History Museum, the British Geological Survey, the Royal Geographical Society, the Earth Sciences Libraries in Cambridge and Oxford, the Museum of Wales and the US Geological Survey.

The Library acknowledges the need to work more collaboratively with its UK/London partners and develop its collections and retention practices with regard to those held in comparable organisations.

Currency of collections

The Library primarily collects material supporting Earth sciences research and the aims of the Geological Society. Items selected for purchase will be current research, authoritative texts and maps in a variety of formats. The balance between printed and digital acquisitions will be determined by the Library Strategy (2015-2019).

Historical role

The Geological Society Library is over 200 years old and has a collection of historical importance which includes works dating from the 16th century and one of the most comprehensive map collections in the world. However, the Library aims to maintain a working collection and is not a repository for all Earth sciences works.

Selection, scope and limitations

The Library is committed to the maintenance and development of its printed collections and long-term provision of high quality online resources relevant to the changing needs of its users - currently, only 30% of the Society's Library users access its resources on-site.

Although the Library will seek to supply information in a range of formats, it cannot collect comprehensively across all Earth sciences areas.

The emphasis of the collection will be on English language material. Conversely foreign language maps will be purchased when available and in demand.

Decisions regarding acquisitions will be limited by:

- Budget
- Licensing and Copyright issues
- Usage and potential usage
- Space
- Balance of subject areas
- IT resources

The Library will normally acquire a single copy of a book, map and journal for lending or reference purposes. Duplicate copies may be purchased occasionally e.g. in case of some heavily used titles and memoranda of understanding.

The Library receives two copies of each book and one copy of each printed journal published or co-published by The Geological Society Publishing House (please note - this arrangement excludes journals published for other societies e.g. Scottish Journal of Geology)

New acquisitions will be circulated to the Fellowship via the Library's newsletter and the Society's website.

Subject coverage

The Library will actively collect books, periodicals and maps from a number of priority areas (see Addendum A) which will be revised every five years.

The Society has never actively collected archive material but has occasionally acquired unique collections e.g. the Plate Tectonic Collection and should only seek items on the development of geological thinking and theories.

Suggestions and recommendations from Fellows

Advice, recommendations and feedback are welcomed from the Society's Fellows. This can be done directly to the Library staff - in person, by phone +44 (0)20 7432 0999 or email:

library@geolsoc.org.uk

Donations

The Library will consider donations of material particularly of recent publications and where they fall into the scope of the collection or are of historical importance.

Donated material will be carefully evaluated by the Library according to its likely benefit to the Society and the resources involved in acquiring, maintaining and preserving it.

The Library is not obliged to keep donated items especially if unsolicited and may dispose, sell or donate them to other libraries.

Replacement policy

The Library will only seek to replace high usage items and authoritative textbooks which have been damaged or lost. A replacement might be the same title or a more recent publication covering the same subject area as appropriate.

Binding

171 journal titles currently require binding and around 200 volumes are bound each year using the Library's budget. Binding is a preventive measure and is essential to the conservation of the printed journal collection.

Retention, withdrawal and disposal

Items published by the Society, material of historical significance to the earth sciences and the history of the Geological Society will be retained. These should be stored in Burlington House or off-site in a climate controlled environment if older than a hundred years old, fragile or rare.

The Library will try and keep as much hard copy stock as possible but cannot promise to retain other items in perpetuity. When reviewing the stock the following criteria should be considered: usage, currency, historical importance, subject coverage, space and accessibility.

A full survey of the Library's hard copy stock will be undertaken by Library staff from January 2013 in order to assess the relevance and condition of the collections as well as their suitability for off-site storage and digitisation according to the criteria set out in the Collection Development Policy.

Inter-library loans

Inter-library loans should be considered for out of print and/or out of scope material. Titles published in the last two years and within scope requested via the Library's inter-library loan service should be considered for purchase.

Conservation and preservation

It is the Society's duty to look after its heritage and maintain its collections in the best possible conditions. Many of its items are currently not being preserved adequately in environmentally controlled areas – some are already in dire need of attention, others are stored in locations unfit for purpose e.g. the William Buckland Room – which will long-term have an impact on their usefulness and financial value.

The Library has an annual budget for archives and a number of initiatives have been developed e.g. Sponsor a Fish and Sponsor a Book to raise awareness and help with the conservation of valuable works such as the 1808 Louis Necker Geological map of Scotland. More needs to be done in this area in order to maximise the useful life of the Society's print collections and match the recommended

national standards such as those of the British Library and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA).

Additionally, it is the intention of the Society to digitise a significant part of its collection for preservation purposes. A small pilot on the maps of Malawi began in October 2012 and will determine how we manage digitisation projects in the future.

Disaster management

The Society has a Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan. The Library is also a priority user with Harwell Document Restoration Services who can be called on after damage from fire, water damage, explosion, sewage flood, mould damage contamination or infestation affecting its printed stock. The Library's professional staff should be encouraged to attend Harwell's training courses in salvage and disaster recovery.

Fabienne Michaud
19 September 2013

Addendum A

Priority subjects 2014-2019
chronostratigraphic methods (dating)
coal geology
early earth
earthquakes
engineering geology
environmental geology
geoarchaeology
geochemistry (inorganic)
geochemistry (organic)
geoconservation
geohazards
geoinformatics (GIS & remote sensing)
geomorphology
geophysical methods: indirect (gravity, magnetics, etc)
geophysical methods: seismic
history of geology
hydrogeology
magmatic studies
marine studies and oceanography
metamorphic geology
mineral and ore deposits
mineralogy
palaeoclimatology
palaeogeography
palaeomagnetism
palaeontology and geobiology
petroleum geology
petrophysics and borehole research
planetary geology and meteoritics
quaternary geology
regional geology
sedimentology
shallow geophysics
soils
stratigraphy
structural geology
tectonics and geodynamics
volcanology