



**University of
Nottingham**

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Stock Review (physical content in libraries and stores)

Standard Operating Procedure

University of Nottingham Libraries

1. Purpose

University of Nottingham (UoN) Libraries' mission is to provide thriving communities and inspiring environments where learners, teachers and researchers can discover, develop, use and share information and learning content to advance knowledge creation and dissemination.

Libraries' priorities are informed by UoN strategic delivery plans:

- Education & Student Experience. Equip students and staff with the physical and digital library resources and experiences they need, to be happy and successful at UoN.
- Research & Knowledge Exchange. Provide library resources, services & expertise that enables, participates in, and enhances UoN research strategy & practice.

Priorities are further informed by feedback from both national and local user surveys, and from the academic community.

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines our general approach to reviewing print content and deciding what to keep and what to remove from UoN Libraries' collections. Engagement with the consultations and requests for feedback outlined in Section 4 of this SOP is critical to the effectiveness of this procedure as we work with the UoN academic community to determine what is still relevant for current teaching and research needs. The consequences of non-engagement could result in, for example, the need to obtain removed material from another source if later requested.

2. Scope

This SOP covers the collections and activities at the UK campuses of the University. It provides an overview of how we manage our collections in support of the learning, teaching and research activities of the University.

This procedure applies to print material which we make available through [NUsearch](#), our online discovery tool, and which is available in our off-site store and 7 library sites:

- Business Library
- Denis Arnold Music Library
- Djanogly Learning Resource Centre
- George Green Library
- Greenfield Medical Library
- Hallward Library
- James Cameron-Gifford Library

The following procedure does not apply to [Manuscripts and Special Collections](#) for which there are separate procedures and operational plans.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Collections Team - one of three teams within UoN Libraries' [Content and Discovery](#) section - is responsible for this SOP. Broadly speaking, the Collections Team develops and manages the print collections within campus libraries and the off-site store using the [Collection development – monographs and one-off purchases](#) SOP to inform decision-making. While we provide an eBook rather than a print copy whenever possible for equitable ease of access, we still purchase a great deal of print material. This SOP explains our general approach to reviewing print collections.

The Customer Services Teams across the 7 library sites support some of the processes outlined in section 4. For example, they are responsible for retrieving material from the shelves, packing it for transport and repurposing the created space (e.g. to make collections easier to consult or to respond to student demand for more study space).

The Collections Team works in collaboration with the academic community to select new print and digital resources and we likewise value academic input to decisions around retaining or removing print content. In recent years, we have worked with the academic community to agree a systematic

and standard approach to withdrawing material. Our processes are founded on accepted professional practice, and we endeavour to be transparent about our plans, criteria we use to guide our decisions and requests for feedback. The UoN academic community has a role to play in the consultations outlined in section 4, providing specialist knowledge to determine, for example, historical value along with the ongoing and potential relevance of and requirement for material. We rely on the designated Academic Library Representative for each School or Department to relay information from Libraries to academic colleagues and provide feedback to Libraries in a timely manner.

4. Stock review

Our collections are regularly reviewed for use and relevance to current academic activity, ensuring that space for existing stock, new items and study within Libraries is balanced. It is important that any material selected for disposal is carefully assessed. Our aim is to operate an evidence-based approach to managing, reviewing, transferring and disposing of print material to ensure our collections meet current teaching, research and learning needs. We recognise that this can be a sensitive subject for our user community; we endeavour to be open about our activities and seek academic input to guide decisions.

This section outlines how we manage retention and disposal of our print collections, covering:

- Review of monographs and related content
- Review of journals and related content

Material selected for disposal is dealt with in an ethical and environmentally responsible manner.

4.1 Review of monographs and related content

Throughout the year, we undertake housekeeping activities to reduce multiple copies of books where these appear to be no longer required, e.g. duplication across our Libraries system, previous editions and items in poor physical condition.

Annually, we systematically review print books which have not been borrowed for a certain number of years and which are widely held nationally. We use a combination of local usage data from our library management system and national tools to identify titles. The [Library Hub Compare](#) service allows us to analyse our library collections and compare them with those of other institutions which contribute their records to the National Bibliographic Knowledgebase (NBK). Where there are holdings in a minimum number of other [Research Libraries UK](#) (RLUK) libraries, we invite academic

colleagues to comment on listings before any books are removed. Low use material that is retained will usually be located within our off-site store rather than on open library shelves.

4.2 Identifying low-use material for review

We review final copies of books in Libraries and Store on a cycle of at least every 3 years. Each Autumn, we agree which Libraries or subsets of our collections will be reviewed and we prepare listings using data from our library management system. This will usually look for items held for a certain number of years, and with no recorded “loans” during the most recent years.

4.3 Comparison with national holdings

We then run the listings against the NBK to compare our holdings with availability in other RLUK libraries. We remove from the review titles which then fall outside of the criteria (i.e. insufficient holdings confirmed as available, indicating rarity in the UK context).

4.4 Consultation

We use all of this data to produce final sub-sets of items for consultation (low/no usage at UoN over a number of years and availability of copies as loans from other libraries). See Appendix 1 for an example of the criteria used to identify low use stock for review.

We share listings at the beginning of the Spring term and the consultation remains open for the whole of that term. Listings are in an Excel workbook, with sheets to separate broad groupings by classmark. Listings will include the following information where available.

- Author, Title, edition, volume
- Publisher, year of publication
- Item’s NUsearch record number (which can be entered into [NUsearch](#) to see the full record details to aid decision-making).

Members of the UoN academic community can ask Libraries to “keep” an item and add comments about why an item will be needed in future. We will retain any items identified in this way, and this additional information can be useful to inform future planning.

4.5 Action and timing of removals from libraries and Store

After the consultation period we will produce final listings of items for Libraries’ use.

- Items in review and with no request to “keep” will be disposed of via our current partner, [Better World Books](#). Books are either sold (to generate funds for literacy projects), donated or recycled.
- Items with low use but also low holdings (not included in review listings) will be transferred to our off-site store where possible.
- Items included in review but flagged to “keep” will also be moved to our off-site store if possible. The item record will be annotated to record that it was part of the review.

Any disposals from our off-site store will start as early as possible. Material to be moved or disposed of from Libraries will usually be carried out over the summer vacation to avoid disruption.

4.6 Non-standard content

The process above is the best way to approach reviewing large amounts of book stock from our General Stock (e.g. books and pamphlets). Other types of print content (reference material, microform, physical digital media etc) will be reviewed on occasion using the same principles of usage, relevance and academic consultation.

5. Review of journals and related content

See the [journals and subscriptions SOP](#) for more detail around review of current subscriptions, both print and online.

5.1 Journal holdings where we still have a current print subscription

Our primary aim is to provide access, which does not necessarily require local physical holdings. Some journals are only available in print, or only affordable for us as a print subscription. We would not automatically retain all holdings simply because we have a current print subscription.

Where there is equivalent and reliable online access to a range of content (e.g. where we have purchased online archive access, or it has become included in a resource such as JSTOR) then we may also review these holdings.

5.2 Journal holdings where there is no longer a current print subscription (UK Research Reserve)

Where electronic access is also available, use of print journals in our libraries is rare, so online access is a primary driver for review – but is not the only one.

Titles and holdings are identified as appropriate for review and removal under the UKRR initiative where:

- We have bought journal archive access direct ourselves
- Access to content has been bought on behalf of UK Higher Education by Jisc
- Access is included in JSTOR or other journal archive packages we have bought or subscribe to
- There are short runs/no subscription and the title is agreed to be no longer relevant for teaching or research (regardless of online availability)
- A significant archive, including our holdings range, has been digitised and made Open Access

Where we also pay smaller annual fees for the platforms to access such content online, or may do so in future, any decision NOT to continue with those would always be based on usage of the titles concerned. In conjunction with our membership of Portico (which further guarantees access to titles where publishers might no longer do so) this gives us confidence in continuing access where we need it.

6 Associated Documents, Appendices and Resources

6.1 Associated Documents

This SOP covers how we review physical stock held in libraries and store. Related collection management and development documents are:

- [Collection development – monographs and one-off purchases](#)
- [Journals and subscriptions](#)
- [Global Library Collections](#)

6.2 Appendix 1 -

Each year in the Spring term, we conduct a final copy, low use book stock consultation. We use a combination of library data and national tools to identify titles which match certain criteria. The following criteria were used in the 2024 review:

Libraries

- item owned for a certain number of years (15 for Arts and Social Sciences, 10 for STEM) and has 0-1 loans
- item available in a number of other RLUK libraries (7+ for Arts and Social Sciences, 3 for STEM)

Stores

- Item owned for more than 10 years
- item not borrowed for 6 years and available in 4+ other RLUK libraries

Removed from review

- Items on a reading list in the online reading list system
- Items previously flagged for local retention

Version	1
Last Updated	1 July 2025
Date of Next Review	1 July 2027
Responsible Team	Collections (collections@nottingham.ac.uk)