

QUT Library Collection Development Manual

4. Collection Management

4.5. Collection Evaluation

Identification block

QUT Library Collection Development Manual	
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Contact Officer	Associate Director, Library Services (Information Resources)
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Policy statement

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4.5 Collection Evaluation

1. Purpose of evaluation

Collection evaluation at QUT Library is carried out to ensure that information resources are being utilised effectively and that they meet the changing information needs of clients

2. Evaluation methods

Conspectus is no longer used to evaluate the Library's collection. Evaluation is considered to be an ongoing process, based on meeting identified needs in a rapidly changing environment.

Evaluation is informed most importantly by the subject-specialist knowledge of librarians and the collaborative relationships that exist between librarians and faculty staff. Liaison Librarians and Branch Library Managers work closely with academics to maintain and develop the collection in particular areas. As a result they receive regular feedback from academics in relation to the adequacy of the collection and assistance in identifying collection strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluation occurs in response to:

- Proposals for new courses
- Identification of new research areas

- Course accreditation requirements (to meet the requirements of professional organisations such as the Australian Psychological Society)
- Preparing School Information Resource Plans
- Developing bids for additional funding
- Developing a weeding plan
- Trials of electronic databases
- Subscription renewals

Liaison Librarians employ a number of specific methods to evaluate collection areas. Different methods are used, depending on the purpose of the evaluation and the subject area being evaluated. Methodologies for evaluating coursework monograph collections and research monograph collections are available as appendix to this policy

Coursework monograph collection evaluations are to be completed by liaison librarians every three years in consultation with their BLM if not completed during this time for one (1) of the reasons mentioned above.

The Datasets Coordinator, the Web Development Coordinator and the Datasets Reference Group facilitate and assist with evaluation of electronic databases

Evaluation of electronic trial products

Liaison Librarians may be required to evaluate and report on new products in their discipline areas, following e-trials.

Evaluation of databases valued at over \$100,000

Databases valued at >\$100,000 pa are reviewed annually as part of the Library's adherence to the Qld. State Government's Purchasing Procedures Guidelines to ensure that the University is continuing to get value for money from these expensive investments.

Appendices to policy

Appendix 1: Methodology for Evaluating the Coursework Monographs Collection

Appendix 2: Methodology for Evaluating the Research Monographs Collection

Modification history

Date	Sections	Source	Details
12 December 2006]		Assoc Director (IR) via IRMG	No changes made

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Evaluation Policy Appendix 1

Methodology for evaluating coursework monographs collection

Usage

The methodology is intended for use by Liaison Librarians. It may be used to inform:

- School Information Resource Plans
- Funding allocations
- Course Impact Statements
- Weeding plans
- Faculty accreditation processes
- Relevant stakeholders

It is important for the Liaison Librarian to understand the purpose of the evaluation and to use such steps and elements as are appropriate to that particular need.

Evaluations should be undertaken on a cyclic basis every three years if not completed for one(1) of the reasons indicated above.

Evaluations occur in response to:

- a liaison librarian needs to develop his/her knowledge of the collections relating to their liaison areas. This is important for newly appointed liaison librarians, or librarians taking on subject areas unfamiliar to them.
- to evaluate the collection following concentrated collection building for a specific area.
- to evaluate the collection gaps for new teaching areas
- in response to requests from teaching staff about the adequacy of the collection in specific areas.
- to provide input to faculty accreditation processes

Evaluations may be done on all areas relating to a School's teaching areas or specific areas may be targeted for evaluation.

It is recommended that all steps in the methodology be considered when undertaking evaluation. The components of each step, however, are suggestive. It is expected that the choice of components will vary according to discipline area and purpose of the review.

The Basis of the Methodology

In undertaking collection development and analysis and receiving feedback from clients, Liaison Librarians gain a wealth of qualitative information regarding the collection's strengths and weakness, as well as resource usage in the discipline areas. To validate this qualitative data, selective quantitative methods can be employed to confirm and quantify genuine collection needs. The steps of the procedure are detailed below. The components listed are suggestions and individual liaison librarians may choose not to use individual components.

Methodology

Step 1: Review Unit Abstracts to Identify Key Curriculum Areas

Review available unit abstracts, existent or anticipated (identification via Course Bulletins or other means), to compile a list of each School's key teaching areas. These could be considered as "majors", "streams" or "courses", and may be determined by amalgamating common foci from across the units eg "Multi-Media Design". Depending on the area, the terms may be best expressed by either using subject headings or keywords.

Ask for feedback on the list of School's key teaching areas from academic staff. As well as advising on the completeness of the list Academic staff may also comment on the relative priorities of the key teaching areas.

Step 2: Email Course & Unit Coordinators

Email Academic staff requesting their advice regarding areas of the coursework collection that are inadequate. Also consider relevant feedback from students. Collect and synthesise responses from throughout the year.

Step 3: Record Qualitative Information

For each major teaching area, record pertinent qualitative information gained through liaison eg academic staff member advises that the collection needs building in a specific area.

Note large units (at Kelvin Grove large units may be considered to have 100+ enrolments, while officially, the Library acknowledges large units as 200+)

Note also, any significant other future funding consideration (eg. technological developments requiring a new format)

Step 4: Record Quantitative Information

For each of the key teaching areas identified, run a catalogue inquiry of holdings. This may be done by subject, keyword or Dewey range search, depending on the nature of the topic area. Record both total holdings and recently published holdings (the time period for currency will vary by discipline), and holdings at the specific campus.

For each area, consider the total number of students requiring access from across the units with respect to the holdings available.

Consider other relevant information, for instance, whether you are regularly unable to afford all orders requested by academics.

If after considering the above criteria you judge that there are insufficient holdings to support a particular area, mark that quantity in red for further analysis and costing within the report.

If quantitative data disputes a concern that has been suspected or reported by academics or students (eg. the number of titles appear adequate for student requirements) discuss the claim with the academic. The claim may be withdrawn or assigned a lower collecting priority.

Review holds reports to determine which titles/subject areas are regularly requested from other campuses.

Review reading lists to check the collection includes sufficient copies. How many copies constitutes a sufficient number varies according to a number of factors such as: numbers enrolled in the unit, extent to students studying in this area use the Library, mode of delivery for the unit.

Check relevant e-book usage (if applicable)

Step 5: Check statistics in Millennium

A range of tailored lists may be created in Millennium to provide information to inform collection evaluation strategies. Reports include:

Check out reports
Filled hold reports

Circulation renewal reports
Title circulation reports, requests (intercampus loans request)
Age of collection report
Collection development reports

Some reports are produced centrally due to the size of the report. Others can be produced locally. See the attached link for more information about the reports and availability:

..\..\Information_Resource_Management\Collections\Collection_Management\GDL_Millennium_Reports_Statistics_Collection_Analysis_Evaluation_11Oct05_FIN.doc

Step 6: Benchmarking against published output and other collections

Compare our collection against suppliers JBO and Collection Manager

Use the subject headings in CM to search titles in a specified date range and check against holdings to determine the extent to which we have collected what is currently available for purchase.

Compare our collection against other significant collections in the subject area

Identify significant collections for the subject area. Academics, senior library staff, heads of schools and document delivery staff may be able to assist with identifying significant collections. This may include other ATN Libraries

Comparison may be made at a broad level ie number of titles held in the QUT collection in specific subject areas compared with number of titles held in the same areas in the other collection or

Comparison may be made at title level. Search the catalogue/s of the other collection for relevant titles and check holdings against the QUT collection.

Note 1: Checking against other collections may require some scoping and explanation. For example it may only be useful to check titles with an imprint of 5 years or later. QUT may not be interested in how well we compare with a very large and old collection in the relevant subject area. We may only be interested in the extent to which we hold recently published material in the area.

Note 2: Subject headings, descriptors vary with the database. Searching on a heading in one source may not retrieve any hits in another. Alternative headings may be needed to describe the relevant subject area in a different catalogue or database eg. Collection Manager and JBO do not use LCSH headings.

Step 7: Prepare a report

Prepare a report outlining the findings: areas where deficiencies have been identified, itemising the specific collection weaknesses and areas where the collection is adequate or better. This evaluation will then inform annual School Information Resource Plans, and will need to be read in conjunction with them.

Append all relevant data for referral (eg. enrolment numbers, holdings tables etc), including LRA figures for the past three years

Send a copy of the report to the BLM. Strategies for communicating the outcomes of the evaluation to the relevant School/s should be agreed with the BLM.

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Evaluation Policy Appendix 2

Methodology for evaluating research monographs collection

Usage

The methodology is intended for use by Liaison Librarians to assist with:

- Collection evaluation reports
- Funding bids/allocations
- Course Impact Statements for new research areas
- Informed comment to collection stakeholders
- Grant applications; and
- School Information Resource Plans

The final evaluation of the Research Monographs Collection is at the discretion of the liaison librarian, in consultation with relevant academic staff.

NB. The various Quantitative Methods detailed in Steps 3 and 4 will not specifically identify "Research Monographs". The methods detailed will identify the items held and/or used on a topic BUT it requires analysis of the individual items by the Liaison Librarian to determine whether individual items are "Research Monographs".

NB. The complete Research Information Resource Collection is made up of three components:

*Research Serials Collection
Document Delivery Service
Research Monographs Collection*

The following methodology applies to the Research Monographs Collection and the Document Delivery Service.

The Basis of the Methodology

Methodology

Step 1: Identify research areas

A list of the Research Programs and Centres within particular faculties/schools are available on the faculties/schools' websites. On these websites locate the key research areas.

Step 2: Record Qualitative Information: External Data

Consult with relevant stakeholders including the leaders of each of the research programs, relevant academic/professional staff and postgraduate research students requesting their advice regarding whether they perceive the research monographs collection adequate for their research needs. In addition informal feedback will be collected throughout the year.

Step 3: Record Quantitative Information: Internal Data

Throughout the year record pertinent quantitative information about the research monographs collection, its use and growth, using such tools as those listed below. Liaison Librarians should note that these tools will identify monographs held and/or used on a particular topic but it requires analysis of the individual titles by the Liaison Librarian to determine whether

individual titles are “Research Monographs”.

Document Delivery reports (indication of collection shortfalls)

Millennium Create Lists (collection growth and its response to demand and possible shortfalls)

Millennium Create Lists can be used to identify items of the collection in specific Dewey ranges and order records created during specific time periods. Possible list topics could include “Candidates for weed”, “Items that have been borrowed”, “Ordered items still on order”, and “Item subject search by three different subjects”.

Further Millennium Create Lists help can be found at:

<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/millennium/createlists.jsp>;

<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/millennium/#training>; and <http://libcat.qut.edu.au/manual/>

Millennium Web Management Reports

<..\..\..\Information Resource Management\Collections\Collection Management\GDL Millennium Reports Statistics Collection Anaysis Evaluation 11Oct05 FIN.doc>

Library Catalogue Search (current status of the collection)

From the list of research programs identified in Step 1 generate a list of appropriate keywords or Subject Headings.

For each of the keywords or Subject Headings you have identified run a catalogue inquiry of holdings. This may be done by keyword or Subject Heading search depending on the nature of the topic area. After detailed analysis of the report, record both total holdings of research related titles, recently published holdings of research related holdings (the time period for currency will vary by discipline) and holdings of research related titles at the specific campus.

Step 4: Record Quantitative Information: External Data (BENCHMARKING)

Liaison Librarians should note that these tools will identify monographs held and/or used on a particular topic but it requires analysis of the individual titles by the Liaison Librarian to determine whether individual titles are “Research Monographs”.

Search James Bennett Online (JBO) and Blackwells Collection Manager (CM):

Using the keywords and subject headings identified in Step 3 for the Library Catalogue Search, identify the equivalent **Bennett’s Subject Code** and search JBO for titles published within a relevant date range. Use should also be made of the Readership Level option on the JBO Power Search Screen.

Using the keywords and subject headings identified in Step 3 for the Library Catalogue Search, identify the equivalent **Blackwell subjects** and search CM for titles published within a relevant date range. When analysing the search results Liaison Librarians should note the “Non-subject parameters – Level of Audience” and “Non-subject parameters – Readership Level”.

Search Key Library Collections:

Identify those library collections with significant collections in the identified research fields. Once identified, Using the keywords and subject headings identified in Step 3 for the Library Catalogue Search, search these library catalogues for titles published within a relevant date range. Then check the titles against the library holdings.

Step 5: Determine approximate number of academic/professional staff and postgraduate research students within each Research Program

Using information from QUT Virtual Search and/or PORTIA and/or Research Master determine approximate numbers of academic/professional staff and postgraduate research students within each Research Program.

Step 6: Compare holdings of research monographs to numbers of clients requiring access

Based on the holdings of, demand for, and shortcomings of, research monographs collection for the identified Research Programs (this quantitative data is generated in Step 3 and Step 4) **CONSIDER** whether there are sufficient numbers of research monograph items for the population of academic/professional staff and postgraduate research students who are likely to use them.

Step 7: Prepare Research Collection Evaluation Report

Prepare a brief summary itemising the specific collection weaknesses. This summary can then be used to inform your Research Collection Evaluation Reports. Be sure to append all relevant data for referral (e.g. holdings tables, numbers of academic/professional staff and postgraduate research students, etc).

Send a copy of the report to the BLM. Strategies for communicating the outcomes of the evaluation to the relevant Faculty/Research staff should be agreed with the BLM.